Mr. and Mrs. David Reece.
Mr. Reece a farmer. Born in Ohio 1823; came to county 1851. Mrs. Reece born in N. J., 1829.

Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Reece.
Mr. Reece a farmer. Born in Spring Grove township 1866. Mrs. Reece born in Center Point 1873.

David and C. D. Reece
Proprietors of
Hickory Grove Farm
Section 12, Spring Grove Township
R. R. 3
COGGON, IOWA

Residence of David and C. D. Reece, Spring Grove Township

Harvey & Floyd
Manufacturers of
Cement Building Blocks
TROY MILLS, IOWA

Residence of David and C. D. Reece, Spring Grove Township

Store Building of A. J. Harver, Troy Mills.
Preface

Welcome to the 2nd Edition of: The Reece Family History, which was published on December 19, 2006, by me, Brett David Reece, the author. This edition is a revision of the first, which was published on February 18, 2002. I mistakenly titled the first Reece Family History book as Volume 1; in actuality, I should have titled it as the 1st Edition.

I can trace my Reece paternal ancestry back seven generations. This edition of The Reece Family History encompasses 157 years of my paternal ancestry...dating from 1791 to 1948.

The following men make up my paternal ancestry.

2. *William David Reece, my great-great-great-great-great grandfather (1791-1850)
3. *David Reece, my great-great-great-great grandfather (1823-1914)
4. *Abraham Ward Reece, my great-great grandfather (1853-1886)
5. *William Milton Reece, my great grandfather (1882-1952)
8. *Brett David Reece, myself, the author.

Only three of the above listed men have biographies within this edition; they are: William David Reece, David Reece and Abraham Ward Reece.

This book goes into some detail about the migration of my Reece ancestral line from Virginia to Ohio, and eventually to Iowa. My paternal ancestry has been in the United States for quite some time; as is demonstrated by the fact that I have traced it back to Virginia prior to the year of 1791, which is 215 years ago. I have yet to fully research my paternal ancestral line prior to 1791.

My research has revealed that my paternal line originated from an ancestor having immigrated to America from Wales, but we do not know who this individual is or exactly when he came. I do believe that this ancestor immigrated to America prior to the birth of the United States on July 4, 1776. When this ancestor immigrated from Wales, he traversed the Atlantic Ocean to reach the British colonies on the eastern fringe of the North American continent; these later became the United States of America.

The nation of Wales is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, which is comprised of Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Wales is a small mountainous country, about the size of Massachusetts, which lies on the western side of Great Britain. Wales only has a landmass of 8,015 square miles. The Welsh people share the island of Great Britain in the North Atlantic with the Scotts and English. This is the largest island in Europe. Great Britain is a geographical and political term. Great Britain is the official name given to the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, and the principality of Wales. It is my desire to some day travel to Wales to see for myself where my ancestry came from.

This work is my attempt to place all of my Reece paternal ancestral knowledge into one book. This book represents the latest information that I have pertaining to what
is known and speculated about the lives of my ancestors. I want you the reader to realize, that this book is an amalgamation of the research and thoughts of many genealogists from across the United States.

Throughout my life, I have always had an interest in world history and in my family history. Many people have asked me over the years why I have such an interest in genealogy. In answering that question... I find that understanding my ancestry is an understanding of who I am, and how I came to be. I believe that history becomes more 'real' when you can relate it to the experiences of your ancestry.

Due to my own personal interest and ambition, I have literally spent many thousands of hours researching my family history. I can remember, even as a kid, asking my paternal grandparents, Vernon and Clara Reece, what they knew about our family history. In answering my questions, my grandfather essentially did not have any information to share beyond his father. I can remember a particular conversation that I had with grandpa one day when I was a teenager; during that conversation, he stated to me that when he was my age he did not have any interest in knowing his ancestry. He was an old man at the time of our conversation, and he stated to me then that he wished he knew more about his ancestry. I published the first edition of this book shortly prior to my grandfather’s death so that he could answer some of his own questions pertaining to his ancestry. In the rush to accomplish that goal, the first edition of this book is not nearly as well written or designed to the extent of the second.

I seriously started my research into this book when I moved to Utah to work at Capitol Reef National Park in March, 1999. Upon moving to Utah, I realized how close I was to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, which is the world’s largest genealogical database. I decided then to begin researching my family history. Since then, I have conducted many hours of research at the Family History Library. As an example, between 2001 and 2003, I tried to spend one weekend per month researching at the library. During each one of those weekends of research, I generally spent a total of 24 hours researching. To date, I have researched in the Family History Library for four years. I estimate that I have literally spent thousands of hours researching and writing this book. Many of those hours were spent in the Family History Library.

Tax, census, school, land, church, court, immigration and military records are just a few examples of the source records used to write this book. Much of the information contained within this book has come from federal, state, and local records found at the Family History Library. In addition to the information acquired from the library, much of the information in this book was obtained from other sources including genealogists from across this country. Genealogists from California to New Jersey, from Arizona to Minnesota, and from points in between, have contributed information to make this book a reality. Portions of my own personal knowledge of my family history are also contained in this book.

I have found various spellings of my surname while conducting research into this book. As found in the original source records used to write this book, my surname has been spelled either: Reece, Reese, Riece, Reace, Rece, or Rees. These different spellings are commonly found with surnames in early records. These spelling differences were often due to the fact that early record keepers spelled surnames like Reece phonetically; that is, they spelled any given name the way it sounded. Within this book the reader will
find the different spellings of my surname as they were found in the context of the original source records. In addition to the spelling of my surname, all the information in this book is spelled the way it was found in the original source records.

This book was written and composed to reflect information as it was found in its original context within the record it was found in. I believe that the reader will easily ascertain where speculations have been made within the individual biographies found in this book. These speculations are often based upon documentary evidence.

This book contains biographical sketches of my paternal ancestry. For the most part, I have only gone off my paternal ancestral line by one generation throughout this book. The core of this book is comprised of my paternal ancestral history. I formatted the book this way because having not done so would have made this book almost impossible to write. There are some relationships, facts, pieces of trivia, etc., pertaining to the subjects within this book that I intentionally omitted. For me to have added all these would have made this book difficult to read, let alone write. Future researchers, I am sure, will find these omissions during the course of their research.

Throughout this book the reader will find asterisks in front of the names of the men that make up my paternal ancestral line. The maiden names of the women found within this book are in parentheses, which is a standard genealogical practice. This book is divided into two sections. Section 1 contains biographical information pertaining to my Reece ancestral line. Section 2 contains maps of where my ancestors lived. These maps are arranged in chronological order to reflect the movement of my paternal ancestral line from Virginia to Ohio, and eventually to Iowa. The reader will find that this entire book is in chronological order to best tell the Reece story.

The reader will find many first person references in this book, such as the word ‘I’. Unless otherwise noted, these first person references refer to me, Brett David Reece, the author.

This book has many references to the town of Troy Mills, Iowa. Troy Mills is found in Section 5, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Troy Mills is located in extreme northern Linn County and borders southern Buchanan County, Iowa. The reader will also find many references in this book to Lower Spring Grove and Troy Mills Cemeteries.

Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, sometimes referred to as Sod Town Cemetery, is located 5 miles east of Troy Mills, Iowa in the NE¼ of Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This cemetery is located between Troy Mills and Coggon, Iowa. To get to Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, drive east from the main intersection in Troy Mills on the Coggon Road for 5 miles, then turn south onto Sutton Road, and then take the first driveway on the right. This cemetery is located a short distance east of the aptly named Walton Creek. Many of the individuals in this book are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Troy Mills Cemetery is located in the SW¼ of Section 5, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. It is located a short distance west of the town of Troy Mills on the north side of Walker Road (D62).

I have tried to be as accurate as possible in writing the individual biographies contained in this book. The fact is, future researchers will undoubtedly find errors in this book; that is just part of genealogy. Over the years, a variety of primary and secondary
sources, have recorded the vast amounts of information pertaining to the lives of the individuals found within this book. Our understanding of these individuals comes from these primary and secondary sources. People make mistakes; for instance, reading dates accurately from a 150-year-old tombstone often times can be difficult. Time takes a toll and information is lost. I can not vouch for the validity of all the information contained within this book. However, I have tried to the best of my ability to validate the information contained herein.

My intent is to have every edition of The Reece Family History available at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. Institutions in Iowa will also be given editions. In addition, various relatives of mine have an original copy of the editions written to this point. Since the Family History Library is the world’s largest genealogical database, I have chosen it as the main depository for all editions of this book. This will allow a future descendant the ability to find this book years down the road. I would hate to see all of my genealogy research to someday become lost or forgotten; this is why I have chosen the Family History Library as the main depository for all of my research.

I foresee future editions of The Reece Family History. I intend to make each future edition an addition to and revision of the preceding one. At any given time, the current edition of this book should be considered the most accurate. As additional information surfaces in the future, I will add that information to future editions of this book. If the reader has any comments, photos, or additional information that they wish to share, I encourage you to contact me at the address provided.

It has been and will continue to be my intention, to write in the greatest detail, the biographical histories of the men that comprise my paternal ancestral line.

Just as a side note, the next time you are feeling rather unimportant, try a little mathematical trick based on the fact that it took two people, your parents, to get you here. Each of your parents had two parents, so in the generation just prior to that of your mother and father, there were four people whose pairing off and sharing a love contributed to your existence. You are the product of eight great-grandparents, 16 great-great-grandparents, 32-great-great-great-grandparents, etc. Keep on multiplying the number by two, you will discover that a scant 500 years ago there were 1,048,576 people on this planet beginning the production of you.
Acknowledgements

Many people and organizations have made this book a reality. I want to specifically thank genealogist Daphane Hoover of Walker, Iowa for the contributions she has made to make this book possible. Much of the information and photos contained in this book came from Daphane and her many years of genealogy research. Daphane gave me a large base of knowledge to start this book from. She has added greatly to my understanding of my ancestry, which she is a part of. I also want to thank all the other genealogists from across this nation that have graciously shared information with me.

A Troy Mills, Iowa historian by the name of Isaac Holman (1833-1913), wrote many of the historical accounts contained in the individual biographies found within this book. Mr. Holman’s writings have added greatly to the individual biographies found herein. Without Holman’s writings, much of the pioneer history of the Troy Mills area would not have been recorded. A debt of gratitude is owed to Mr. Holman for his contributions to history and to this book. Future researchers may come across Mr. Holman’s grave located in Troy Mills Cemetery.

Genealogy research, such as mine, is in part made possible through LDS (Mormon) Church facilities such as the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. I wish to thank the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for their genealogical resources. The Family History Library and the network of LDS Family History Centers found throughout the United States are great genealogical resources. I would like to especially thank the volunteers that staff the Family History Library for the help that they provided to me during my many hours of research there.

I want to thank my brother-in-law and sister, Brad and Barb Sleep, for letting me use their computer to write much of this book. I spent m-a-n-y hours on their computer composing this.

I need to thank my wife Elizabeth for her patience and assistance in putting this book together.

In concluding, I want to thank the numerous individuals that have contributed in making this book a reality by sharing information with me and other genealogists. These individuals are just too numerous to be mentioned here individually.

Brett Reece
P.O. Box 322
Toledo, Iowa 52342
Phone: (641) 484-4249
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Section 1: The Reece Ancestry
The Reece Coat of Arms illustrated left was drawn by an heraldic artist from information officially recorded in ancient heraldic archives. Documentation for the Reece Coat of Arms design can be found in Burke's General Armory. Heraldic artists of old developed their own unique language to describe an individual Coat of Arms.

In their language, the Arms (shield) is as follows:

"A lion rampant, or, a bordure az. charged with eight annulets sa."

When translated the Arms description is:

"Blu: a golden lion attacking; a silver border charged with eight black rings."

Above the shield and helmet is the Crest which is described as:

"A wirvern sejant vert, wings elevated, holding in the mouth a spearhead ar. enorou so."

A translation of the Crest description is:

"A green wirvern sitting, wings raised, holding in the mouth a silver spearhead, stained with blood (red)."

Family mottos are believed to have originated as battle cries in medieval times. The Motto recorded with the Reece Coat of Arms is:

"RESPIE FUTUR" (Regard the Future)

Individual surnames originated for the purpose of more specific identification. The four primary sources for second names were: occupation, location, father's name and personal characteristics. The surname Reece appears to be patronymical in origin, and is believed to be associated with the Welsh, meaning, "son of Rhys."

The supplementary sheet included with this report is designed to give you more information to further your understanding of the origin of names. Different spellings of the same original surname are a common occurrence. Dictionaries of surnames indicate probable spelling variations. The most prominent variations of Reece are Rhys, Reakes, Ryoce and Reke.

Information available to us indicates that in 1971 there were approximately 4,500 heads of households in the United States with the old and distinguished Reece name. The United States Census Bureau in 1970 estimated that there were approximately 3.1 persons per household in America which yields an approximate total of 14,505 people in the United States carrying the Reece name. Although the figure seems relatively low, it does not signify the many important contributions that individuals bearing the Reece name have made to history.

No genealogical representation is intended or implied by this report and it does not represent individual lineage or your family tree.
Until about 1100 A.D., most people in Europe had only one name. (This is still true in some primitive countries today.) As the population increased, it became awkward to live in a village where perhaps 1/3 of the males were named John, another sizable percentage named William, and so forth.

And so, to distinguish one John from another, a second name was needed. There were four primary sources for these second names: a man's occupation, his location, his father's name or some peculiar characteristic of his. Here are some examples:

**Occupation:** The local house builder, food preparer, grain grinder, and suit maker would be named respectively: John Carpenter, John Cook, John Miller, and John Taylor.

**Location:** The John who lived over the hill became known as John Overhill, the one who dwelled near a stream might be dubbed John Brook or perhaps John Abrook.

**Patronymical:** (father's name): Many of these surnames can be recognized by the termination—son, such as Williamson, Jackson, etc. Some endings used by other countries to indicate "son" are: Armenian's—ian, Dane's and Norwegian's—sen, Finn's—nen, Greek's—poulos, Spanish's—ez, and Pole's—wiecz.

Prefixes denoting "son" are the Welsh—Ap, the Scot's and Irish—Mac, and the Norman—Fitz. The Irish Ô incidentally denotes grandfather.

**Characteristic:** An unusually small person might be labeled Small, Short, Little, or Lytle. A large man might be named Longfellow, Large, Lens, or Long. Many persons having characteristics of a certain animal would be given the animal's name. Examples: a sly person might be named Fox; a good swimmer, Fish; a quiet man, Dove; etc.

In addition to needing an extra name for identification, one occupational group found it necessary to go a step further. The fighting man: The fighting man of the Middle Ages wore a metal suit of armor for protection. Since this suit of armor included a helmet that completely covered the head, a knight in full battle dress was unrecognizable. To prevent friend from attacking friend during the heat of battle, it became necessary for each knight to somehow identify himself. Many knights accomplished this by painting colorful patterns on their battle shields. These patterns were also woven into cloth surcoats which were worn over a suit of armor. Thus was born the term, "Coat of Arms."

As this practice grew more popular, it became more and more likely that two knights unknown to each other might be using the same insignia. To prevent this, records were kept that granted the right to a particular pattern to a particular knight. His family also shared his right to display these arms. In some instances, these records have been preserved and/or compiled into book form. The records list the family name and an exact description of the "Coat of Arms" granted to that family.

Interest in heraldry is increasing daily. This is especially true among people who have a measure of family pride and who resent attempts of our society to reduce each individual to a series of numbers stored somewhere in a computer. In our matter-of-fact day and age, a "Coat of Arms" is one of the rare devices remaining that can provide an incentive to preserve our heritage. We hope you'll agree that it is much more than just a wall decoration.

If you are interested in a more in-depth study of the subject of this paper, may we suggest you contact the genealogical department of any fair-sized public library. We especially recommend the "Dictionary of American Family Names" published by Harper & Row and also "The Surnames of Scotland" available from the New York Public Library as excellent sources on the meaning of surnames.

Nancy L. Halbert
Seven Generations of My Paternal Ancestry

Ancestors of Brett David Reece

William David Reece
b: 1791
m: May 08, 1817
d: September 20, 1850

David Reece
b: December 30, 1823
m: September 13, 1850
d: January 14, 1914

Rebecca Hiatt
b: January 19, 1795
d: Abt. 1834

Abraham Ward Reece
b: October 07, 1853
m: August 21, 1876
d: December 27, 1886

Kittorah Ann Conner
b: November 15, 1826
d: February 26, 1862

William Milton Reece
b: October 12, 1882
m: October 25, 1907
d: February 18, 1952

Angeline Betzer
b: November 18, 1858
d: April 07, 1948

Vernon David Reece
b: September 20, 1916
m: May 01, 1938

Hattie Oldridge
b: May 13, 1889
d: January 16, 1987

Wendell Ray Reece
b: 1941
m: September 10, 1971

Clara Gladys Thompson
b: 1919

Brett David Reece
b: 1972

Catherine Joyce
b: 1947
William David Reece is my great-great-great-great grandfather. Sources indicate that William was born in 1791; his exact date of birth is unknown. My research indicates that he was born near Mount Pleasant, Grayson County, Virginia. Grayson County is located in the western tip of Virginia. William was probably named after his father, David Reece Senior, who would be my great-great-great-great-great grandfather. My research has identified William's parents as David and Elizabeth Reece.

We know that David Reece Senior is of Welsh descendant. Whether or not he is the immigrant ancestor that immigrated from Wales to America is yet unknown. At least one genealogist that I have collaborated with on this book believes that David Reece, as well as his wife Elizabeth, are of Welsh descent. This same genealogist believes that David Reece was possibly born in Philadelphia in 1738 and married an Elizabeth Babb in 1761 in Frederick County, Virginia. The father of David Reece may possibly be a Thomas Reece, who was born in Galmorganshire, Wales in 1680. Thomas may have married a Margret Bowen in Frederick County, Virginia. Margret reportedly died in 1785. At the present time, I have yet to independently verify the above information given to me regarding the parentage of William David Reece. My intent someday, is to fully research William’s parentage and to include it in a future edition of this book.

Our subject, William, had a son by the name of *David Reece (1823-1914). A 20th century biography of David’s states that his paternal line is of Welsh descent and that his maternal line is of English descent. This biographical history of David’s is just one piece of evidence that confirms that William Reece’s paternal ancestry is of Welsh descent.

Much of the genealogical information that has been gathered about William Reece and his ancestry has been extrapolated from the records of the Quaker faith. As a rule, Quakers have been diligent recorders of the proceedings of their faith throughout their history; and as a consequence, their records are of great genealogical importance. William Reece was a Quaker himself, as were members of his family and the family he married into. We owe a great deal of thanks to Quaker records for making this biography and this book possible.

The Society of Friends, otherwise known as Friends or Quakers, emerged in the north-west of England in the mid 1600’s during an era of religious reformation that swept across Europe. The faith was founded by George Fox in 1652. Fox believed that: there is that of God in everyone...that we all can experience direct communication with the Divine without the assistance of priests, pastors or churches...and that it was a Quaker’s duty in life to foster that spark in themselves and in other people. Fox and his followers, who became known as Quakers for the way their bodies shook during worship, lived lives of peace, simplicity, honesty and equality. Early Quakers were persecuted and imprisoned for their religious beliefs, and many sought greater religious freedom by settling in America.

Despite persecution, regular meetings of Quakers occurred. For instance, between 1682 and 1691, three large meetings of Quakers from all over Wales were held
in the town of Pembrokeshire. Quakerism in Wales became well established. But a
totally unexpected problem came over the horizon in the form of a Quaker idealist named
William Penn.

In 1681, Penn was given a huge tract of land in America by King Charles II, King
of England. According to most sources, this land was named ‘Pennsylvania’ or Penn’s
Woods, in honor of William Penn’s father who was a famous English admiral.

William Penn was greatly concerned at the suffering of other Quakers and offered
to sell them plots in the new territory of Pennsylvania. Welsh Friends set up a ‘Welsh
Tract’ so that Welsh language and culture could survive. Many, anxious to practice their
religion in freedom, took up the offer. But one needed courage to make the dangerous
journey, good health to set up in a new country, and commitment to leave family
members and friends behind. Good people left Wales for America, not knowing that the
persecution was about to end.

Penn came to North America in 1682. When he left England on his voyage to
Pennsylvania his head was full of visions and hopes for this Land of Promise “six
hundred miles nearer the sun.” In Pennsylvania, Penn wanted to see if he and his fellow
Quakers could establish here a new society based on wider freedoms than the Old World
knew; and he wanted also to see whether it was true, as he thought, that men and women
were better and happier for this freedom. Believing good government to be part of God’s
plan for mankind, he called his venture a Holy Experiment.

In the late 1600’s, many Welsh emigrants braved the horrors of Atlantic passage
to flee the religious persecution they faced at home. The Welsh Quakers, in particular,
sought lands where they could practice their own form of religion and live under their
own law in a kind of Welsh Barony. One of their leaders, surgeon and lawmaker Dr.
Griffith Owen, who came to the colonies in 1684, induced William Penn to set apart
some of his land grant for the settlement. The project envisioned as a kind of “Holy
Experiment,” involved an oral understanding with William Penn and the Society of
Friends (a pact made in England before the Welsh sailed to the New World). The oral
understanding set aside 40,000 acres of land (some sources give 30,000) in what is now
southeastern Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, this agreement was never put into writing and
later became a source of bitter controversy between Penn and the Welsh Quakers.

Even before William Penn’s arrival to take up lands granted to him by the Duke
of York in payment of a debt to his father, Welsh settlements had begun to spread out on
the west side of the Schuylkill River around the nucleus of the new city of Philadelphia.
However, in 1690, in this so-called ‘Welsh Tract,’ the Colonial government abolished the
civil authority of the Welsh Quaker meetings in order to set up a regular township
government. Penn himself refused the legality of the Welsh Quakers’ appeal for self-
government.

Although many Americans are taught that Pennsylvania was named after William
Penn’s father; in actuality, it was named after the Welsh word ‘pen’, meaning head. So,
Pennsylvania is Welsh for ‘the high or head woodlands.’

The Meeting for Worship is the core and center of all Quaker organizations. For,
without the frequent gathering for Divine Light and Leading, none of the other Quaker
activities would be possible. Here Quakers meet, in their meeting houses, or in private
homes; their meeting begins in silence, and often no word is spoke throughout the entire
time of the meeting, although any member may speak if spiritually moved to do so.

Every member of The Society of Friends is registered as a member of a particular
Meeting for Worship and of the Monthly Meeting to which it belongs. An established
Meeting for Worship is usually allowed its own Preparative Meeting, made up of its
overseers, which attends to the general care of the affairs of the meeting.

The Monthly Meeting is the executive body of the Quaker organization. It is a
business meeting which administers the affairs of its sub-ordinate meetings, of which
there are usually several under control of each Monthly Meeting. As the men and women
met separately at Monthly Meetings, two sets of minutes were kept. The duration of the
Monthly Meeting could encompass one or more days. The minutes of the Monthly
Meetings recorded information such as births, deaths, burials, marriages, disownments,
certificates of removal, members received and released, etc. for all Meetings of Worship
which it controlled. These records are of great genealogical interest and are referred to
many times in this biography.

Meeting houses were usually owned by the Meeting for Worship. Monthly
Meetings were often held at the different meeting houses under their control, rotating
between or among them. Sometimes a Monthly Meeting was the same name as a
Meeting of Worship, or it could have had an entirely different name. The Monthly
Meeting was a separate entity from any Meeting for Worship under its control.

Our William Reece would have lived his early childhood years in Grayson
County, Virginia. He and his family would have certainly attended a Meeting for
Worship somewhere near Mount Pleasant, Grayson County, Virginia, which one exactly
is unknown.

Quaker records tell us that at one time William Reece was a member of the Mount
Pleasant Monthly Meeting. He may have been a member of the Mount Pleasant Monthly
Meeting during part or all of his childhood. This meeting later changed its name to the
Chestnut Creek Monthly Meeting in 1818. The Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting house
was located in Grayson County, Virginia, but the verge of this Monthly Meeting
extended into Carroll County, Virginia, and into Surry County, North Carolina. The
location of this meeting house would today be located two miles south of Galax, Carroll
County, Virginia. The first meeting of the Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting was held on
January 30, 1802. This meeting house was utilized up until February 19, 1825. By that
time most of the membership had migrated to Ohio and other north-western states.

Some of the original members of the Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting, names
taken from the minutes of the women’s meeting, include: Sarah Reese, Ann Hiett,
Elizabeth Hiett, Hannah Hiett, Phebe Hiett and Rachel Hiett. Ann, Hannah and Rachel
Hiatt appear to have been sisters; formerly of the maiden name Reece. If so, they appear
to have been sisters to our William Reece.

William Reece moved from Virginia to Highland County, Ohio at some point in
the early 1800’s. He may have made this move with his parents and other family
members. This was a period when many Quaker families were settling in Ohio.
Specifically, it appears that at some point between 1791 and 1812 that William moved
from Mount Pleasant, Grayson County, Virginia to Highland County, Ohio. Highland
County is located in southern Ohio.
In order to give the reader some sense of what Highland County, Ohio would have been like at the time William Reece moved there... the following is a brief history of the area written in 1946.

**History of Highland County, Ohio**

Here, in southern Ohio, the trails linking us with the past grow dim and dimmer as they recede through Indian history, through the Moundbuilder Era, and vanish all together in what scientists call the Ice Man Age. Beyond this we know nothing of the history of this section of the State, nor are we concerned. Our beginning lie not here, but in some far distant land, generations and generations before our forefathers crossed the rolling waters, bound for America.

We are all of us familiar with the Indian history of Ohio. We know that French missionaries and traders were the first white men to discover Ohio's fertile land. We know that when Celeron floated down the beautiful Ohio in 1749, marking his course as he came by burying leaden, engraved plates at the mouths of all the rivers from Muskingum to the Miami as he took possession for his king, the Shawnee and Miami Indians had already named these streams and claimed the land drained by them for their own.

We know that England disputed possession of this land because of charters granted Virginia by James the First, and that war between France and England was the inevitable result; that the sound of the gun broke the strange quiet of the wilderness that had been the kingdom of the Indian, the Moundbuilder, and the Ice Man. Historians have recorded this for us.

Interesting to us because we are a result of it, is the story of the flow of immigration that began about 1771 toward what is now Ohio, following the exploration of Kentucky by Daniel Boone and his companions. During the Indian hostilities in Kentucky, white men crossed at intervals through the Ohio forests to recover prisoners taken by the Indians, to make treaties with the red men, and to protect their trading posts. The beauty of this wild, virgin country was as a siren beckoning the adventurer and the explorer on to “greener pastures.”

Virginia, who had laid further claim to this territory because of the conquests of General George Rogers Clark, 1778-1779, ceded to the United States her territory northwest of the Ohio River in 1784, but reserved the land lying between the Miami and Scioto Rivers. This land was called the Virginia Military District and was portioned to Revolutionary War soldiers as the Government’s method of paying them for their services in the war.

Many of the soldiers did not want their lands and sold them to prospective settlers for about a dollar an acre. Free religion, Habeas Corpus, property rights, just taxation, and no slavery were other special inducements held out as possible in the land beyond the Ohio River. A general rush began for the Ohio country.

Over the Alleghenies they came, English, Irish, Scotch, French, and Dutch, with their different religions and their different customs, all searching for illusive peace. By way of the national turnpike they poured in steady streams, the national turnpike that once had been merely an Indian trail.
Soon their log cabins dotted the forests. They were usually made square with a clapboard roof, one door, a puncheon floor and a cat-and-clay chimney. The logs were chinked with a plaster of mud and straw called daubing and fastened to it by wooden pegs. Windows, when there were any, were greased with bear’s oil and were translucent. The baby’s cradle was a hollowed, rockerless gum log.

The men wore leather hunting shirts, buckskin breeches, moccasins, and coonskin caps. After the importation of sheep and the raising of flax, the wool hat, linsey shirt, and cowhide shoe or brogan, took their places. Women wore linsey garments and went barefoot except on Sunday when they put on their woolen stockings and heavy shoes before reaching the meetinghouse. Little boys wore blue linsey shirts fringed with red and yellow. They wore tow-linen pants supported by galluses made of deerskin and secured with large waistband buttons at both front and back. Girls were dressed like their mothers.

THE BEGINNING:

When that part of the Northwest Territory known as the Virginia Military District was being carved into states it was in the year 1803 that Ohio came into being and was admitted in the Union. At first Ohio had but four counties, a small number compared to the 88 of today. Highland County was the 21st county organized and was created by an act passed by the general assembly February 18, 1805. It was cut out of Ross, Adams, and Clermont counties and lay in the southwestern part of Ohio, in a particularly fine section. The location of its high land between the little Miami and Scioto Rivers gave it its name. When organized, there were four townships, Brushcreek, Fairfield, Liberty, and New Market.

The first county seat was New Market, 1805. A more centrally located site was sought by the legislature and Hillsboro was chosen for this honor in 1807.

The area of the county was made smaller in 1810 when Fayette and Clinton counties were formed and again in 1813 when more land was given Clinton. Highland County contained 549 square miles, or 346,307 acres.

The earliest date that I have found that places a William Reece in Highland County, Ohio is the year 1812. Highland County voting records recorded that a William Reece was an elector (voter) in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio for the October elections of 1812, 1814, and 1821. Our William David Reece would have been approximately 21 years old in 1812. I do not know for certain whether or not this William Reece listed as a Paint Township elector in Highland County voting records is in fact our subject. I do believe that it is more than likely that at some point, William was an elector and did in fact vote in one or more elections within the township of Paint.

There is no doubt that William was one of the early pioneers of Highland County, Ohio. The county was created by an act of the general assembly on February 18, 1805. The State of Ohio was admitted into the Union only two years earlier in 1803. Highland County would have certainly been a wilderness setting when William moved there in the early 1800’s.
Upon moving to Highland County, William and his family would have been members of their local Quaker Meeting for Worship, which appears to have been located near a stream named Paint Creek within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Their Meeting for Worship would have been under the organization of the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting.

The Fall Creek Monthly Meeting in Highland County, Ohio was set off from the Fairfield Monthly Meeting on May 11, 1811. This is the date that the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting was established. One of the first acts of the new meeting was to appoint a committee to confer with a similar committee of the Fairfield Monthly Meeting to establish their boundaries. The men selected for this committee were: Richard Barrett, Josiah Tomlinson, Walter Canaday, Caleb Sumner, Obadiah Small and Joseph Small. The new boundary between the Fairfield and Fall Creek Monthly Meetings established by this committee was described as follows: The new road leading from New Lancaster to Chillicothe; thence up the state road to the Indian Ford on Paint Creek; thence up Paint Creek to the mouth of Rattlesnake (fork of Paint); thence up Rattlesnake to the mouth of Fall Creek; thence the road leading to Hillsborough; then the new state road to West Union.

William Reece and his family certainly would have been living within or near the above described boundaries of the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting. We do not exactly know which Meeting for Worship he and his family attended at that time, but it appears to have been located near the local stream named Paint Creek. We do know that at one time William Reece was a member of the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting. Knowing this, their can be no doubt that the Meeting for Worship that he and his family attended would have been located within the boundaries of the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting.

The Fall Creek Monthly Meeting house was located at the present address of 11345 Karnes Road, Hillsboro, Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio 45133. The last meeting of the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting occurred on August 21, 1848. It later merged with the Fairfield Monthly Meeting near Leesburg, Highland County, Ohio.

A Fall Creek Monthly Meeting record of November 19, 1814 reads that a certificate (of removal) was produced to this meeting for William Reece, son of David Riece, from Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting dated July 30, 1814, which was accepted. The Mount Pleasant Monthly meeting was located in Grayson County, Virginia. I believe that this is our William Reece and his father mentioned in this certificate of removal.

When individual members or families removed from one Monthly Meeting to another, they were furnished removal certificates setting forth the fact of their membership in good standing and recommending them to the fellowship of the Monthly Meeting to which they were going to. In the earlier days these certificates were usually prepared and signed in advance and carried by the members to their new place of abode. Later, it appears to have become more of a custom to wait until the new home had been established and then send back a request that the certificate be forwarded. A condition of granting of a certificate was that the member’s ‘outward affairs’ be satisfactorily settled. The certificate usually stated that this had been done. When a certificate was issued to a family the fact was generally recorded in the men’s minutes so far as it applied to the husband and sons, and in the women’s minutes as it applied to the mother and daughters.
In cases where a member wished to remove to a locality which was within the 
verge, or boundaries of another Monthly Meeting, regardless of the distance away, they 
were required by the discipline to ask for and receive a certificate of removal, transferring 
their membership to the other Monthly Meeting. When a request for such certificate was 
made at a regular Monthly Meeting, a committee was appointed to investigate the person 
or persons and report at the next monthly meeting. If everything was satisfactory then the 
parties were granted their certificates. Such a certificate was regarded as a guaranty that 
the person or persons were a member in good standing, had paid their just debts, and 
fulfilled all other obligations. If an obstruction was found, the certificate was withheld 
until the obstruction was removed.

The before mentioned certificate of removal pertaining to William Reece recorded 
in the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting record of November 19, 1814, tells us two important 
things. First, it tells us that William applied to become a member of the Fall Creek 
Monthly Meeting upon moving to Highland County, Ohio from Grayson County, 
Virginia; other members of his family presumably did likewise. Second, it tells us that 
William and his father were members of the Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting of 
Grayson County, Virginia prior to their move to Highland County, which suggests that 
they lived within Grayson County prior to moving to Ohio. Whether or not William 
came to Highland County with his father and mother is unknown. Whether or not 
William was living within his father’s household when he came to Highland County is 
also unknown. This record tends to suggest that William came to Highland County 
between the dates of July 30, 1814 and November 9, 1814. This is assuming that 
William’s certificate of removal was prepared and signed in advance of his leaving 
Virginia for Highland County, Ohio.

Around the time that William Reece immigrated to Highland County, Ohio, 
several members of his family and that of another Quaker family named Hiatt were 
moving into the area. The Reece and Hiatt families had both been members of the Mount 
Pleasant Monthly Meeting in Grayson County, Virginia, and were likely members of the 
same Meeting of Worship. The Hiatt and Reece families intermarried. William’s sisters 
méried Hiatt’s and those families also immigrated into Highland County about the same 
time as William.

Genealogist Neil Henderson of Hudson, Ohio wrote the following about William 
Reece’s parents and siblings: *We know that three of David and Elizabeth Reece’s 
dughters married Hiatts and lived in the same village of Paint Creek, in southern Ohio 
near William Reece and his wife Rebecca in the early 1800’s. [These daughters are: 
Hannah, Ann, and Rachel Reece.] Another probable son of David and Elizabeth’s is 
David Reece Junior; he was born about three years earlier than our William Reece and 
lived even closer to William in Paint Creek. David Reece Junior’s grandson was Ohio 
Governor, Joseph Benson Foraker.*

Evidently, according to Henderson, there was a village of Paint Creek in southern 
Ohio. During the course of my research, I myself have not found mention of their having 
been an actual village of Paint Creek. Perhaps Henderson is making a reference to the 
township of Paint Creek.

My research has led me to believe that William Reece had at least three sisters 
that Married Hiatts. They are: Ann, Hannah and Rachel. Ann married Absolom Hiatt.
Hannah married Joseph Hiatt Jr. Rachel married John Hiatt. I and other researchers have concluded that these three Hiatt men were brothers.

William Reece married a Rebecca Hiatt in 1817. In Hiet-Hiatt Genealogy and Family History 1950, genealogist William Perry Johnson reported that the marriage of Rebecca Hiatt to our William Rees occurred on May 8, 1817 in Highland County, Ohio. William would have been approximately 26 years of age and Rebecca would have been 22 when they married. William and Rebecca Reece are my great-great-great-great-grandparents.

Rebecca Hiatt was born on January 19, 1795 near Mount Pleasant, Grayson County, Virginia. At least one source has it that Rebecca was born in Surry County, North Carolina, which is not out of the realm of possibility given the fact that Surry County, North Carolina abuts Grayson County, Virginia.

Rebecca was the 5th of 15 children born to Benjamin and Mary Hiatt, who were of English descent. Benjamin and Mary Hiatt would be my great-great-great-great-grandparents. As has already been stated, it is reported that Benjamin’s brothers: Absolom, Joseph and John married William Reece’s sisters: Ann, Hannah and Rachel.

Most sources indicate that William Reece and Rebecca Hiatt are both native to the State of Virginia; specifically, to Grayson County. Other sources, like a biography of their son Henry written in 1901, list William and Rebecca as natives of South Carolina. The 1880 U.S. Census records of Henry Reece and his brother David each lists their father, William, as a native of South Carolina; and each lists their mother, Rebecca, as a native of Pennsylvania. The 1920 U.S. Census record of Henry and David’s brother, William Lewis Reece, lists their father and mother as both natives of Virginia. I believe that William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece are natives to the State of Virginia.

The Hiatts were Quakers and they had good biographers who were helped by the meticulous records kept by Quaker communities. Hiatt Family History 1950 provided many details in the lives of four generations of Rebecca’s ancestors.

Rebecca Hiatt’s father, Benjamin Hiatt, was born on January 4, 1764 in Rowan (now Guilford) County, North Carolina. Benjamin was one of nine children of Joseph and Hannah Hiatt.

Benjamin Hiatt married a Mary Worley on December 22, 1787 at the Westfield Monthly Meeting, Surry County, North Carolina. Her parentage is unknown. She appears to have been born about 1769.

Benjamin and Mary were the parents of 15 children; their children are reported to have been born in Surry County, North Carolina and Grayson County, Virginia.

Benjamin and Mary Hiatt are the parents of:

1. Nathan Hiatt, born September 24, 1788; died April 13, 1859.
2. Zimry Hiatt, born October 28, 1789; October 2, 1813.
3. Levinah Hiatt, born July 12, 1791; died after 1850.
4. Amaziah Hiatt, born March 11, 1793; died before November 28, 1865.
5. Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece, born January 19, 1795.
6. Harmon Hiatt, born November 20, 1796; died November 1849.
7. Ithamar Hiatt, born December 18, 1798; died after 1850.
9. Ruth Hiatt, born June 6, 1802; died before 1845.
11. Benjamin Hiatt, born about 1809.
12. Henry Hiatt, born about 1809; died after 1880.
13. Hannah Hiatt
14. Mourning (Hiatt) David
15. Mary Hiatt

It is reported by Idaho genealogist Larry Anderson in Hiatt-Hiett Genealogy and Family History, 2000, that the following children of Benjamin and Mary Hiatt were twins: Benjamin, Ruth, Hannah and Mary. I do not know the specific pairing of each one of these individuals with their respective twin sibling.

The Reece and Hiatt families were both members of the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting, Highland County, Ohio. After reading many minutes of the Fall Creek Monthly Meetings, my impression is that the Reece and Hiatt families had been devoted Quakers and deeply involved in the faith.

Genealogist Neil Henderson wrote the following:

Rebecca Hiatt was from the same very close-knit Quaker community as was William Reece. About 1800, there were seven Hiatt families in Mount Pleasant, Grayson County, Virginia. The Reece part of the record is incomplete. By 1803, the young men and teenaged boys of this community had begun moving; most of them to Highland County, Ohio, and the families followed over the next few years. There is a record of Rebecca Hiatt’s family being received by the Quaker, Fairfield, (Highland Co.) Ohio monthly meeting in 1809.

There is little doubt that the Reece’s were part of the same Quaker migration into Virginia and North Carolina and then back to Virginia and then to Ohio, with the Hiatts. The last short stay in Virginia (Grayson County) something happened to one of the Reece record books. The Reece birth data were in the missing book, whereas the Hyatts were in the book that was saved.

Benjamin Hiatt (Rebecca’s father) was the second son of Joseph and Hannah Hiatt. Joseph was born about 1732 in Bucks or Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and he probably died in Highland County, Ohio. He and Hannah were married about 1753, perhaps near Hopewell in Virginia. They were among the Quaker families who moved to North Carolina during the French and Indian Wars, to avoid hostilities. The tax lists and land records of Surry County show a life of active farming and land speculation, the acreage fluctuating between 230 and 800. In the 1790 census he reported 5 males over 16, 2 males under 16, and 4 females. In 1800, Joseph Hiatt was still selling land in North Carolina but he was a resident of Grayson County, Virginia. He bought 400 acres in Grayson County in 1800 and sold it in 1805. Hannah had died by 1808, probably before the exodus of Grayson County Quakers to Ohio. Joseph’s second wife was a widow, Elizabeth Ballard; they were married in 1809 in Highland County, Ohio.
In a letter to genealogist Daphane Hoover, Neil Henderson wrote the following:

_It is interesting that your family has in one generation or another used three spellings of Hyatt. Rebecca's father and brothers apparently wrote Hiatt. So did his father and his grandfather. But his great-grandfather is known as John Hiett, and is believed to have arrived with William Penn. There was a Reece mentioned with William Penn, too, but I have not so far learned of anybody tracing your Reeces (who were earlier spelled 'Rees', and perhaps still earlier Rhys) back past William who married Rebecca._

As mentioned previously, the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting in Highland County, Ohio was set off from the Fairfield Monthly Meeting on May 11, 1811. A new boundary between the two meetings was then established. The Fairfield Monthly Meeting opened on July, 18, 1807 near Leesburg, Highland County, Ohio. A Meeting of Worship had been established at Fairfield about two years prior to the opening of the Fairfield Monthly Meeting.

At a meeting of the Fairfield Monthly Meeting on December 30, 1809, at the Clear Creek Meeting house, the following excerpts were recorded in the meeting minutes: _The following certificates were produced to this meeting, read and accepted—one for Benjamin Hiatt and sons Nathan, Amaziah, Harmon, Ithamar, Joseph, Benjamin and Henry from Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting, Virginia, dated July 30, 1809. A certificate was produced for Mary Hiatt and daughters Levina, Rebecca, Sarah, Ruth, Hannah, Mourning and Mary from Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting, Virginia, dated November 11, 1809._

The above certificates would have been certificates of removal. The individuals listed on these certificates would have been the parents and siblings of Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece. These certificates of removal suggest that Benjamin Hiatt and his family moved to Highland County, Ohio from Grayson County, Virginia between July 30, 1809 and December 30, 1809. This is assuming that their respective certificates of removal were issued prior to their actual departure from Virginia to Ohio. On one hand, the fact that the certificates of removal for Benjamin and Mary Hiatt were accepted on the same date, December 30, 1809, by the Fairfield Monthly Meeting, seems to suggest that Benjamin Hiatt and his family traveled together in their move from Grayson County, Virginia to Highland County, Ohio. On the other hand, by looking at the dates in which Benjamin and his wife were issued their respective certificates, it is possible that Benjamin Hiatt and or his sons may have come to Highland County prior to the rest of the family.

Many members of the Hiatt family, and several from the Reece family, produced individual certificates of removal to the Fairfield Monthly Meeting in Ohio that were issued from the Mount Pleasant Monthly Meeting in Virginia, during the same time frame that Benjamin and Mary Hiatt produced their certificates to the Fairfield Monthly Meeting (December 30, 1809). This clearly indicates that the Reece and Hiatt families were moving in concert with one another from Grayson County, Virginia to Highland County, Ohio. And this further demonstrates that both families knew one another from Grayson County, Virginia.

By 1810, the family of Benjamin Hiatt had moved to and settled in Highland County, Ohio from Grayson County, Virginia. Several sisters, uncles, and aunts of Rebecca Hiatt's also moved to Highland County in the early 1800's. In moving from
Virginia, Benjamin Hiatt migrated to Rainsborough, Highland County, Ohio; settling on what later became known as the M.B. Park farm.

Highland Pioneer Sketches and Family Genealogies 1971, tells us that at some point prior to 1810, Benjamin and Mary Hiatt settled on a farm northwest of the site of Rainsborough, Ohio. This town is located within Paint Township in Highland County. Their log cabin home was on the west side of the trace that led through the wilderness to New Petersburg. The old Hiatt homestead became the property of James George and was later owned by his son-in-law, Morgan B. Park.

Near Rainsborough, Benjamin and Mary Hiatt would have lived near members of the Hiatt and Reece families. Benjamin and Mary undoubtedly would have made a living throughout their lives through farming. Rebecca Hiatt certainly would have assisted her parents in helping the family make a living from farming in what was then the Ohio wilderness. She probably had lived a farmer’s life by the time she married William Reece. After her marriage to William, she would have continued to live a farming life; this time as a farmer’s wife.

Rebecca’s mother, Mary Hiatt, died sometime prior to 1818. She appears to have died in Highland County, Ohio. In all probability, Mary probably died on the Hiatt homestead.

Benjamin Hiatt remarried to a Mary Ellis on June 15, 1818 at the Clinton County, Ohio Monthly Meeting. Mary was a member of the Society of Friends. She was a member of the Clear Creek Monthly Meeting at the time she married Benjamin.

Mary Ellis was probably born in Berkeley County, Virginia. She may have been born about 1769. Her parents are Nehemiah and Sarah (Thornburg) Ellis.

Upon moving to Highland County, Ohio from their respective homes in Virginia, members of the Reece and Hiatt families eventually became members of the Quaker Fall Creek Monthly Meeting located in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. In Paint Township, these families probably attended the same Meeting of Worship, which in part, might explain how William Reece met and subsequently married Rebecca Hiatt. William and Rebecca more than likely would have known one another, or their respective families, from their residency in Virginia prior to moving to Highland County.

According to Quaker, Society of Friends organization records of Highland County, Ohio, both William and Rebecca were disowned from the Quaker faith on April 18, 1818, for having ‘married contrary to discipline.’ I am not sure what this violation of the Quaker faith’s doctrine consisted of. Genealogist Neil Henderson wrote that he believed it entailed having the marriage performed by someone who was not a Quaker. According to Henderson, there is an entry suggesting that William wrote a letter of contrition, requesting reinstatement into the faith, though there is no further evidence that they remained Quakers. I have not found any direct evidence myself to suggest that William ever requested reinstatement or that he or Rebecca were ever reinstated. Quaker records lead me to believe that they were not.

When researching Quaker records of the monthly meeting minutes, one will find many complaints registered against members of the Society. The most common complaint was marriage contrary to discipline. After a complaint was filed against any member, an investigative committee was appointed to investigate the person or persons and report at the next monthly meeting. During this time they were to meet the person
complained about and give their report. If they were unable to see the person, in some cases the member would be under consideration for several months. In so many cases these reports are very quaintly worded as ‘she not appearing in a suitable disposition of mind to make satisfaction’, etc.

At any regular meeting a couple might declare their intentions to marry each other. Then a committee would be appointed to examine each one to see if they were qualified to marry and if so, then they were liberated to marry each other. However, another committee was appointed by each meeting of men and women to attend the marriage ceremony and report at the next meeting if the marriage was accomplished in regular order. As a rule, these committees were composed of only two members.

At the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting of February 21, 1818, the following meeting minute excerpt was recorded: *The preparation meeting informs this that William Rees has accomplished his marriage contrary to discipline, also is guilty of fornication. Amasa Beeson and Isaac Overman are appointed to treat with him on the occasion and report to next meeting the disposition of mind they find him in.*

A meeting minute excerpt from the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting of April 18, 1818, reads: *The friends appointed to prepare a testimony against William Rees, and to assist the women, report they complied with the appointment and produced a testimony which was approved and signed. Timothy Jessop and Absalom Sumner are appointed to offer him a copy thereof, inform him of his right of appeal, and report their case to next meeting.* [It is my understanding that this is the meeting that resulted in William and Rebecca’s official disownment from the Society of Friends.]

A meeting minute excerpt from the Fall Creek Monthly Meeting of April 21, 1818, reads: *The friends appointed to treat with William Rees report that they attended to the appointment, and he not appearing disposed to make satisfaction, John Wilson and Joshua Wright are appointed to prepare a testimony against him, inform him thereof and produce it to next meeting—Also to as, with women friends (who request assistance) to prepare against Rebecca his wife, and report their care to next meeting.*

A little over a year after William Reece and Rebecca Hiatt married, the following Fall Creek Monthly Meeting minute of May 23, 1818 was written: *The friends appointed to offer William Rees a copy of a testimony against him report complied with.* [This is the last Quaker record entry that I have found that gives any mention of either William or Rebecca, which suggests that they never rejoined the Society after their disownment.]

Marriage contrary to the Friends’ order, variously referred to in their meeting minutes as ‘marriage by a priest’, ‘outgoing in marriage’, ‘marriage contrary to good order’, ‘marriage out of unity’, ‘marriage contrary to discipline’, etc., and spoken of in everyday speech as ‘marriage out of meeting’, was the cause of more complaints and disownments than any other single offense.

When both parties to a marriage engagement were members in good standing, there was usually no reason why they might not apply to the meeting, and receive permission to marry under its authority, but there were some exceptions. Marriage between first cousins or others of close relationship was forbidden by the rules of the Society. Parental objection may have been a bar to marriage in meeting in some cases. In other cases the couple married out of meeting for no other reason than to accomplish their purpose more quickly and without the formality which was necessary to a marriage.
in meeting. It is obvious that persons of standing and influence within the Quaker faith, for whatever reason, disapproved of William and Rebecca’s marriage, which ultimately led to their disownment.

Those individuals that broke the rules of the Society occupy much space in the minutes of Quaker records. Members were ‘dealt with’ on a great variety of complaints, including fiddling and dancing, drinking intoxicating liquor to excess, serving in the militia or other armed forces, using profane language, fighting, failure to meet financial obligations, marrying contrary to the order used by Friends, deviation from plainness in apparel or speech, joining another religious society, etc. An offending member, such as someone marrying contrary to discipline, unless they expressed sorrow for their misconduct and brought a signed paper condemning the same, were usually disowned. The number so disowned runs into the thousands. Many of them, after a shorter or longer time, produced the necessary paper of condemnation and were reinstated in membership. A minute showing that a person presented a satisfactory paper condemning their misconduct implies that they were retained or reinstated. I have not found such a minute pertaining to William and Rebecca Reece. A great many of those disowned never asked to be reinstated and remained out-side the Society for the rest of their lives. The names of these persons never appear in the minute records again.

My research tells me that William Reece lived within or near Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio, from the time he moved to the area from Virginia in the early 1800’s through his early manhood.

Upon their marriage in 1817, William and Rebecca Reece would have then started and subsequently raised a family in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. William and Rebecca certainly would have resided near where her parent’s homesteaded northwest of Rainsborough. It appears very likely that William and Rebecca made their home along or near a fork of Paint Creek named the Rocky Fork. It is here that I believe that William and Rebecca farmed and resided.

I have concluded that William and Rebecca are the parents of eight children. Sources indicate that all eight children were born in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. I am not certain that I have the correct order of birth of William and Rebecca’s first four children.

The first child of William and Rebecca Reece appears to have been their daughter Mary Reece, who was born on November 24, 1818. Mary was probably named after her maternal grandmother, Mary Hiatt. William would have been approximately 27 years of age, and Rebecca would have been 23, when Mary was born.

William and Rebecca’s second child appears to have been their son Alfred. He appears to have been born about 1819. I do not know the date of his birth.

William would have been approximately 29 years of age when Rebecca, age 25, gave birth to their third child, Benjamin Hiatt Reece, on June 23, 1820. Benjamin was probably named after his maternal grandfather, Benjamin Hiatt.

The household of William Reece resided within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio in 1820. The 1820 U.S. Census recorded five Reece and five Hiatt households as residing within Paint Township at the time of this census. As recorded in the 1820 census data, the William Rees household was one of the five Reece families that resided within Paint Township in 1820. The 1820 census recorded that the William Rees
household at the time of this census included one individual involved in agriculture; this was undoubtedly William and he would have been a farmer. Unfortunately, the only names recorded in the 1820 census were those of the head of a household. As recorded by the 1820 U.S. Census, the William Rees household consisted of the following age classes at the time of this census:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Class</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two males under 10</td>
<td>(sons, Alfred and Benjamin?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male between 26-45</td>
<td>(father, head of household, William Reece)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female under 10</td>
<td>(daughter, Elizabeth or Mary?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female between 16-26</td>
<td>(Mother, Rebecca)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female between 26-45</td>
<td>(?????????)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unfortunately, as mentioned previously, the 1820 census did not record the names of or relationships between the individuals that resided within William Rees’ household at the time of this census. However, we can assume that William was living with his wife Rebecca and their children at the time. I do not know who the one female between 26-45 years of age would have been that resided within William’s household at the time of this census. This woman had to have been an extended family member of either William or Rebecca’s.

It appears that at the time of the U.S. Census of 1820, that William and his family resided along or near the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Paint Township in the 1820’s was a community which was only in its second decade out of virgin wilderness.

Tax records of Highland County, Ohio recorded that our William Reece (spelled Rees in the original record) was a resident of Paint Township in 1822. William and his family were living in close proximity to the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in 1822. If I am interpreting the tax records correctly, it appears that William and his family resided upon 50 acres in 1822. The year of 1822 is the earliest date that I have found that places William Reece as a landowner in Highland County, Ohio. Highland County tax records tell us that William Reece was a resident upon military warrant survey #4081 from 1822 to 1825 (see map of Paint Township). [Many of the soldiers who fought in the American Revolution were paid for their service in western lands. Some of the lands that eventually became the State of Ohio were surveyed into military survey units called military warrants. The names of Revolutionary War veterans were then entered to a specific military warrant land and given to war veterans like James Herron. Military warrant #4081 is just one example of many such military warrants. Warrant #4081 was patented to veteran James Herron from the U.S. Government and originally consisted of 1,860 acres along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek. Many of these military warrants were subsequently purchased by speculators or sold by the veterans they were issued too to individual buyers such as settlers. The result being that the survey warrants were divided up over time.]

According to Highland County tax records, our William Rees was a resident upon military warrant survey #4081 in 1822, 1823, 1824 and 1825. Again, if I am interpreting the tax records correctly, William appears to have owned and resided upon 50 acres
within military warrant #4081 between 1822 and 1825. Within military warrant #4081, it appears that William, Rebecca and their family resided on the north side of the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. William and his family would have then resided in a southerly direction from the town of Rainsborough, which is near where Rebecca’s parents homesteaded.

Paint Township, lying at the easternmost point of Highland County, is bounded by the westerly line of Ross County, on the east; by Marshall and Brush Creek Townships, on the south; by Liberty and Penn on the west; and by Fairfield and Madison, on the north. Its southern portion is rough and picturesque, its surface resembling the broken country of Pike County, which it reaches at its southwestern corner.

The Rocky Fork of Paint Creek, which forms a large portion of the southern boundary of Paint Township, and empties into Paint Creek at the county line, is a stream of much natural beauty and of striking geological interest. Along its course, hollowed by the action of the water from the old limestone foundation of the hills, are the numerous caves which have attracted so much attention, and have given to the channel and neighborhood a more than local celebrity.

The present day Rocky Fork Creek flows through an ancient valley nestled in Highland County, Ohio. This stream, winding over dolomite limestone, has eroded spectacular gorges and caves which we enjoy today. Today, Rocky Fork State Park bares this stream’s name. The area that makes up this state park provided abundant game and a ready transportation system in the nearby creeks and rivers. These same streams provided access to the Rocky Fork area for the first settlers. The park is an area steeped in the rich Indian history of Ohio.

Plentiful water attracted a number of millwrights to the Highland County region. During the 1800’s and the early 1900’s, at least six different mill sites were established along Rocky Fork’s banks. These mills not only ground flour, but also cut lumber, carded wood and even wove blankets. Water-powered industry was instrumental in the early development of the locale.

The only mill remaining today on the Rocky Fork is the J.A. McCoppin Mill found just below the Rocky Fork spillway, which was operated until the 1970’s. First built by David Reece in 1810, the earliest mill was washed out during high water. Soon after the destructive flood, the present cut-stone dam was built. These mills were the focal point of early rural life. A David Reece is attributed as having built the first mill at the McCoppin Mill site. This would have to be a reference to David Reece Jr., who would have been a brother to our William Reece.

From the very early times in the history of the settlement of Paint Township, the Rocky Fork has been important for its milling facilities, and is amusingly noteworthy as being the scene of the only experiment in the navigation of the tributaries of the Scioto River. From the mouth of the Rocky Fork, to the north and west, the surface of Paint Township is, like nearly all of northern and northeastern Highland, comparatively level, very fertile and easy of cultivation. About two miles northwest of the county limit, we have the channel of Paint Creek, at the mouth of Rattlesnake Fork, and the township line follows the latter stream until it reaches the Fairfield border. (See map of Paint Township)

Rattlesnake is a large stream, having as its principal tributaries in Paint, Fall and Hardin’s creeks, while small streams join it at short intervals, forming together a maze of
water-courses, a natural system of irrigation of great value to the farming community. It is said that many rattlesnakes were found along this stream when the settlers arrived.

The fourth child of William and Rebecca Reece appears to have been their daughter Elizabeth. Sources lead me to believe that she was born in or about 1821. Her exact date of birth is unknown. Elizabeth was probably named after her paternal grandmother, Elizabeth Reece.

Since Elizabeth and her brother Alfred’s dates of birth are not exactly known, I have speculated as to their correct birth order among their siblings. If one looks at the known and speculated dates of birth of the children of William and Rebecca Reece, as I have them, there is obviously some question pertaining to whether or not I have the correct birth year for Alfred and Elizabeth. It could be possible that either Alfred or Elizabeth are twins, and thus share a common date of birth with one of their other siblings.

William Reece was approximately 32 years of age when Rebecca, age 28, gave birth to their fifth child, David, on December 30, 1823. David Reece is my great-great-great-grandfather. David was probably named after his paternal grandfather, David Reece Senior.

William would have been approximately 35 years old, and Rebecca would have been 31, with the birth of their sixth child, Nancy, on May 16, 1826.

We know from tax records of Highland County, Ohio, that William Reece was a taxpayer of Paint Township during the years of 1826, 1830, 1831, and 1832. County tax records for years 1828, 1829 and 1833 are missing. Highland County collected the first tax record in 1826. Assuming that William paid taxes in these missing years, we can safely assume that William Reece would have been a taxpayer and resident of Paint Township from 1826 to 1833.

In 1827, William and Rebecca Reece became the owners of 125 acres located along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. All sources indicate that William and Rebecca lived on this property. Their 125 acres may have been located on the north side of the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek. William and Rebecca acquired this land from the following two deed conveyances which occurred in 1827.

The first conveyance occurred on March 14, 1827 when Joseph W. Spargur, Walter Canady, and David Reece Junior, sold 25 acres along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek to our William Reece for $62. This David Reece Junior would have to be William’s brother. These 25 acres were part of 1,660 acres within military warrant survey #4081 patented to James Taylor Jr.

The second conveyance occurred on October 20, 1827 when Caleb Reece and his wife Phebe, sold 100 acres along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek to William Reece for $500. I assume that this Caleb Reece is another brother to our William Reece. William’s 100 acres were located within military warrant survey #4081 along the waters of the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek. William’s land was adjacent to veteran Daniel Clark’s 1,000-acre military warrant #2895, and next to Abraham Taylor’s and William Wilson’s lands. A David Reese, who is probably William’s brother, is listed in this land deed as the justice of the peace that presided over this land conveyance.
We know that William Reece was a school director for the 7th school district of Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. The earliest documentation that I have found that describes William as a school director is dated September 13, 1828. A deed dated September 13, 1828 reads that Joseph Wilson and his wife Phebe, sold, for $7, one acre of land to William Reece and Jacob Tomlinson, directors of the 7th school district of Paint Township. This one-acre was sold for school purposes for 30 years. The land was part of military warrant survey #2509 and would have been near the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek. A David Reece presided over this deed conveyance as the justice of the peace; and again, this is probably William’s brother. William appears to have been a school director for Paint Township up until he moved from Highland County in 1833.

The above deed conveyance dated September 13, 1828, describes school director William Reece as then being from Highland County, Ohio. I would presume that a schoolhouse would have been built on the one acre site deeded by Joseph and Phebe Wilson to William Reece and Jacob Tomlinson. This schoolhouse would have unquestionably been near the residence of William Reece. It is plausible that William’s own children may have attended school at this very same schoolhouse.

The Quaker Fall Creek Monthly Meeting ran smoothly until mid-year 1829 when quite a serious upheaval was experienced within the Society of Friends due to so many members following the teachings of Elias Hicks. For example, on May 23, 1829, there were several members who were up for disownment and together with several men from other near meetings intruded upon the regular monthly meeting and refused to leave. Finally, the members adjourned the meeting for two days and then they were to meet in the private home of one of the members. For several months the regular meetings were held at some member’s home instead of the meeting house. The women’s meetings were having the same troubles.

Those Quakers that followed the teachings of Elias Hicks became known as Hicksites. The Society of Friends subsequently split and formed two branches known as the Hicksite and Orthodox Quakers.

Elias Hicks was not a Quaker by birth. He joined the Society of Friends as a young man. He subsequently became a very influential preacher within the Society. It was not until an advanced period of his life, that serious suspicions began to be excited, that the doctrines he taught were not in strict accordance with the views of the founders of Quakerism. The apprehension, however, at first confined to a few minds, gradually gained ground, till it gave rise to spirited discussion, and eventually to fierce contention; and in some instances, to tumultuous proceedings. The extensive acquaintance and great personal influence of this celebrated man caused these discussions to become general throughout the country; and a disposition to try the strength, and determine the members of the respective parties, was manifested in every part of the land. This introduced a new order of things into the meetings, and led to measures hitherto unknown to this denomination. Instead of calm cool deliberations, in which every measure was settled by general consent, without the formality of a vote; now, each party was found striving for the mastery, and every question was contested, and finally settled, by a stern and uncompromising majority. In numerous instances, the weaker party was excluded from the premises, and doors were locked and barred against their intrusion. This state of things necessarily laid the foundation for much litigation, and in several states, protracted
and expensive lawsuits were resorted to, to determine who were the rightful possessors of 
the public property, and consequently, which party had the claim to the title of true and 
genuine Friends. In some instances, these disputes were settled by a compromise 
between the parties. But in both cases, a complete division has been the result, and the 
two parties form distinct societies, each claiming the original appellation, distinguished in 
common parlance, by the names Hicksites and Orthodox.

This division which was consummated about the year of 1827, has laid the 
foundation of the existence of two distinct denominations, both retaining the dress, the 
language, and the forms of the disciples of George Fox, but differing materially in their 
thetical sentiments. The orthodox assign, as the cause of the division, "certain 
opinions promulgated by Elias Hicks, denying or invalidating the miraculous conception, 
divinity, and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also the authenticity and divine 
authority of the Holy Scriptures. These, with some other sentiments, were so entirely 
repugnant to the acknowledged and settled principles of the society, that endeavors were 
used to prevent the promulgation of them."

The Fall Creek Monthly Meeting minutes of June 20, 1829 recorded the men then 
considered as intruders (i.e. followers of Elias Hicks); among these men listed was a 
Benjamin Hiatt. On that same date, among the women considered as intruders was a 
Mary Hiatt. Benjamin and Mary Hiatt would have been the father and stepmother of 
Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece. Benjamin and Mary were subsequently disowned for joining the 
Hicksites.

The Quakers in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio began to hold meetings 
as soon as they reached the area. In 1807, they constructed a church building on the old 
Spargur Mill, later known as Overman Road. The house contained two log rooms, 40 
feet square, arranged so the women could sit on one side and the men on the other. 
Known as 'The Fall Creek Friends' Meeting, it was supported by the Newby, Barrett, 
Overman, Cowgill, Sumner, Tomlinson, Sinclair, Taylor and Caudy families. On April 
7, 1819, by indenture, Nathaniel Pope conveyed six acres of land to Enoch Overman for 
the use of the Quakers. Land was set aside for a burial ground near the quaint church. 

In 1828, when the Quakers split into two factions, the Hicksites, who were in the 
majority, retained the first church building. The Orthodox Branch built a small structure 
which was used until 1876, when Benjamin Cowgill donated land and helped construct a 
meeting house. It was a handsome brick structure, a credit to the solidarity of those who 
supported it. The church flourished and grew stronger each year. 

The original church was completely remodeled twice, with additional rooms and 
service areas. It has been called Cowgill's, the Friends' Meeting House, Old Quaker, 
Orthodox Quaker, Lower Quaker, Lower Fall Creek, and the Anderson Pike Quaker 
Church.

The Hicksite Branch used the rather crude, pioneer log church until 1835 when 
they constructed another building on the Anderson State Road. The Fall Creek Church 
continued to hold meetings for many years before attendance dropped off to a mere 
handful. Finally the key was turned in the door for the last time and the logs of the 
building were used as a part of the home erected on the location.

William Reece would have been approximately 37 years of age when Rebecca, 
age 33, gave birth to their seventh child, Henry, on August 8, 1829.
In 1830, William and his family were still residing within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. According to the 1830 U.S. Census, the William Rees household lived within Paint Township at the time of this census. Again, unfortunately, no names were recorded in the census data for this census year other than that of the head of the household; in this case, William Rees. The 1830 U.S. Census recorded that the household of William Rees then encompassed the following age classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Class</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two males under 5</td>
<td>(sons, Henry and Alfred?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male between 5-10</td>
<td>(son, David?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male between 10-15</td>
<td>(son, Benjamin?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male between 30-40</td>
<td>(father, head of household, William Reece)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female under 5</td>
<td>(daughter, Nancy?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female between 5-10</td>
<td>(daughter, Elizabeth?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female between 10-15</td>
<td>(daughter, Mary?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two females between 30-40</td>
<td>(wife, Rebecca and ?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1830 census lists two women between 30-40 years of age residing within William’s household at that time. One of these women was surely his wife Rebecca. I do not know who the second woman would have been.

We know that at the time of the U.S. Census of 1830, that William and his family were living within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Specifically, it appears that they were then residing along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek.

On September 17, 1830, William and Rebecca Reece sold, for $5, one acre on the north side of the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek to James Young, Elger Brown, and Joseph W. Spargur, directors of the 5th school district of Paint Township. This land was evidently sold for school purposes. Two and a half years later, on March 4, 1833, this same land appears to have been sold back to William Reece. A deed dated March 4, 1833, reads that for the sum of $7, School Directors Edgar Brown, Isaac Roads, and Henry Foreacres of the 5th school district of Paint Township, sold one acre on the waters of the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek to William Reece. This one-acre property sold to William Reece had to be located within or in close proximity to military warrant survey #4081; thus being a part of William’s 125 acres that he bought in 1827. This deed gives us a pretty good idea that William and Rebecca’s property, and their home, was located on the north side of the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek within military warrant survey #4081.

It is recorded that Rebecca Reece’s stepmother, Mary, died on April 14, 1832 in Highland County, Ohio. She surely would have been living in close proximity to William and Rebecca Reece within Paint Township when she died. Mary is reportedly buried in the Hicksite Cemetery, Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

William Reece would have been approximately 42 years old when his wife Rebecca, age 38, gave birth to their eighth child, William Lewis, on April 8, 1833. I have concluded that William Lewis was the last child of William and Rebecca’s, and that he was born in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.
William and Rebecca Reece are the parents of:

1. Mary (Reece) Church, born November 24, 1818.
2. Alfred Reece, born about 1819.
4. Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton, born about 1821.
5. *David Reece, born December 30, 1823.
8. William Lewis Reece, born April 8, 1833.

Deed records tell us that on May 2, 1833, William and Rebecca Reece of Highland County, Ohio, sold their 125 acres along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek to a Tandy Hughes for the sum of $880. A David Reece was the justice of the peace that presided over this land conveyance. I assume that this was David Reece Jr., William’s brother.

I have a physical description from deed records detailing where William and Rebecca’s 125 acres were located along the Rocky Fork, within military warrant survey #4081; however, their property was surveyed under the metes and bounds system, making it almost impossible to locate on a map where their property was. The metes and bounds system used natural features such as trees and rocks to describe property boundaries. It is my understanding that under the metes and bounds system, you would have to physically get on the ground and hope that these natural features are still in place, as described in deed records, in order to determine where William and Rebecca’s property boundaries were.

My research clearly demonstrates that William and Rebecca Reece owned land within military warrant survey #4081, along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek, Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio, from as early as 1822 up until their subsequent move to Allen County, Ohio in 1833. This suggests that William, Rebecca and their children resided within military warrant survey #4081 during the period from 1822 to 1833. William Reece and his family appear to have resided within Paint Township, near the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek, from approximately 1818 to 1833. William Reece himself appears to have lived within Paint Township from the point he arrived in the area from Grayson County, Virginia in the early 1800’s, up until the year of 1833.

Shortly after William and Rebecca sold their 125 acres along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio, they and their children moved from Highland County to Allen County, Ohio. There, they homesteaded on 160 acres within section 33 of Jackson Township. William and Rebecca were approximately 42 and 38 years of age respectively in 1833 when they made this move. The 20th century biographies of two of William and Rebecca’s sons (David and Henry), found within a history of Linn County, Iowa, tells us definitively that they, along with their parents, moved to Allen County in the year of 1833.

I would assume that William and Rebecca’s move to Allen County was financed in part, by their sell of their 125 acres along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek. This sale
must have financed not only their subsequent move to Allen County, but the purchase of 160 acres within Jackson Township as well.

William and Rebecca would have no doubt made their move to Allen County by wagon. It appears that at the time of their move that William and Rebecca’s children ranged in age from a baby up to fifteen years old. I believe that William Reece and his family probably made their move to Allen County in May 1833. One would logically assume that the family moved to Allen County after April 8, 1833, because William and Rebecca’s eighth and youngest child, William Lewis Reece, was born on April 8, 1833 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

When William and Rebecca left Highland County to move to Allen County, it is reported that Rebecca’s mother and stepmother had already passed away, and that her father, Benjamin, was still living. It appears that Benjamin Hiatt was living within Highland County, Ohio when William and Rebecca moved to Allen County.

In 1833, William Reece, formerly of Highland County, Ohio, bought 160 acres in newly opened Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; thus assuring himself a line in a book titled: *Original Land Entries of Allen County*. I have read a description of the land of Jackson Township, upon which William and Rebecca homesteaded on in 1833, described as, until then, an unbroken beech-maple forest.

William once again found himself as an early pioneer, this time pioneering in Allen County, which was formed on April 1, 1820 from Indian territory. The first parcel of land sold in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, was sold in 1827, which was just six years prior to William and Rebecca’s move to that township. In 1830, three years prior to William and Rebecca’s arrival in Allen County, there were only 578 residents in the entire county. The county was not organized until 1831, which was two years prior to the arrival of William and Rebecca Reece.

William and Rebecca were farmers, and would have farmed and resided upon their 160 acres in Jackson Township from 1833 until the day of their respective deaths. It is here where William and Rebecca would have raised their children through the remainder of their childhood years.

William and Rebecca’s 160 acres occupied the NW¼ of Section 33, Township 3 South (Jackson Township), Range 8 East, Allen County, Ohio. William and Rebecca lived in section 33, approximately one mile to the south of the town of Lafayette, Ohio.

The NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, containing 160 acres, was recorded as being owned by William Reece on May 4, 1833. This is not the date when possession of the land took place; it is the date when the land was recorded as being owned by William Reece. When William actually took possession of this land is unknown. It does appear as though that William officially took possession of these 160 acres on July 4, 1833.

Given the fact that William’s 160 acres in Allen County were recorded as being owned by him as early as May 4, 1833, he and Rebecca must have moved to the county shortly after selling their 125 acres in Highland County.

Upon moving to Allen County, two more former residents of Highland County, Ohio bought portions of the quarter section next to William Reece. The first former resident being: Henry Hiatt, who purchased 120 acres of the NE¼ and W½ NE¼. These 120 acres were recorded as being owned by Henry Hiatt as early as May 14, 1833 and
March 26, 1834. These dates imply that Henry must have bought these properties in two separate purchases. The second former Highland County resident was Benjamin Hiatt, who purchased 40 acres of the SE¼ NE½. Benjamin was recorded as owning these 40 acres as early as March 26, 1834. Benjamin Hiatt would have been Benjamin Hiatt Jr., and Henry Hiatt would have been his brother. Benjamin and Henry would have been brothers to Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece, William’s wife.

Upon moving to Allen County, Ohio from Highland County, Ohio, once again the Reece and Hiatt families migrated to the same locale; just as they had done earlier in the 19th century when they moved from Grayson County, Virginia to Highland County, Ohio. William Reece bought his 160 acres in Allen County from the State of Ohio. The following is the land deed conveyance between William Reece and the State of Ohio. I have written the deed out word for word as follows:

Robert Lucas, Governor of the State of Ohio, in consideration of the sum of two hundred dollars paid by William Reece of Highland County, Ohio to Joseph G. Young, Receiver of Ohio lands at Pigua for the purchase of the tract of lands herein described lying and being in the County of Allen and granted by an act of Congress entitled an act to aid the state of Ohio in extending the Miami Canal from Dayton to Lake Erie; and to grant a quantity of lands to said state to aid in the construction of the canal authorized by law; and for making donation of land to certain persons in Arkansas Territory, which said tract of land has been fully paid for agreeably to the returns of the Register and receiver of said district made to the officer; therefore in pursuance of an act to provide for the sale of certain lands granted by Congress to the State of Ohio; there is granted by the State of Ohio unto the said William Reece and to his heirs and assigns forever the north west quarter of section number thirty three in township number three (south) of range number eight (east) containing one hundred sixty acres of lands more or less in the Pigua land district. To have and to hold the said one hundred and sixty acres of land with the appurtenances there of unto the said William Reece and his heirs and assigns forever. In virtues where of the said Robert Lucas, Governor of the State of Ohio, later caused the great seal of the state to be hereunto affixed and signed the said with his land at Columbus, this 4th day of July in the year of our lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty three.

Robert Lucas, the above stated governor of the State of Ohio, later went on to become governor of the Iowa Territory in 1838. He was the first governor of Iowa. In 1833, when William Reece moved to and acquired his 160 acres within Allen County, Ohio, 57 years had passed since the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. In 1833, William Reece would have found himself participating in the tide of immigration that was sweeping out upon the expanding American frontier. In 1833, what was then part of the American frontier included what is now the State of Iowa, which opened to settlement during that year. In later years, several of William’s children would continue the pioneering spirit and movement westward by settling in Iowa and places beyond.
The following are two histories pertaining to Allen County, Ohio. These have been added to give the reader a sense of what this locale would have been like at the time that William Reece lived in the county and within Jackson Township.

**History of Allen County, Ohio**

Every great war has left its mark in some way upon the earth’s surface. It may be a scar, deep, long and broad; it may be the lasting hatred of two nations, each for the other; it may be the dawn of better things. In the case of Allen County, however, the War of 1812 left its mark by the contribution of a name, Allen County.

One of the brave men, a colonel, in the War of 1812, whose name was Allen, gave his name to this county, which was formed April 1, 1820, from Indian Territory. A number of other counties were formed at the same time.

In the first years of its organization, Allen County was attached to Mercer County for judicial purposes, and in that way much of the early general history is the same as that of Mercer County.

Ohio sprang into existence by the Ordinance of 1787. Highland County was established in 1805. Allen County was established in 1820. A number of counties including Allen, were set off from Indian Territory, and were not organized for years after their establishment, and in the case of Allen County not for 14 years after the treaty of Maumee Rapids, which was made September 29, 1817.

The organic act of 1820 provided that the lands ceded by the Indians in the treaty of Maumee Rapids should be divided into 14 counties; all of the second townships to the northern limits of the organized counties at that time went to form Allen County.

This act further provided that Allen County be attached to Shelby County for judicial purposes. Subsequently Allen was attached to Mercer until the organization of Allen County in 1831.

In 1830 there were only 578 residents in Allen County, but in 1850 there were 12,116 residents.

The first white man who lived within the bounds of Allen County was a Frenchman by the name of Francis Deuchotigue. He was an Indian interpreter. In about 1817, a number of other hardy pioneers came to live in the wilderness of Allen County. It was in 1817 that the first white child was born in the county.

**History of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio**

The Commissioners’ Board organized Jackson Township on June 6, 1831 after a petition for the establishment of Jackson was presented to the board. After Auglaize and Perry Townships claimed their sections in December 1833, and after Bath Township claimed her eastern sections from Jackson in December 1834, the township of Jackson was organized as a congressional township, under its original name.

The settlement of Jackson may be said to date back to 1827, when Jacob Hawk purchased the first parcel of public lands in the township and began life in the wilderness. The actual settlement began a few years later, and six years after 1830,
every section of the township claimed an occupying proprietary. Along with him as pioneers came the following sturdy sons of toil and hewers of fortune, whose names are found on the list of taxpayers in this township in 1834 (which was the first assessment roll): (our) William Reese, Thomas Nash, [a brother to two of William Reece’s daughters-in-laws]; John B. Walton [probably William Reece’s brother-in-law]; Abram Ward, [possibly the grandfather of William Reece’s son-in-law Abram Ward]; William Ward, and Joseph Ward [possibly a father-in-law to William Reece’s daughter Nancy].

William Watt, (our) William Reese and Thomas Nash were the first trustees, John Jamieson the first Justice of the Peace and Joseph Hall the first Clerk of Jackson Township.

In 1834, the assessed value of Jackson Township was $472, a steam-mill valued at $160 and personal property, $3,800. The total tax levied was $57.53.

In 1840 the population of the township was 1,176.

From an early historical account we know that the soil of Jackson Township was of a rich variety, from light sand and gravel to heavy clay. The township had a large number of beautiful creeks and small streams, all flowing into the Ottawa River. The roads were all well graveled, and carefully repaired as needed. In fact the roads of the township were noted throughout the county. The Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railway passed through the township, and furnished ample shipping and transportation facilities.

The move that the Reece and Hiatt families made in 1833, from Highland to Allen County, Ohio, was a distance of about 100 miles. For William Reece’s seven year-old daughter Nancy, it was probably the first of her many long migrations by ox-cart. Upon arriving at their new home, William Reece along with Thomas Nash subsequently became two of the first three trustees of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. It appears that this Thomas Nash was a brother to John Nash, whose daughters, Anne and Lucretia, in later years married William Reece’s sons, Benjamin and Henry.

In 1833, William Reece was a landowner in Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. The following men then also owned land in various sections of Jackson Township. They were John Nash in section 28 [Ann and Lucretia Nash’s father]; John B. Walton in section 29 [a brother to Mary (Walton) Church/Rennells; she being William Reece’s future wife] and Benjamin and Henry Hiatt in section 33. Benjamin and Henry would have been William Reece’s brothers-in-law.

According to an 1833 Allen County, Ohio tax list, the following men were also personal property tax payers of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1833. They are: David Church [probably William Reece’s future stepson], Samuel McClure [an early pioneer], David Saxton [probably David Church’s father-in-law], Joseph Ward [probably the father of William Reece’s future son-in-law, Abraham J. Ward], and John B. Walton [probably William Reece’s soon to be brother-in-law] and Joseph G. Walton [a brother to John B. Walton]. I assume that all of these men were landowners and residents within Jackson Township in 1833. They surely all would have known William Reece and his family and probably resided near them.
The 1834 tax roll of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio included: a Thomas Nash (mentioned previously); our William Reece; a John B. Walton (mentioned previously); a Joseph G. Walton (mentioned previously); an Abram Ward [probably a grandfather of William Reece's soon to be son-in-law, Abraham J. Ward]; a William Ward [probably Abram Ward's son]; and a Joseph Ward (mentioned previously).

According to genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams, the previously mentioned John B. Walton eventually moved to the area of Troy Mills, Iowa by 1860. Like John B. Walton, other individuals already mentioned in this history eventually make the same migration to Troy Mills, Iowa, including some of the sons and daughters of William and Rebecca Reece.

Rebecca Reece did not get the opportunity to enjoy life in her new home in Allen County, Ohio, because she died shortly after moving there. It is not known exactly when Rebecca died, but I do believe that she died shortly after arriving in Allen County. It appears that she died around 1834-35. She would have been approximately 40 years of age at the time of her death. It is not known where Rebecca died or where she is buried. She certainly died at or near the farm she and her husband bought in 1833 within section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. I believe that Rebecca’s final resting place is likely located within or near section 33 of Jackson Township, near where the family farm was located.

I have come across some speculation by others that Rebecca may have died during or soon after giving birth to her youngest child, William Lewis. I believe that documentary evidence unequivocally supports my belief that Rebecca did not die from giving birth to William. First, sources indicate that William was born on April 8, 1833 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Second, the 20th century biographies of two of William and Rebecca’s sons (David and Henry), found within a history of Linn County, Iowa, tells us definitively that they along with their parents moved to Allen County in 1833. This Linn County history tells us that Rebecca was alive when the family moved to Allen County. Third, a deed dated May 2, 1833, specifically states that William and Rebecca Reece of Highland County, Ohio, then sold 125 acres that they owned along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek to a Tandy Hughs for the sum of $880. Obviously, according to this deed, Rebecca was alive on May 2, 1833, which would have been after the birth of her son William Lewis, and would have been just prior to her move to Allen County. My research indicates that Rebecca died soon after arriving in Allen County; from what is unknown.

When Rebecca died she left behind a husband and eight children. The approximate ages of Rebecca’s children at the time of her death ranged from 1 to 16. Upon Rebecca’s passing, William was left to take care of their eight children. He would have been approximately 43 years old at the time. Without help from his wife, taking care of his eight children must have been quite a burden on William. Whether or not he had help from family and friends in raising his children is a matter of speculation, but one would certainly assume that he did have some assistance.

William and Rebecca would have been farmers at the time of her death. After her death, William no doubt would have continued to make a living through farming the 160 acre farm in Jackson Township that he and Rebecca purchased in 1833. This would have supported him and his children.
William was a farmer and at an early point his land was valued at $182. As early as 1834, William was recorded as being a taxpayer of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Tax records recorded that in 1834, William owned 2 horses valued at $80 and 6 cattle valued at $48. William owned the 160 acres within the northwest quarter of section 33 of Jackson Township from the date he purchased the land in 1833 up until his death 17 years later. It appears that William farmed his 160 acres during that 17 year period.

Allen County tax records recorded that in 1836, William owned 3 horses valued at $120 and 1 cow valued at $8.

One could assume that with eight children to take care of, that William Reece was probably looking for a wife to help him out with domestic life and in raising his children. Approximately four years after Rebecca’s death, William remarried to a Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Reynolds (Rennells in family bible) on September 13, 1837 in Allen County, Ohio. William would have been approximately 46 years of age when he and Polly wed. She would have been 47 years old at the time of their marriage. I have found no information to suggest that William and Polly had any children of their own. It would seem unlikely that they would have had any children given their ages at the time of their marriage.

William and Polly were married by Justice of the Peace, Adam White. A record of their marriage lists her name as Mary Reynolds and records that she married William Reece on September 13, 1837. This record also lists William Reece as then a justice of the peace. This is the earliest documentation that I have found yet describing William Reece as a justice of the peace. Adam White was recorded as a landowner in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in the 1834 tax rolls of the township. At that time, White likely lived in close proximity to the farm owned by William Reece. Both men probably knew one another fairly well given the fact that they would have been colleagues in the same profession; that being: justices of the peace. Adam White and William Reece were likely friends; thus explaining the fact that White presided over the marriage of William Reece to Mary Reynolds.

It appears that upon William and Polly’s marriage that she moved into his home on his 160 acre farm in Jackson Township. By marrying William Reece, Polly more than likely helped him out immensely through helping him with his home, the farm and his remaining children living within his household at the time. William’s remaining children living within his home at the time he and Polly married appear to have been: Alfred, Benjamin, David, Nancy, Henry and William Lewis. I assume that William’s daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, would not have been residing within his home when he and Polly married. Not only did Mary (Walton) Church/Rennells/Reece become a stepmother to all of William Reece’s children, she also became a mother-in-law to his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth Reece.

Mary and Elizabeth Reece were married to sons of Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells at the time of her marriage to William Reece. This seems likely to explain, in part, how it came to be that Polly married our William Reece. There is also no doubt that the Walton, Church and Reece families knew one another for some time prior to the marriage of William Reece to the former Mary (Walton) Church/Rennells.

According to genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams of Lake Tahoe, Nevada, Mary ‘Polly” Walton was born on November 12, 1789. Polly was probably born at Dunham,
Vermont according to Abrams. [Later in history, the U.S./Canada border was changed and what was Dunham, Vermont is now Dunham, Quebec, Canada. Vermont became a state in 1791, prior to that it was considered a part of Canada.] Polly is the daughter of Peres Walton and Hannah Glazier.

Abrams reports that Peres (Pierce) Walton was born on July 16, 1762 in Norwich Township, New London County, Connecticut. Abrams has it that Peres was born in the town of Preston. He died August 1, 1817 in Pike Township, Madison County, Ohio. Hannah Glazier was born about 1783 in Connecticut or Vermont. She died at some point after the 1850 U.S. Census according to Abrams.

According to Abrams, there is a record of a Perez Walton receiving land in Templeton Township in Lower Canada. Abrams adds that if this is our Peres Walton, he was probably a loyalist during the American Revolutionary War that fled to Canada. Many loyalists received land in Upper and Lower Canada for their loyalty to England during the Revolution.

Peres and Hannah Walton are the parents of:

1. **Joseph G. (Glazier?) Walton**, born February 4, 1786; died April 17, 1841.
2. **Mary ‘Polly’ Walton**, born November 12, 1789; died April 25, 1851.
3. **Hannah Walton**, born September 5, 1793; died unmarried.
5. **Sally ‘Sarah’ (Walton) Patterson**, born about 1801.
6. **Maria (Walton) Tucker**, born July 18, 1806; died June 2, 1895.

The Waltons were in Dunham, Missisquoi County, Quebec, Canada in 1806 according to Abrams. This is where the marriage of daughter Mary ‘Polly’ Walton occurred to Reuben Church II in June 1806. Reuben was active in the Methodist Church in Dunham as church records show. Reuben and Polly’s son, David Glazier Church, was born in Dunham according to Abrams.

‘The Refugee Tract’ land was set aside by Congress in Ohio for Canadians who aided in the American Revolution. According to Abrams, Peres Walton and Reuben Church II and families may have taken advantage of this and moved to Ohio. According to Abrams, they did not want to return to their homes in Vermont because of public controversy. Abrams wrote that they (Waltons) went from Quebec to New York, and then to Pike Township, Madison County, Ohio, probably as early as 1815. It was in Pike Township, according to Abrams, that Peres Walton made his will on July 13, 1815. He died two years later. His wife Hannah Walton was listed as the head of a household residing within Pike Township, Madison County, Ohio at the time of the 1820 U.S. Census.

Sources indicate that the children of Peres and Hannah Walton appear to have been born in Dunham, Quebec, Canada or Vermont, U.S.A. The change in the border between the U.S. and Canada probably explains the discrepancies as to what side of the border these children are reported to have been born. Some of Peres and Hannah’s children eventually migrated to Allen County, Ohio, possibly with their parents, which is where some of them are reported to have died.
Mary (Walton) Church/Rennells/Reece was first married to Reuben Church II. He was born on December 6, 1782 at Brattleboro, Windham County, Vermont. Reuben Church II and Mary Walton married on Tuesday, June 24, 1806 in Dunham, Vermont. According to genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams, Reuben and Mary were in Dunham, Quebec, Canada in 1812; they were in Broome County, New York in 1815; and they eventually migrated to Madison County, Ohio where they were found living at the time of the 1820 U.S. Census. Reuben died on September 23, 1821, probably in Madison County, Ohio.

Reuben and Mary Church are the parents of:

1. **Peres Walton Church**, born September 2, 1809 in Dunham, Vermont; died February 12, 1853. *[He married Elizabeth Reece, the daughter of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece.]*
2. **David Glazier Church**, born July 6, 1811 in Dunham, Vermont; died November 14, 1878. *[Buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, Troy Mills, Iowa with wife Mary.]*
3. **Elvira A. Church**, born November 5, 1813 in Dunham Vermont.
4. **Reuben Whipple Church III**, born September 4, 1815 in New York; died February 4, 1894. *[He married Mary Reece, the daughter of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece. Buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, Troy Mills, Iowa.]*
5. **John B. Church**, born February 26, 1818, probably in Madison County, Ohio.
6. **James P. Church**, born July 22, 1820, probably in Madison County, Ohio.
7. **Elias N. Church**, born August 31, 1823, probably in Madison County, Ohio.

Mary (Walton) Church remarried after Reuben’s death to a Charles Rennells on April 28, 1825 in Champaign County, Ohio. Charles Rennells has an unknown date of birth. Charles was found residing in Madison County, Ohio at the time of the 1820 U.S. Census, but not in later censuses. Charles and Mary may have lived in Madison County, Ohio for an unknown period of time after their marriage. Charles’ date of death is not known, but by taking into account census data, he must have died between 1825 and 1830, possibly in Madison County, Ohio. Charles and Mary had a son named Joseph Henry Rennells, who was born on June 11, 1826. He was likely born in Champaign County, Ohio.

After the death of her second husband, Charles Rennells, Mary (Walton) Church/Rennells eventually became the wife of our William Reece on September 13, 1837.
Genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams has been researching the Church ancestry for a number of years. Her genealogical research, including that on the Church family, can be found at the Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Allen County, Ohio tax assessment of 1839 recorded that William Reece then owned 160 acres within the northwest corner of section 33 of Jackson Township. This tax record listed William as then owning 3 horses valued at $120 and 5 head of cattle valued at $110.

The 1840 U.S. Census tells us that William Reece and his family were residing within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio at the time of this census. The Reece family was then unquestionably residing upon their 160 acre family farm within the northwest quarter of section 33 of Jackson Township. Unfortunately, no names were recorded in the census data for this census year with the exception of the head of the household, William Reece. The 1840 U.S. Census recorded that the household of William Reece encompassed the following age classes at the time of this census:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One male 5 and under 10</td>
<td>(son, William Lewis?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male 10 and under 15</td>
<td>(son, Henry?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male 15 and under 20</td>
<td>(son, David?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One male 20 and under 30</td>
<td>(son, Benjamin?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female 40 and under 50</td>
<td>(father, head of household, William Reece)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female 10 and under 15</td>
<td>(daughter, Nancy?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One female 40 and under 50</td>
<td>(wife, Mary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unfortunately, the 1840 census did not record the names of or the relationships between the individuals that resided within William Reece's household at the time of this census. However, we can conclude that William was, at the time of this census, residing with his second wife Mary and his children from his first marriage.

I suppose that it is entirely possible, that upon William and Mary’s marriage in 1837, that she and some of her children from her previous marriages may have moved into the home of William Reece. Thus, some of the individuals that resided within William’s household at the time of the 1840 census may have been Mary’s children from her previous marriages. It seems likely that Mary’s children, Elias Church and Joseph Rennells, would have been of the age where they would have still been residing with their mother at the time of the 1840 census.

It appears as though that William Reece’s daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, were not residing within their father’s household at the time of the 1840 census. They would have been married by 1840 and this fact would explain why they would not be found within their father’s household that census year. In 1840, Mary would have been married to Reuben W. Church; and her sister Elizabeth would have been married to his brother, Peres W. Church.

The 1840 U.S. Census tells us that William Reece was then living in close proximity to the following three households: John Walton, Alfred Reece and Reuben Church. I believe that this John Walton is William Reece’s brother-in-law, John B. Walton; he being a brother to William’s second wife. This Alfred Reece would have been William’s son. This Reuben (W.) Church would have been William’s son-in-law, who married his daughter Mary in 1836. All four of these households and their respective families were residing within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1840.

In 1840, William Reece would have been a farmer farming the 160 acres that he and his first wife Rebecca bought and settled upon in 1833. Allen County, Ohio tax records recorded that William owned 160 acres within section 33 of Jackson Township in 1840. William’s neighbors, John Walton, Alfred Reece and Reuben Church, were likely farmers as well in 1840, farming their respective ground near the farm owned and resided by William Reece and his family.

The tax records of Allen County, Ohio tell us that in 1841, William Reece still owned his original 160 acres within section 33 of Jackson Township. According to the tax records of that year, William then owned 4 horses and 3 head of cattle.

The 1843 Allen County tax record recorded that William then owned 3 horses valued at $120 and 5 head of cattle valued at $40. A year later, in 1844, William owned 3 horses valued at $120 and 3 cattle valued at $24.

According to the Historical Society of Allen County, Ohio, William Reece’s name appears as a justice of the peace on a number of Allen County marriage records. This conclusion is supported by genealogist Neil Henderson, who also reported finding William Reece’s name on a number of Allen County marriage records as the justice of the peace that performed these marriages.

The documentation that I have found to date indicates that William was a justice of the peace of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, from as early as 1837, up until his death a few years later. It is possible that William may have been a justice of the
peace of Allen County prior to 1837. The earliest documentation that I have found listing William as being a justice of the peace of Allen County comes from an 1837 document. William Reece, acting as a justice of the peace of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, performed the marriage of his son David to Juliana Lane on March 12, 1844 in Lima, Allen County, Ohio.

According to marriage records of Allen County, Ohio, Justice of the Peace, William Reece, married a Sarah Emily Walton to a Moses Lawrence on February 19, 1846. She is the daughter of John B. Walton and Mary ‘Polly’ Flemming. These marriage records also recorded that William Reece, acting as a justice of the peace, married a Mary Walton to a Lewis Flemming on November 16, 1848. This Mary Walton would be another daughter of John B. and ‘Polly’ Walton. John B. Walton is William Reece’s brother-in-law. John B. Walton and William Reece, along with their respective families, would have likely been neighbors to one another at the time of the marriages of the above named daughters of John B. Walton.

It is reported that William Reece’s father-in-law, Benjamin Hiatt, from his first marriage with Rebecca Hiatt, died on May 26, 1844. It is believed that Benjamin died in Highland County, Ohio on the old Hiatt homestead which later became known as the Morgan B. Park property. Benjamin is reportedly buried at the Hicksite Cemetery in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Benjamin and both of his wives are reportedly buried at this cemetery.

Allen County, Ohio tax records tell us that from 1845 to 1848, several Reeces were then personal property taxpayers of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. During that time, William, David, Benjamin, William L. and Alfred Reece were all listed as personal property taxpayers within Jackson Township. These men would have included the subject of this biography, William Reece, and his four sons: David, Benjamin Hiatt, William Lewis and Alfred Reece. They all no doubt would have resided in or near Jackson Township during that time.

In 1845, William, Alfred and David Reece were listed in Allen County tax records as then being personal property taxpayers in Jackson Township. Again, these three must be our subject and his two sons. All three men were also listed as personal property taxpayers in Jackson Township in 1846.

In 1847, William and B.H. Reece (no doubt our subject and his son) were listed in the tax records of Allen County as then being personal property taxpayers of Jackson Township. Allen County tax records tell us that William Reece owned 160 acres within section 33 of Jackson Township during the tax record years of 1845 thru 1847.

According to tax records, William Reece’s 160 acre farm was valued at $816 in 1848. That year, William, William L., B.H., David, and Alfred Reece were all listed as personal property taxpayers of Jackson Township. William would have been the father, followed by his sons: William Lewis, Benjamin Hiatt, David and Alfred. They all appear to be listed as heads of households in the original tax record. William Reece and his sons: William Lewis, Benjamin, Henry, David and Alfred, all appear to have been Jackson Township property owners prior to 1847. I can not determine definitively if all of William Reece’s sons were property owners prior to 1847, because I do not understand the tax recorders notes in the original record.
Allen County, Ohio tax records list William Reece as owning between 2 and 4 horses and from 1 to 6 head of cattle during the time period from 1832 to 1848.

In 1850, William Reece still owned his original 160 acres within the northwest quarter of section 33 in Jackson Township. According to tax records, these 160 acres were valued at $816 in 1850. In addition, tax records indicate that in 1850, William also owned town lots #21 and #22 in the town of Lafayette, which is located in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Tax records indicate that as early as 1847, William owned these Lafayette town lots, each lot measuring 66 feet wide in front. The Allen County tax record year of 1847 is the earliest documentation describing William as the owner of town lots #21 and #22 in Lafayette. William owned his farm and the two town lots up until his death.

The tax records of Allen County, Ohio, help demonstrate that William and Mary Reece lived in close proximity to his children during the later years of William and Mary’s lives. William and Mary continued to reside near his children for the remainder of their lives.

At the time of the 1850 U.S. Census, William and Mary Reece were residing within census enumeration district #6 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. They no doubt would have been living upon their Jackson Township farm in section 33 at the time of this census. The 1850 U.S. Census enumerator collected the following census information pertaining to the household of William Reece on July 29, 1850. According to this census, on July 29, 1850, William Reece’s household included: himself, age 59, a farmer, owned $1,500 in real estate, born in Virginia; Mary Reece, age 61, born in Vermont; William Lewis Reece, age 16, a laborer, born in Ohio; William Henry Reece, age 5, born in Ohio; and Hannah Walton, age 85, born in Vermont.

The 1850 census does not tell us how the members of William’s household at that time are related to one another. The following is an explanation of how the members of William’s household listed within this census are related to him. Mary, age 61, would be his wife; William Lewis, age 16, would be his son; William Henry, age 5, would be his grandson; and Hannah (Glaxier) Walton, age 85, would be his mother-in-law.

The William Henry Reece, age 5, found within William Reece’s household at the time of the 1850 census is his grandson from son David’s marriage to Juliana Lane. Juliana died in 1847, and it appears that William and Mary Reece were raising their grandson William Henry due to the fact that their son David was a widower.

The eighty-five year old Hannah (Glaxier) Walton, found within William’s household at the time of the 1850 census is his mother-in-law; she being the mother of his wife Mary. I have seen some references to Hannah’s last name as Hammond. I do not know if this is correct. I suppose that it may be plausible that Hannah may have remarried to a Hammond after the death of her husband Peres Walton.

From the 1850 U.S. Census record of July 29, 1850, we know that at that time, the William Reece household lived in close proximity to the household of his son-in-law and daughter, Reuben Whipple and Mary (Reece) Church. These two households were then living within census enumeration district #6, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. William Reece and his extended family would have been living on their farm in section 33 near the household of Reuben Church at the time of this census. William’s son-in-law and daughter, Reuben and Mary Church, would have been living in the same section, or
within a nearby section, of Jackson Township at the time. My research suggests that William Reece lived in close proximity to most of his children throughout their early adult lives, within the vicinity of Allen County, Ohio.

In addition, at the time of the census of 1850, William and Mary Reece also lived in close proximity to the household of a John B. Walton. This John B. Walton would have been William Reece's brother-in-law; a brother to his second wife. If the 1850 census record is correct, John B. Walton was born in Vermont in 1799. John was a farmer with real estate valued at $1,000 at the time of this census. The households of William Reece and John B. Walton resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1850. In 1850, the farm of John B. Walton was no doubt located near the farm of William and Mary Reece located within section 33 of Jackson Township.

There is no doubt that the households of William Reece, Reuben Church and John B. Walton were neighbors to one another for some period of time. It appears as though that each of the above three households resided at the same respective locations during the censuses of 1840 and 1850.

The 1850 U.S. Census tells us two important things about our William Reece. First, it tells us that William was 59 years old when the census was taken on July 29, 1850. Thus, he would have been born between July 30, 1790 and July 29, 1791. Almost all sources indicate that William was born near Mount Pleasant, Grayson County, Virginia in the year of 1791. Second, it tells us that he was born in Virginia. However, some of his children's census records from later census years indicate that he was born in South Carolina. I have not found any evidence to support William's birthplace as being in South Carolina. I believe that the 1850 census information pertaining to William's household, and specifically listing his native state as Virginia, is correct.

September 13, 1850 marked the 13th wedding anniversary of William and Mary Reece. On that very same day, William and Mary's widowed son, David, remarried to his second wife, Kittorah 'Kittie' Conner. David and Kittorah's marriage would have occurred in close proximity to William and Mary's home in Allen County, Ohio. One would assume that William and Mary would have attended David and Kittorah's wedding. Seven days after the marriage of David Reece to Kittorah Conner, William Reece died at approximately 60 years of age on September 20, 1850.

William Reece was undoubtedly a farmer his entire life. In addition, we also know that William was a school director and a justice of the peace. Upon moving to Allen County in 1833, William certainly would have spent the remaining 17 years of his life upon his farm in Jackson Township. During that time he would have lived with or in close proximity to his children and other relatives.

All of the sources that I have found indicate that William died in Allen County, Ohio. It is very likely that William died at his farm home in Jackson Township. It is not known where William is buried. His grave undoubtedly has to be located near Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. William has to be buried in close proximity to the 160 acre farm that he owned in section 33. It may very well be possible that William was buried on his farm.

William Reece died having been a pioneer settler of Allen County, Ohio. When William came to the county in 1833 there were fewer than 600 people residing there. Twenty years later, there were 12,116 residents of the county in 1850. William was
described by one source as a land owner, tailor and justice of the peace. The reference to him being a tailor may be inaccurate. I have yet to find any evidence myself that confirms that William was a tailor. I believe that the source that described William as a tailor may have confused him with his son, William Lewis Reece, who was a tailor at one time.

When William David Reece died he did not leave a will. William’s estate case was heard on December 3, 1850 by the Court of Common Pleas, Allen County, Ohio. William’s wife Mary declined the administratorship of his estate. Mary requested that Alfred Reece be the administrator. Alfred was Mary’s stepson. The court appointed Alfred administrator on December 3, 1850. The court appointed John Nash, Michael Leatherman, and Jacob Fisher as appraisers of William’s estate. John Nash was a father-in-law to William’s sons: Benjamin and Henry. John had also been a neighbor to William Reece as had Michael Leatherman and Jacob Fisher. All three men were farmers that farmed near William Reece’s farm. On December 3, 1850, Alfred Reece appeared before said court, accepted the administratorship and gave bonds totaling $800 to the court to insure his appointment. I find evidence that Alfred accepted the administratorship as early as October 1850.

On December 3, 1850, Alfred Reece filed the estate of the late William Reece with the Court of Common Pleas, Allen County, Ohio. The following are items that belonged to the late William Reece as listed on the appraisement list of his estate dated February 28, 1851. Michael Leatherman, Jacob Fisher and John Nash were the appraisers. The following items are listed exactly as I found them in the original appraisement list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brass Clock</td>
<td>16 bushels of wheat at 56 cents per bushel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner Cupboard</td>
<td>1, 15-gallon kettle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent beehive</td>
<td>1 book, Swams Treatise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crosscut saw</td>
<td>3 meat tubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad ax</td>
<td>Desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain and drawing knife</td>
<td>Meat knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 reaping hooks</td>
<td>4 shotes at $1.25 per head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One inch auger and hand saw</td>
<td>50 bushels of corn at 25 cents per bushel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of steelyards</td>
<td>5 acres of wheat more or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowing sythe and hangings</td>
<td>One stove and 2 joints pipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plow and clevis</td>
<td>Windmill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovel plow</td>
<td>Hay Fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cradle and sythe</td>
<td>2 year old heifer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grind stone</td>
<td>Calf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrow</td>
<td>4 hogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 double tree, single, and clevis</td>
<td>1 peg butter hammer and sythe stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>Horn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frow</td>
<td>Mattock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Articles taken by the widow at the appraisement were:

- One corner cupboard
- One plow and clevis
- One harrow
- One 2 year old heifer
- One 15-gallon kettle
- One patent beehive
- One shovel plow
- One calf
- One wind mill

10 bushels of corn at 25 cents per bushel
12 bushels of wheat at 56½ cents per bushel

[My research indicates that the estate sale of the late William Reece took place on March 15, 1851. William Reece’s son-in-law, Peres Walton Church, was the clerk at William’s estate sale. Several items belonging to William’s estate were given to his widow prior to the estate sale and the rest were then sold.] As listed in the original record of February 28, 1851, Mary was given, without cost:

- 10 bushels of wheat. $41.87 cash
- 5 bushels of corn. 2 spinning wheels
- 5 bushels of potatoes. 1 bureau
- 1 weaving loom 1 family bible and all family books
- 1 cook stove 1 cow
- 2 beds and bedding All pots and cooking utensils
- 1 table 6 each—knives, forks, plates
- 6 chairs Teacups and saucers
- 1 sugar dish 1 milk pot
- 1 tea pot 12 spoons and all wearing apparel of the deceased.

All cloth and sewing thread. The clothes, wearing apparel and ornaments of the widow.

On December 3, 1850, estate administrator Alfred Reece ran a notice in the Lima Argus Newspaper, a newspaper then in general circulation in Allen County, Ohio. The notice was to run for four weeks and was evidently a notice of William Reece’s upcoming estate sale. It appears that the estate sale occurred on March 15, 1851.

An inventory listing the debts owed to the late William Reece estate includes the following men as debtors: M. (Michael) Leatherman, J.B. (John B.) Walton, S. and Polly Walton, P.W. (Peres Walton) Church, D.G. (David Glazier) Church, B.H. (Benjamin Hiatt) Reece, A. (Alfred) Reece and J. (John) Nash. Michael Leatherman, in addition to being a neighbor to William Reece and an appraiser of William’s estate, was the probate judge that presided over the late William Reece estate in probate court. John B. Walton would be a brother-in-law to William Reece. Peres Walton Church would be William’s son-in-law; David Glazier Church is a brother of Peres Walton Church; Benjamin and Alfred Reece are sons of William; John Nash would be a father-in-law to Benjamin Reece. These individuals and their associated families would have been family, neighbors and friends of William Reece at the time of his death.

As listed in the original records of William Reece’s estate sale, which appears to have taken place on March 15, 1851, the following are a few of the individuals that were
listed as having bought articles from the sale: Reuben Church, Walton Church [probably Peres Walton Church], David Church, P.W. Church, R.W. Church, A. Ward, Mary Reece and Andrew Reece. Reuben Church (R.W. Church), P.W. (Peres Walton) Church and A. (Abraham) Ward bought several items at the estate sale; they would have been William Reece’s son-in-laws; namely: Reuben Whipple Church, Peres Walton Church and Abraham J. Ward. The Mary Reece listed as having bought articles is either the widow of the deceased or the wife of Alfred Reece. At the present time, I do not know how Andrew Reece is related to William. The Walton Church listed in the original estate sale record must be Peres Walton Church, William’s son-in-law. The David Church listed appears to be a brother to both Peres Walton Church and Reuben Whipple Church.

From the documentation that lists the items that were sold at the estate sale, we know that William Reece farmed for a living and that some of his crops included potatoes, wheat and corn. We can assume that he was farming right up to his death. At the time of William’s death, he would have been getting approximately 25 cents per bushel for potatoes and corn and 56 cents per bushel for wheat. We know these prices because these are the amounts that his crops sold for at his estate sale.

In William’s estate inventory records, I found a list of unpaid docket fees owed to him as a justice of the peace of Allen County, Ohio. As Justice of the Peace, William had many clients who had docket fees owed to him that were outstanding at the time of his death. From William’s estate inventory records, I have determined that he was quite active as a justice of the peace, having presided over many civil cases. Some of these cases involved friends and family.

Mary, William’s widow, lived for less than a year after William’s death. It is not known whether or not she continued to live on the family farm after his death. I assume she did. She died at the age of 61 on April 25, 1851 in Allen County, Ohio. It is very plausible that Mary could have died on the family farm in Jackson Township. It is not known where Mary is buried. Her grave has to be located in Allen County near the family farm; in all likelihood, she is likely buried near William and his first wife, Rebecca, near section 33 of Jackson Township.

The family bible that reportedly once belonged to Mary and her first husband, Reuben Church II, is the only primary source that I have found that recorded the dates when William and Mary Reece died. Someone recorded the births and deaths of several members of the Reece and Church families in this family bible. This bible is just one of many primary sources that have been used to write the biographies within this book.

Documentary evidence clearly supports my contention that throughout William Reece’s residency within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, during his two marriages, that he lived in close proximity to his children and to associated families of the Reece’s such as Walton and Church.

As has already been mentioned, William Reece’s son, Alfred, became the administrator of William's estate upon his death. Alfred died shortly after his father and stepmother. He died at some point between June 3, 1851 and January 22, 1853. Upon Alfred’s death, his duties as the administrator of his father’s estate apparently were turned over to an Adam White. This would have to be the same Adam White that married William Reece and Mary Polly Walton in September 1837. White apparently took this position without compensation.
When William and Mary Reece died they owned two town lots in Lafayette, Ohio and a 160-acre farm. These properties were located within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. These properties were divided among their children. In January of 1854, Abraham J. Ward and his wife (Nancy Reece), David and Kittorah Reece, and Reuben Church (guardian of the minor heirs of the late Mary (Reece) Church), these parties, all for cash sums paid by their sibling, Benjamin H. Reece, quit claim all their title interest and estate legal and equitable in Lafayette town lots #21 and #22 to Benjamin. These deeds describe the Ward, Reece and Church families as residents of Linn County, Iowa by January 1854. The deed of quit claim between Rueben W. Church and Benjamin H. Reece, dated January 19, 1854, describes Benjamin as a resident of Buchanan County, Iowa at that time.

William and Mary divided their 160 acre farm among their eight children. We know that they did this because quit claim deeds between their children describe them as having an equal one-eighth part (20 acres each) of the farm. Most of their children sold their interest in their equal part to their sibling Henry. Allen County deed records confirm that Henry eventually acquired his sibling’s interests in the family farm. In 1854, John and Elizabeth (Reece) Walton, Benjamin H. Reece, David and Kittorah Reece, and William L. Reece, all individually accepted the sum of $275 each, paid by Henry Reece, and quit claim their title interest and estate legal and equitable to their respective 20 acres of the NW ¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio to Henry Reece. Abraham J. and Nancy (Reece) Ward accepted a $150 payment from Henry and quit claim their title interest and estate legal and equitable to the same property on April 24, 1854.

Alfred Reece, the administrator of the late William Reece estate, from Auglaize County, Ohio, also inherited 20 acres of his parent’s farm. However, he died shortly after his father. The administrator of Alfred’s estate was a Stephen Klingaman. On June 13, 1854, Stephan Klingaman, administrator of the late Alfred Reece estate, sold 20 acres of the NW ¼ of Section 33, Township 3 South (Jackson Township), Range 8 East, to Henry Reece for $195. Henry would have been Alfred’s brother. This sell was subject to the power estate of Mary Reece, the wife of the late Alfred Reece [under old English law the widow was entitled to one-third of her husband’s estate.]

A deed of quit claim dated January 30, 1855, between Mary Reece of Auglaize County, Ohio and William L. Reece of Allen County, Ohio, reads that for the sum of $58 paid by William L. Reece, Mary Reece quit claim to 160 acres within the NW ¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. This property would have been the farm of the late William and Mary Reece. The Mary Reece in this quit claim deed would have to be the late Alfred Reece’s wife. William Lewis Reece would have been a brother-in-law to Mary and the son of the late William Reece. This $58 payment made to Mary may have been her dower right to her husband Alfred’s 20-acre inheritance of his parent’s farm.

From about the mid 1840’s through the early 1850’s, the majority of the sons and daughters of William and Rebecca Reece left the Allen County, Ohio area and migrated to Linn County, Iowa; settling near the present day town of Troy Mills. Some referred to Iowa at that time as the ‘Far West’.
Upon settling on the Iowa prairie near Troy Mills, William and Rebecca's children led pioneer lives, just as their parents had done in Ohio and Virginia. Two of these children eventually migrated from Iowa to points further west; one migrated to Kansas and another to California. Many descendants of the children of William and Rebecca Reece, including myself, continue to reside near Troy Mills to this day.

To this point, several family surnames associated with the Reeces, such as Walton, Church, Klingaman, Ward and others, have been mentioned in this biography. As one reads further into this book, one will find that many members of these associated families continue to intertwine their lives with those of the descendants of William and Rebecca Reece.

William and Rebecca Reece are the parents of:

1. Mary (Reece) Church, born November 24, 1818.
2. Alfred Reece, born about 1819.
4. Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton, born about 1821.
5. *David Reece, born December 30, 1823.
8. William Lewis Reece, born April 8, 1833.
Mary Reece
1st child of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece

Mary Reece was born on November 24, 1818 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. She was probably named after her maternal grandmother, Mary Hiatt.

Our subject's early childhood years would have been spent growing up in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Here, Mary would have acquired her early education through her attendance of the schools in the vicinity. She certainly would have attended country schools with her siblings near their parent's home in Paint Township.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1830, Mary would have been residing with her parents and siblings in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. She would have been about 12 years old at the time. The 1830 census recorded that several individuals were then residing under the household of William Rees, Mary's father. Unfortunately, this census only recorded the name of the head of the household; in this case, William Rees. So, we do not know the names of or relationships between the individuals that resided within Mary's father's household at the time of the 1830 census. One of the individuals listed as residing within the William Rees household in 1830 was a female between 10-15 years old; she appears very likely to have been our subject Mary. The remaining individuals listed as then residing within the household of William Rees would have included his wife and children.

Mary appears to have been 14 years of old in 1833 when she, along with her family, moved from Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. She and her family were early pioneers of Allen County when they settled upon section 33 of Jackson Township. Mary’s parents were farmers when the family resided within Highland and Allen counties. Mary more than likely helped her family in farming the land they owned when the family lived in Highland County; upon moving to Allen County, she probably continued to help on the family farm in section 33 of Jackson Township.

Mary’s early education would have certainly been acquired, in part, through her attendance of country schools near where her parents lived in Highland County. When she moved to Allen County, Mary probably continued her education through the country schools near her parent’s home in Jackson Township. She certainly would have attended country school with her siblings.

Shortly after moving to Allen County, Mary would have been about 14 or 15 years old when her mother died around 1834-35.

I would assume that from 1833, up until her eventual marriage in 1836, that our subject probably lived with her parents, and later with her father and stepmother, on the family farm in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

A few years after the death of Mary’s mother, her father remarried to Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells on September 13, 1837 in Allen County, Ohio. Polly subsequently became a stepmother to William and Rebecca’s children. Ironically, when Polly married William Reece, she was already the mother-in-law of our subject.

Our subject, Mary Reece, married Reuben Whipple Church III on May 5, 1836 in Allen County, Ohio. Mary would have been 17 years old and Reuben would have been
20 when they married. Their marriage was performed by a justice of the peace named John Jameson.

Reuben Whipple Church III was born on September 4, 1815 at Binghamton, Brome County, New York. Reuben Whipple Church is the son of Reuben Church II and Mary ‘Polly’ Walton. As discussed in the biography of Mary’s father, William David Reece, Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells married our William Reece in 1837. Upon marrying William, Polly became a stepmother and mother-in-law to the subject of this biography, Mary Reece.

Reuben Whipple Church III was a brother to Peres Walton Church; the latter was a husband to Mary’s sister Elizabeth. The paternal ancestry of Reuben and Peres Church can be dated back to their grandfather, Reuben Church 1, who was born on March 23, 1757 in Hardwick, Worcester County, Massachusetts. He fought in a Vermont unit during the Revolutionary War.

Much of the ancestry of brothers Rueben Whipple and Peres Walton Church has been researched by descendant and genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams. The Church ancestry can be traced back to England; they came to America in the mid 1600’s.

The 1840 U.S. Census recorded that a Reuben Church household resided within Allen County, Ohio at the time of this census. This would have been our Reuben Whipple Church III. At that time, the household of Reuben Church lived in close proximity to the following three individuals and their households: his father-in-law, William Reece; his brother-in-law, Alfred Reece; and to a John Walton. Alfred Reece is Reuben’s wife’s brother. John Walton was probably John B. Walton, Reuben’s uncle; he being a brother to Reuben’s mother Polly. This census tells us that in 1840, these four households lived in close proximity to one another within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; all four households would have resided within or near section 33. All four households appear to have been farm families. Since this census recorded that Reuben’s household lived in close proximity to his father-in-law in 1840, we know that Reuben, Mary and their children then had to be residing in or near section 33 of Jackson Township.

The 1840 U.S. Census recorded that the household of Reuben Church then included: 1 male between 20-30 years old; 1 female between 20-30 years old; and 2 females between 5-10 years old. Since no names were recorded in the 1840 U.S. Census record, we can infer that Reuben’s household in 1840 encompassed himself, his wife Mary, and their two daughters; namely: Rebecca and Hannah. Rebecca was born on April 17, 1837; her sister Hannah was born on June 17, 1839.

From 1841 to 1848, Reuben and Mary Church became the parents of four more children; namely: David, William, Mary and James. In 1844, Reuben and Mary’s daughter, Rebecca Jane Church, born in 1837, died at the age of seven.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that on July 30, 1850, that the household of Reuben Whipple Church lived on a farm near Mary’s father, William Reece, and his extended family. At the time of this census, both the Reece and Church households lived within census enumeration district #6 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Reuben Church and William Reece were both farmers at the time of this census, and would have been neighbors to one another.
Reuben's household on July 30, 1850 consisted of: Reuben, age 34; Mary, age 31; Hannah, age 11; David, age 9; William, age 6; Mary E., age 4; and James H., age 2. This census did not list how everyone was related to one another; however, we know that Mary was Reuben's wife and that the children listed in this census were theirs. At the time of this census Mary would have been pregnant with her seventh child, Nancy Ann. This census recorded that Reuben and Mary's children were all born in Ohio.

The 1850 U.S. Census record tells us that Reuben and Mary's children: Hannah, David and William, had attended school within the year. At approximately the time this census was taken, these children no doubt had attended a country school in or near the vicinity of section 33 of Jackson Township, near their grandparent's farm which was in the northwest corner of section 33. Given the fact that the 1850 U.S. Census record pertaining to their father's household was taken on July 30, 1850, the children of Reuben and Mary Church were probably not attending school at that time, because school was more than likely in summer recess at the time. At the time of the 1850 census, the Church children likely had last attended school at some point during the Spring of 1850.

The Church children probably attended country school in Jackson Township with their first cousin, William Henry Reece; he being the son of their uncle, David Reece. William Henry is a nephew of Mary (Reece) Church. Reuben and Mary Church were farmers at the time of the 1850 census, and they were neighbors to William Henry and his grandparents at that time.

Two months after the 1850 U.S. Census was taken, Mary's father died on September 20, 1850. Mary would have been 31 years old at the time of her father's death.

Reuben and Mary Church became parents for the seventh time with the birth of their daughter, Nancy Ann Church, on January 9, 1851. My research indicates that Nancy was their last child.

Between the ages of 18 and 32, Mary gave birth to seven known children. Reuben and Mary Church are the parents of:

1. **Rebecca Jane Church**, born April 17, 1837; died October 3, 1844.
2. **Hannah Alvira Church**, born June 17, 1839; died August 23, 1856.
3. **David Church**, born April 8, 1841; died January 4, 1876.
5. **Mary Elizabeth Church**, born May 28, 1846; was deceased by 1922.
6. **James Peres Church**, born November 1, 1848; died June 22, 1928.
7. **Nancy Ann (Church) Long**, born January 9, 1851; died in March 1928.

By looking at the names of Reuben and Mary's children, one can easily see who the children were more than likely named after; this is a pattern seen throughout the biographies contained within this book. Several sources indicate that the middle name of their sixth child, James Church, is Henry. If it is Henry, James was likely named after his uncle, Henry Reece. Other sources indicate that James' middle name is Peres. If his middle name is in fact Peres, he was likely named after his uncle, Peres Walton Church.
Sources indicate that Reuben and Mary’s children were all born in Allen County, Ohio. The obituary of Reuben and Mary’s son, William W. Church, states that William was in deed born in Allen County. From this we know that Reuben and Mary were living in Allen County at the time of William’s birth in 1843. The obituary of their son James Peres Church states that he was born at Urbana, Ohio, which is in Champaign County. Thus, we know that Reuben and Mary would have been living at or near Urbana at the time of James’ birth in 1848. The obituary of Reuben and Mary’s daughter Nancy states that she was born in Allen County, Ohio on January 9, 1851. Thus, we know that Reuben and his family resided within Allen County, Ohio at the time of Nancy’s birth.

Documentary evidence suggests that Mary Reece lived in Allen County, Ohio from 1833 to 1851. From 1833 to 1836, Mary would have lived with her parents at their home on their farm in section 33 of Jackson Township. Upon her marriage to Reuben Church, they appear to have started their lives together in Allen County, Ohio. We know that Reuben and Mary resided within Allen County from at least 1840 to 1851. The evidence suggests that they resided within the county from 1836 to 1851; specifically, within Jackson Township. However, if their son James was indeed born at Urbana, Ohio as his obituary states, then Reuben, Mary and their children evidently resided for a short time at Urbana in Champaign County, Ohio around the year of 1848.

My research indicates that at some point between January 9, 1851 and November 6, 1851, that Reuben, Mary and their children moved from their home in Allen County, Ohio to near the town of Troy Mills in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. January 9, 1851 is when Reuben and Mary’s daughter Nancy was born in Allen County, Ohio. November 6, 1851 is the earliest dated documentation that I have found that places Reuben Church in the Troy Mills area. In order to have migrated to the Troy Mills area, Reuben and Mary would have traversed the Midwestern prairies between Allen County, Ohio and Linn County, Iowa in a wagon with their young children. This journey would had to have taken place between January 9, 1851 and November 6, 1851.

I speculate that Reuben and Mary, along with six of their children, may have come to the Troy Mills area with several families in a wagon train. It is possible that Reuben and his family may have accompanied Mary’s brother, David, and his family, in their move to the Troy Mills area. [David Reece and his family moved to the Troy Mills area from Allen County, Ohio in June 1851]. Mary would have been in her early 30’s when she and her family moved to Linn County, Iowa. The obituary of Reuben and Mary’s son, William, who was born in September 1843, states that he came to Linn County (the Troy Mills area) with his parents when he was but a small boy.

Upon moving to the Troy Mills area, it appears that Reuben and Mary settled within the northwest quarter of Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. They no doubt would have commenced farming shortly after their arrival, and they surely would have broken virgin prairie in establishing their farm. By 1859, Reuben had a residence within the northwest quarter of section 1 of Spring Grove Township (see map in Section 2.) I believe that it is very likely that Reuben and Mary built this home shortly after arriving here in 1851. If so, this home no doubt would have been a log cabin that they built from local timber.

Upon their arrival in Linn County, Iowa, Reuben and Mary Church would have been living near her siblings: David Reece, who came here in 1851; and Nancy (Reece)
Ward, who came here in 1845 with her husband Abraham J. Ward. It is very likely that the Wards played an instrumental part in the reason why Reuben and Mary moved to Linn County. Reuben and Mary were likely attracted to moving to the county based on information they received about it from the Wards.

There is a grave marker in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery inscribed with the name of Rebecca Jane Church, Reuben and Mary's daughter. This stone reads that Rebecca died in October 1844 at the age of 7 years, 5 months, and 18 days. One source lists Rebecca’s date of death as October 3, 1844. She reportedly died in Allen County, Ohio. According to Genealogist Daphane Hoover, there is a bible entry which states that Rebecca died on October 18, 1844. This is contradicted by another bible entry which lists Rebecca’s date of death as October 3, 1844. Mrs. Hoover believes that the family of Reuben Church did not come to Troy Mills, Iowa until the early 1850’s. I certainly agree with her belief and documentary evidence supports our belief. This being the case, Rebecca Jane Church would have to be buried in Ohio if she died in October 1844, even though her name is on the stone in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Rebecca’s death would have occurred prior to when her parents left Ohio for Troy Mills. My research indicates that Rebecca was deceased by the time of the family move to Troy Mills. Therefore, I presume that Rebecca is buried in Allen County, Ohio. We do not know where she is buried. I believe that her grave may be in or near Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, possibly in or near section 33. I believe that Reuben and Mary Church left their home in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, bound for Troy Mills with six of their children; having left Rebecca Jane behind at a presently unknown grave.

We can make a safe assumption that Rebecca Jane is buried somewhere in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. I base this assumption upon the fact that on July 30, 1850, the U.S. Census recorded that her father’s household then resided within Jackson Township, and that his household did not include Rebecca at that time. This is a good indication that in fact Rebecca had died prior to that census year and that she is likely buried in Allen County.

The stepmother and mother-in-law of our Mary (Reece) Church, Mary (Walton) Church/Rennells/Reece, died at the age of 61 on April 25, 1851 in Allen County, Ohio. It is very plausible that Mary died on the Reece family farm in section 33 of Jackson Township. Our Mary Church was either living in Ohio or Iowa at the time of her stepmother’s death.

A Dubuque County, Iowa land deed tells us that Reuben W. Church, on November 6, 1851, purchased land in the SW¼ of the SW¼ of Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Reuben purchased this land for $50 from the estate of a Henry E. Mowhay, a resident of the state of Virginia. This property was located near the farm of David Reece, Reuben’s brother-in-law, located east of Troy Mills, Iowa in section 12 of Spring Grove Township. The above mentioned deed describes Reuben as a resident of Linn County, Iowa at the time he purchased the Mowhay property. The fact that this land conveyance was recorded in Dubuque County, Iowa leads me to believe that this transaction occurred at the U.S. Land Office located in Dubuque. This deed provides us with the transaction date of November 6, 1851, which is the earliest date to definitively place Reuben and Mary Church in Linn County, Iowa. This leads me to
strongly believe that Reuben and his family may have arrived in the county in July 1851 with Mary’s brother David and his family.

Like her mother, our subject did not live a long life and did not have an opportunity to enjoy a new life with her family in a new home. Mary (Reece) Church died at the age of 33 years, 9 months and 5 days in Linn County, Iowa on August 29, 1852. It appears that she died about a year after arriving in Iowa. I believe that it is very likely that Mary died at her home in section 1 of Spring Grove Township. The circumstances behind her death are yet unknown. Mary is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. After Mary’s death, Reuben continued to live within Linn County, Iowa in the vicinity of Troy Mills for the remainder of his life.

Upon Mary’s death, Reuben was the sole parent of six young children. A deed record found within a Linn County deed book lists Reuben as a resident of the county on October 13, 1852, which would have been a month and a half after his wife’s death. We can assume that on October 13, 1852, that in all probability, Reuben and his children were living in the Troy Mills vicinity. It appears very likely that in October 1852, that Reuben and his children would have been residing at a farm home in the northwest quarter of Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This was probably the farm that he and Mary homesteaded upon moving to the Troy Mills area.

Sometime in January of 1854, Reuben appeared before the January term of the County Court of Linn County, Iowa to apply for letters of guardianship of the estate of his minor children. The following is an excerpt from the original court record of Reuben’s appearance in January 1854 before the court, which enumerated his children’s ages at the time of his application for guardianship. The court record enumerated his children as: Hannah E. [sic]Church, aged 16 last June, David Church, aged 12 years, William W. Church, aged 10 years, Mary E. Church, aged 8, James H.[sic]Church, aged 5, and Nancy A. Church, aged 3. The court record described the above children as infant heirs at law of Mary Church of said county deceased, all being entitled to an estate in Allen County, Ohio. This reference to an estate in Allen County, Ohio would be a reference to the estate of the heirs’ grandparents, the late William and Mary Reece of Allen County, Ohio. When William and Mary died they owned two town lots in Lafayette, Ohio and a 160 acre farm, both located in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, which their children, including Mary, inherited. Since Mary (Reece) Church died shortly after her parents, her interest in her parent’s estate would have fallen to her surviving children. The court record shows that Reuben W. Church entered into bonds for the performance of his duty and took an oath prescribed by law. The court record reads that Reuben W. Church was appointed the guardian of the estate of the above named minors. The court record also reads that Reuben had full power to demand in for and take possession of, all money and estate belonging to his said wards, and in general to do all the acts which assertain to him in his capacity and as the law shall charge him. At no point in the before mentioned court record does it specifically refer to Reuben as being the father of the infant heirs of the late Mary Church, but that is all but a certainty.

It appears that shortly after Reuben’s appointment as guardian of his children’s estate, he entered into an agreement with his brother-in-law, Benjamin Reece, pertaining to the estate. A quit claim deed dated January 19, 1854, reads that Reuben W. Church, guardian of the minor heirs of Mary Church, deeded Lafayette, Ohio town lots 21 and 22
in Allen County, Ohio, for the sum of $10, to her brother Benjamin H. Reece of Buchanan County, Iowa. These properties were part of the estate of Mary and Benjamin’s late parents. Reuben quit claim his title interest and estate legal and equitable in these properties on January 19, 1854. This deed describes Reuben as then the guardian of the minors and sole heirs of the late Mary Church, and as that of the guardian of the estate of: Hannah E., David, William W., Mary E., James H., and Nancy A. Church of Linn County, Iowa, heirs of the late Mary Church of said county. This deed states that on the above date, Reuben W. Church, guardian of the respective estates of the wards mentioned above, appeared before Joseph B. Young, a Notary Public within and for Linn County, Iowa, to personally acknowledge this conveyance as his voluntary act and deed. By January 19, 1854, Reuben would have been residing in Linn County and no doubt near Troy Mills, probably within section 1 of Spring Grove Township; he would have been making a living, in part, through farming.

On April 3, 1854, an election was held in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This election was held at the home of Reuben Whipple Church’s brother-in-law; this being Reuben’s late wife’s brother, David Reece. Reuben appeared and voted at this election; he and James H. Swain were elected constables.

A source titled: Journal of the Linn County, Iowa Board of Supervisors, reads as follows: And to wit April 8, 1854, comes Rubin [sic] Church who was duly elected constable in and for said county on the 3rd day of April 1854 in Spring Grove Township for the term of 2 years and files in this court his bond and is duly qualified as such constable.

A Linn County deed record listed Reuben as a resident of Linn County, Iowa on May 19, 1854. At that time Reuben owned more than one property in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Reuben, and I assume his children, appear to have been residing upon section 1 of Spring Grove Township in May 1854.

The Iowa census record of 1854 lists the Reuben W. Church household as then residents of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Reuben’s household at the time of this census consisted of: 4 males, 3 females, 1 voter and 1 militia member, for a total of 7 individuals. The four males in this census record would have been Reuben and his sons: David, William and James. The three females would have been Reuben’s daughters: Hannah, Mary and Nancy. The number of females in Reuben’s home at this time coincides with the information that I have that his daughter Rebecca died in 1844. Reuben would have been the one listed as the voter and militia member in this census record.

The 1854 Iowa Census also recorded that Elias N. and David G. Church were residents of Spring Grove Township at the time of this census. They would have been Reuben’s brothers and they certainly would have lived in close proximity to Reuben at the time.

The 1856 Iowa Census recorded that Reuben and his children were then living on a farm in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Reuben Church was listed in this census as a 40 year old farmer, born in New York, with 130 acres of unimproved land; 110 acres of cultivated land; 12 tons of hay; 11 bushels of grain; 8 acres of wheat, 186 bushels harvested; 3 acres of oats, 136 bushels harvested; 15 acres of corn, 600 bushels harvested; a quarter acre of potatoes, 40 bushels harvested; 40 hogs sold; and 50 pounds
of butter sold. Reuben’s household during this census was recorded as including his
children: Hannah, age 16; David, age 15; William, age 13; James, age 7; Mary, age 12;
and Nancy, age 5. His household also included Andrew and Christine Leach, ages 26 and
20 respectively. Andrew is listed in this census record as a farmer. He evidently was
working as a hired hand on Reuben’s farm at the time of this census. This census
recorded that all of the individuals listed under Reuben’s household during this census
were born in Ohio.

Shortly after the 1856 Iowa Census, Reuben’s daughter, Hannah, died on August
23, 1856 at the age of 17 years, 2 months, and 6 days. Hannah reportedly died east of
Troy Mills. If this is true, she probably died on her father’s farm in section 1 of Spring
Grove Township. Hannah is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

One can only imagine the emotional roller coaster that Reuben likely went
through in a few very short years, given the fact that within a span of 12 years, he lost his
wife and two daughters.

Reuben remarried four years after his wife’s death. Reuben was 41 years old
when he married Mary Ann (Crossfield) Gilliam on November 23, 1856. Reuben’s first
wife, the former Mary Reece, would have turned 38 years old on November 24, 1856.

It is reported by one source that Mary Ann (Crossfield) Gilliam was born in 1832 in
Vermont, and that she is the daughter of John Crossfield and Elizabeth Lott.

Genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams reports that John Crossfield was born in 1803 in
Virginia, and that Elizabeth was born in 1811 in Kentucky.

Mary Ann (Crossfield) Gilliam had two children from a previous marriage when
she married Reuben Church. Their names are:

2. **Alice Behethleum (Gilliam) Butterfield**, born November 10, 1854; died
   September 9, 1921.

According to genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams, James and Alice Gilliam were
born in Indiana. Another source places Alice’s birthplace as Louisa County, Iowa.

Reuben and Mary (Crossfield) Gilliam/Church had two children of their own;
namely:

2. **John Charles Fremont Church**, born May 23, 1859; died January 22, 1922.

John Charles Fremont Church was born in Linn County, Iowa near Troy Mills. He was likely named after the famous explorer John Charles Fremont. Elias Theodore
Church appears to have also been born near Troy Mills. John and Elias’ parents, no
doubt, would have been living in the Troy Mills area when they were born.

When John Charles Fremont Church was born his parents were evidently still
making a living through farming in the Troy Mills area. Linn County deed records
recorded that on March 11, 1859, that R.W. Church purchased the N½ of the NW¼ of
Section 15, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, which would have encompassed 160 acres. Reuben purchased this property for the amount of $600 from Mary W. Calendar and her husband William, both from Clinton County, Iowa. The Calendar property was located approximately two miles south of Troy Mills. Plat maps of the era tell us that by 1859, when Reuben purchased the land in section 15 from the Calendar’s, much of that section and surrounding area was virgin prairie that had yet to be settled or cultivated.

One source described Reuben Church’s occupation as, at one time, being that of a hotelkeeper and farmer. At one time Reuben owned a farm in the northwest quarter of Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. He owned this land as early as 1859 according to a township plat map of that year (see map in Section 2). Reuben may have settled this land when he moved to the area in about 1851 with his first wife. In 1859, the Reuben Church farm in section 1 was located approximately one mile north from where his late wife’s brother, David Reece, farmed and resided at within section 12. In addition to living near David Reece in 1859, Reuben would have then been living near his late wife’s brother Henry, who came to Spring Grove Township in 1853. According to the 1859 plat map of Spring Grove Township, Reuben then lived near a D.G. Church who owned property in sections 7 and 8 of Township 86, Range 6 West, which is Jackson Township east of Troy Mills encompassing the town of Coggon. I assume that this individual is David Glazier Church, Reuben’s brother. In 1859, an individual named E. Church owned property in section 25 of Township 84, Range 6 West, which is near Marion, Iowa in Marion Township. I presume this to be Elias N. Church, a brother to Reuben and David G. Church.

The above mentioned 1859 plat map of Spring Grove Township found in section 2 of this book, also lists an R.W. Church (our Reuben Whipple Church) as then the owner of property in the southwest corner of section 12 of Spring Grove Township. This property owned by Reuben in section 12 would have been located adjacent to farm ground owned by his brother-in-law’s, David and Henry Reece.

I think it would be a safe assumption to believe that Reuben and his second wife, their children, her children from a previous marriage, and his children from his first marriage, were all probably living within Reuben’s household at his home within section 1 of Spring Grove Township during the year of 1859.

Several pieces of documentation confirm that Reuben owned his farm in section 1 of Spring Grove Township from as early as 1859 up until 1873. I believe that Reuben owned and also resided upon his farm in section 1 from 1851 up until 1874. Reuben owned ground in the southwest corner of section 12 in Spring Grove Township from as early as 1851 up until 1885. In addition, Reuben also owned property in other parts of Spring Grove Township.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that a Robert [sic] Church household then lived within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This census enumerator evidently recorded the wrong name. This undoubtedly has to be the household of Reuben Church and his second wife Mary. I believe that the Church family resided within section 1 of Spring Grove Township at the time of this census. At the time of this census, Reuben Church would have also owned additional parcels of ground in the area that he farmed.
As recorded by the 1860 U.S. Census, the Robert [sic] Church household on July 9, 1860 consisted of: Robert [sic], age 44, born in New York; Mary A., age 29, born in Vermont; William, age 17, born in Ohio; Mary, age 14, born in Ohio; James H., age 12, born in Ohio; Nancy A., age 10, born in Ohio; Theodore, age 2, born in Iowa; Fremont, age 1, born in Iowa; James Gilliam, age 10, born in Indiana; and Alice B. Gilliam, age 6, born in Iowa. In addition, this census recorded that Mr. Church was a farmer, with real estate amounting to a value of $1,600; his personal property is listed in this census record as being valued at $500. Unfortunately, this census does not list the relationship of the individuals in this household with the head of the house, but we can extrapolate that this is indeed our Reuben Church based upon what information we already have. We also know that the children listed under Reuben’s household in this census record are from his first and second marriages.

The 1860 U.S. Census listed Robert Church’s (Reuben Church’s) post office as being Spring Grove, Iowa. This is additional evidence that Reuben and his family lived near the community of Spring Grove, which was located near the farm that Reuben and his first wife evidently homesteaded on in section 1 in 1851. It is my understanding that the community of Spring Grove was located at or near the present day Spring Grove Church east of Troy Mills. Reuben and his family were certainly residing near Spring Grove, presumably within section 1 of Spring Grove Township, on July 9, 1860.

At the time of the 1860 census, Reuben and his family were neighbors to four farmers who are mentioned in various places within this book; namely: John B. Walton, Nelson Walton, John R. Betzer and S.J. Wickham. John B. Walton would have been the father-in-law of the late Mary (Reece) Church’s sister, Elizabeth. He would have been the brother of Mary and Elizabeth’s stepmother and mother-in-law. Nelson Walton was a son of John B. Walton. S.J. Wickham was a family friend of the Reeces and more than likely to associated families such as Church as well.

A Linn County deed recorded that Reuben W. Church and his second wife Mary Ann, were residents of Linn County, Iowa on January 2, 1868. On that day, Reuben and Mary sold ten acres to an individual from Buchanan County for the sum of $135. These ten acres were located in the NE corner of the NW¼ of Section 13, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Reuben’s brother-in-law, David Reece, is recorded in this deed as the justice of the peace that presided over this land conveyance. Reuben and Mary may have been living within section 1 of Spring Grove Township at the time of the above conveyance. They certainly would have lived in the area at that time.

It appears that around 1874 that Reuben and Mary Church moved to the town of Troy Mills from their farm home in section 1 of Spring Grove Township. I come to this conclusion based on two deeds that I found within Linn County, Iowa deed books. The first deed reads that Reuben W. Church, and his wife Mary Ann of Linn County, sold 40 acres within the NE¼ of the NW¼ of Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, to John H. Swazie for $700 on September 18, 1873. The second deed reads that on October 15, 1874, Reuben and Mary sold an additional 80 acres within the W½ of the NW¼ of Section 1, Spring Grove Township, to Sager Wilde for the sum of $1,800. These 80 acres appear to have been adjacent to and a part of the 40 acres sold by Reuben and Mary the year before; i.e., being part of the same farm. As indicated by the 1859 plat map of Spring Grove Township, the home of Reuben W. Church was located within the
NW¼ of the NE¼ of section 1 that year. I believe that Reuben and Mary sold their farm in section 1 before moving off the farm and into Troy Mills.

Sources, namely deeds, lead me to believe that Reuben, along with his first and second wives, owned and resided on a farm in section 1 of Spring Grove Township from at least 1859 to approximately 1874.

In September 1875, Reuben Whipple Church was listed in school records as the parent and or guardian of Theodore and Charles Church, students then enrolled in sub district #7, district township of Spring Grove, Linn County, Iowa. These were Reuben’s sons from his second marriage. Both boys were subsequently enrolled in sub district #7 in September 1876, 1877, and 1878. Charles was enrolled in sub district #7 in September 1879 and 1880. From the sub district #7 school records that I found in the home of John and Vivian Fay of Quasqueton, Iowa, we know that Reuben and his second wife Mary had to be living in Troy Mills, or vicinity of, from at least 1875 to 1880. Based upon all available information, Reuben Church unquestionably lived in or near Troy Mills from the date he arrived in the area in the early 1850’s up until his death.

One of Reuben’s sons from his first marriage, David, died on January 4, 1876 at the age of 35 years. He is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Reuben was 60 years old when David died.

The 1878 directory of Linn County, Iowa listed an R.W. Church as then being in the hotel business in Troy Mills. This is certainly our Reuben Whipple Church. Reuben and his family must have been living in Troy Mills at the time this directory was published, because by all accounts, he was the proprietor of the National Hotel in Troy. It is my understanding that the first hotel built in Troy Mills was constructed in 1871. This means that Reuben would have entered into the hotel business sometime shortly after 1871. Reuben also appears to have been farming close to Troy Mills at the same time he operated the National Hotel. It is reported that Reuben and his wife Mary operated the National Hotel together. It is very likely that Reuben and Mary moved into Troy Mills to be closer to work; that being, their operation of the National Hotel.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that the household of R.W. Church lived in the village of Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa on June 18, 1880. Without a doubt, this is our Reuben Whipple Church in this census record. This census recorded that Reuben’s household on June 18, 1880 consisted of: himself, age 65, a hotel keeper and farmer, born in New York; his wife Mary A., age 44, ‘keeping house’, born in Kentucky; son Theodore, age 22, born in Iowa; son Charley, age 19, born in Iowa; father-in-law John Crossfield, age 77, born in Virginia; mother-in-law Elizabeth Crossfield, age 69, born in Kentucky; and stepson S. Gilliam, age 30, saloon keeper, born in Indiana.

As recorded by the 1880 U.S. Census, living next door to the Reuben Church household on June 18, 1880 was the household of a Henry Long. Henry’s wife is listed in the 1880 census record as Nancy, age 29. She would be the daughter of Reuben Church and his first wife, the former Mary Reece. This census recorded that the Long household at the time of the census consisted of his three children and three boarders. A William W. Church, age 37, a peddler, is listed in this census record as one of the three boarders then residing within the Long Household. This would be Nancy’s brother, William Walton Church.
A Linn County, Iowa deed book recorded that our R.W. Church and his wife, on August 11, 1885, sold to a Robert B. Candler, 20 acres of the S½ of the SW corner of the SW corner of Section 12, Township 86 (Spring Grove), Range 7 West. Linn County deed records indicate that Reuben owned part, if not all, of the southwest corner, including the 20 acres mentioned above, of section 12 from November 6, 1851 to August 11, 1885. These 20 acres mentioned in the above deed must have been part of the original ground that Reuben and his first wife purchased when they first settled in Spring Grove Township.

The same Linn County deed book mentioned above also recorded that on August 20, 1885, R.W. Church sold 8½ acres in the NE corner of the NE corner of Section 6, Spring Grove Township. It appears that Reuben sold these 8½ acres to a Rachel V. Chamberlain. These acres would have been located less than a mile west of Troy Mills. I believe that by 1885, Reuben and his wife were probably still living in Troy Mills as they had been during the 1880 U.S. Census.

Reuben’s second wife, Mary (Crossfield) Church, died from typhoid fever at the age of 57 on October 14, 1889. Reuben was 74 years old when she died. Mary is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery.

Reuben lived for about another four and-a-half years after Mary’s death. Reuben Whipple Church died at the age of 78 years and 5 months on February 4, 1894. A record of Reuben’s death describes him as a widower. He is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery next to his first wife, our subject Mary Reece. I believe that Reuben and his second wife were living within Troy Mills at the time of their respective deaths.

William Walton Church, the son of Reuben and Mary (Reece) Church, died at the age of 55 on February 15, 1899 at his home in Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa. William’s funeral service was held at the Spring Grove Church east of Troy Mills. Due to large attendance, only about half of the people that attended were actually able to get in the church. William and his wife Lillie are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery near his parents.

William Walton Church was also known as Pawnee Bill. He was a scout to Buffalo Bill Cody, reportedly during the Civil War according to one source. William served in Co. H, 14th Iowa Infantry and the 6th Iowa Cavalry during the Civil War. The 6th Iowa Cavalry was stationed on the frontier. On December 6, 1883, a Walker Iowa newspaper described William Church of Troy Mills as an old Indian scout, interpreter and guide employed by the government and a lecturer on his adventures in the west.

Nancy Ann (Church) Long, the daughter of Reuben and Mary (Reece) Church, died in March 1928 in Troy Mills, Iowa. Nancy is buried alongside her husband Henry in Troy Mills Cemetery.

James Peres Church, the son of Reuben and Mary (Reece) Church, died on June 22, 1928. He is buried at a Lutheran Cemetery in Cridersville, Auglaize County, Ohio.

Reuben and Mary (Reece) Church along with three of their children, namely: Hannah, David and William, are buried in the old portion (west end) of Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

John Charles Fremont Church, from Reuben’s second marriage with Mary (Crossfield) Gilliam, died on January 22, 1922. He is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery.
John’s older brother, Elias Theodore Church, reportedly lived in Ohio, which is where he is probably buried.

Alice Behethleum (Gilliam) Butterfield, Reuben’s stepdaughter from his second wife’s previous marriage, is buried with her husband Frank in Hope-Enterprise Cemetery in Knox County, Nebraska. I do not know where Alice’s brother James is buried or where he died.

This is a photo of me taken in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery on October 5, 2005. I am standing in row 21 of the old portion of the cemetery. This row contains the graves of the Church family. Immediately to my right in this photo is the monument of Hannah Church. Immediately to my left in this photo is the monument marking the graves of Hannah’s parents: Reuben Whipple and Mary (Reece) Church. The large monument to the right of Reuben and Mary’s monument marks the graves of their son, William W. Church, and his wife Lillie C. This photo was taken after my wife and I had moved Hannah’s stone from where it had been laying on the ground for many years in the foreground of this photo.
These photos are of the same monument in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery taken from different angles on Veteran's Day November 11, 2003. This monument marks the graves of Reuben Whipple and Mary (Reece) Church. This is the west side of their monument. The south side of this monument is inscribed with the dates of birth and death of Reuben and Mary's daughters, Rebecca J. and Hannah A.
This is a closer look at the west side of the monument marking the graves of R.W. and Mary Church. The south side of this monument contains the inscriptions of the names of their daughters, Rebecca J. and Hannah A., and their dates of birth and death. This photo was taken on February 25, 2006. The photo on the next page is of the south side of this monument which was taken on the same day.
Even though Rebecca's name is inscribed on this monument, she has to be buried in or near Allen County, Ohio. Her sister Hannah's name is also inscribed into this monument as seen above. Hannah's grave is near that of her parent's. In addition to the above inscription for Hannah Church, she has a separate monument in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery as seen in the photo on the next page.
Both of these photos were taken on November 11, 2003 in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. The stone laying on the ground in both photos is the monument belonging to the grave of Hannah Church. I found her stone laying on the ground as seen in the above photos in 2001. The large monuments in the middle of the left photo are Church monuments. The large stone on the left in the middle of the left photo and behind Hannah’s is the monument belonging to her parents: R.W. and Mary (Reece) Church. The large monument in the middle right of this photo marks the graves of Reuben and Mary’s son, William W. Church, and his wife Lillie.
In the foreground of this photo is where I originally found Hannah Church’s grave stone in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery in 2001. I found it lying on the ground as is indicated by its imprint in the grass in the foreground of this photo. It obviously had laid in this position for quite some time, but did not belong in this location nor was it associated with the broken base of the monument in the foreground of this photo. So, my wife and I moved Hannah’s stone and stood it upright on October 5, 2005. We moved it to the left of the large monument in the middle of this photo which marks her parent’s graves. In this photo you can see a shovel leaning up against Hannah’s stone. Where Hannah’s grave is actually located in relation to her stone is unknown. Her grave has to be in close proximity to her parent’s monument, which is why we placed Hannah’s stone where we did. This photo was taken looking northeast from Lower Spring Grove Cemetery on October 5, 2005.
This is my wife Elizabeth alongside the stone of Hannah Church after we placed it here on the cold and windy day of October 5, 2005. To Elizabeth’s left in this photo is the monument marking the graves of Hannah’s parents. Their monument is just outside of this photo. The photo on the next page was taken on February 25, 2006 and gives a closer look at Hannah’s monument.
I assume that this is Hannah's original tombstone and that her name was added to her parent's monument around or after the time of her father's death.
This monument in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery marks the graves of William W. Church and his wife Lillie.
Alfred Reece
2nd child of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece

When I first began researching my family history, I found that most genealogists that had researched my ancestral lines believed that William and Rebecca Reece had seven children. I have found only one other genealogist during the course of my research that believes as I do, that William and Rebecca had eight children. I believe that the evidence clearly indicates that Alfred Reece is one of the eight children of William and Rebecca Reece.

A genealogical chart created on March 19, 1940, by Carl Emery Hermann, lists Alfred Reece as a son of William and Rebecca Reece. Carl was born on March 17, 1895 and died April 8, 1964. He is the son of William and Anna Hermann. Anna is the daughter of David Reece, Alfred’s brother. Thus, Alfred Reece would be a great-uncle to Carl Hermann.

Carl Hermann was a genealogist and I have some of his work. He would have lived during the time when many of the old folks that are written about in this book lived. So, he would have had a first hand knowledge of who was who in the Reece family. I concur with Carl’s belief that Alfred is a child of William and Rebecca Reece. My research leads me to believe that Alfred was William and Rebecca’s second child. However, Alfred’s order of birth in relation to his siblings may be incorrect. Census records suggest that Alfred was born during the year of 1819 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

It appears that Alfred was living with his parents and siblings in 1820. At the time of the 1820 U.S. Census, Alfred’s father’s household resided within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. This census did not record the names of the individuals that were then living under the household of William Rees, Alfred’s father. However, this census recorded that two males under the age of 10 were residing within William Rees’ home at the time. I assume that these two males were Alfred and his brother Benjamin. If this census is correct, Alfred would had to have been a couple of years old at the time of this census; whereas, his brother Benjamin would have been a baby at the time given the fact that we know that he was born in 1820.

By looking at the known and speculated dates of birth of the children of William and Rebecca Reece, I wonder if Alfred is a twin to his sister Mary who was born on November 24, 1818. This seems to be the only plausible explanation as to when Alfred was born given the information we have from the sources researched to date.

Alfred’s early childhood years would have been spent within Paint Township in Highland County, Ohio. Those years were likely spent growing up on the land that his parents resided upon along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township.

Paint Township in the 1820’s was a community which was only in its second decade out of virgin wilderness. One can only imagine what adventures the wild places of Highland County offered to a young boy in the 1820’s, or for anyone irregardless of age for that matter. Alfred’s parents were farmers at the time of the 1820 U.S. Census and Alfred surely would have played an important part in helping his parents on the farm in subsequent years.
By the time of the 1830 U.S. Census, Alfred would have continued to have been residing with his parents and siblings in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio; undoubtedly near the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek. Alfred appears to have been about 11 years old in 1830.

Alfred would have accompanied his parents and siblings during the family move in 1833 from Highland County to Allen County, Ohio. Having been one of the older siblings at the time, I would assume that Alfred probably helped his younger siblings during that move of about 100 miles. Assuming that Alfred was born in 1819, he would have been approximately 14 years old when he moved to Allen County with his parents.

Upon moving to Allen County, Ohio, Alfred’s parents purchased 160 acres within section 33 of Jackson Township. Alfred more than likely played a role in helping his family prepare the land for farming, which his father unquestionably made a living by. These 160 acres that his parents purchased would have undoubtedly been virgin ground at the time his parents settled the land.

Alfred must have been a teenager at the time of his mother’s death in about 1834-1835. He would have unquestionably played an important part in helping his father in operating the family farm prior to and after his mother’s death.

Most of Alfred’s early education would have likely been acquired by his attending country schools within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. This would have been a time when his family lived near the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township. One can only guess as to whether or not Alfred continued his education when the family moved to Allen County.

An Alfred Reece is listed in a tax record as a taxpayer of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1836. This individual must be the subject of this biography. This tax record recorded that in 1836, Alfred Reece owned 1 horse valued at $40, and 2 cattle valued at $16. From this tax record we can infer that Alfred was a resident of Jackson Township in 1836. Undoubtedly, in 1836, Alfred would have been living in close proximity to his family; particularly to his father, who then would have been residing on the family farm in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

Presumably, at some point between arriving in Allen County in 1833 and the above tax record of 1836, Alfred moved out of his parent’s home and started out on his own. It appears that Alfred would have been about 17 years old at the time of the above mentioned tax record of 1836.

Alfred would have gained a stepmother upon his father remarrying to Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells in September 1837.

Marriage records of Allen County, Ohio list an Alfred Reece as having married a Mary Lawrence on April 25, 1839 in Allen County. This has to be our subject; if so, and I have no doubt that it is, their marriage would have taken place when Alfred was approximately 20 years old; this is obviously assuming that he was born in 1819. U.S. Census records place Mary’s year of birth as 1822.

The 1840 U.S. Census recorded that an Alfred Reece household resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1840. This census recorded that Alfred’s household then consisted of: 1 male between 20-30 years of age; 1 female between 15-20 years of age; 1 person employed in agriculture; 1 primary and common schooled person; and two scholars. We can infer that the one male between 20-30 years old was Alfred,
and that the one female between 15-20 years old was his wife. We can infer that Alfred and his wife had no children at the time of this census. We can infer that Alfred was the one listed in this census as being employed in agriculture; so, we know that he was a farmer when this census was taken. We also know from this census record, that Alfred and his wife had attained some level of education since this record lists two scholars in the household. The term scholar was a general term used at that time to indicate an educated person.

No doubt, Alfred would have been living near his family, particularly his father and stepmother, at the time of the 1840 census. So, we can assume that in 1840, that Alfred and his wife lived within or near section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, which again, was where his father and stepmother’s farm was located.

The 1840 U.S. Census recorded that the following households resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio at the time of this census. The heads of these households as they appear in order within the original census record are:

1. William Reece
2. John Walton
3. Alfred Reece
4. Reuben Church

From the 1840 U.S. Census record, we know that Alfred and his wife were living near his father’s household (William Reece) at the time of this census. In addition, Alfred was then living near John Walton and Reuben Church. This John Walton was probably John B. Walton, a brother-in-law to William Reece. This Reuben Church would have been Alfred’s brother-in-law. This census tells us that these four households lived in close proximity to one another in 1840 within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; in all probability, they were then likely living within or near section 33.

A tax record of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio lists an Alfred Reese as a personal property taxpayer of Jackson Township for the tax record year of 1841. This tax record recorded that in 1841, Alfred owned 1 horse valued at $40 and 2 cows valued at $16. Again, this tax record is additional proof that in all probability, Alfred was then living in or near the vicinity of section 33 of Jackson Township.

Tax records of Allen County, Ohio recorded that in 1844, Alfred Reece of Jackson Township, owned 1 horse valued at $40 and 1 cow valued at $8. County tax records also list Alfred Reece as being a personal property taxpayer in Jackson Township during the years of 1845 and 1846.

Birth records of Auglaize County, Ohio recorded that a Newton Reese was born on September 5, 1845 in Uniopolis, Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. This would be Newton S. Reece, the son of Alfred and Mary Reece.

Alfred Reece was listed in a tax record as a personal property taxpayer in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1848; as were his brothers: William L., Benjamin H. and David. Their father was also listed as a personal property taxpayer in the township for tax year 1848. Father and sons all individually appear to be listed as separate heads of households in the original tax record. William Reece and his sons: William Lewis,
Benjamin Hiatt, Henry, David and Alfred, all appear to have been Jackson Township property owners prior to 1847. I can not determine definitively if all of William Reece’s sons were property owners prior to 1847, because I do not understand the tax recorders notes in the original record.

One can certainly assume from the above cited tax records of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, that Alfred and his family resided within the township during those tax record years. This would have been a period from 1836 to 1848. However, the birth of Alfred and Mary’s son, Newton, in Uniopolis, Auglaize County, Ohio in September 1845, certainly suggests that the family resided in Uniopolis at the time of Newton’s birth.

The documentary evidence presented to this point suggests that Alfred and his wife, upon their marriage, began their lives together in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, and that they resided there up to September 1845. It appears that at some point after the 1840 U.S. Census, but prior to September 1845, that Alfred and his family moved from Allen County to or near Uniopolis in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. The only plausible explanation as to why Newton Reece was born in Uniopolis would be that his parents must have moved to that locale prior to his birth. I suppose that it may be plausible that Alfred may have owned property in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio while actually residing at or near Uniopolis in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio where his son Newton was born.

My research indicates that Alfred and Mary Reece’s first child was born in 1841; and that between 1841 and 1849, they had four more children.

Alfred and Mary Reece are the parents of:

1. **Elizabeth Reece**, born in October 1841.
5. **John Reece**, born in October 1849.

If Alfred and his family were residing at or near Uniopolis when his son Newton was born in 1845, they would had to have subsequently moved to Clay Township within Auglaize County, Ohio by 1850.

From the 1850 U.S. Census record, we know that the Alfred Reece household, on August 13, 1850, resided within Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. Alfred’s household at that time consisted of: himself, age 31; a Pearler by occupation; Mary, age 30; Elizabeth, age 9; Rebeca, age 7; William L., and Newton S., ages 4; and John, age 10 months. In addition, a David Reece is also listed as residing within Alfred’s household at the time of this census. David is listed in this census record as being 25 years old and a pearler by occupation.

Unfortunately, the 1850 U.S. Census record did not record how Alfred is related to the individuals found within his household during this census. We can certainly assume from this census record that Mary was born in 1820 and that she is Alfred’s wife. We can also assume that the children listed within Alfred’s household in this census are
his and Mary’s. We can extrapolate from this census record that Alfred and Mary’s
daughter Elizabeth was born in 1841 and that their daughter Rebeca was born in 1843.
This census record suggests that Alfred and Mary’s sons, William L. and Newton S., are
twin brothers. According to this census record, William and Newton were born in 1846.
My research leads me to believe that William and Newton are twin brothers and that they
were born on September 5, 1845. Alfred and Mary’s son John would have been born in
October 1849 according to this census. We can also assume that the 25 year old David
Reece listed within Alfred’s household at the time of this census is Alfred’s brother.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that both Alfred and David Reece were then
pearlers by occupation. I have no idea what the occupation of pearler entailed. It must
have had something to do with the pearl/clam industry. This census lists all of the
individuals found within Alfred’s household during this census as being born in Ohio. It
also lists that Elizabeth, Rebeca, William and Newton, had attended school within the
year. This census recorded that Alfred then owned real estate valued at $550.

I assume that David Reece was living within Alfred’s household at the time of the
1850 census because David’s wife had passed away in 1847. David would have been
single at the time of this census, and as such, he probably found it convenient to stay with
his brother at that time. David remarried to his second wife in September 1850; so he
more than likely moved out of Alfred’s home shortly after the 1850 census. For how
long David resided within his brother’s household is unknown.

Since the 1850 U.S. Census recorded that the household of Alfred Reece resided
within Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on August 13, 1850, we know definitely
that at some point between 1840 and 1850, that Alfred and his family moved from
Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio to Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. This
would have been a short move. Exactly when Alfred and his family moved to Auglaize
County from Allen County is unknown. As was stated earlier, it appears that at some
point around 1845, that Alfred and his family resided in or near Uniopolis where his son
Newton is reported to have been born.

If the 1850 U.S. Census is correct in regards to Alfred’s age, he would have been
born during or about the year of 1819. This approximate year of birth obviously conflicts
with Alfred’s sister Mary’s date of birth of November 24, 1818 and with his brother
Benjamin’s birth date of June 23, 1820. Knowing Mary and Benjamin’s birth dates, there
is no way in my mind that Alfred could have been born in 1819, which leads me to
ponder the possibility of Alfred being a twin to his sister Mary.

Alfred’s father, William Reece, died on September 20, 1850. When William died
he did not leave a will. William’s estate case was heard on December 3, 1850 by the
Court of Common Pleas, Allen County, Ohio. William’s wife Mary declined the
administratorship of his estate. Mary requested that Alfred Reece be the administrator.
Alfred would have been Mary’s stepson. The court appointed Alfred administrator on
Dec. 3, 1850. Alfred Reece appeared before said court, accepted the administratorship
and gave bonds totaling $800 to the court to ensure that he completed his responsibilities.
I find evidence that Alfred accepted the administratorship of his father’s estate as early as
October 1850.

Within seven months of his father’s death, Alfred’s stepmother, Mary, died on
April 25, 1851.
When Alfred’s father and stepmother died they owned properties in Allen County, Ohio. These properties consisted of two town lots in Lafayette and a 160 acre family farm; all three properties were located within Jackson Township. We know from deed records that these properties were divided among their children. In January 1854, Abraham J. Ward and his wife (Nancy Reece), David and Kittorah Reece, and Reuben Church (guardian of the minor heirs of the late Mary (Reece) Church), these parties, all for cash sums paid by their sibling, Benjamin H. Reece, quit claim all their title interest and estate legal and equitable in Lafayette town lots #21 and #22 to Benjamin. The parties listed above are Alfred’s siblings and their spouses.

William and Mary Reece divided their 160-acre farm among their eight children. Evidence of this is demonstrated by the fact that their farm was split into equal one-eighth parts (20 acres each). Most of their children sold their interest in their equal part to their sibling Henry. Allen County deed records confirm that Henry eventually acquired his sibling’s interests in the family farm. In 1854, John and Elizabeth (Reece) Walton, Benjamin H. Reece, David and Kittorah Reece, and William L. Reece, all individually accepted the sum of $275 each, paid by Henry Reece, and quit claim their title interest and estate legal and equitable to their respective 20 acres of the NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio to Henry Reece. Abraham J. and Nancy (Reece) Ward accepted a $150 payment from Henry and quit claim their title interest and estate legal and equitable to the same property on April 24, 1854.

At some point after the 1850 U.S. Census, Alfred and his family appear to have moved from Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio to Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio, which is where they were evidently living at in 1845 according to the birth record of Alfred’s son Newton.

The Assessors Office of Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio created a document which was a compilation listing and enumerating all the white male inhabitants above the age of 21, residing within Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on the first day of March 1851, and being residents of Ohio. This document, which lists at least a couple hundred men, lists an Alfred and David Reece. Their names appear together, one after the other on this list. I believe this is our subject, Alfred Reece, and his brother David. One can assume from this document that Alfred and his family were residing within Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on March 1, 1851. They evidently would have been living in or near Uniopolis at that time.

We do not know when the death of Alfred Reece occurred; nor do we know what he died from. From the previously mentioned assessor’s document of Union Township, we know that he died at some point between March 1, 1851 and January 22, 1853. We can infer from the estate sale bill record of the personal property of the late William Reece, Alfred’s father, that Alfred died at some point after June 3, 1851, but prior to January 22, 1853. This inference is made because this sale bill record is dated June 3, 1851 and describes Alfred Reece as the administrator of the William Reece estate. Thus, we can assume that Alfred was alive at this date.

At the time of Alfred’s death, he and his family appear to have been residing within Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. Specifically, it appears that they were then living within Uniopolis, Ohio.
Alfred Reece died intestate; meaning: he had no will at the time of his death. Since Alfred had no will, the laws of the State of Ohio would have governed the dispersal of Alfred's property after his death. The fact that Alfred had no will at the time of his death is not surprising given the fact that he died at a young age. He died in his early to mid 30's.

The location of Alfred's grave is unknown. He certainly has to be buried within Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. I believe that he is buried in or near the town of Uniopolis.

Probate court records of Auglaize County, Ohio document the fact that Stephan Klingaman and two other men from Auglaize County were appointed executors and administrators of the estate of Alfred Reece on January 22, 1853. Stephan Klingaman was a family friend of the Reeces. His wife Anna was a cousin to David Reece's second wife. As has already been mentioned, David Reece is a brother to Alfred.

An Auglaize County, Ohio Probate Court record dated January 22, 1853 reads that Stephen Klingaman, A. Trimble, and Michael Miller of Auglaize County, Ohio, filed a bond with the court in the amount of $800 upon their appointments as executors and administrators of Alfred Reece's estate. Stephen was appointed administrator by the court. This probate record tells us that Alfred Reece had died prior to January 22, 1853. On that date, the probate court decreed that Stephen Klingaman, as the duly appointed administrator was to make and return into court within three months a true inventory of all the money, goods, chattels, rights and credits of Alfred's estate, which have or shall come to the possession or knowledge of said Stephen Klingaman. The court also instructed Klingaman to produce an inventory of Alfred's real estate to be sold for the payment of Alfred's debts within eighteen months.

On January 16, 1854, Stephen Klingaman filed a petition in the office of the Probate Court of Auglaize County, Ohio to sell the real estate of the late Alfred Reece. Klingaman, as administrator, petitioned that the personal assets of the late Alfred Reece were totally inadequate to the payment of his debts. In his petition, Klingaman informed the court that Alfred died seized of the following premises: lots 27 and 28 in the town of Uniopolis, Auglaize County, Ohio. One or both of these lots is where Alfred and his family were evidently living at when he died. Klingaman also described Alfred in his petition as having died seized of and held as coparcener one undivided eight part of NW¼ of Section 33, Township 3 South of Range 8 East in Allen County, Ohio, the whole containing 160 acres. These 160 acres were part of the farm owned by Alfred's father and stepmother. Alfred acquired a one-eighth (20 acre) equal title interest in the family farm as did his siblings when their father and stepmother died. The word coparcener means: one of two or more persons sharing an inheritance; a joint heir. This petition of Klingaman's filed on January 16, 1854 is additional evidence that Alfred Reece is a child of William and Rebecca Reece.

In the above mentioned Klingaman petition, he then informed the court that Alfred left a widow, Mary Reece, who was entitled to dower in the whole of the foregoing premises, that he left Elizabeth Reece, Rebecca Reece, William Lewis Reece and Newton S. Reece as minor children and heirs at law, all residing in the county of Auglaize. In his petition, Klingaman asked that dower be assigned to Mary Reece and that she with said
minor children be notified of the pendency of the proceeding and that the court order him to sell aforesaid premises in accordance with the statute for the settlement of estate in order to pay off Alfred's debts. [Under old English law the widow was entitled to one-third of her husband's estate.]

The above excerpt from the Klingaman petition enumerates the children of Alfred and Mary Reece at the time of his death. From this, we know that their son John was deceased by January 16, 1854. John appears to have died at some point between October 1849 and January 16, 1854.

On January 18, 1854, the Probate Court of Auglaize County, Ohio ordered the sheriff of Auglaize County to serve notice to Alfred's widow and minor children to appear before the probate judge of Auglaize County at the court house on February 20, 1854 to answer Klingaman's petition exhibited against them. On January 28, 1854, Mary and the children were served a subpoena at their residence to appear before the court.

On February 20, 1854, the probate court issued the order that Mary Reece be endowed with one equal full third of the premises on the petition. The court ordered Klingaman to sell the Uniopolis town lots and the one-eighth part (20 acres) of the 160 acre family farm. The twenty acres were appraised at $295. Mary's dower right to those twenty acres was appraised at $8 per year. The Uniopolis town lots were appraised at $20 and the widow's dower on that property was appraised at seventy cents per year.

The court further ordered Klingaman to sell the real estate subject to and encumbered by the dower estate of Mary Reece and to pay her under the following terms: one third of the purchase money to be paid on the day of sale, one third in nine months and the remainder in eighteen months, deferred payments to bear interests and to be secured by mortgage on the premises. Klingaman was ordered to return a report of his proceedings to the court within sixty days.

On March 6, 1854, the Probate Court of Auglaize County, Ohio ordered Stephen Klingaman, acting as administrator, to sell the real estate of the late Alfred Reece.

On June 13, 1854, Stephen Klingaman, acting as administrator of the late Alfred Reece estate, sold a one-eighth undivided equal part (20 acres) of the NW¼ of Section 33, Township 3 South (Jackson Township), Range 8 East within Allen County, Ohio, to Henry Reece for $195. This sell was subject to the dower estate of Mary Reece, the wife of Alfred Reece. Henry Reece is Alfred's brother and Mary Reece is a sister-in-law to Henry.

Klingaman produced to the probate court a report of sale on June 13, 1854. He wrote:

In pursuance of the written order, I caused the within property to be duly advertised in the Auglaize Republican, a newspaper published and in general circulation in the county of Auglaize and also in the Lima Argus, a newspaper publication in and in general circulation in the county of Allen for more than thirty days previous to May 6, 1854; upon which day between the hours entitled by law, I offered for sale at the door of the court house in Auglaize County and sold the one individual eighth part of the northwest quarter of section number thirty three Township Three (3) South of Range eight (8) East in said Allen County to Henry Reece for $196.66, subject to the dower aforesaid upon the conditions aforesaid, said Henry Reece being the highest and best
The following is the notice that Stephen Klingaman placed in the previously mentioned Lima Argus newspaper. This notice was first published on April 1, 1854 and ran for five consecutive weeks prior to the Alfred Reece estate sale:

<table>
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<th>On the 6th day of May A. D. 1854 at one o'clock P.M., at the door of the Court house in the town of Wapakoneta will be sold to the highest bidder the following real estate as the property of Alfred Reece deceased: In lots number twenty seven and twenty eight in the town of Uniopolis in the county of Auglaize. One undivided eighth part of the northwest quarter of section thirty three township three south of range eight east in the county of Allen and state of Ohio, subject to dower. Terms of sale—one third of the purchase money to be paid on the day of sale, one third in nine months and the residue in eighteen months deferred payments to bear interests and secured by mortgage on the premises.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Klingaman, Administrator, March 8, 1854</td>
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A deed of quit claim dated January 30, 1855, between a Mary Reece of Auglaize County, Ohio and a William L. (William Lewis) Reece of Allen County, Ohio, reads that for the sum of $58 paid by William L. Reece, Mary Reece quit claim to 160 acres within the NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. This property would have been the farm owned by the late William and Mary Reece, Alfred Reece’s father and stepmother. This Mary Reece in this quit claim deed would have been the late Alfred Reece’s wife. William Lewis Reece would have been a brother and sister-in-law to Alfred and Mary Reece. This $58 payment must be the widow Mary Reece’s dower right to her husband Alfred’s 20-acre inheritance of his father and stepmother’s farm.

From the above deed we know that Alfred’s widow, Mary, was residing within Auglaize County, Ohio on January 30, 1855. On that day, Mary Reece personally appeared before a justice of the peace of Auglaize County to acknowledge the above deed as her voluntary act and deed.

It appears that at some point after Alfred’s death, that Newton S. Reece, Alfred and Mary’s son, moved from his mother’s home in Auglaize County, Ohio to live with his uncle, Henry Reece, at his farm east of Troy Mills, Iowa. It is plausible that Newton went to live with his uncle because of his father’s death. It may have been easier on Newton, and possibly on his mother at the time, for Newton to live with his uncle Henry. I speculate that Newton’s siblings may have also lived with other family members after their father’s death. I would assume that Newton went to live with his uncle, Henry Reece, because his mother had four children to take care of after Alfred’s death. Alfred’s
widow, Mary, probably sent her son Newton to live with his uncle because she could not handle raising her four children alone.

The fact that Newton S. Reece went to live with his uncle Henry Reece near Troy Mills, Iowa is demonstrated by the 1856 census of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, which recorded that the household of Henry Reece then included: Henry, age 27; wife Lucretia, age 24; son Hiatt, age 3; Newton, age 10; and Alice, age 6. Newton in this census record would be: Newton S. Reece, the son of Henry's brother Alfred. Alice in this census record would be: Alice Jane Reece, the daughter of Henry's brother Benjamin. For an undetermined amount of time, Henry and Lucretia raised Benjamin Reece's daughters, Alice Jane and Agnes Ida Reece. Like his sister-in-law, Mary Reece, Benjamin evidently needed helping raising his children after his spouse died; this would explain why Benjamin and Mary's children were found residing within Henry's household at the time of the 1856 census.

As is demonstrated by the above 1856 census, the fact that some of Alfred and Benjamin Reece's children resided with Henry and Lucretia Reece after the loss of a parent, seems to lend credence to my belief that Henry and Lucretia took in these children to help a sibling.

Mary Reece continued to live in Auglaize County, Ohio after her husband Alfred died. The 1860 U.S. Census tells us that on July 21, 1860, Mary was living with her family in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. This census recorded her post office as being in Uniopolis. So, from this census record we know that Mary was living at or near Uniopolis, Ohio on July 21, 1860. At the time of this census, Mary and her children may have been residing at the same residence where Alfred and the family were residing at when he died.

According to the 1860 U.S. Census, on July 21, 1860, Mary Reece's household included: herself, age 37, Rebecca A. Reece, age 17; William Reece, age 15; and a John W. Underwood, age 37. Rebecca and William would be children of Mary and Alfred's. The above census information is recorded under Mary's household; so, Mr. Underwood was living within Mary's home at the time of this census. Why Mr. Underwood was living within Mary's household at the time of this census is unknown. He may have been a boarder within her home at the time. It appears that Mary Reece never married John Underwood. No record of a marriage between the two has been found.

Alfred and Mary Reece's children: Elizabeth, Newton S. and John, were not living with their mother at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. Elizabeth would have then been approximately 19 years old and married. She probably would have been living under her husband's household at the time of this census. This census suggests that John died at a young age between 1850 and 1860. I believe that John died prior to January 16, 1854. Newton S. Reece was living with his uncle, Henry Reece, at Henry's farm near Troy Mills, Iowa at the time of this census. Newton lived with Henry for at least 4 years, possibly longer.

The 1860 U.S. Census record pertaining to the household of Mary Reece recorded that John W. Underwood's occupation was that of a physician. This census recorded that at that time, Mary's children: Rebecca and William, had attended school within the year.

By comparing the 1850 U.S. Census record with that of the 1860 census, we know that at some point between August 13, 1850 and July 21, 1860, that Mary, possibly
with Alfred, moved their family from Clay Township to Union Township within Auglaize County, Ohio.

Alfred and Mary Reece’s daughter, Elizabeth, married a Thomas Harrod on June 2, 1860 in Auglaize County, Ohio. Mary probably attended the wedding. Mary appears to have been living in or very near Uniopolis when Elizabeth married Thomas Harrod.

It appears that at some point between July 21, 1860 and January 23, 1865, that Mary moved from the Uniopolis area to the town of St. Johns in Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. On January 23, 1865, Mary Reece purchased, for the amount of $500, town lot number 37 in St. John’s, Ohio from a Lewis and Christina Bayliff of Auglaize County. At the time of this purchase Mary was from Auglaize County.

On May 8, 1865, for the amount of $180, Mary sold 777 square feet of lot 37 to an individual. The deed of conveyance pertaining to this transaction describes Mary as being from Auglaize County, Ohio. This deed recorded that Mary’s son-in-law, W. [sic] V. Edmiston, was a witness to this transaction before a justice of the peace of Auglaize County. I believe that Mary was residing upon lot 37 at the time of this conveyance.

On November 29, 1865, for the amount of $300, Mary sold 231¼ square feet of lot number 37 to two men. This transaction is recorded in a deed of conveyance. Mary’s son-in-law, M.V. Edmiston, is recorded in this deed as a witness to this conveyance.

On April 22, 1867, Mary sold a small piece of lot 37 to a man for the amount of $85. Why she sold this piece of ground which amounted to 131½ square feet is unknown. I believe that she was living upon this lot at the time. The deed of conveyance of this property lists Mary’s daughter Rebecca as a witness to this conveyance, which suggests that Rebecca was living in the vicinity of her mother at that time. This and other deeds suggest that lot 37 was of some size.

By 1870, Mary was residing within Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. Specifically, it appears that Mary was residing in St. Johns, Ohio in 1870. I believe that by 1870, that Mary was probably living upon lot number 37 within the town of St. Johns; having purchased this property in January 1865.

We can make the above speculations regarding where Mary lived in 1870 based upon the 1870 U.S. Census record, which recorded that on August 19, 1870, that a Mary Reece, age 47, was then living in Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. This would have to be Alfred Reece’s widow. This census recorded her post office as being St. Johns, Ohio, which she unquestionable lived at or near at the time of this census. I believe that she actually resided within St. Johns at the time of this census. This census recorded that Mary’s household on August 19, 1870 included herself and a 7 year old boy named Alford Edmonson. I believe that Alford is Mary’s grandson; he being the son of Mary and Alfred’s daughter, Rebecca. A. Reece.

Marriage records of Auglaize County, Ohio list a Rebecca A. Rees as having married a M.V. Edmiston on April 27, 1862 in Auglaize County. County records also list a Rebecca A. Reese as having married a John M. Lanning on May 8, 1870 in Auglaize County. Apparently, based on these records, Rebecca’s first husband, M.V. Edmiston, died sometime between 1862 and 1870, and from that marriage was born Alford Edmiston, who was likely named after his grandfather, Alfred Reece, the subject of this biography.
I suppose that it is very plausible that Alford Edmiston could have gone to live with his grandmother, Mary Reece, after his mother remarried in May 1870 to John Lanning. This would explain why Alford was found living with Mary Reece in August 1870 at the time of the 1870 U.S. Census.

It is interesting to note that the 37 year old man, John W. Underwood, who resided within Mary’s household during the 1860 U.S. Census, was not residing with her ten years later at the time of the 1870 census. The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that Mr. Underwood was then living with a wife and children in Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio. This census recorded Mr. Underwood’s wife’s name as Mary. This certainly is not the widow of Alfred Reece.

The U.S. Census record of August 19, 1870, lists Mary Reece’s occupation as then ‘keeping house’; her real estate value was listed at $450; and her personal property value was listed at $100. This census lists that both Mary and Alford were born in Ohio and that he had attended school within the census year.

At the time of the 1870 census, Mary Reece and her grandson Alford were living in close proximity to Newtin and Mary E. Reece, residents of Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. Unquestionably, this is Newton S. Reece, Mary and Alfred Reece’s son. Newtin is listed in this census record as being 24 and Mary is listed as being 18 years old at the time of this census. This census recorded Newtin’s occupation as that of a farmer and his wife Mary’s as ‘keeping house’. Newtin’s personal property, as recorded by this census, is listed as then being valued at $150. This census also lists Newtin and Mary’s birthplace as Ohio.

Based upon the 1870 U.S. Census record, it appears that Alfred and Mary Reece’s son, William L. Reece, may have died between 1860 and 1870.

It appears that Alfred Reece’s widow, Mary, died at some point in time between August 19, 1870 and July 8, 1872. August 19, 1870 is when Mary was recorded in the 1870 U.S. Census record as then living within Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. A quit claim deed dated July 8, 1872 suggests that Mary must have died between the 1870 census and the date of this deed. I believe that Mary may have died between these dates because the above mentioned quit claim deed dated July 8, 1872, tells us that on that day, Newton S. Reece of Auglaize County, Ohio, sold, for the amount of $40, town lot number 37 in St. Johns, Ohio to Elizabeth Harrod. Newton and Elizabeth would have been Mary’s children. This forty dollar payment to Elizabeth by Newton must have been his title interest to the property from his late mother; a title interest which he later conveyed to his sister through this deed.

Unquestionably, the above mentioned quit claim deed of July 8, 1872 is between Newton S. Reece and his sister Elizabeth (Reece) Harrod. This quit claim deed describes Newton’s title interest in lot 37 as an undivided one fourth part. Thus, it appears that Mary died and divided her ownership of this lot between four heirs. We know for certain that three of these heirs would have been her surviving children; namely: Elizabeth, Rebecca and Newton. I do not know who the fourth heir would have been. Sources suggest that by the time of Mary’s death, that her sons William and John were deceased. It may be possible that one of these two sons was alive at the time Mary died, thus accounting for the fourth heir. Of these two sons, it appears that William would have
been the one most likely to have been alive at the time of his mother's death. It may be possible that Mary left a grandchild as the fourth surviving heir.

Given the fact that our Mary Reece can not be found within the U.S. Census records of 1880 or later, supports my belief that she was deceased by 1880 and that she likely died between August 19, 1870 and July 8, 1872. I do not know where Mary is buried.

My research leads me to believe that Alfred and Mary Reece started their lives together in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio, and that they later moved to Auglaize County, Ohio where they appear to have resided in the vicinity of the towns of Uniopolis and St. Johns, which were approximately 3 miles apart. It appears that Alfred and Mary each lived their entire married lives in the area encompassing Allen and Auglaize counties.

All the sources that I have researched to this point support my belief that Mary did not remarry after Alfred’s death. I have found no information to suggest otherwise. It appears that Mary lived within Union Township, in or near the town of Uniopolis, for some time after Alfred’s death, and that she later moved a short distance to or near St. Johns in Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. It appears that from as early as January 23, 1865, up until her death, that Mary lived on lot 37 in the town of St. Johns, Ohio.

My research indicates that the children of Alfred and Mary Reece married:

2. **Rebecca A. Reece**, born in 1843. First marriage was to M.V. Edmiston on April 27, 1862. Her second marriage was to John M. Lanning on May 8, 1870.
3. **Newton S. Reece**, born September 5, 1845; died May 14, 1934. Married Mary E. Sommers on November 14, 1869. She was born on November 19, 1850. Newton’s second marriage was to Emaline Moore on August 18, 1872. Emaline was born on August 12, 1852 and died on June 2, 1938.

It appears that the above children of Alfred and Mary Reece lived the majority, if not all of their lives, in the vicinity of Auglaize County, Ohio. Newton and Emaline, along with their son Ernest, are buried in Greenlaw Cemetery in Auglaize County, Ohio. Other family members are surely buried at Greenlaw or in the vicinity of, possibly including Alfred and Mary Reece.
Benjamin Hiatt Reece
3rd child of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece

Benjamin Hiatt Reece was born on June 23, 1820 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. He was probably named after his maternal grandfather, Benjamin Hiatt. According to his obituary, our subject spent his early life in Ohio. Benjamin would have spent his early childhood, about the first 12 years of his life, growing up in Highland County, presumably along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek, which was near his parent's farm.

At the time of the 1820 U.S. Census, Benjamin’s parents resided within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. It appears as though that Benjamin was living with his parents and siblings at the time of the 1820 census. He would have been a newborn at the time.

Benjamin would have spent the ten years of his life between 1820 and 1830 residing with his parents and siblings in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

At the time of the 1830 U.S. Census, Benjamin would have been approximately 10 years old and would have resided with his parents and siblings within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

Benjamin would have been 12 years of age in 1833 when he moved with his family from Highland County to Allen County, Ohio. Upon moving to Allen County,
Benjamin’s parents homesteaded a 160-acre farm in section 33 of Jackson Township; this family farm is where Benjamin would have spent his remaining childhood years. Benjamin's education would have been acquired from the country schools near where he lived with his parents in Highland and Allen counties. He surely would have attended these rural schools with his siblings.

Like his siblings, Benjamin probably started working at a young age. He more than likely helped his parent’s farm on the land they farmed in Highland and Allen counties.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1840, Benjamin appears to have been residing with his father, stepmother and siblings on the family farm within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. As recorded by this census, Benjamin would have been between 20 and 30 years of age at that time. Specifically, he would have been 20 years old in 1840.

It would appear that at some point after the 1840 U.S. Census that Benjamin moved out of his father’s household to start out on his own. Sources indicate that Benjamin continued to reside within Allen County after he left his father’s household.

Allen County, Ohio tax records for the years of 1847 and 1848 list a B.H. Reece as then a personal property taxpayer in Jackson Township. I believe this is our subject, Benjamin Hiatt Reece. On the 1848 tax list, below Benjamin’s name, a David Reece is also listed as then being a personal property taxpayer in the township. This David Reece must be Benjamin’s brother. Benjamin appears to be listed as a head of a household in the 1847 and 1848 tax records of Allen County, Ohio. He may have also been paying personal property taxes in the township prior to 1847. Since I can not interpret all the tax recorders notes, I can not determine whether or not Benjamin was a personal property taxpayer within Jackson Township prior to 1847.

Benjamin was 27 years old when he married Anne 'Annie' Nash on March 9, 1848 in Allen County, Ohio. Anne Nash is the daughter of John and Jane (Boyle) Nash. [Anne’s sister Lucretia married Benjamin’s brother Henry on August 5, 1852.] Anne was born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania in 1829. According to one source, John and Jane Nash are the parents of the following individuals:

1. Mary (Nash) Norris, born February 3, 1815; she married Thomas Norris; he died on July 11, 1906 and is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery.
3. Thomas Nash; he married Augusta; he died December 23, 1902 in Lima, Ohio.
7. Lucretia (Nash) Reece, born October 12, 1831; she married Benjamin Reece’s brother Henry.
8. Arthur Nash; he married Julia.
[U.S. Census records seem to contradict some of the names and birthdates of the previously listed children of John and Jane Nash. For example, see the 1850 U.S. Census record of the John Nash household. These discrepancies will need to be unraveled by a future researcher.]

Sisters Anne and Lucretia Nash were both born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Shortly after Lucretia’s birth in 1831, she would have accompanied her siblings and her parents in the family move from Fayette County, Pennsylvania to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Anne and Lucretia’s father, John Nash, owned land within section 28 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1833. Benjamin Reece’s father, William Reece, was listed as a landowner in 1833 in section 33 of Jackson Township, which would have been in close proximity to the land owned by John Nash in section 28. I believe that the family of John and Jane Nash resided near Benjamin Reece’s parents when Benjamin first came to Jackson Township in 1833 with his parents. The 1834 Jackson Township tax roll includes, in part, Thomas Nash and our William Reece. This Thomas Nash may be a brother to John Nash. William Reece and Thomas Nash subsequently became two of the first three trustees of Jackson Township.

It certainly appears that members of the Nash and Reece families knew one another for many years from their residency in or near Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; thus explaining how the daughters of John Nash met and subsequently married the sons of William Reece.

John Nash was born in Virginia and later immigrated to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. John Nash and Benjamin’s father, William Reece, were early pioneers of Jackson Township. John and his wife Jane were farmers in or near section 33 of Jackson Township. Specifically, it appears that the Nash farm was located in section 28 of the township. The Nash farm was located near the farm owned by Benjamin’s parents.

As recorded by the 1850 U.S. Census, on July 29, 1850, the household of John Nash resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio and consisted of: John, age 54, a farmer; Jane, age 44; Margaret, age 23; Lucretia, age 19; Thomas, age 16; Mary, age 10; William, age 8; Martha, age 6; and Rachel, age 4. Jane and the children were all born in Pennsylvania according to this census record. Some of these children are certainly John and Jane’s; the others appear to be grandchildren.

The 1850 U.S. Census record helps demonstrate how Benjamin Reece and his brother Henry ended up marrying sisters Anne and Lucretia Nash. Benjamin and Henry would have spent their childhoods growing up on their parent’s farm, and during that time they were neighbors to the Nash family. Benjamin, Henry, Anne and Lucretia would have known one another throughout their childhood years; thus explaining how the couples eventually married.

The marriage license of Benjamin Reece and Anne Nash states that both were from Allen County, Ohio at the time of their marriage. According to their marriage license, their marriage was performed by Minister John S. Kalb in the presence of David Wyar and Mary Nash. Mary Nash is probably Anne’s sister. How David Wyar is related, if at all, to either Benjamin or Anne is unknown.

It appears that shortly after Benjamin and Anne’s marriage, that they left Allen County, Ohio to begin their married lives together in the town of Van Wert, Van Wert County, Ohio. Van Wert County borders Allen County to the west.
Benjamin was 28 years old when he and Anne had their first child, Alice Jane, on June 22, 1849. The obituary of Alice Jane (Reece) Cook states that she was born in Van Wert, Van Wert County, Ohio.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that on August 8, 1850, that the household of Benjamin Reece (spelled Reis in this census) lived within the town of Van Wert, Ohio. As recorded by this census, Benjamin’s household on August 8, 1850 consisted of: himself, age 30; Ann, age 21; Alice, age 2; and Henry Reece, age 20. This census did not record how these individuals were related to Benjamin the head of the household, but one can assume that Ann was Benjamin’s wife; Alice was their daughter; and that Henry would have been Benjamin’s brother. This census recorded that Benjamin was a merchant at the time of the census. Henry Reece is listed in this census record as a laborer. I do not know why Henry was residing with his brother Benjamin at the time of this census.

Benjamin and Anne’s second child, Agnes Ida, appears to have been born in 1850. Sources indicate that Agnes was born on either November 1, 1850 or October 2, 1851. According to Daphane Hoover, both Alice and Agnes were born in Van Wert, Van Wert County, Ohio. Most sources indicate that Agnes was born in 1850. That being the case, her mother appears to have been pregnant with Agnes at the time of the 1850 U.S. Census.

Anne Reece died at some point between her daughter Agnes’ birth and October 21, 1858. Rumor has it that Anne may have died due to complications of childbirth in Van Wert, Van Wert County, Ohio. According to Daphane Hoover, there may have been another baby born to Anne who died in childbirth. Maybe this is the child that led to Anne’s death. I do not know. We know that Anne died sometime after August 8, 1850, which is the date the census that year was taken pertaining to her and Benjamin’s household. I speculate that Anne may have died due to complications of giving birth to her and Benjamin’s second child, Agnes.

Benjamin and Anne Reece are the parents of:

1. **Alice Jane (Reece) Cook**, born January 22, 1849.
2. **Agnes Ida (Reece) Cook**, born November 1, 1850.
Benjamin was recorded as being a personal property taxpayer in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1850. I assume that Benjamin resided within Allen County from the time he arrived in the county in 1833 up until he married in 1848. As has already been mentioned, Benjamin and his wife were living in Van Wert County by August 1850. It is possible that Benjamin owned land in Allen County in 1850 while residing within Van Wert County.

A quit claim deed dated January 18, 1854, reads that A.J. and Nancy Ward of Linn County, Iowa, quit claim their title interest to town lots number 21 and 22 in the town of Lafayette, Allen County, Ohio, for the sum of $10, to Benjamin H. (Hiatt) Reece. Nancy Ward would be Benjamin’s sister and A.J. (Abraham J. Ward) would be her husband. These properties were part of the estate of Benjamin and Nancy’s late parents. Benjamin’s brother and brother-in-law, David Reece and Rueben Church, were listed in this deed as being present during the conveyance of these properties. On January 18, 1854, A.J. and Nancy Ward personally appeared before Johnathan J. Nugent, Justice of the Peace of Linn County, Iowa, to personally acknowledge this as their voluntary act and deed.

According to another quit claim deed, Benjamin bought, for the sum of $8, the estate title interest of his brother David and his wife Kittorah Ann to town lots 21 and 22 in Lafayette, Ohio on January 18, 1854. David and Kittorah at that time were residents of Linn County, Iowa. This deed of conveyance was made in the presence of A.J. Ward and Reuben W. Church; they being Benjamin’s brother-in-laws.
At some point, Benjamin and his family moved from Ohio to Iowa. The earliest documentation that I have found that describes Benjamin as a resident of Iowa comes from a quit claim deed dated January 19, 1854. This deed of conveyance was between Benjamin and his brother-in-law and late sister, Rueben W. and Mary Church, and their minor heirs, of Linn County, Iowa. This deed reads that for the sum of $10, Benjamin bought the estate interest of Rueben and the minor heirs’ of Mary Church to Lafayette, Ohio town lots 21 and 22. This deed describes Benjamin as a resident of Buchanan County, Iowa at the time of this conveyance.

The above deed describing Benjamin as a resident of Iowa is contradicted by a quit claim deed dated April 17, 1854 between Benjamin and his brother Henry. This deed of quit claim concerned Benjamin’s estate title interest to a one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of his parent’s farm in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. On April 17, 1854, Benjamin sold his interest in the undivided one-eighth part (20 acres) in the northwest corner of section 33 to his brother Henry for $275. This deed describes Benjamin as a resident of Allen County, Ohio at that time. This deed reads that on April 17, 1854, Benjamin personally appeared before John Webster, Justice of the Peace of Allen County, Ohio, to acknowledge the above conveyance as his voluntary act and deed.

According to a deed dated December 6, 1854, Benjamin bought Lafayette, Ohio town lot #11 in the second south addition for the sum of $50. Lafayette is located in Allen County, Ohio. Benjamin purchased this lot from Barnet and Nancy Weyer of Allen County, Ohio. This deed describes Benjamin as a resident of Iowa at the time of this conveyance.

According to Daphane Hoover, Benjamin and his two little girls came to Troy Mills, Iowa in a wagon train with other relatives. It is not exactly known from where in Ohio Benjamin departed from or where he was living at the time he left. A letter written by Huldah (Reece) Kincade, a granddaughter of Benjamin’s brother David, describes Benjamin as having been a resident of Marion County, Ohio. Presumably, in her letter, Huldah was referring to Marion County as the place where Benjamin was residing at prior to his coming to Iowa. It is possible that Benjamin and his daughters were not living in Marion County immediately prior to their move to Iowa. They certainly were living in the general vicinity of Allen County, Ohio immediately prior to their move to Iowa.

Benjamin’s obituary states that he settled in Iowa in 1856 in the marble business. According to information acquired through Daphane Hoover, Benjamin and his daughters came to Iowa in 1856. I do not know exactly when Benjamin came to Iowa, with whom, or where he settled. According to Hoover, two sisters of Anne (Nash) Reece, Benjamin’s first wife, came to Iowa and settled in the Troy Mills area; these being: Mary (Nash) Norris and Lucretia (Nash) Reece. Lucretia came to the Troy Mills area with her husband Henry Reece in 1853.

At some point after arriving in Iowa, Benjamin’s brother Henry and his wife Lucretia raised Benjamin’s daughters, Alice and Agnes, at their home east of Troy Mills for an undetermined amount of time. Henry and Lucretia were probably raising Alice and Agnes because Benjamin had recently lost his wife and he more than likely needed help raising his daughters.
The 1856 census of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa recorded that Benjamin’s daughter, Alice, was then living within the household of his brother, Henry Reece, in Spring Grove Township. Henry’s household as recorded by the 1856 census included: Henry, age 27; wife Lucretia, age 24; son Hiatt, age 3, Newton, age 10; and Alice, age 6.

At the age of 38, Benjamin remarried to Mary Jane Beckner on October 21, 1858 in Marion, Linn County, Iowa. Their marriage was performed by Minister E.C. Byan. Mary Jane was approximately 18 years younger than Benjamin. According to one source, Mary Jane Beckner was born in 1838 in Missouri and is the daughter of John Beckner and Elizabeth Kentzer. U.S. Census records indicate that Mary Jane was born in Ohio in 1838. She is one of nine children of John and Elizabeth Beckner.

John Beckner was born in Franklin County, Pennsylvania on January 15, 1804 and died December 19, 1891. He married in 1826 to Miss Elizabeth Kentzer; they moved to Holmes County, Ohio in 1832 and to Marion, Iowa in 1845. They had seven daughters and two sons; all of whom were living by December 1891.

John and Elizabeth Beckner are the parents of:

1. **Hannah (Beckner) Hunter** of Oregon.
2. **Mrs. Parsons** of La Porte City, Iowa.
3. **Mrs. Nancy Scantons** of Cherokee, Iowa.
4. **Mrs. Houston** of Coggon, Iowa.
5. **Rebecca Beckner**, born March 10, 1832; died in October 1922. (Always lived with parents.)
7. **Pauline (Beckner) Bowman** of Crabapple, Iowa, born August 3, 1842; died September 28, 1898.
9. **Perry Beckner** of Marion, Iowa.

It appears that Benjamin and Mary Reece began their married lives together in the city of Marion, Iowa. They started a family of their own shortly after their marriage.

Benjamin and his second wife Mary are the parents of:

2. **Lewis Edward Reece**, born in October 1861.

Pauline Gertrude Reece was more than likely named after her mother’s sister, Pauline (Beckner) Bowman. Lewis Edward Reece was more than likely named after his father’s brother, William Lewis Reece.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 18, 1860, that the household of Benjamin Reece then resided within the city of Marion, Marion Township, Linn County, Iowa. This census listed the Benjamin Reece household as then consisting of: himself, age 40, a peddler from Ohio; Mary J., age 22; and Paulina G., age 10 months. This
census recorded that Mary, Benjamin’s wife, was born in Ohio; and that Paulina, Benjamin’s daughter, was born in Iowa. This census also recorded that at the time of this census, Benjamin’s post office was Marion and that his real estate was valued at $1,200.

It is reported that Benjamin and Mary’s son, Lewis, was born in Marion, Iowa. Census records list his birth as having taken place in October 1861.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that Benjamin’s daughter, Alice J., was then living with her uncle, Henry Reece. The 1860 census lists Henry’s household at that time as consisting of: himself, age 30; wife Lucretia, age 37; daughter Rebecca, age 5; son Lewis A., age 3; Newton S., age 15; and Alice J., age 11. This census tells us that even after Benjamin remarried in 1858 that his daughter Alice continued to live with her uncle Henry.

To date, I have yet to find Benjamin’s daughter Agnes in either the 1856 Iowa or 1860 U.S. censuses. I do not know where Agnes was residing at during those census years.

Benjamin’s daughter, Alice Jane Reece, married a man named Edmund Charles Cook on November 29, 1868 in Marion, Iowa. Records indicate that Edmund was 22 and that Alice was 19 when they wed. Their minister was a J. Fay.

Benjamin’s other daughter from his first marriage, Agnes Ida Reece, married a Charles C. Cook Jr. on December 2, 1869 at Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa.

Edmund and Charles Cook Jr. are brothers and sons of Charles Cook Sr. and Mary Swift who had six children; their first two children were born in Lincolnshire, England. The Cooks immigrated to America in the early 1840’s. Their other four children, including Edmund and Charles, were born in New York-Edmund in 1846 and Charles in 1849. Charles is reported to have been born in Williamsville, Sussex County, New York. The Cook family came to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa in 1857. The Cooks settled on the west side of the Wapsipinicon River and south of Troy Mills.

Sources indicate that both Alice and Agnes Reece were raised by their uncle and aunt, Henry and Lucretia Reece of near Troy Mills, Iowa. Alice’s obituary states that she joined the Methodist Protestant Church at Spring Grove when she was about 15 years of age. Alice and her sister Agnes appear to have continued to live near Troy Mills after their father established a new home of his own with his second wife. It is unknown whether or not Alice or Agnes ever moved back into their father’s home after he remarried. From the time that Alice and Agnes were raised by their uncle and aunt, both women lived the remainder of their lives in the vicinity of Troy Mills. Census and other records indicate that they and their respective husbands lived in the vicinity of Troy Mills their entire lives.

Edmund and Alice (Reece) Cook are the parents of:

1. Mary Evaline (Cook) Krapf, born February 10, 1870; died December 19, 1905.
2. Lilly May Cook, born January 8, 1872; died April 27, 1874.
5. Arthur Franklin Cook, born January 18, 1883; died April 9, 1934.
The 1870 U.S. Census record tells us that the Benjamin Reece household was still residing within Marion, Iowa in 1870. Benjamin and his family do not appear to have lived in the same home between 1860 and 1870.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on August 8, 1870, that Benjamin’s household then consisted of: himself, age 50; Mary, age 33; Gertrude, age 10; Louis, age 9; Mary White, age 21; Allie Spalding, age 22; and Relta Tomlinson, age 20. Mary, age 33, would be Benjamin’s wife; Gertrude would be their daughter; and Louis would be their son. Mary White, Allie Spalding, and Relta Tomlinson are all listed in this census record as school teachers, and as all being born in Pennsylvania. These teachers were evidently boarders in Benjamin’s house at the time of this census.

Benjamin’s occupation, as listed in the 1870 U.S. Census, is that of a tombstone agent. His wife Mary is listed in this census record as then ‘keeping house.’ Their daughter Gertrude and son Louis were both listed by this census as at school; having attended school during the year. This census also recorded that Benjamin’s post office was Marion, Iowa at that time.

Census and other records indicate that Benjamin and his family lived in Marion, Iowa from 1860 up until 1876. They later moved to Anamosa, Iowa. According to Benjamin’s obituary, he and his wife Mary lived in Anamosa from 1876 to 1901. Benjamin worked in the marble business according to his obituary.
The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that in June 1880, the household of Benjamin Reece resided in Anamosa, Jones County, Iowa. This census recorded that Benjamin’s household at that time consisted of: himself, age 60, a stonecutter; wife Mary J., age 42, a housewife; daughter Gelty (Gertrude), age 20; son Edward, age 18; and daughter Jenny, age 8. I believe that Jenny is Benjamin’s granddaughter; the daughter of Benjamin’s daughter Agnes and her husband Charles C. Cook Jr. According to this census record, Gelty, Edward, and Jenny were all born in Iowa and were single at the time. Jenny is listed in this census as having attended school within the census year. Jenny’s date of birth is reported as being May 20, 1872.

Charles and Agnes (Reece) Cook are the parents of:

1. **Edith Ann (Cook) Buckingham/Scott/Yockey**, born October 3, 1870; died February 20, 1949.
2. **Nettie Cook**, 1871-1875.
4. **William (Willie) Cook**, born August 9, 1873; died August 31, 1882.
5. **Sylvia Mae (Cook) Andrews/Sorenson**, born June 27, 1878 or June 22, 1880; died March 14, 1952.

There is a rumor that Charles and Agnes lost a baby and that they buried it on his parent’s lot. I assume that this is a reference to his parent’s cemetery lot, which would be located in Troy Mills Cemetery. This rumor may be in reference to Charles and Agnes’ daughter Nettie or possibly to a sixth child.

Sources indicate that Benjamin’s daughter, Agnes Ida (Reece) Cook, died at the age of 32 of typhoid fever during the winter of 1881-82. One source lists Agnes’ date of death as November 10, 1881. Charles and Agnes would have been living in the vicinity of Troy Mills at the time of her death. Agnes is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery. I believe that when Agnes died, that her daughter Jenny then went to live with her grandparents, Benjamin and Mary Reece, at their home in Anamosa, Iowa. It is reported that in addition to living with her grandparents at their home in Anamosa, that Jenny also lived with them when they lived in Marion, Iowa.

According to several sources, when Jenny’s mother Agnes died, Agnes’ husband Charles left Iowa and moved to the Washington Territory; leaving his children in Iowa. Charles remarried while in the Washington Territory and eventually returned to the Troy Mills area. The Walker, Iowa Newspaper reported on December 6, 1883 that... *Charles Cook returned from Washington Territory and brings a wife.*

The Iowa Census of 1885 listed Charles Cook as then a 35 year old well-driller, residing within Spring Grove Township; his residency at that time would have been near Troy Mills. At the time of this census, Charles’ household then included his wife Sarah, age 24, and Edith, age 14. Edith would have been Charles’ daughter from his marriage to Agnes Ida Reece. So, at some point after returning to Troy Mills, Charles and his new wife took in at least one of his children from his previous marriage.

It is my understanding, that at the time, the locals around Troy Mills did not think highly of Charles Cook for leaving his children and moving to the Washington Territory...
after his wife’s death, but that’s another story. The children of Charles and Agnes Cook subsequently went to live with other families after Agnes’ death. Son William (Willie) was adopted by a Cobe family living in Kansas. Daughter Jenny went to live with her grandfather Benjamin. Daughter Edith appears to have moved in with a Whisennand family. And daughter Sylvia was taken in by the Elijah Biggs family. It appears that all of these children, with the exception of Willie, were taken in by families living near the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa.

Our understanding of what happened to the children of Charles and Agnes (Reece) Cook after her death, in part, comes from a great-granddaughter of Charles and Agnes’ named Martina Thompson of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In a conversation with Thompson in November 2003, she told me that it was her understanding that her great-aunt, Jennie L. (Cook) Arthur, went to live with Jennie’s grandfather, Benjamin Reece, after her mother’s death. Thompson stated to me that Jennie was raised by Benjamin and that she probably stayed with him until she married.

The family stories pertaining to Agnes’ death, her husband’s departure and the fate of their children seem to be supported by a biography of the Elijah Biggs Family that was written in December 1937 by C.W. Biggs, the son of Elijah and Mary Jane Biggs. C.W. Biggs wrote the following:

My father had always wanted a girl in the family, so one of the neighbors lost his wife and had three [sic] small children. They were very poor so my father and mother decided they would take the baby girl (Sylvia) about one and one half years old and give her a home. [Sylvia may have actually been a small baby at the time.] One cold stormy winter night, my father went across the fields and carried this baby girl over to our house, where she made her home until she was married and did not know but what she was the daughter of our father and mother until she was nearly grown. Her parents were named Cook, and the children at school knew of the circumstances and called her Cookie, and she came home from school and asked my mother why they called her Cookie, and my mother had to tell her the truth. She was always like a child of my father and mother and sister to my brother and me. She is now married and lives at Walker, Iowa and has two children, Carl Andrews and Marie Andrews Waterbury.

One story is that Elijah Biggs brought Sylvia Mae Cook to his home on horseback in the middle of the night. Elijah was a farmer; he farmed in section 20 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Elijah and his wife’s home was located within section 20. It appears that Elijah came to Spring Grove Township in 1852 or 1855.

Charles Cook Jr. died on November 8, 1928 in Linn County, Iowa. Charles undoubtedly would have been living near Troy Mills when he died; his death apparently occurred on the Cook family farm. One source states that Charles died at home and was a farmer at the time of his death. Charles is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery. His obituary reads:

The funeral services of Charles C. Cook, an old time resident of this community, was held at the Christian Church Sunday afternoon at 2 o’clock, Rev. J.Q. Robinson of
Walker officiating. Burial was in the Troy Mills Cemetery. Music was furnished by Mrs. Belva Graves and Mrs. Effie Murphy of Walker, with Mauve Murphy at the piano. Pall bearers were six nephews, Lorenzo D. Cook, William C. Cook, John H. Cook, George Cook, Arthur Cook and Charles W. Cook. Charles C. Cook, son of Charles C. and Mary Cook, was born in Waterloo, New York, July 4, 1849, and died November 8, 1928, at the ripe old age of 79 years, 4 months and 4 days. His parents moved to Iowa in 1854 and settled on the farm which includes the present site of east of Troy Mills; here he grew to manhood and was where he has spent the greater part of his life.

He was united in marriage with Agnes Reece in 1869, who departed this life in 1879 [sic]. Five children were born to them, four daughters and one son, one daughter, Nettie dying at the age of four and the son William, at the age of nine. Of the three remaining daughters, Mrs. Edith Scott lives at Independence, Mrs. Mae Andrews near Walker, and Mrs. Jennie Arthur residence not at this time known. There are four grandchildren and eight great grandchildren living. The grandchildren are: Mrs. Fred Floyd of Troy Mills; Mrs. Jennie McGuire of Ryan; Carl Andrews of Walker; and Mrs. Marie Waterbury, also from near Walker. The deceased was the last of a family of four brothers and two sisters. He himself had been blessed with health and strength thru nearly all of his long life, only within the past two years suffering the loss of memory and his final illness was but brief.

So has passed one more of that hardy pioneer stock to whom their descendants owe a debt of gratitude and of honor. The men and women who dared the wilderness and dangers and discomforts of life to tame and subdue what has now become one of the fairest among our heritage of states. Verily they have their rewards. Those from a distance to attended the funeral were Mrs. Edith Scott of Independence.....[the rest of this obituary is missing.]

Charles and Agnes Cooks’ daughter, Jennie, married in the year of 1898. A newspaper article regarding the marriage of Jennie Reece to Harry G. Arthur reads as follows:

April 27, 1898-On Wednesday evening at the home of the bride on Main Street, Mr. Harry G. Arthur, of Edgerton, Wisconsin was united in marriage with Miss Jennie Reece, Rev. W.E. Glanville officiating. The wedding march was played by Mrs. F.S. Carpenter. The following guests witnessed the ceremony: Mr. and Mrs. B.H. Reece, Miss Gertie Reece, Mr. E.L. Reece, Mrs. I.H. Brasted, Mrs. D. Chadwick, Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Miller; Mr. and Mrs. F.S. Carpenter, and Mrs. Hoskinson. The newly married couple left on the 10:32 train for Edgerton, their future home, where Mr. Arthur is a general merchant. Many handsome presents were received, and hardy good wishes were extended.

The above reference to the bride’s home on Main Street must be a reference to the home of Jennie’s grandfather, Benjamin Hiatt Reece, who lived on Main Street in
Anamosa, Iowa. From the above article we know that Benjamin and Mary Reece attended Jennie’s marriage as did their daughter Gertie and son Lewis.

Harry and Jennie Arthur’s marriage certificate reads that Jennie’s maiden name was Reece; so, evidently Benjamin adopted her when her mother died. Jennie had apparently been living with her grandparents, Benjamin and Mary Reece, at their home on Main Street in Anamosa from approximately 1880 until her marriage in 1898. Jennie died in Madison, Wisconsin on November 11, 1947. She and her husband Harry are buried in Edgerton, Wisconsin.

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that on June 19, 1900, that the household of Benjamin Reese resided in the city of Anamosa, Fairview Township, Jones County, Iowa. As recorded by this census, Benjamin’s household on June 19, 1900 consisted of: himself, age 80, married 34 years; wife Mary J., born in October 1837, age 62, married 34 years; daughter Gertrude, born in 1869, age 30, single; and son Lewis E., born in November 1871, age 28, single. This census is evidently wrong on the years of birth of Benjamin’s children, Pauline and Lewis. Census years prior to 1900 list Pauline and Lewis’ years of birth as being approximately 1860 (Pauline) and 1861 (Lewis). This census lists that Mary J. Reese was the mother of 2 children, both living at the time of this census.

No member of the Benjamin Reese household was listed with any occupation in the 1900 U.S. Census. Benjamin was surely retired by that time. This census recorded that the Benjamin Reese household was living in a home that they were renting at the time of the census.

Benjamin Reece died at the age of 80 at 9:15 p.m., Wednesday, May 1, 1901 at his home in Anamosa, Jones County, Iowa. According to Benjamin’s obituary, which appeared in an Anamosa paper, during the last eight years of his life his health failed him, and during the last two months of his life he was detained to his room. His obituary reads that he was conscious until he fell into his final sleep at the ripe age of nearly 81 years. Benjamin’s obituary describes him as: for many years being a well-known and beloved figure on our streets; he was a good citizen, widely respected, of kind heart and serenely even in disposition.

Benjamin’s funeral service was held at 2:30, Friday afternoon, May 3, 1901 from his residence on Main Street in Anamosa, Iowa. The funeral was conducted by Rev. W.E. Glanville; he was no doubt the same minister who married Jennie Reece to Harry Arthur. Appropriate music at Benjamin’s funeral service was furnished by a choir. Benjamin’s burial took place at Riverside Cemetery, Jones County, Anamosa, Iowa. His pall bearers were W.A. Cunningham, E.M. Harvey, I.H. Brasted, A. Heitchen, William Port and W.O. Jackell. Col. E.J. Wood was master of ceremonies. Oddly enough, Benjamin’s tombstone reads: BENJAMIN REESE. I do not know if somewhere along the line if Benjamin changed the spelling of his last name or just what the story is behind its spelling on his stone. Someone evidently spelled his name wrong on the stone.

Benjamin’s obituary tells us that he was survived by two sisters: one in Kansas and one in California; and by three brothers: one in Ohio and the two present at his funeral, David and Henry Reece of Coggon, Iowa. Benjamin’s sister in Kansas would have been Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton. His sister in California would have
been Nancy (Reece) Ward/Johnston. Benjamin’s brother in Ohio would have been William Lewis Reece.

Benjamin’s obituary reads that he was survived by his wife, three daughters and one son. Benjamin’s obituary lists his son, Ed Reece, as a resident of Valley Junction; a town which I believe was located near Des Moines, Iowa. This obituary reference to three daughters having survived Benjamin must be wrong. As I have it, only two daughters survived Benjamin; they being: Alice and Pauline. At the time of Benjamin’s death, his daughter Pauline Gertrude Reece had not married; daughter Agnes was deceased; and daughter Alice was a widow living near Troy Mills. Perhaps, the third daughter listed in Benjamin’s obituary as a surviving daughter may have been a reference to his granddaughter, Jennie L. (Cook) Arthur.

To my knowledge, no one knows what happened to Benjamin’s wife Mary after his death. She may have remarried and or moved away with her grown children. A search of the 1910 U.S. Census records of Anamosa, Iowa failed to find Mary living there at that time. It is possible that after Benjamin’s death, that Mary may have moved in with, or near, one of her children; where and with whom is unknown. It is entirely possible that Mary may have remarried by 1910.

Benjamin’s daughter, Pauline ‘Gertrude’ Reece, is recorded as having purchased town lot number 11 in blocks 28 and 29 of Roper and Boardman’s subdivision of east Anamosa in October 1890. She bought this lot from Abraham and Pauline Bowman, who would be her uncle and aunt. Gertrude sold this lot in January 1907. It is possible that Gertrude may have left Anamosa at about the time she sold lot number 11, which may have been where her home was located. The deed record which recorded Gertrude’s sell of lot #11 reads that she was unmarried in 1907 at the time she sold this lot.

According to Daphane Hoover, Benjamin’s son, Lewis E. (Edward) Reece, is found in the 1900 U.S. Census record in Valley Junction, Walnut Township, Polk County, Iowa. Lewis’ household during the 1900 census would have been living near Des Moines. One source states that Ed Reece, Benjamin’s son, was a resident of Des Moines at one time. The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that Lewis E. Reece was then 38 years old, a railroad conductor, married for 15 years; his wife Jessie L. is recorded in this census as 35 years old and having been born in October 1864; their son Benjamin David Reece is recorded in this census as having been born in July 1885 in Iowa. According to one source, Lewis E. Reece was not found in the 1910 U.S. Census residing in Valley Junction. This implies that he and his family probably left the Des Moines area sometime after 1900; where they moved to is yet unknown.

Alice Jane (Reece) Cook, the daughter of Benjamin Hiatt Reece, died at the age of 70 on December 26, 1919 at her long time home near Troy Mills in Linn County, Iowa. Alice and her husband Edmund are buried in Troy Mills Cemetery.

Benjamin Reece and his two wives are the parents of:

1. Alice Jane Reece, born January 22, 1849; died December 26, 1919.
2. Agnes Ida Reece, born November 1, 1850; died November 10, 1881.
4. Lewis Edward Reece, born in October 1861.
Alice Jane (Reece) Cook and son George.
Elizabeth Reece
4th child of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece

Elizabeth 'Lizzie' Reece

Our knowledge of Elizabeth's life is not as complete as I would like it to be. Her biographical history is one of the most incomplete of any direct descendant of William and Rebecca Reece. Only the life of her brother Alfred is less understood. As a result, the reader will find in this biography numerous speculations that I make regarding Elizabeth's life.

Elizabeth's date of birth is unknown. She was probably named after her paternal grandmother, Elizabeth Reece. Not surprisingly, Elizabeth's friends and family called her Lizzie.

Elizabeth would have been born in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. My research leads me to believe that she was born in 1821 or there about. Several genealogists have suggested that her birth year is approximately 1818. I believe that she was actually born in 1821. I primarily have based Elizabeth's birth year on census records which consistently place her year of birth as 1821.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1830, Elizabeth would have been residing with her parents and siblings in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. The 1830 U.S. Census recorded that several individuals were then residing under the household of William Rees, Elizabeth's father. Unfortunately, this census did not record names or how
everybody under William's household was related to him. One of the individuals listed as residing within the William Rees household in 1830 was a female between 5-10 years of age. This girl appears very likely to have been Elizabeth.

Elizabeth would have spent her early childhood years in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio; presumably along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek with her parents on their farm.

Elizabeth would have been approximately 12 years old in 1833, when she accompanied her parents and siblings, in the family move from her childhood home in Highland County to Allen County, Ohio. Upon arriving in Allen County in 1833, her parents homesteaded 160 acres in section 33 of Jackson Township. Her mother Rebecca died shortly after the family moved to Allen County; it is believed that she died around 1834-35. Elizabeth surely would have spent the years immediately after her mother's death, up until 1837, living with her father and her siblings on the family farm in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

As listed by the Allen County, Ohio Historical Society in 1990, county marriage records list an Elizabeth Reece as having married a P.Jes Walton Church on August 17, 1837 in Allen County, Ohio. There is no doubt in my mind that this Elizabeth Reece is in fact the subject of this biography. Assuming that Elizabeth was born in 1821, she would have been approximately 16 years old at the time of her marriage to P.W. Church. He would have been approximately 28 when they wed.
A marriage record of Allen County, Ohio lists that a Walton Church married an Elizabeth Reece in August 1837. This record recorded that their marriage was performed by Justice of the Peace Adam White. This would be Peres Walton Church and our Elizabeth Reece in this marriage record. Justice Adam White performed the marriage of Peres’ mother to Elizabeth’s father in September 1837. White also performed the marriage of Peres’ brother, Reuben W. Church, to Elizabeth’s sister, Mary, in May 1836. Adam White would no doubt have been a family friend to the Reece family, and he certainly would have known Elizabeth’s father quite well since both men were justices of the peace.

Peres Walton Church was born on September 2, 1809 in or near Dunham, Vermont or Quebec, Canada. At some point in history the U.S./Canadian border was changed and what was Dunham, Vermont is now Dunham, Quebec, Canada; thus, explaining the discrepancy on the reported place of birth of Peres W. Church. His parents are Reuben Church II and Mary ‘Polly’ Walton. As has already been mentioned in the biography of William David Reece, Elizabeth’s father, Polly married William in 1837. Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells/Reece would have been a stepmother and mother-in-law to our subject, Elizabeth Reece. Polly became Elizabeth’s stepmother less than a month after Elizabeth’s marriage to Polly’s son, Peres Walton Church.

Peres and Elizabeth Church appear to have started a family of their own with the birth of their first child, William, in about 1840. As reported by at least one descendant of Peres and Elizabeth’s, their second child, Mariah Jane Church, was born on May 5, 1845 in Allen County, Ohio. Based upon this information, it appears that Peres and Elizabeth began their married lives together in Allen County. However, shortly after Mariah’s birth, Peres and his young family would have moved to Auglaize County, Ohio. Between 1845 and 1850, Peres and Elizabeth appear to have become the parents of three more children; namely: James, David and Rebecca.

Peres and Elizabeth Church were residing in the town of Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio on July 15, 1850. The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that on July 15, 1850, that the household of Peres Walton Church consisted of: himself, age 40; Elizabeth, age 29; William, age 10; Mariah, age 5; James, age 3; David, age 3; Rebecca A., age 9 months; and John Church, age 33. This census does not tell us how all of these individuals are related to one another, but one can safely assume that Elizabeth is Peres’ wife and the subject of this biography. The five children recorded in this census record would be Peres and Elizabeth’s. The 33 year old John Church listed in this census would be John B. Church, Peres’ brother. Peres and Elizabeth were apparently taking care of his brother John at the time of this census because he was evidently mentally challenged. This would explain why John was living with his brother and sister-in-law at the time of this census. We can assume that John B. Church was mentally challenged because the 1860 and 1870 U.S. Census records both list him as ‘idiotic’.

If the 1850 U.S. Census record pertaining to the household of Peres W. Church is correct, Elizabeth was born in the year of 1821. This census leads one to believe that Peres and Elizabeth’s sons, James and David Church, are twin brothers. This census recorded that Peres was born in Vermont and that Elizabeth, and the children, were all born in Ohio.
The U.S. Census record of 1850 lists Peres’ occupation at that time as that of a mason. His brother John is listed in this census record as a laborer. Peres’ real estate is listed in this census record as being valued at $550. In addition to the individuals already mentioned, the household of Peres Church at the time of the 1850 U.S. Census included a man of 53 years of age named Joseph Kayiettas, who was a mill wright by occupation, and a 19 year old woman named Jemima Godfrey. We do not know how or if Joseph and Jemima are related to Peres Church. Nor do we know why they were then residing within Peres’ household. My suspicion is that Joseph and Jemima were boarders in Peres’ home at the time of this census.

My research indicates that Peres and Elizabeth Church are the parents of:

2. **Mariah Jane (Church) Zimmerman**, born May 5, 1845; died April 17, 1916.
5. **Rebecca Ann Church**, born in October 1849.

Elizabeth would have been approximately 29 years old when her father died on September 20, 1850. She and her husband Peres appear to have still been living in Wapakoneta, Ohio at the time of her father’s death. Elizabeth and Peres would have been living about 12 miles southwest of her father and stepmother’s residence at the time her father died.

Peres Walton Church, Elizabeth’s husband, was recorded as the clerk at the estate sale of her late father’s held on March 15, 1851 in Allen County, Ohio.

Within a year after her father’s death, Elizabeth’s stepmother and mother-in-law, Mary Reece, died at the age of 61 on April 25, 1851 in Allen County, Ohio. It is very plausible that Mary died on the family farm in section 33 of Jackson Township.

Elizabeth and her family were probably still living in Wapakoneta, Ohio at the time of Mary’s death.

Within three years after the deaths of Elizabeth’s father and stepmother, her husband Peres died. As recorded in the family bible that once belonged to Peres’ parents, he died on February 12, 1853. Peres would have been 43 years old when he died. He is probably buried in Auglaize County, Ohio near the town of Wapakoneta, which is where he and his family were probably living at or near when he died.

The Church family bible mentioned previously has an entry that lists the name of Rebecca Ann Church. She would be a daughter of Peres Church and Elizabeth Reece. This bible also contains an entry with the name of Benjamin H. Church. He may be a son of Peres and Elizabeth Church. The bible entry reads that Benjamin H. Church died on September 20, 1853. It would make sense that if Benjamin is the son of Peres and Elizabeth Church, that she would have named him after her brother, Benjamin Hiatt Reece.

Elizabeth would have remarried thirteen months after the death of her husband Peres. Allen County, Ohio marriage records list a John Walton as having married an Elizabeth Church on March 11, 1854 in Allen County, Ohio. Their marriage was
performed by Harrison Maltbie, who was evidently a county magistrate. I believe that this Elizabeth Church listed in Allen County marriage records is our subject, the former Elizabeth (Reece) Church. Assuming that Elizabeth was born in 1821, she would have been approximately 33 years old when she married John Walton in 1854.

It is unknown where Elizabeth and her children resided at between the death of Peres and her subsequent second marriage to John Walton. She and her children may have continued to reside in or near Wapakoneta in Auglaize County, Ohio during that period of time. Or, it is quite plausible, that she and her children may have moved to Allen County after Peres’ death to be closer to family, which might explain why she and John Walton are reported to have been married in that county.

It seems to me that Elizabeth remarried relatively quickly after Peres’ death. One would assume that Elizabeth must have been under a great deal of pressure to remarry in order to support herself and her children.

![Photo of Elizabeth Reece](image)

This photo of Elizabeth Reece appears to have been taken when she was in her 30’s. She was probably married to her first husband, Peres W. Church, when this photo was taken. The front of this photo reads: *Our Cousin.*
Elizabeth’s second husband, John Walton, was born on May 31, 1831 near Lima, Allen County, Ohio. John Walton would have been a nephew to Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells/Reece, who married Elizabeth’s father in 1837. John Walton’s father would be John B. Walton; he being a brother to Polly. It is recorded that John B. Walton was born on September 8, 1799 in Dunham, Vermont, which is now Dunham, Quebec, Canada. Sources indicate that John B. Walton married a Mary ‘Polly’ Flemming in 1821 in Madison County, Ohio.

Sources indicate that John B. and Mary Walton are the parents of:

1. **Sarah Emily (Walton) Lawrence/Mote**, born February 8, 1824 near Lima, Ohio; died March 24, 1886 in or near Weeping Water, Cass County, Nebraska.
3. **David Walton**, born December 10, 1828 in Lima, Ohio; died March 26, 1898 in Allen County, Ohio.
5. **Lydia (Walton) Sibold**, born in 1832 in Lima, Ohio.
6. **Nelson Walton**, born December 10, 1836 in Lima, Ohio; died on May 12, 1898.
8. **James M. Walton**, born March 10, 1840 in Lima, Ohio; died August 6, 1930. He is buried in Holt County, Nebraska.
9. **Pierce (or Peres) Walton**, born December 10, 1840 in Allen County, Ohio; died October 21, 1917 in or near Junction City, Kansas. *He is said not to be a son of John B. and Mary Walton. It is said that Pierce was raised as a son. John B. Walton’s will describes Pierce as a son. Pierce is buried in Junction City, Kansas at Highland Cemetery.*
10. **Samuel James Walton**, born November 22, 1842 in Lima, Ohio; died about 1860 in or near Des Moines, Iowa. He is buried in Des Moines.

John B. and Mary Walton may have been parents of an eleventh child; her name being Nancy. No further information is known about her. It is reported that all of John B. and Mary Walton’s children were born in Allen County, Ohio. Many of their children are reported to have been born in or near the town of Lima, which is in Allen County.

We know from the 1840 U.S. Census record that John B. and Mary Walton would have then been residing near our subject’s father and stepmother. As recorded by this census, at the time of the census, a John Walton household was recorded as then residing in close proximity to a William Reece, Alfred Reece and Reuben Church in Allen County, Ohio. This John Walton must have been John B. Walton, William Reece’s brother-in-law. This William Reece is the father of our subject. This Alfred Reece is our subject’s brother and Reuben Church is a brother-in-law to our subject. All four of the above households resided within Jackson Township in 1840. The family of John B. Walton is reported by one source to have lived at some point in time within Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio, which was not too far from the farm owned by William
Reece, located in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. We know that the John B. Walton household resided within Jackson Township in 1840.

According to genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams, John B. Walton and family were residing within Rush Township, Champaign County, Ohio during the U.S. Census of 1830. So, we know from census records that at some point between 1830 and 1840, that John B. Walton and his family moved from Champaign County to Allen County, Ohio.

Allen County, Ohio tax records tell us that John B. Walton was a landowner within section 29 of Jackson Township as early as 1832. It is recorded that John owned the E½ SE¼ of Section 29 of Jackson Township on September 12, 1832. At that time, John B. Walton would have been residing near the land that later became the farm owned by William Reece in section 33 of Jackson Township. It also appears that John B. Walton and William Reece lived in the vicinity of John’s brother, Joseph G. Walton, who owned land in section 24 of Jackson Township. These tax records are additional pieces of evidence that support my belief that the John B. Walton family resided near and knew the William Reece family for a considerable amount of time, which ultimately led to the marriages of two of John B. Walton’s sons to our subject, Elizabeth Reece.

From the 1840 U.S. Census record, we know that John [B.J Walton was then the head of a household with what appears to be a wife between 40-50 years of age and eight children. One of these eight children was surely son John who eventually married our Elizabeth Reece in 1854.

As recorded by the 1850 U.S. Census, on July 29, 1850, the household of John B. Walton lived in close proximity to the household of William Reece, Elizabeth’s father. At that time both men were farmers and resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. This John B. Walton would certainly have to be William Reece’s brother-in-law, his second wife’s brother. If this census record is correct, which I do not question, John B. Walton was born in Vermont in 1799. At the time of this census, John was a farmer with real estate valued at $1,000. The Walton farm at the time of this census was no doubt located near section 33 of Jackson Township.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that the John B. Walton household on July 29, 1850 included: himself, age 51; Polly, age 48; David, age 21; Lydia, age 18; John, age 16; Nelson, age 12; William, age 10; Pearce, age 8; and James, age 6. John, age 16, found within this census record, would have to be the same John Walton that eventually married our Elizabeth (Reece) Church on March 11, 1854. I do not believe that John’s age as recorded in this census is correct.

John Walton would have been 22 years old when he married our Elizabeth (Reece) Church. She would have been approximately 33. John and Elizabeth would have known one another most of their lives prior to their marriage. John certainly knew Elizabeth and her family for a number of years from having lived in such close proximity to them during his early life. This conclusion is supported by documentation; namely, the U.S. Census records of 1840 and 1850. Given the knowledge we have that the Waltons and Reeces knew one another, were neighbors to one another during John and Elizabeth’s childhoods, and that John Walton is a nephew to Elizabeth’s stepmother, would certainly explain how it came to be that John and Elizabeth married after the death of her first husband, Peres W. Church.
I would assume that when John and Elizabeth married, that she and her children from her first marriage would have all lived under the household of John Walton. It appears likely that John and Elizabeth resided within Allen County, Ohio upon their marriage.

A quit claim deed dated June 24, 1854, between the former Elizabeth Reece and her brother Henry, definitively proves that she was the wife of John Walton at the time of this deed. This deed reads that Henry Reece paid John and Elizabeth Walton $275, and in doing so, the Waltons quit claim to their title interest to an undivided one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of the northwest quarter of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. These twenty acres would have been Elizabeth’s one-eighth equal inheritance of her parent’s farm. These twenty acres would have been part of the 160 acre farm that Elizabeth moved onto as a child with her siblings and parents in 1833. This deed reads that at the time of this conveyance, that John and Elizabeth Walton were residents of Allen County, Ohio. This deed specifically reads that John and Elizabeth personally appeared before Allen County, Ohio Justice of the Peace John Webster, to acknowledge the signing and sealing of the above named conveyance to be their voluntary act.

It appears that John and Elizabeth Walton were residents of Allen County, Ohio up until their eventual move to Iowa. It would appear that shortly after June 24, 1854, that John and Elizabeth left Allen County to relocate in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. They more than likely departed from the town of Lima in a wagon train bound for Spring Grove Township. If federal census records are correct, it would appear that Elizabeth may have been pregnant at the time she moved to Iowa, because census and cemetery records indicate that her son George was born in Iowa in 1854.

By the early 1850’s, Elizabeth had two brothers and a sister living in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, near the town of Troy Mills. According to genealogist Daphane Hoover, a John Walton lived in Linn County, Iowa in 1853. This would have to be a reference to John B. Walton, the father of Elizabeth’s second husband, John Walton. At some point between 1850 and 1860, John B. Walton and his wife Polly moved from Allen County, Ohio to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa.

Since the 1860 U.S. Census listed John B. Walton’s post office as being Spring Grove, Iowa, we know that John and his household resided near Elizabeth’s siblings at the time of this census. Specifically, John would have been living near Elizabeth’s brother, David Reece, when the 1860 census was taken. In 1860, David would have been living east of Troy Mills within Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa.

John B. and Polly Walton settled a short distance east of Troy Mills with the Reeces, Churchs, Swaims, Leathermans and Flemmings. John’s son David moved to Des Moines, presumably from Ohio, and later settled near the Ida Carson farm three miles east of Troy Mills. John and Polly were farmers and lived in close proximity to Elizabeth’s siblings. Given the fact that relatives of both John and Elizabeth Walton were residing within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa by the early 1850’s, seems to draw a logical conclusion that John and Elizabeth must have located here from Ohio as well.

It may be that John and Elizabeth Walton accompanied his parents or her siblings to the Troy Mills area. It is entirely possible that a good share of the members of the
Walton, Reece and associated families, may have come to the Troy Mills area together, at the same time, from Ohio in a wagon train.

John Walton's parents, John B. and Polly Walton, and his siblings, Mary and David, are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery east of Troy Mills, Iowa; as are many members of Elizabeth's family. Polly died near Troy Mills in 1866. John died near Troy in 1869.

John and Elizabeth Walton would have had their first child, George, shortly after their marriage. He was reportedly born in Iowa. Their second child, Nancy, was reportedly born in Iowa as well. Both children were probably born near Troy Mills.

We can make the assumption based upon census records that at some point between 1856 and February 1860, that John and Elizabeth Walton moved from Iowa to Davis County, Kansas, which is where the 1860 U.S. Census recorded them as residing at on August 21, 1860. Elizabeth and her family would have certainly moved to Kansas by wagon. John and Elizabeth's third child, Henry, was reportedly born in Kansas in February 1860.

John and Elizabeth Walton are the parents of:

1. George W. Walton, born November 15, 1854; died October 17, 1870.

We know that by August 21, 1860, that John and Elizabeth Walton had moved from Iowa and settled in Davis County, Kansas. According to the 1860 U.S. Census, on August 21, 1860, the household of J. Walton consisted of: himself, age 28; E. Walton, age 39; M.J Church, age 17; J. Church, age 15; George Walton, age 6; N.E. Walton, age 4; and H.H. Walton, age 6 months. Unfortunately, this census enumerator did not record the full names of these individuals. However, we can extrapolate that this is in fact the household of John Walton, his wife Elizabeth and their children; namely: Mariah Jane Church, James Church, George Walton, Nancy (Elizabeth?) Walton and Henry (Hiatt?) Walton. Mariah and James are from Elizabeth's first marriage to Peres Church.

John Walton was a farmer in Davis County, Kansas at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. This census recorded that John's real estate was then valued at $800 and his personal property at $275. This census recorded that John, Elizabeth, Mariah and James were born in Ohio; that George and Nancy were born in Iowa; and that Henry was born in Kansas.

John and Elizabeth Walton were neighbors to a 37 year old farmer named E.N. Church at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. The household of E.N. Church then consisted of himself and nine individuals. These nine individuals appear to have been E.N. Church's wife; their five children; and three farm hands. I assume that this is Elias N. Church, Elizabeth's brother-in-law; he being a brother to her first husband, Peres W. Church.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that residing within the household of E.N. Church at the time of this census was one 19 year old man named David Church. He is listed in this census record as a farm hand. David may be Elizabeth's son from her first marriage.
If so, David would have been living with his uncle Elias at the time of this census and likely would have been working upon Elias' farm. It may be possible that this David Church was Elizabeth's nephew, the son of Elizabeth's sister Mary and her husband Reuben Whipple Church.

John and Elizabeth were living near Fort Riley, Kansas at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. We know this because that census recorded their post office box as being Fort Riley. Fort Riley was established in 1853 as a military post to protect the movement of people and trade over the Oregon-California and Santa Fe trails.

It is interesting to note that John and Elizabeth were actually living within the Kansas Territory at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. The 1860 census record of John and Elizabeth's lists the free inhabitants of Davis County, Kansas. It is important to remember that at the time of this census, that there were enormous tensions between northern and southern states regarding the issues of slavery and states rights. Kansas was right in the middle of the slavery debate.

The years 1854-1861 were a turbulent time in the Kansas Territory. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 established the territorial boundaries of Kansas and Nebraska and opened the land to legal settlement. It allowed the residents of these territories to decide by popular vote whether their state would be free or slave. This concept of self-determination was called popular sovereignty. In Kansas, people on all sides of this controversial issue flooded the territory, trying to influence the vote in their favor. Rival territorial governments, election fraud, and squabbles over land claims all contributed to the violence of this era.

Three distinct political groups occupied Kansas: pro-slavers, free-staters and abolitionists. Violence broke out immediately between these opposing factions and continued until 1861 when Kansas entered the Union as a free state on January 29th. This era became forever known as 'Bleeding Kansas'.

During the period known as 'Bleeding Kansas', murder, mayhem, destruction and psychological warfare became a code of conduct in eastern Kansas and western Missouri. Well-known examples of this violence include the sacking of Lawrence, Kansas and the massacre at Pottawatomie Creek where John Brown and his sons killed five pro-slavery advocates.

In May 1856, an 800-man 'posse' made up of border ruffians from Missouri sacked the town of Lawrence, Kansas, which was settled by Free-Soilers who harbored fugitive abolitionists, slaves and newspaper editors indicted for treason by the proslavery territorial government. Four days later, the fanatic abolitionist John Brown and his four sons seized five proslavery settlers from their homes along Pottawatomie Creek and, in front of the settler's families, hacked them to death with broadswords. More than 200 men were killed in the era known as 'Bleeding Kansas'.

'Bleeding Kansas' was part of the political storm that occurred throughout the United States before the Civil War. The anti-slavery forces prevailed as Kansas entered into the Union a free state on January 29, 1861. This turbulence illustrated the beginning of the terrifying bloodshed that was to come during the Civil War.

It may be possible that John and Elizabeth Walton may have been attracted to settling in Kansas after the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 opened the land to legal
settlement. To what extent that John and Elizabeth Walton personally experienced and or took part in the period known as ‘Bleeding Kansas’ is unknown.

We know that at some point after the U.S. Census of 1860 that Elizabeth’s daughter from her first marriage, Mariah Jane Church, left Elizabeth and John’s home in Davis County, Kansas and moved to Iowa. A descendant of Mariah Jane Church reports that Mariah married a George W. Zimmerman on February 23, 1862 in Center Point, Linn County, Iowa. It appears that George and Mariah subsequently lived in Center Point for about 30 years. Mariah died in Marengo, Iowa. I infer that at some point as a child that Mariah probably lived in the vicinity of Center Point with her mother and stepfather before they moved to Kansas. I believe that this would explain why she later returned to Iowa to marry in Center Point and to live in Iowa. I believe that as a child, Mariah lived with her mother and stepfather, Elizabeth and John, for a short period of time near Troy Mills, Iowa before the family eventually moved to Davis County, Kansas.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1870, John and Elizabeth Walton were living within Davis Township, Davis County, Kansas. This is apparently where they were living ten years earlier at the time of the 1860 census. As recorded by the U.S. Census of 1870, on December 3, 1870, the household of John Walton consisted of: himself, age 39; Elizabeth, age 49; George, age 16; Nancy, age 14; and Henry, age 11. George, Nancy and Henry would be John and Elizabeth’s children.

The 1870 census listed John’s occupation as that of a farmer and listed Elizabeth’s as ‘keeping house’. Their three children were listed in this census record as at home at the time of the census. George, Nancy and Henry had attended school within the year according to this census record. This census listed John and Elizabeth’s birthplace as Ohio. George and Nancy were listed as being born in Iowa. Henry was listed as being born in Kansas. This census recorded that Elizabeth could read and write. However, this census did not record the same for her husband John.

John and Elizabeth were farmers at the time of the U.S. Census of 1870, and they would have been living within or near the town of Junction City, Kansas. We know that they were living near Junction City, Kansas at the time of this census because this census listed their post office as being Junction City. This census recorded that John’s real estate was then valued at $2,000 and his personal property was valued at $1,800.

John and Elizabeth were neighbors to a 30 year old farmer named William Church at the time of the 1870 U.S. Census. At that time, William’s household consisted of himself, his wife Mary, and their daughters, Penople and Martha. This William Church would have to be Elizabeth’s son from her first marriage. From this census record we know that Elizabeth would have been living near her son and grandchildren at the time of the 1870 census.

John and Elizabeth lived in close proximity to a farmer named Elias N. Church at the time of the 1870 census. The households of John Walton and Elias N. Church resided within Davis Township, Davis County, Kansas at the time of this census. Elias’ household was also recorded as residing near John and Elizabeth ten years earlier at the time of 1860 U.S. Census. I believe Elias to be Elizabeth’s brother-in-law.

The 1870 U.S. Census also recorded that a David Church household resided within Davis Township, Davis County, Kansas on December 5, 1870. David Church was then a farmer and his household would have resided near our John and Elizabeth Walton
at the time of this census. This David Church may or may not have been a son of our subject, Elizabeth, and her first husband Peres Church. David’s age in this census is listed as 29, which does not correspond to his year of birth as recorded by the U.S. Census of 1850. If this is Elizabeth’s son in this 1870 U.S. Census record, she and her family would have been living near her son David, his wife and their two children, at the time of this census.

Census records demonstrate that John and Elizabeth Walton moved to Davis County, Kansas in conjunction with other family members; particularly with members of the Church family.

Elizabeth once again experienced personal loss with the passing of her husband and son within a relatively short period of time. It is recorded that John and Elizabeth’s son, George, died on October 17, 1870. Remember, George was recorded in the 1870 U.S. Census as living within his parent’s home on December 3, 1870, which obviously leads one to ponder how that can be if he died in October 1870. It may be possible that there is a discrepancy as to the date in which George died. However, it is reported that George’s tombstone reads that he died on October 17, 1870. It is entirely possible that the 1870 census is wrong.

John Walton died shortly after his son George. Both father and son are buried in Upper Humboldt Cemetery in Geary County, Kansas. Their headstone reads: John Walton, born (unreadable) 1831; died August 15, 1873, aged 42 years, 2 months, and 15 days; George W., son of John and Elizabeth, born November 15, 1854; died October 17, 1870. Upper Humboldt Cemetery is located in the very northeastern corner of section 2 of Liberty Township, Geary County, Kansas.

John and Elizabeth were evidently living within Davis County, Kansas when he and George died. According to material that I found in the possession of Daphane Hoover, by 1882, parts of Davis County, Kansas had become Geary County, Kansas. This boundary change would explain why John and Elizabeth were found in U.S. Census records living within Davis County, Kansas in 1860 and 1870, and why John and George are buried in Geary County, Kansas.

It appears that John and Elizabeth were residents of Davis County, Kansas from the time they moved there from Iowa up until his death.

At some point in time after John died, Elizabeth remarried to his brother, William Hammond Walton. Their marriage must have taken place shortly after John’s death in 1873. Elizabeth’s marriage to William Walton would have certainly taken place in Kansas, and likely within either Davis or Geary County. Assuming that Elizabeth was born in 1821, she would have married William when she was in her 50’s.

It appears that Elizabeth was William Hammond Walton’s second wife. William’s first wife may have been a woman named Deliah Parker. William and Deliah are reported to have married in Wyandot County, Ohio.

William H. Walton certainly would have known our subject, Elizabeth, quite well prior to their marriage. He and his brother John would have grown up in the vicinity of Elizabeth’s childhood home and her parent’s farm in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Both men certainly knew Elizabeth throughout the majority of their lives; this is demonstrated by the fact that the Walton and Reece families lived in close proximity to one another in Ohio and Iowa, and the fact that the families intermarried.
William and Elizabeth Walton lived in or near Junction City, Kansas, which is a town that can be found today in Geary County, Kansas. This conclusion is supported in part by the photo of Elizabeth on page 104 of this book, which has an inscription on the back that reads: *Elizabeth (Reece) Walton, Junction City, Kansas.* The front of this photo reads: *Our Cousin.* No more is known about this photo. My research indicates that Elizabeth lived in or near Junction City, Kansas as did some of her relations, including members of the Church family.

William and Elizabeth Walton had one daughter according to at least one source; her name was also Elizabeth (*Lizzie*) and she reportedly married a man with the last name of Siebold. He may have been some relation to a James Siebold that reportedly married Elizabeth’s sister-in-law, Lydia (Walton) Siebold.

If Lizzie is in fact the child of William and Elizabeth Walton, then Elizabeth would have to have been in her 50’s when Lizzie was born, which seems unlikely, but not impossible. It seems more plausible that Lizzie was a child from a previous marriage of William Walton’s.

Genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams reports that James Rupert Church, who would be the nephew of Elizabeth’s first husband, Peres W. Church, died in Tilden, Madison County, Nebraska on January 22, 1913. Abrams reports that James is buried in Tilden. According to Abrams, James R. Church and his family probably went to Nebraska in a wagon train from Iowa about 1880. It is reported by Abrams that this wagon train consisted of 10 wagons. Abrams reports that Waltons and Churches were in this group. This story, as told by Abrams, corroborates other evidence that indicates that these two family groups moved to Nebraska at certain points in time and resided near our subject, Elizabeth, and her family.

It is reported that Elizabeth traveled to Troy Mills, Iowa on a visit once from Kansas. Her visit must have occurred between the years of 1873 and 1882. Exactly why Elizabeth made this trip is unknown. She may have made this trip to Iowa with the intention of taking back with her to Kansas a boy by the name of William (Willie) Cook. Willie is the son of Charles C. Cook Jr. and Agnes Ida Reece. Agnes is the daughter of Elizabeth’s brother Benjamin and his first wife Anne Nash. Agnes would be a niece to our subject, Elizabeth. Willie would have been Elizabeth’s great-nephew.

I will now take some time to go into some detail regarding the family of Charles C. Cook Jr. and Agnes Ida Reece, because understanding their history enables us to understand the life of our subject, Elizabeth Reece.

Charles and Agnes married in Marion, Iowa on December 2, 1869. They subsequently lived in the vicinity of Troy Mills, apparently on a farm east of town. Charles and Agnes are the parents of five children; all appear to have been born near Troy Mills.

Charles and Agnes are the parents of:

1. **Edith Anne (Cook) Buckingham/Scott/Yockey**, born October 3, 1870; died February 20, 1949. She is buried in Independence, Iowa.
2. **Nettie Cook**, born in 1871, possibly born on May 20; died at the age of 4 in 1875.
5. Sylvia Mae (Cook) Andrews/Sorenson, born June 27, 1878 or June 22, 1880; died March 14, 1952.

Sources indicate that Agnes Ida (Reece) Cook died at the age of 32 of typhoid fever during the winter of 1881-82. One source lists Agnes’ date of death as November 10, 1881. Charles and Agnes would have been living in the vicinity of Troy Mills at the time of her death. Agnes is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery.

According to several sources, when Agnes died her husband Charles left Iowa and moved to the Washington Territory; leaving his children in Iowa. The children of Charles and Agnes Cook subsequently went to live with different families after Agnes’ death. Son William (Willie) was adopted by a Cobe family living in Kansas. Daughter Jenny went to live with her grandfather, Benjamin Hiatt Reece. Daughter Edith appears to have lived with a Whisennand family. And daughter Sylvia was taken in by the Elijah Biggs family. It appears that all of these children, with the exception of Willie, were taken in by families living near the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa.

The story which has been handed down through the generations is that our subject, Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton, took Willie Cook back to Kansas with her where he was adopted by a man by the name of F.A. Cobe.

Elizabeth evidently did return to Iowa with the intention of taking Willie Cook back to Kansas with her. The family stories pertaining to Willie’s adoption are supported by the U.S. Census record of 1870, which recorded that a farm couple by the name of Frederick and Emeline Cobe resided near Elizabeth and her husband John at the time of that census. The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that Frederick was then 29, and that Emeline was 24. The Cobes evidently had no children at the time of the 1870 census because their census record that year indicates that they had no children living with them at the time. It seems as though that the Cobes were looking to adopt a child and that opportunity presented itself when Willie Cook’s mother died. When she died, Elizabeth probably saw an opportunity for her great-nephew to be adopted into a good family; they being the Cobes.

A letter written on April 24, 1882 by a Susannah Whisennand to her daughter-in-law, Alice (Packard) Whisennand/Ball, found by genealogist Daphane Hoover reads as follows as Susannah wrote it in her own hand......

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Troy Mills, Iowa
April 24, 1882

Well my children, after a long delay I will try to write you a fools cap full of evre thing I can think of. I have been wating for the boys to write for mee but they are trying to get ther crop in. On Saturday they go to troy and shave and shingle hair. They make money shaving. I will tell you of evre thing that has hapened, ma be you have heard them all redy. Ida Cook died last winter and Charley came and wanted us to take Edith and keep her. He gave the baby to Bigs and started to Washenton teritory and left Willie with out any home. John Waltons widow came from Kansas and took him home with her and gave him to a man that had no children and he is rich and wants to give him all he is
worth. Old Mrs. Haw is dead and Mrs. Wade and one of her girls thirteen years old and Sarah Ramsey died with the measles, her baby is sick yet it calls her.

The above letter is a first person account to the fact that John Walton’s widow, Elizabeth, did come back to Iowa from Kansas to take Willie Cook back with her to be adopted. Shortly after arriving in Kansas, it is reported that Willie Cook died due to pneumonia. His grave has to be located in Kansas, and in all probability, near Junction City. His grave has yet to be located.

An inscription found inside a family bible which may have been used at Willie’s funeral service contains the following inscription...Oh, Willie must we call it death, or is it but a gentle sleeping. When thou hast gone from earth below and we are left to weep. How hard it was to part with thee. No longer on earth can tell (unreadable) for good thou were on earth to stay so now we bid farewell. An entry on the front of this bible reads...Willie died on Friday evening August 31st of inflammation of the bowls. Willie, adopted son of F.A. and Emma Cobe, age 9 years. We extend to the sorrowing family our heart-felt sympathy and refer them to the intraities of the savior suffer little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven. [I found this bible in the possession of a resident of Cedar Rapids, Iowa named Martina Thompson in November 2003. Thompson is a great-granddaughter of Agnes Ida (Reece) Cook. This bible once belonged to Agnes’ daughter, Edith.]

After living for an unknown length of time in the Washington Territory, Willie’s father, Charles C. Cook Jr., eventually moved back to the Troy Mills area. Charles’ obituary states that he and Agnes were the parents of 5 children; four daughters and one son. According to his obituary, his daughter Nettie died at the age of 4 and his son William died at the age of 9. His obituary states that of his remaining daughters at the time of his death that Mrs. Edith Scott lived in Independence, Iowa; Mrs. May Andrews lived near Walker, Iowa; and Mrs. Jennie Arthur lived at an unknown location.

It is entirely possible that our Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton was living in or near Junction City, Kansas in 1885. It is reported that Elizabeth’s daughter, Mariah Jane Church, from her first marriage to Peres W. Church, married a George W. Zimmerman and that they lived in or near Center Point, Linn County, Iowa. Some descendants of George and Mariah Zimmerman still live in the Center Point area. George and Mariah’s daughter, Alice, who was born in 1865, married a John H. Hobbs. John and Alice’s daughter, Clara Jane Hobbs, married a William H. Porter; in Clara’s obituary it states that she was born on June 7, 1885 at Junction City, Kansas. I believe that it is plausible that John and Alice Hobbs were living near our Elizabeth when their daughter, Clara Jane (Hobbs) Porter, was born. Clara at one time lived in or near the communities of Walker and Cedar Rapids in Linn County, Iowa; she would be a great-granddaughter to our Elizabeth.

The above conclusion is supported by genealogist Vance Bailey of Tempe, Arizona. Bailey happens to be a descendant of our Elizabeth Reece. He stated to me that he would not be at all surprised if Elizabeth died in Geary County, Kansas given the fact that his grandparents, John and Alice (Zimmerman) Hobbs, lived all over that country including Geary County, Kansas.
Bailey's first cousin, a woman in her 90's named Mary Louise (Porter) Campbell, currently lives in Center Point, Iowa; she is a daughter of William and Clara (Hobbs) Porter, which would make Mary a great-great granddaughter to our Elizabeth. In a conversation with Mary on January 2, 2006, she told me that someone once told her that some of her Church and Zimmerman relatives at one time moved out to Kansas. Mary stated that she imagined that they came back to Iowa because they just could not make it at farming out there due to the poor ground. Mary also stated that she was told that at one time her great-great grandmother, our Elizabeth, lived near Troy Mills, Iowa.

We have photos that prove that Elizabeth did return to Iowa in her later years. We know that at some point she at least came back to the town of Coggon in Linn County, Iowa. According to a genealogist named Rita Guzzo, Elizabeth may have came back to the area of Center Point, Iowa because Elizabeth's daughter, Mariah, and her husband George Zimmerman, lived in Center Point, Iowa from 1862 up until sometime in 1895 when George died. I speculate that Elizabeth may have ventured back to the Center Point area to visit her daughter Mariah and her family. The following photos of Elizabeth were given to me by Mary Louise (Porter) Campbell of Center Point, Iowa in January 2006. These photos would have been taken in the late 1800's. Whether or not they were taken when Elizabeth came back for Willie Cook is unknown.
This is a photo of Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton. The back of this photo reads: *My mother’s mother, Elizabeth Walton Church.* This photo evidently once belonged to Mary (Porter) Campbell’s grandmother, Alice Zimmerman, because the name Alice is written on the back of the photo. This inscription would have been made by Alice herself, and in it she would have been referring to Elizabeth as the mother of Mariah Jane (Church) Zimmerman, Alice’s mother.
In this photo we have James Church, Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton, and Alice (Zimmerman) Hobbs. Jim would be Elizabeth’s son and Alice would be her granddaughter. The back of this photo reads: *My grandmother and Uncle Jim Church.* This inscription would have been written by Alice (Zimmerman) Hobbs, and in it she would have been referring to Elizabeth as her grandmother and to James Church as her uncle. As you can see, this photo was taken in Coggon, Iowa and appears to date back to the late 1800’s.
The back of this photo reads: *Aunt Florence McKenna, Aunt Libbie Bebee and Uncle Jim Church of Clara Porter*. The young woman seated is Libbie. Mary Louise (Porter) Campbell told me that Florence lived in Wisconsin and that Libbie lived in Center Point, Iowa. This photo evidently once belonged to Mary’s mother, Clara Porter, and these individuals are Clara’s aunts and uncle. Jim Church would have been a son to Elizabeth (Reece) Church and a great-uncle to Clara Porter. This photo was taken in Center Point, Iowa and appears to date back to the late 1800’s.
I assume that Elizabeth returned to Kansas after the previous photos of her were taken. I do not know when or where Elizabeth died. A source reports that she and her husband William died in Kansas. Elizabeth’s brother, Benjamin Hiatt Reece, died on May 1, 1901. Benjamin’s obituary states that two sisters survived him; one is Kansas and one in California. Without a doubt, the sister in Kansas as reported by Benjamin’s obituary would have to be our Elizabeth. So, we know that she was alive at the time of Benjamin’s death and living in Kansas at that time. The sister living in California as reported by Benjamin’s obituary would have been his sister Nancy.

Elizabeth’s sister, Nancy (Reece) Ward/Johnston, died at the age of 91 on May 29, 1917 in Ferndale, Humbolt County, California. Nancy’s obituary states that she was survived by her brother, William Lewis Reece, a resident of Greenville, Ohio. Since Nancy’s obituary does not list her as being survived by her sister Elizabeth, one can only infer that she was deceased when Nancy died. Given the fact that Elizabeth lived in close proximity to Junction City, Kansas with her last known husband, William, they must be buried somewhere in the vicinity of Junction City. Genealogist Vance Bailey has it that Elizabeth died in 1917. This has yet to be verified. At this point, it appears that Elizabeth died sometime between the years of 1901 and 1917.

I have yet to research the Kansas records pertaining to Davis and Geary counties in an attempt to find out what happened to Elizabeth. More research needs to be conducted in order to finish this biography of Elizabeth Reece.
David Reece is my great-great-great grandfather. David was born on December 30, 1823 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. It is very likely that David was born upon a farm that his parents owned along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township. At the time of David’s birth his parents would have been farmers.

David was likely named after his paternal grandfather, David Reece Senior. According to a 20th century biographical history of our subject, we know that in the paternal line, David came from Welsh ancestry, while in the maternal line he is of English descent.

David spent the first nine years of his life growing up in Highland County, Ohio; presumably on the 125 acres that his parent’s owned along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township. Undoubtedly, David’s parents made a living as farmers in Highland County.

David’s parents were living within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio at the time of the 1830 U.S. Census. According to this census, at that time one male between 5 and 10 years of age was then living within the household of David’s father, William Rees. This boy would be our subject, David Reece, who would have been approximately 7 years old at the time of this census. David would have been living with his parents and
siblings when this census was taken in 1830. It appears that in 1830, that David and his family were living on a farm they owned near the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

David lived in Highland County, Ohio until the age of nine; when, with his parents, he moved to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in the year of 1833. Specifically, it appears that David and his family moved to Allen County in May 1833.

Upon moving to Allen County, David’s parents purchased 160 acres within the northwest quarter of section 33 of Jackson Township. David’s parents were farmers in Allen County and here David spent the next ten years growing up on his parent’s 160 acre farm. According to the 1875 map of Allen County, Ohio found in the back of this book, the 160 acre farm that David’s parents owned in Jackson Township was then located approximately one mile south of the town of Lafayette, Ohio. It is entirely possible that this farm, whereupon David grew up, may, by this time, be incorporated into the city limits of Lafayette. I have not traveled to Lafayette, Ohio to conduct any research to date to ascertain the location of this farm.

David’s mother, Rebecca, died shortly after the family arrived in their new home in Allen County, Ohio. Rebecca is believed to have died around 1834-35. David would have been approximately ten years old when his mother passed away. I speculate that after her mother’s death, that David would have subsequently spent the next three years living with his father and siblings on the family farm. David more than likely helped his father in the family farm operation as a child, both prior to and after his mother’s death. He was probably an indispensable part of helping his father run the family farm.

David Reece was 13 years of age when his father remarried to Mary ‘Polly’ (Walton) Church/Rennells on September 13, 1837. David would have subsequently spent the next six years living with his father and stepmother on the family farm that his parents originally homestead in 1833.

One would think that upon David’s father’s marriage to Polly (Walton) Church/Rennells in September 1837, that she would have brought her children from her previous marriages into her new home with William Reece. I can not help but think that David Reece shared a home with a new extended family upon his father’s second marriage to Polly. Assuming that was the case, David and his siblings would have been living with their father, their new stepmother, and her children shortly after the marriage.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1840, David would have been living within his father’s household. At the time of this census, the William Reece household lived within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. This census recorded that a male between 15 and 20 years of age was then residing within the household of William Reece; this would undoubtedly have been his son and the subject of this biography, David Reece. David would have been living with his father, stepmother and siblings at the time of the census of 1840. Based upon this census record, it does not appear that David would have been living with step-brothers or sisters at the time of the 1840 U.S. Census.

One of David’s 20th century biographical histories reads that he remained with his parents (a reference to his father and stepmother) until he attained the age of 19, which would have been the year of 1842, when he made his first venture in the business world by working at farm labor by the month. I have no doubt that David would have worked as a farm laborer well before he attained the age of 19. He surely would have helped his
parents make a living through farming when the family resided in Highland and Allen counties.

We know that David attended school in Ohio. It would have been while living within the Ohio counties of Highland and Allen that David acquired his education. David’s education would have been acquired through the schools located near his childhood homes in Highland and Allen counties. Thanks to a letter written by a granddaughter of David’s, we have the following account of his schooling; she wrote: Grandpa (David) went to school in Ohio. They had long benches to sit on in school and nothing for desks. He said he would take a potato and a chunk of corn bread for his lunch, then roast the potato in the hot ashes in the fireplace.

David’s childhood and early adult years were spent in Highland and Allen counties. He certainly lived in those counties during a period of early Ohio history when those areas were not too removed from their wilderness roots. In fact, the years of David’s youth were spent in what would have been a wilderness setting.

David was 20 years old when he married Miss Juliana Lane on March 12, 1844 in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. Their marriage was performed by David’s father who was then a justice of the peace of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Juliana was born on February 20, 1827 to John and Sarah Lane. Some sources have her name as Julia Ann Lane; others have it as Juliana. I usually write her name as Juliana since most sources indicate this to be the correct spelling. She appears to have been named after her first cousin, Julia Ann Crosley, born in 1812; she being the daughter of Juliana’s uncle, Joseph Crosley.

The following information pertaining to Juliana’s genealogy was given to me by genealogist Arnold H. Breitenbach. As noted by Breitenbach, not all of the following information is fully documented and Juliana’s line is currently being researched. With that in mind, according to Breitenbach, Julia is the oldest child of John Lane and Sarah Crosley. John was born about 1800. He married Sarah Crosley on December 11, 1823 in Miami County, Ohio. Sarah was born on October 31, 1801 in Ohio. John and Sarah Lane had the following children: Julia Ann Lane, born in 1827; Samuel Lane, born November 1829; Joseph Lane, born in 1831; and Ross Lane, born in 1833. Juliana’s father, John, died about 1839. After John’s death, his wife Sarah remarried to Benjamin Henry Clevenger. Sarah died on September 13, 1842 at Vaughnsville, Putnam County, Ohio.

According to information supplied by Breitenbach, there is an 1839 Allen County, Ohio record where Joseph Crosley, who would be Juliana’s uncle, was appointed the guardian of the children of John Lane (Juliana’s father). This guardianship would have taken place shortly after John’s death. This Allen County record reads that at the time Joseph Crosley became the guardian of the children of John Lane, that Juliana (spelled Julian in the original record) was 11 years and 10 months old. This record also lists John Lane’s children, in addition to Julian, as: Samuel Lane, 9 years and 10 months old; Joseph Lane, 8 years old; and Ross Lane, 6 years old.

It appears that Juliana was born in Allen County, Ohio, and lived there prior to and after her father’s death. After her father’s death, it appears that Juliana lived within her uncle’s (Joseph Crosley’s) household in Allen County.
Juliana appears to have been living in Allen County when she married David Reece. David and Juliana lived their married lives in or near Allen County, Ohio. Juliana would have been living in the area of Allen County with David at the time of her death. The Crosley and Lane families appear to have both been from the area of Allen County, Ohio. The Lanes may have been a family with a Quaker background.

At one time, as has already been mentioned, David’s parents were both practicing Quakers as were members of their respective families. His parents appear to have been excommunicated from the Quaker faith around the time of their marriage. To what extent, if any, that David himself was involved in Quakerism is a matter of speculation. I have yet to find any mention or documentation of any personal involvement, on David’s part, in the Quaker faith at any time during his life.

David was 21 when he and Juliana, age 17, started a family of their own with the birth of their first child, William Henry Reece, on January 12, 1845. Sources indicate that William Henry was either born in the Ohio counties of Allen or Auglaize. A letter written on November 25, 1979 by George V. Conner to a Mrs. Winifred Kelly states that William Henry was born in Auglaize County, Ohio. George V. Conner’s grandfather (named George Vernon Conner) was a brother to David Reece’s third wife, Anna. Mrs. Winifred Kelly is a daughter of Janette Stevenson Murray, the author of a book titled: They Came to North Tama [A history of Tama County, Iowa]. This book was written about David Reece’s third wife, Anna, and her first husband Stephen Klingaman. I make reference to Mr. Conner’s 1979 letter throughout this biography.

David and Juliana became the parents of a second child with the birth of a daughter, Sarah Margaret Reece, on August 23, 1847. Sources identify Allen County, Ohio as the place of Sarah’s birth. David’s cemetery records list Sarah’s middle name as Rebecca. This is evidently incorrect.

David and Juliana had been married for three years when she died on October 25, 1847. David’s obituary states that Juliana died on November 2, 1847. David’s obituary is evidently incorrect because Conner’s 1979 letter states that Juliana died on October 25, 1847 in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. Juliana’s date of death, as recorded by Conner, is corroborated by Huldah (Reece) Kincade, David’s granddaughter. It appears that David and Juliana were living in or near Lima, Ohio at the time of her death. Juliana would have been 20 years old when she died. I wonder if she died due to complications associated with childbirth.

Sarah Margaret, David and Juliana’s daughter, died shortly after Juliana’s death. Conner’s letter states that Sarah died on November 2, 1847. This date is also corroborated by Huldah Kincade. Evidently, David’s obituary misprinted Juliana’s date of death, having printed daughter Sarah’s instead. One of David’s biographical histories states that Sarah died at the age of four months. It appears that she died at less than three months of age. David’s cemetery records list Sarah as having died in December 1847 in Allen County, Ohio. This date, as recorded by David’s cemetery record, is evidently incorrect.

To lose his wife and daughter in less than two weeks must have been a devastating experience for David. I do not know where Juliana and Sarah are buried. They are probably buried together somewhere in the vicinity of the towns of Lima and Lafayette in Allen County, Ohio.
Tax records of Allen County, Ohio for the year of 1848 list a B.H. Reece as then a personal property taxpayer in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. I believe this to be Benjamin Hiatt Reece, David’s brother. On this tax list, below the name of B.H. Reece, a David Reece is also listed as a personal property taxpayer. This has to be our David Reece. David Reece is listed as a personal property taxpayer of Jackson Township from 1845 to 1848. These tax records suggest that David lived within the vicinity of his parent’s farm from the time he left home, married Juliana, to shortly after her death. Undoubtedly, David was making a living during this period through farming. Tax records lead me to believe that David was living in Allen County from 1845 to 1848.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that David and Juliana’s son, William Henry Reece, at the age of five, was living with his grandparents, William and Mary Reece, in Allen County, Ohio, on July 29, 1850. David’s parents were evidently raising his son William at that time because David was a widower and probably needed help raising William Henry. David remained single for three years after Juliana’s death; so, it is very likely that David’s father and stepmother helped in raising William Henry during that three-year period of time. I assume that William Henry moved back into his father’s home when David remarried in September 1850.

As William Henry Reece was being cared for by his grandparents at the time of the 1850 U.S. Census, it appears that his father, David, was living with his brother Alfred in Auglaize County, Ohio. Auglaize borders Allen County to the south. In the 1850 U.S. Census record, I found a David Reece, age 25, living within the household of one Alfred Reece, of Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio, on August 13, 1850. This has to be the subject of this biography, our David Reece.

According to the 1850 U.S. Census, the Alfred Reece household on August 13, 1850, which included the 25 year old David Reece, consisted of: Alfred, age 31; a pearler by occupation; Mary, his wife, age 30; and their children: Elizabeth, age 9; Rebecca, age 7; William L., and Newton S. ages 4; and John, age 10 months. Unfortunately, this census does not indicate how David and Alfred are related, but there is no doubt in my mind that they are brothers. This census lists David’s occupation as being that of a pearler as well. I have no idea what the occupation of pearler entails; it must have had something to do with the pearl/clam industry. I believe that the David Reece found within Alfred’s household in this 1850 census record is, in fact, our David Reece. I also believe that David was a brother to Alfred. This census lists all of the individuals then found in the household of Alfred Reece as having been born in Ohio.

At the time that David was residing in Auglaize County, Ohio with his brother Alfred during the 1850 U.S. Census, their sister Elizabeth (Reece) Church resided within the county as well. Elizabeth and her husband, Peres Church, were living in the town of Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio on July 15, 1850. David, Alfred and Elizabeth were probably living in close proximity to one another at the time.

Three years after his wife Juliana’s death, at the age of 26, David Reece remarried to Miss Kittorah ‘Kittie’ Ann Conner on September 13, 1850. Given the fact that David’s widowed father remarried on September 13, 1837, I wonder if David and Kittorah’s marriage date was chosen to coincide with the anniversary of his father and stepmother’s date of marriage. David and Kittorah were married in Auglaize County, Ohio. Their marriage license was issued on September 13, 1850. Said license reads: 

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the authority of the marriage license issued by the Court of Common Pleas of Auglaize County, Ohio on the 13th day of September A. D. 1850, I solemnize the marriage of David Rees with Kittora Conner on the 16th Day of September A. D. 1850....Charles G. Galester, Justice of the Peace.

According to Conner’s 1979 letter, Kittorah was a cousin to David’s first wife Juliana. Kittorah was born on November 15, 1826 in Ohio. According to Daphane Hoover, the Conner name use to be the Irish O’Conner, but the ‘O’ was eventually dropped. This story is also corroborated by another reliable source. David and Kittorah are my great-great-great grandparents.

I would presume that David’s father and stepmother, along with other family members, would have attended David’s wedding to Kittorah Conner. Seven days after their marriage, David’s father died on September 20, 1850. Within one week, David must have gone through a wide range of emotions; having gone from being married to attending his father’s funeral.

David was residing with his brother Alfred in Clay Township, Auglaize County, Ohio shortly before he married Kittorah Conner. David would have subsequently moved to or near Uniopolis in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio upon his marriage to Kittorah.

David and Kittorah appear to have begun their married lives together in Auglaize County, Ohio; probably in the town of Uniopolis given the fact that they sold property in that town five months after they were married. I found a deed which reads that David and Kittorah Ann Reece of Auglaize County sold town lot #12 in Uniopolis, Auglaize County, Ohio, for $110, to a Hiram Klingaman of Auglaize County on February 3, 1851. David and Kittorah personally appeared before Robert J. Layton, Justice of the Peace of Auglaize County, Ohio, on February 3, 1851, to acknowledge this conveyance as their voluntary act.

I believe that the above deed suggests that David, Kittorah and William Henry were living in the town of Uniopolis after David and Kittorah’s marriage and shortly before their subsequent move to Iowa. I speculate that they might have sold their lot in Uniopolis in preparation for their eventual move to Linn County, Iowa in June 1851. The sale of this property very likely financed, in part, David and Kittorah’s move to Iowa.
These photos are reported to be of David and Juliana (Lane) Reece. However, I have some doubt to whether these are actually them. To me, David does not appear in this photo to resemble himself as compared to older known photographs of him. Older photos of him show a slim man who appears to have lived a hard life. Perhaps, he once had a fuller face and time took its toll. David appears to be too old in this picture to have been married to Juliana at that time. The source that gave me this photo has proven to be very reliable, so it may be that this is a photo of David and his second wife Kittorah.

Conner’s 1979 letter states that David Reece was from Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio. The letter does not clearly indicate when David lived there. I have no doubt that David and Kittorah lived in the area of Wapakoneta, Ohio prior to their move to Iowa. The towns of Wapakoneta and Uniopolis are located a few miles apart from one another in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio. When David and Kittorah lived in the Wapakoneta area they would have been living approximately 15 miles southwest of the farm where he grew up and that his parent’s homesteaded in 1833; the farm being in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

The Assessors Office of Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio created a document which was a compilation listing and enumerating all the white male inhabitants above the age of 21, residing in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on the first day of March 1851, and being residents of Ohio. This document, which lists at least a couple hundred men, lists David and Alfred Reece. Their names appear together, one after the other, on the list. I believe this is our subject David Reece and his brother Alfred. I believe that this document supports my belief that David and Kittorah were living in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio three months prior to their departure for Linn County, Iowa. David and Kittorah must have been living in or near Uniopolis, which is in Union Township, at the time of this compilation. This is where David and Kittorah appear to have been residing right up to the point they left for Iowa.

I speculate that prior to David and Kittorah’s departure for Iowa, that they left their home in the Wapakoneta/Uniopolis area and traveled north approximately 12 miles
to Lima, Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio, in order to prepare and stage for their eventual move to Iowa in June 1851. At least one history states that David started out for Iowa from Allen County, Ohio. Historical accounts state that David came to Iowa in a wagon train. It would make sense to me that David would have left Allen County from the town of Lima, which would have been a likely starting off point for a wagon train bound for Iowa. We have historical accounts that David and his family made their journey to Linn County, Iowa with at least two families; one of which, I believe may have been his sister Mary and her family.

One of David’s 20th century biographical histories states that he started from Allen County, Ohio on June 5, 1851, and settled in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Another history states that David started from Allen County on June 5, 1851, and that he came to Linn County, Iowa on June 7, 1851. This latter date may be a typo as it appeared in the original biographical history. It probably should have read July 7, 1851.

If David left Allen County, Ohio on June 5, 1851, as one history records, there is obviously no way that he could have made it across the plains to Iowa, by wagon, in just two days. In regards to the historical documentation that tells us that David came to Linn County on June 7, 1851, history does not tell us if the word ‘came’ refers to when David left Ohio or when he arrived in Iowa. History may have confused the dates when he left Allen County and when he arrived in Linn County. I think that David left Allen County on either June 5 or 7, 1851. It would have taken David and his family a few weeks at least, traveling by wagon, to travel from Allen County, Ohio to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. A Spring Grove Township history written by historian Isaac Holman describes David’s migration to the township as taking at least four weeks. David’s obituary states that he arrived in Linn County in July 1851. It appears likely that David arrived in Linn County from Ohio on July 7, 1851.

I believe that when David and his family left Allen County, Ohio, that they clearly intended on settling in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. I do not believe that they left Ohio and just happened to settle in Spring Grove. The facts demonstrate that David and his family left Allen County with the specific intent of moving to Linn County. David’s sister Nancy and her husband, Abraham J. Ward, settled in Spring Grove in 1845. The fact that David and some of his siblings eventually made the same migration to Spring Grove demonstrates that they were moving in concert with one another to that locale.

I would imagine that David and Kittorah must have been attracted to Spring Grove based upon knowledge of the area gained from his sister Nancy and her husband Abraham J. Ward, who lived in the area for six years prior to David and Kittorah’s arrival. It is very likely that the Wards expected David and Kittorah’s move to Spring Grove and anxiously anticipated their arrival in the summer of 1851. David’s sister Mary and her husband, Reuben Church, came to Spring Grove in the early 1850’s, possibly arriving here with David and Kittorah. David’s brother Henry came to Spring Grove in 1853. One source describes David’s brother Benjamin as a resident of Buchanan County, Iowa by 1854. Buchanan County borders northern Linn County and borders the north end of Troy Mills, Iowa. These migrations clearly demonstrate that the Reeces,
Churches, Wards, and associated families, were moving in concert with one another from Ohio to Linn County, Iowa and the Troy Mills area.

In addition to Abraham and Nancy Ward, David and Kittorah must have also been attracted to Spring Grove through information on the area they likely acquired from Josiah Hammond Walton; he being the son of Joseph G. Walton and Deborah Gilbert. Joseph G. Walton was an uncle to David Reece; the former being the brother to David's stepmother Polly. Josiah H. Walton and his wife Maria came to Linn County, Iowa from Allen County, Ohio in 1847. They settled in section 1 of Spring Grove Township and farmed there for many years. Their farm was located a short distance north of David Reece's Hickory Grove Farm. Josiah and Maria (Cunningham) Walton are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Information on Spring Grove obtained from Abraham and Nancy Ward, and from Josiah and Maria Walton, was likely shared with David and Kittorah Reece while they resided in Auglaize County, Ohio. The sharing of this information on Spring Grove, in part, likely led to the subsequent move of David and Kittorah to Linn County, Iowa.

David Reece is the first of my paternal ancestors to settle in Iowa. David arrived in Spring Grove Township just 6 years after the first settler (Leonard Austin) settled here in 1845. The first permanent white settlers of Linn County arrived around 1837, which was just fourteen years prior to David's arrival.

When David left Ohio he undoubtedly left family behind, but one would think that the ties that may have bound him to that state would have been cut to a degree by the fact that both of his parents and stepmother were deceased by the time he moved. These and other personal losses in David's life may have given him the desire and motivation to start anew by settling near Troy Mills, Iowa.

David was 27 years of age, his wife Kittorah was 24, and their son William Henry was 6 when they moved to Spring Grove. David and his family made their journey to Spring Grove by wagon; they would have crossed the tall grass prairies of northwestern Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and eastern Iowa during their journey. We can infer that Kittorah would have been six months pregnant at the time she and David made their journey to Spring Grove based upon information we have that she gave birth in their new home of Spring Grove in September 1851.

Historian Isaac Holman wrote that David's journey to Spring Grove, in part, consisted of wallowing in mud and mire for several days. Holman wrote that David eventually reached and crossed the Mississippi River by ferryboat at Rock Island. From Rock Island, David and his family would have traversed the Iowa prairie from the southeastern corner of Iowa, then through eastern Iowa, until they eventually arrived in Spring Grove Township in Linn County, located in the northeastern part of the state.

One can hardly imagine what hardships and adventures David and his family encountered during their trek through Iowa, not to mention their journey through three other states to get here. I imagine that very few roads or trails existed at the time that David and his family came to Linn County. I would imagine that they did a lot of traveling through trackless prairie along the entire course of their journey from Ohio.

Upon arriving in Spring Grove, David continued the pioneering tradition as his father had done in Ohio. Seventy-five years after the birth of the United States on July 4,
1776, David Reece found himself on the expanding American frontier when he settled in Iowa, which was opened to settlement in 1833, eighteen years before David’s arrival.

Daphane Hoover shared a story with me once that was told to her many years ago by a Mrs. Lois Elizabeth (Fay) Evers of Troy Mills, Iowa. Mrs. Evers’ grandparents are Horace Herschel Fay and Clarissa Ann Klingaman; the latter being a stepdaughter to our David Reece. Mrs. Evers, who died in 1979, told Daphane that the Fays, Reeces, Waltons and others, all came to Spring Grove from Ohio, and that they had planned to leave Ohio together in a wagon train a year before they actually did. Mrs. Evers stated to Hoover that they were delayed because someone in their party was ill, so they ended up postponing the trip by a year. I believe that in all likelihood, that David Reece and his family were among this group of pioneers described by Mrs. Evers in her story to Daphane Hoover. I believe the documentation that I have found to date strongly indicates that David migrated to the Troy Mills area with his sister Mary, her husband Reuben, and their children.

After arriving in Spring Grove, David for about a year thereafter engaged in the manufacture of brick in Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa. Quasqueton is located along the Wapsipinicon River a short distance northwest from Spring Grove. According to David’s obituary, it is during this short time spent in Quasqueton that he burned the first brick burned in Buchanan County. According to one of David’s obituaries, a part of the building erected with this brick (presumably located in the town of Quasqueton) known as the old school, was still standing at the time of David’s death in 1914. Knowing that David was engaged in brick making in Quasqueton, he evidently would have taken up residency in that town as he made brick there for a living.

Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto, a resident of California and a descendent of David’s sister Nancy (Reece) Ward, informed me that Nancy’s husband, Abraham J. Ward, made bricks in Iowa in partnership with his brother-in-law, David Reece. Given the fact that David Reece’s obituary states that he made brick in Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa, I speculate that his partnership with Abraham Ward may have taken place in Quasqueton sometime between 1851 and 1856.

David then purchased forty acres east of Troy Mills in Section 12, Township 86 (Spring Grove Township), Range 7 West, from the government, paying for the land at a dollar and a quarter per acre, which was the standard rate at the time. David and Kittorah subsequently resided upon and farmed this land for the remainder of their lives.

According to an area history, upon David’s arrival in Linn County, he entered forty acres of timberland and one hundred and twenty acres of prairie land, on which not a furrow had been turned nor an improvement made. David added to his original purchase and at one time had two hundred acres. David and Kittorah’s farm was located in sections 11 and 12 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Their farmhouse was located within the northwest corner of section 12; it still stands today. From this point on in this book, I will refer to David and Kittorah’s farm as the Hickory Grove Farm. I have chosen this name because a turn of the century biographical history describes David and a son as then being the proprietors of the Hickory Grove Farm in section 12. I assume that David probably found a grove of hickory trees on the prairie land that he purchased upon coming to Spring Grove and that he subsequently named his farm after this grove.
In 1851, when David Reece and his family settled in Spring Grove, just east of what is now the town of Troy Mills, the town of Troy had yet to be founded. It was not until two years later, in 1853, that Troy Mills was founded. The State of Iowa was only in its fifth year of existence when David came to Spring Grove. Iowa became the 29th state of the Union in 1846.

The U.S. population in 1850, the year before David and his family arrived in Linn County, Iowa, stood at 23,191,876. Iowa’s population in 1850 was 192,914. Between 1840 and 1850, Iowa’s population doubled with the influx of settlers into the territory and later into the state. The census of 1850 shows that there were then only 5,444 inhabitants of Linn County.

At some point after arriving in Spring Grove, between July 1851 and April 1854, David and Kittorah built a log cabin on their Hickory Grove Farm. I would assume that they built this log cabin in the northwest corner of section 12, which is where David’s home in later years was located. This home still stands today.

David soon commenced farming after acquiring the Hickory Grove Farm. Arriving in a new land, building a new home, and trying to make a living from the Iowa prairie, must have been quite an experience for David, Kittorah and other settlers. I speculate that David and Kittorah may have built a sod home upon moving onto their farm and prior to building a log cabin because from what I have read, and from what I have been told by ‘old timers’ in the area, sod homes were prevalent in the area now known as sod town, which was located a short distance southeast of David’s farm. Sod Town, which is now a ghost town, gained its unusual name because early Indiana settlers in the area built their homes from prairie sod. This town was located in what is now known as the seven hills area, approximately where the Seven Hills Road turns north, just about a mile or so to the southeast of the Hickory Grove Farm. The area in general, including where David and Kittorah lived, is commonly referred to as Sod Town yet today.

When David Reece and his family settled on their Hickory Grove Farm, the tall grass prairie covered the landscape; it stretched from Ohio to mid Nebraska. The tall grass prairie then covered 28 million acres in Iowa alone and 224 million square miles in North America. In 1840, ten years before David and his family settled in Iowa, the state had 28 million acres of tall grass prairie and wetlands and seven million acres of forest that covered nearly twenty percent of the land.

The Iowa landscape that David and Kittorah looked out upon when they arrived in Spring Grove appeared very different than it does today. Only a small percentage of the total acreage in Iowa today currently resembles what the pioneers encountered when they settled here. When David and Kittorah settled just east of Troy Mills, they would have found a mixture of tall grass prairie and prairie savanna in the area. The prairie savannas consisted of primarily open hardwoods underlain by prairie grasses. The Iowa prairie that David found upon coming here was definitely every much the wilderness that we presently associate with the grasslands of Africa. The oak/hickory woodlands that comprised the prairie savannas were described then as being open enough to allow a team and wagon to easily be driven underneath the bows of the large Burr Oak trees that dominated these prairie savannas. David would have seen the tall grasses of the prairie becoming more and more dominant as he traveled away from the Wapsipinicon River;
eventually, he would have found himself surrounded by a sea of grasses and forbs extending to the distant horizon in every direction. Prairie savannas then dotted the landscape between the wide-open prairie and the woodlands of the Wapsipinicon River valley. This prairie savanna ecosystem was maintained by prairie wildfires and was a natural process that continued until the prairie was brought under the plow.

Wildlife that we now think of as being found in the western United States existed in Iowa when David and Kittorah came to Spring Grove in 1851. During their time, elk, bison, wolf, bobcat, mountain lion, bear, prairie chicken and many more animal, as well as plant species, native to the Iowa prairie could be found upon the land of Spring Grove; the very same land that we farm today. From one of David’s granddaughters, a Mrs. Huldah (Reece) Kincade, we have an account of David shooting a panther (mountain lion), which would have occurred in the Troy Mills area.

Troy Mills area historian Isaac Holman wrote the following:

Prairie fires in early times were to be dreaded by the pioneers whose cabins were scattered along the timber line and the margin of streams. Their stables and sheds were almost always covered with course hay or straw. Oats and wheat were the principal grain crops and were generally stored in rail pens as they were threshed. In order to protect fencing (which consisted of rails), grain, hay and buildings, fire lands would be made around these areas by plowing three or four furrows three to four rods apart around the farm. After the grass was dry enough to burn, land would be burned out. A still clear day was chosen to do this, but before the fire was set switches were tied together in bundles and placed at hand in which to whip out the fire should it jump the furrows, which it sometimes did. Whirlwinds would sometimes carry the fire out of the land and it would be disastrous. Neighbors would join together and assist each other to burn out their fire lands. If the lands were well burned out they were good protection, but if burned out to early in the season before the grass was dry to the ground, then it would burn over the fire land and probably burn the pioneer out. The prairie was covered with a thick coat of grass and other vegetation and in the sloughs and valleys, often as high as a horse’s back. This would be killed by the frost of autumn and made dry by the sun and wind. Under these circumstances the pioneers were uneasy and kept a sharp look out for fire which could start after dark. Neighbors often sat up all night to watch and fight prairie fires and sometimes lost the fight and sometimes the pioneers were severely burned.

In those days the nights were often made hideous by the howling of wolves about the cabin door. Mr. Walton kept a large brindle dog which was attacked one night in 1851 by large gray wolves, called timber wolves. Hearing the fight, Walton jumped from his bed and ran to the assistance of his favorite dog. Mr. Walton and the dog gained victory but the dog was helpless for a long time. Timber wolves also attacked and killed a cow belonging to Amos Howery Long. Timber wolves also followed George Carson home one night for a mile from Quasqueton. He managed to fight them off, but he had fresh beef in his wagon. Mr. Walton’s cabin stood near the creek, and deer were so plentiful that Mrs. Walton said they would stand in the creek within seventy-five feet of the cabin on a warm summer afternoon.
David Reece lived a part of Iowa pioneer history that has long since disappeared. In fact, it was not too long after David came to Spring Grove that the prairie landscape changed dramatically with the influx of new settlers. In only a couple of decades after David’s arrival, the Iowa prairie was transformed to meet the needs of increasing numbers of settlers and an expanding country. Many changes have occurred in Iowa since David settled on the virtually unbroken Iowa prairie. David lived on the Iowa prairie as a true pioneer.

Today, as one travels the countryside near Troy Mills, one can hardly imagine what the Iowa prairie of David’s time was like. The observant individual can still find pieces of Iowa’s prairie heritage scattered throughout the state including around Troy Mills. The consensus is that Iowa is today the most biologically altered state in the nation. Upon David Reece’s arrival in Iowa, approximately 30 million acres of prairie lay at his feet. Presently, in Iowa as a whole, we have lost 99.9% of the original prairie that existed at the time of settlement. About 30,000 acres of prairie remnants can be found scattered across Iowa today. What remains is severely degraded in many instances. The prairie ecosystem is the most rare and endangered ecosystem on the face of the planet. If one looks close, prairie remnants can still be found today in our road and railroad right-of-ways and other places. The prairie savanna woodlands that dotted the Iowa landscape at the time of settlement can still be found; however, many of these woodlands are threatened or severely degraded.

Three months after arriving in their new home, David, age 27, and his wife Kittorah, age 24, started a family of their own with the birth of their first child, Hannah Ellen Reece, on September 26, 1851. Some sources indicate that Hannah’s middle name is Elizabeth. Sources indicate that Hannah was born near Troy Mills. I speculate that Hannah may have been born in or near Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa given our knowledge that David was engaged in the manufacture of brick in that town for about a year after arriving in Spring Grove. The children born to David Reece after the birth of his daughter Hannah were all more than likely born at his home on the Hickory Grove Farm; she may have been as well.

Shortly after arriving in his new home, David’s sister, Mary (Reece) Church, died at the age of 33 years, 9 months and 5 days on August 29, 1852. David undoubtedly attended her burial at what is now known as Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, which is located a short distance east of David and Kittorah’s Hickory Grove Farm. At the time of her death, Mary and her husband Reuben may have been living on a farm about a mile north of David’s farm.

David Reece was 29 years of age on October 7, 1853, when his wife Kittorah, age 26, gave birth to their second child, Abraham Ward Reece. Abraham was born near Troy Mills, probably at his parent’s Hickory Grove Farm. Abram is my great-great grandfather.

David acquired an estate title interest to a one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of his late parent’s 160-acre farm in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; this being his childhood home. David also inherited a title interest to his late parent’s properties in town lots number 21 and 22 in Lafayette, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. He sold his title interest in the farm to his brother Henry for $275 on January 18, 1854. That same day, David and his wife Kittorah Ann, residents of Linn County, Iowa,
sold their estate interest in town lots #21 and #22 to his brother Benjamin for $8. David and Kittorah personally appeared before Johnathan J. Nugent, Justice of the Peace of Linn County, Iowa, on January 18, 1854, to personally acknowledge these conveyances as their voluntary act and deed. These conveyances took place in the presence of David’s brother-in-laws: Reuben W. Church and A.J. Ward, before J.J. Nugent.

The Iowa census record of 1854 lists the David Reece household as then residents of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. David’s household at the time of this census consisted of: 3 males, 2 females, 1 voter, and 1 militia member, for a total of 5 individuals living in the Reece house at the time of the census. The 3 males would have been David and his sons: William Henry and Abram. The 2 females in this census record would have been his wife Kittorah and daughter Hannah. David would have been the one listed in this census record as the voter and militia member.

The 1854 Iowa Census recorded that there were then a total of 78 males, 55 females, 28 voters and 24 militia members, for a total of 133 residents then residing within Spring Grove Township, Linn County. In 1854, David Reece did not have too many neighbors around him as this census demonstrates. It’s hard for me to imagine today that at the time of the 1854 census, that there were only 133 residents within the township of Spring Grove, which is an area encompassing 23,040 acres.

In 1854, David and his family were living on the Hickory Grove Farm in what historian Isaac Holman described as an old log cabin home. Holman wrote that on April 3, 1854, the first Spring Grove Township election was held in David Reece’s old log house, the ballot box being David’s old soft woolen hat. I would not think that David’s cabin at the time of that election was what one would consider ‘old’, because David had only been residing within the township for 3 years up until that point. There were only thirteen votes cast during that election for that time there were only thirteen voters in the township. There were just enough voters to fill the offices. David had the honor of casting the first ballot in the township. It is reported that by 1910, that the minutes of that election were framed and in a good state of preservation, treasured by the Reece family. These meeting minutes were reportedly in the possession of David’s son Curtis. This historical record was then given to the Spring Grove Church of Spring Grove Township. It is highly unlikely that these minutes exist today.

At the above mentioned election held at David’s home on April 3, 1854, David Reece, Richard Gilbert and David G. Church were elected to be voting judges. David G. Church was elected as township assessor. This would have been David Glazier Church; he being the son of Reuben and Mary ‘Polly’ Church. Polly was David’s stepmother; thus, David G. Church was David Reece’s stepbrother. A.J. Ward and Sidney Ewing were elected township clerks. A.J. Ward was David Reece’s brother-in-law. David Reece, Josiah Walton and Lorenzo D. Peyton were elected as township trustees. Josiah would have been Josiah Hammond Walton, who came to the township from Allen County, Ohio in 1847. He was the son of Joseph G. Walton and Deborah Gilbert. Joseph G. Walton was the brother of David Reece’s stepmother Polly. Reuben Church was elected constable; this would be Reuben Whipple Church III; he being David Reece’s brother-in-law.

We know that at some point, David held the position of justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa. David was elected to this position as early as 1855. The records of
the Linn County Board of Supervisors lead me to believe that David was a county justice of the peace as early as January 1855. An excerpt from a record of the Linn County Board of Supervisors reads: Be it remembered that on the 7th day of April 1855 comes David Reece who was on the 2nd day of April 1855 duly elected justice of the peace for Linn County; he files herein his bond and is duly qualified as such according to law. 

David was 31 when Kittorah, age 28, gave birth to their third child, James Lewis Reece, on October 27, 1855. James was born in Spring Grove Township near Troy Mills.

It is recorded that by 1855, that the building of railroads through Iowa had decimated forests in the state. Trees were being cut to make railroad ties, cars and trestles. It took six acres of oak to build one mile of track. It is also recorded that as late as 1855, that there were only two pianos and a half a dozen spring buggies found within the boundaries of Linn County, Iowa. Conveniences such as sewing machines were unknown.

In June 1856, David and Kittorah Reece would have been residing and making a living on their Hickory Grove Farm. At that same time, a mass migration of people, consisting of a couple hundred immigrants, were preparing for a journey from Iowa City, Iowa to Salt Lake City, Utah. This journey would later go down in the annals of American history as one of the most memorable and remarkable migrations west. The departure of these immigrants from Iowa City occurred not too far geographically from where David and Kittorah called home. These immigrants consisted of Mormon converts from Europe. These converts to the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints were bound for the valley of the Great Salt Lake, which is where their leader, Brigham Young, had taken his people in July 1847 to escape religious persecution in Nauvoo, Illinois. These European converts to the faith departed Iowa City with handcarts on June 9, 1856. These converts were poor. They could not afford to purchase wagons and the oxen needed to pull them; therefore, they built handcarts from the local timber around Iowa City and proceeded to push/pull these carts across the plains of the mid-continent and over the Rocky Mountains until they finally reached the Salt Lake Valley on September 26, 1856.

Upon arriving at their final destination, these Mormon pioneers completed a 6,000 mile journey which originally began in Europe. What a journey!! These pioneers consisted of the first two handcart companies to depart Iowa City. In all, ten handcart companies made the journey from Iowa City to Salt Lake from 1856 to 1860. These 10 handcart companies were comprised of a total of 3,000 people and 653 carts. These 3,000 people originally departed from Europe, came across the Atlantic Ocean in sailing vessels, arrived in New York, took a train from New York to Ohio, took another train from Ohio to Iowa City, from Iowa City they pulled their handcarts to the Salt Lake Valley. In total, this journey was approximately 6,000 miles in length, which was quite a feat for the era and would be so even today. In 1856, Iowa City was the terminus for the western railroads; thus explaining why these handcart companies departed from Iowa City.

Troy Mills area historian Isaac Holman wrote the following:

In the pioneer days horse thieves caused much trouble and stole many animals and killed others to prevent owners from chasing the thieves. This annoyed the people a great deal as it took away many of the best horses and were rarely ever recovered. The
country was new and sparsely settled which gave the thieves a good chance to escape with ill-gotten gain. In early times, Dubuque and one or two other river towns were their only markets. Dubuque was the principal one for this part of the country. In going and returning from those towns, pioneers would almost always meet men hunting for stolen horses. Thieves were well organized and had headquarters in different parts of the country where the stolen horses would be taken and concealed, sometimes in caves until they could be disposed of. Sometimes the thieves that were caught were hung. One such horse thief is buried in West Prairie Cemetery in an unmarked grave south of Troy Mills, Iowa.

A Troy Mills area resident named Bernard Evers told me that he at one time lived in David Reece's old home upon the Hickory Grove Farm, which is currently located about a block west of Evers' current residence south of the Spring Grove Church east of Troy Mills. Evers stated to me that David and Kittorah built a new brick home on their Hickory Grove Farm in 1857. This is the same home that Evers once lived in years ago. This home stands today as the north half of the old David Reece place. Evers also stated to me that he believed that in 1858 or 59, that David and Kittorah built an addition to their home, which today stands as the south side of the old Reece place. I believe that Evers might be mistaken in regards to when the south side addition was built. I believe that the south addition was built shortly after David married his third wife in 1863. Knowing that David was initially engaged in the manufacture of brick when he arrived in Spring Grove, it is entirely possible that David built his own home with bricks he made himself.

By 1857, it was recorded that steamboat crews were decimating Iowa forests to fuel boats. This in conjunction with other activities such as the building of railroads was contributing to the loss of Iowa forests. That same year, the Iowa State Agricultural Society pleaded for more careful use of the state's forests.

Historian Isaac Holman wrote that in 1857, David and two of his neighbors traveled from their homes to Davenport, Iowa to sell their dressed pork. This obviously would have been a trip made by wagon. Holman reported that David and his neighbors were on the road for nine days. During that time the mercury stood from 18 to 30 degrees below zero each day they were gone. That must have been one hell of a cold journey. I bet David and his neighbors were glad to get home from that trip.

David was 34 years old when Kittorah, age 31, gave birth to their fourth child, Floyd Norval Reece, on April 5, 1858.

David and Kittorah added more land to their original purchase when they bought twenty acres for $150 from A.L. and Rachel Rise of Jones County, Iowa on February 17, 1859. These twenty acres were located within the same section as David and Kittorah's Hickory Grove Farm; being in the north one-half of the southeast one-fourth of the southeast quarter of section 12.

David and Kittorah's third child, James Lewis Reece, died on September 4, 1859. He likely died in the presence of his parents and siblings upon their family farm. Unquestionably, David and Kittorah along with their surviving children would have attended James' burial at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. According to Lower Spring
Grove Cemetery records, James died at the age of 10 months and 2 days; however, this can not be correct because this would place James’ birth in conflict with the date of birth of his brother Floyd. My research indicates that James died at the age of 4 years. James’ tombstone is missing from Lower Spring Grove Cemetery; thus, we do not know exactly where he is buried within the cemetery. His grave has to be located within row 15 of the old portion of the cemetery.

According to the records of Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, an acre of land was deeded for the cemetery to the Trustees of Spring Grove Township in the year 1889. It was surveyed and platted in May 1890 by D.S. Fay. An addition to the cemetery was added to the east in later years. Burials occurred in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery decades before it was officially known as such. This cemetery is sometimes, yet today, referred to as Sod Town Cemetery; named after the sod homes that were constructed by early pioneers in the area.

The 1859 plat map of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa found in the map section of this book, recorded the 1859 population of Spring Grove at 283 persons. This map shows the migration and settlement patterns of the township clearly; one can easily see in this map that the northeastern part of the township was settled first. This map tells us that large portions of the township west of the Wapsipinicon River consisted of virgin prairie and had yet to be settled by 1859.

In 1859, David and Kittorah lived in close proximity to several family names mentioned throughout this book. These families included members of the Betzer, Church, Peyton, Reece, Walton and Ward families. David lived in close proximity to his brother Henry and to his brother-in-law Reuben Church in 1859.

David was 36 years of age, and Kittorah was 33, when their fifth child, Rebecca Annette Reece, was born on May 20, 1860.

Iowa’s population in 1860 was 674,913 persons, which is not that much bigger than the present day population of Des Moines. There were only 18,947 inhabitants of Linn County in 1860. The present day population of Cedar Rapids in and of itself is approximately 120,000.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that the household of David Reece then resided within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa and consisted of: David, age 36, a farmer, born in Ohio; wife Victoria /sic/ A., age 30, born in Ohio; son William H., age 15, born in Ohio; daughter Hannah A., age 8, born in Iowa; son *Abram W., age 6, born in Iowa; son Norval F., age 2, born in Iowa; and daughter Rebecca A., age 3 months, born in Iowa. This census enumerator spelled Kittorah’s name wrong.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that David’s real estate was then valued at $1,800 and his personal property was valued at $350. This census also recorded David’s post office as Spring Grove, Iowa. It is my understanding that the community of Spring Grove existed near the present day Spring Grove Church east of Troy Mills. David lived very close to the area known as Spring Grove the majority of his life.

David suffered another personal loss in his life when his wife Kittorah died at the age of 35 in Linn County, Iowa on February 26, 1862. Kittorah’s death undoubtedly occurred in the vicinity of Troy Mills. In all likelihood, she probably died at her home on the Hickory Grove Farm. Kittorah was survived by three sons: William Henry, age 17;
*Abraham Ward, age 8; and Norval Floyd, age 4; and two daughters: Hannah Ellen, age 10; and Rebecca Annette, age 1.

Kittorah is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. David, his children, relatives and friends certainly would have attended Kittorah’s burial, which probably occurred on a cold day in late February or early March 1862. Upon Kittorah’s death, David found himself a single parent raising five children, all under the age of 18.

David and Kittorah had six children according to a 1901 Linn County, Iowa biographical history of David Reece. David’s obituary states that he and Kittorah had five children. My research indicates that David’s obituary is correct in that David and Kittorah were the parents of five children; namely: Hannah Ellen, *Abraham Ward, James Lewis, Floyd Norval and Rebecca Annette Reece. The 1901 biographical reference to six children must include William Henry Reece from David’s first marriage to Juliana Lane.

David would have been a farmer upon his Hickory Grove Farm when the U.S. Civil War erupted on April 12, 1861. On that date, the first shot of the war was fired by
the Confederacy when they shelled the Federal garrison in South Carolina named Fort Sumter.

Six months after Kittorah’s death, and 16 months after the start of the Civil War, David’s 17 year old son, William Henry Reece, enlisted into the Union army on August 9, 1862. Twelve days later, on August 21, 1862, William was mustered into Federal service with the 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry. One can only imagine the motions that were going through the Reece home stemming from Kittorah’s death, the outbreak of the war, and William Henry’s subsequent enlistment.

When the day came for William Henry to leave the family farm to serve his country through the Grand Army of the Republic, David, along with the rest of the family and relatives, undoubtedly would have said their goodbyes to William before he departed the Hickory Grove Farm. One can hardly imagine what that day was like for William Henry and the entire family. As it turned out, when William left the family farm that he had called home for the majority of his life, it would be the last time that his family or the farm would see William Henry Reece.

David certainly would have missed William Henry’s presence at home during his service in the war; not only in his heart, but on the family farm as well. William Henry probably helped his father in the family farm operation up until he left to serve in the Union army. I would imagine that William’s absence while fighting in the war put a strain on his family to operate the farm.

David remained single for a little over a year after Kittorah’s death. At the age of 39, David remarried to a Mrs. Anna (Conner) Klingaman on June 8, 1863 in Vinton, Benton County, Iowa. They were married by Benton County Judge John McCartney. Their marriage appears to have taken place at the Benton County Courthouse in Vinton. Just who attended their wedding is unknown; it was probably a small affair.

When Anna Klingaman married David Reece, she was the mother of seven children. Anna was previously married to a Stephen Klingaman and they appear to have been living relatively well off in or near the present day town of Traer in Tama County, Iowa. It appears as though that Anna was residing near her brother-in-laws, Hiram Klingaman and Peter Nungesser, just prior to her marriage to David Reece. I assume that they were helping Anna make ends meet with the loss of her husband. As recorded in the obituary of Anna’s daughter Gertrude, Gertrude was only 6 months old when her mother was left a widow with seven children to care for. Gertrude’s obituary goes on to read that a few years later, Mrs. Klingaman (Anna), with her family of children and a few belongings, drove with a team and wagon from Tama to Linn County; locating at Spring Grove east of Troy Mills. This obituary reference to David and Anna locating at Spring Grove would be a reference to the Hickory Grove Farm. I assume that Anna and her children lived in or near present day Traer prior to their move to the Hickory Grove Farm in 1863 upon her marriage to David Reece.

I do not know for sure why David and Anna married in Vinton, Iowa. Given the fact that Anna and her first husband lived west of Vinton in or near the town of Traer, probably had something to do with why she remarried to David Reece in Vinton.

David and Anna’s obituary reads that they commenced housekeeping at Spring Grove in 1863. This would be a reference to the small community of Spring Grove located within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa near David’s farm. Their
obituary and other sources imply that immediately upon their marriage, that David and Anna made their home on his Hickory Grove Farm. I myself have no doubt that Anna and her children from her first marriage moved onto the Hickory Grove Farm when she married David Reece in 1863. David and Anna were to reside upon the Hickory Grove Farm for the remainder of their lives.
Anna and David Reece

This is possibly a wedding photo or was taken around the time of their marriage. At some point, someone used an ink pen to highlight their hair, which you can make out in this photo. Darn that kid!
George V. Conner wrote the following in his previously mentioned 1979 letter:

Anna was a cousin to David's previous two wives. Anna was born on June 7, 1828 in Salem, Salem County, New Jersey. Anna is the daughter of William Conner and Clarissa Huffman. Anna had one sister and two brothers (Maria, Cyrus and George). William and Clarissa Conner were married in Salem, New Jersey in 1820. They eventually moved to Wapakoneta, Ohio. William Conner was a farmer; he died of old age and is buried in St. John's Cemetery, St. John's, Duchuquet Township, Auglaize County, Ohio.

William and Clarissa Conner's children: Cyrus, Maria and Anna, were all born in New Jersey. Their son George was born in Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio on April 18, 1840. Sometime between the birth of their daughter Anna and their son George, William and Clarissa moved the family from New Jersey to Auglaize County, Ohio.

George V. Conner wrote in his 1979 letter that Anna's father, William Conner, was born on March 24, 1794 in Salem, New Jersey, and that he died at the age of 80 years, 7 months and 7 days on August 11, 1874. According to the letter, William had been a farmer at the time of his death. In his letter, Conner wrote that Anna's mother, Clarissa (Huffman) Conner, was born in April 1797, and that she died at the age of 71 years and 1 month on May 4, 1868. Another source lists that Clarissa was born on April 30, 1797. William and Clarissa Conner each died while residing within Duchuquet Township, Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio.

George V. Conner wrote in his 1979 letter that Anna is a sibling to:

1. Cyrus Josiah Conner, born September 20, 1821; died February 12, 1876.
3. George Vernon Conner, born April 18, 1840; died November 19, 1923.

According to George Conner's letter, he wrote that Anna's father, mother, sister and brother Cyrus, are all buried in St. Johns Cemetery, St. John's, Auglaize County, Ohio.

It appears as though that prior to her eventual marriage to her first husband, that Anna (Conner) Klingaman lived with her parents in or near the town of St. Johns in southwestern Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio, which would have been during the approximate time that David Reece lived in or near the town of Uniopolis in the west-central portion of Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio.

It would appear likely that David Reece and Anna (Conner) Klingaman would have known one another for at least 20 years prior to their eventual marriage in 1863. I come to this conclusion given their residency in the Uniopolis area prior to their marriage and given the knowledge that she was a cousin to David's first two wives.

Anna (Conner) Klingaman's first marriage was to a Stephen Klingaman. They were married on August 12, 1845 in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. According to one source, Stephen was born on November 15, 1820 in Columbia County, Pennsylvania. He is the son of Jacob Klingaman and Lydia Furry. According to Conner's 1979 letter, Stephen was born in the year of 1827. According to at least one source, Stephen Klingaman was Pennsylvania Dutch and they came from Holland. Genealogist William
Luth of Mesa, Arizona suggests that Stephen Klingaman’s line is of Germany ancestry, but this appears to be unconfirmed.

According to information furnished by genealogist William Luth, Stephen Klingaman’s father, Jacob Klingaman, was born about 1795 in Berks County, Pennsylvania. According to Luth, Jacob married Lydia Furry about the year 1818 in Bloomsburg, Columbia County, Pennsylvania. She died in 1842 in Pennsylvania and he died in 1848 in Auglaize County, Ohio. Jacob is buried in Tam Cemetery, Auglaize County, Ohio.

Jacob and Lydia Klingaman are the parents of:

1. **Stephen Klingaman**, born November 15, 1820; died ????
2. **Mary Ann (Klingaman) Nungesser**, born November 5, 1822; died March 17, 1896.
3. **George Klingaman**, born October 13, 1824; died June 12, 1879.
4. **Hiram Klingaman**, born January 13, 1827; died April 12, 1908.
5. **Amanda (Klingaman) Mertz**, born March 22, 1839; died April 27, 1927.

It is reported that all of the children of Jacob and Lydia Klingaman were born in Pennsylvania; probably within Columbia County. At some point, Stephen Klingaman moved from Pennsylvania to Ohio. He was a wagon maker by one account. According to the 1979 letter of George V. Conner, Stephen and Anna Klingaman lived near the towns of Wapakoneta and Uniopolis in Auglaize County, Ohio. This is corroborated by the U.S. Census which recorded that Anna and two daughters, Lydia and Clarissa, were living with her parents in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on August 12, 1850. It is unknown why Stephen is not found in the 1850 census record living with his wife and child at that time. At the time of the 1850 census, Stephen may have been in or on his way to California to participate in the gold rush of ‘49.

Stephen and Anna Klingaman are the parents of:

1. **Lydia Ann (Klingaman) Gross/Proven**, born February 22, 1846; died 1899.
2. **Clarissa Ann (Klingaman) Fay**, born April 2, 1848; died December 22, 1932.
3. **Sarah Klingaman**, born March 9, 1852; died July 21, 1862.
4. **George Klingaman**, died in infancy.
5. **Charles Curtis Klingaman**, born August 16, 1853; died November 6, 1925.
6. **Maria (Klingaman) Walton**, born August 28, 1856; died April 9, 1946.
7. **Margaret Gertrude (Klingaman) Long**, born December 11, 1859; died November 19, 1941.

Lydia and Clarissa Klingaman were born in Ohio. According to one source, Lydia was born in Allen County, Ohio and Clarissa was born in Auglaize County, Ohio. Genealogist William Luth has it that Lydia and Clarissa were both born in Auglaize County. Sarah, George and Charles were born in Ohio; in all probability, all three were
likely born in Auglaize County. George died in infancy in Ohio. Maria was born in Tama County, Iowa. One source indicates that Margaret (Gertrude) was born in the area of Buckingham and Traer in northern Tama County, Iowa.

In 1854, Stephen and Anna Klingaman moved their family from the Wapakoneta, Ohio area and settled in northern Tama County, Iowa. Stephen and Anna were one of the first pioneer families of north Tama. Upon moving here, they purchased the northwest quarter of section 10 in 1854, which would have been in Perry Township.

Several sources have misidentified the Tama County town of Tama as the location where Stephen and Anna homesteaded upon coming to the county in 1854. They actually settled at what is now the town of Traer in northeastern Tama County.

In addition to Stephen and Anna Klingaman, his siblings: Mary, Amanda, Hiram and George, also settled in Tama County, Iowa near the present town of Traer. Stephen and his siblings appear to have settled in the area within approximately the same time period; however, it does not appear that all of the siblings came to Tama County from Ohio together.

It is reported that Stephen and Anna Klingaman set out from Ohio with a caravan in May 1854. Reportedly, six weeks later, on July 4th, Mary Klingaman, who kept house for her brother in Tama County, was at a neighbor’s, Giles Taylor, father of E.E. Taylor, editor of the Traer Star Clipper; their old cabin stood east of Traer. A man coming from Vinton stopped for a drink. He said, “The largest caravan I’ve ever seen is coming a little ways back.” “Oh, I know its Stephen,” cried Mary. According to the story, she got a piece of ice from Mr. Taylor, he had it buried in sawdust from the near by mill, and hurried home to get a cool drink ready. There were six covered wagons, one of them unusually large, made by Klingaman, a number of unmarried brothers and sisters of these families, and a group of young men anxious to see Iowa. These were brought by Klingaman to drive his twenty-one head of loose horses and fifty head of cattle. The Klingamans rode in a two seated covered carriage. The seats were taken out at night. Stephen, his wife and baby, slept in it. The rest of the party slept in the covered wagons except the young men who had a big tent. Old Dutch Jake drove a wagon carrying the cook stove, supplies, and the new born calves.

Shortly before the Klingamans arrival, John Connell, William Hitchner and Jonas Wood had set up a saw mill along Wolf Creek in what is now the town of Traer. The up and down saw, castings, and frame were purchased at Muscatine for $500. For a good price, the owners eventually sold to Klingaman, who in 1858 took the mill down and built a grist mill in its place. The settlers were reportedly profoundly thankful. Besides custom work, Stephen manufactured flour sold at home and in neighboring communities. The housewives of that day said it made good bread. It is reported that near the saw mill, the enterprising Klingaman opened a blacksmith shop operated by one of his caravan colonists; started a brick yard; and built several houses for married workman.

The History of Tama County, Iowa 1883, p.69 reads:

Hiram and Stephen Klingaman, natives of Pennsylvania, came here from Auglaize County, Ohio in 1834. Stephen bought (Norman) Osborn’s land on section 10, where he settled in 1835, and there remained until the hanging of the Bunker boys who were notorious horse thieves from Hardin County. He was arrested and an indictment found
against him for murder, but was released on bail and went to Texas and started up the river on a steamboat, which was lost, and it is supposed he perished, although it is asserted by some that he is now living in Missouri. Hiram settled on the northeast quarter of section 3, in 1855, where he lived until 1862. He now lives in Traer.

On January 1, 1852, three years after the first settlers came to southern Tama County, Norman Osborne, opened the wilderness of the Wolf Creek valley in northern Tama County for the settlers who were to follow. He settled in the south half of Section 26, Buckingham Township, Tama County, Iowa. Soon settlers began to homestead the banks along Wolf Creek in what are now Buckingham and Perry Townships.

The first pioneers of northern Tama County lived in frontier style—uncomfortable log cabins with puncheon floors, shake and split shingles for the roof, and logs chinked with mud that washed away with the first spring rains, allowing the air to circulate freely. The roofs were constructed so that the occupants of chambers could witness a heavenly opera before falling off to sleep. When supplies ran low, the men had to journey to Dubuque, Davenport or Muscatine, a journey that took between eight and twenty-one days depending on the condition of the roads. The pioneers of northern Tama County battled the elements to survive. They endured severe winter storms and prairie fires that moved with lightning speed that enveloped everything in their paths.

Two years after arriving in northern Tama County, state census records tell us that Stephen and Anna Klingaman lived within Buckingham Township, Tama County, Iowa in 1856. The township of Buckingham is located north of Perry Township, which contains the community of Traer, Iowa.

At the time of the Iowa State Census of 1856, the household of Stephen Klingaman consisted of: himself, age 36; his wife Anna, age 26; daughter Lydia, age 10; daughter Clarissa, age 8; daughter Sarah, age 4; and son Charles, age 3. According to this census, Stephen was a farmer at the time of this census. In 1856, Stephen and Anna no doubt lived near what is now the community of Traer. It appears as though that they were then residing north of Traer within Buckingham Township.

In addition to the household of Stephen and Anna Klingaman, at the time of the 1856 Iowa State Census, the households of Hiram Klingaman, age 29, George Klingaman, age 32, and Peter Nungesser, age 39, then resided within Buckingham Township, Tama County, Iowa. This census recorded that each of the above households were farmers at the time. Each household would have lived in close proximity to one another. Hiram and George Klingaman were brothers of Stephen Klingaman. Peter Nungesser was the husband of the former Mary Klingaman; she being a sister to Stephen, Hiram and George. At the time of this census, these four siblings: Stephen, Hiram, George and Mary, were residing near two more of their siblings; namely: Amanda and Elisabeth Klingaman, ages 17 and 15 respectively, who were both then living within the household of a 24 year old Buckingham Township farmer named A. Boylan.

Today, there is a monument within the northwest corner of the Iowa town of Traer that commemorates the grist mill once owned and operated by Stephen Klingaman. This monument is located near where the old mill once sat along Wolf Creek. The old grist stone from the Klingaman Mill is the center piece of the monument. It is my
understanding that the mill actually stood across the road from where the mill monument is today. It is believed that the old Klingaman Mill once stood at the present residence of Willard Haldy, a local dentist and area historian, who resides at 104 Mill Street in Traer. Willard and his wife are responsible for building the mill monument across the road from their house. They also deeded the land which the monument is on to the city of Traer. Stephen and Anna would have no doubt lived in close proximity to their mill. Their home would have certainly been located within or just outside of what is now the town of Traer, which was established in 1873.

Willard Haldy gave me a large piece of grist stone, which once was part of the old Klingaman grist mill, on July 13, 2006. According to Haldy, this stone is native to France. This stone was likely brought up the Mississippi River by steamship and hauled overland to Traer. Klingaman himself may have actually hauled the French stone to the site of his grist mill. Today, the grist stone that Haldy gave me sits in my rock garden at my house.

While Stephen Klingaman was busy at his mill along Wolf Creek, events were unfolding upon the Iowa prairie east of Des Moines that would forever alter the lives of Stephen Klingaman and his family.

By many accounts, Stephen and Anna were well to do farmers in their new home in Tama County. One day in 1860, Stephen was asked to go with a posse to guard some horse thieves, by one account, in the process the guards reportedly started drinking and the prisoners were hung. Stephen disappeared shortly after these hangings; he evidently went into hiding to avoid the law after this incident.

The History of Tama County, Iowa, p.1070-1071 reads:

The year 1860 was a memorable one in the history of Tama County, made so by the hanging of the Bunker boys. It was the first and last hanging affair in the county. The bunker boys, says a local writer, Charles and William, were members of a large gang of cut-throats. These men were the representative characters of the gang. The operations of the gang extended from one end of the country to the other—from Texas up through the Indian territory, Arkansas, Missouri and Iowa to Wisconsin; from the Ohio river, as far as civilization extended. Their depravations were directed against society everywhere, and they preyed upon the substance of honest toilers, merchants and business men, with reckless and daring impunity, sparing no one who was not in some way allied with their plunder-stained combination. In 1860, a gentleman by the name of Small, a resident of Polk County, had three valuable colts stolen from the prairie just east of the city of Des Moines. When Mr. Small missed his colts, he procured the assistance of Constable Seaman, of the same county, and started down the trail, which they followed to the residence of the Bunkers in Hardin County, where they very soon found the colts. Advancing to the house the pursuers were met by the mother of the Bunkers, who barred their way, ax in hand. At length, and without violence, an entrance was effected and one of the boys arrested. Securing him, they kept guard until daylight, when another Bunker came in sight, and after a long chase, he too, was captured. The colts were haltered and the party started for Des Moines. While in Tama County they were joined by Stephen Klingaman, and, as the story goes, it was proposed to hang one of their prisoners until he should reveal the names of his partners in crime. They had succeeded so far as to
suspend one of them mid air—without, however intending to continue the process until he was dead—when the other Bunker sprang away and stared for freedom at a lively gait. Klingaman and Seaman started in pursuit leaving Small to take care of the aerial Bunker. Small became so much interested in watching the pursuit and flight that he forgot to lower the body and by the time Klingaman and Seaman returned with the recaptured brother, the first was dead as a smelt. As a matter of precaution and to prevent his telling tales, the other Bunker was submitted to the same strangling process and with the same result. Thus both bodies were left suspended on a Tama county tree in what is known as National grove, in Perry Township. They were found hanging soon after the perpetrators had gone. Klingaman, it is said, was drowned the next spring, near Helena, in the Mississippi, having fled to that point, and Seaman and Small were arrested shortly after, but escaped. The former was never seen, or heard of afterward. Small, after passing several years in the Rocky Mountains, returned to his farm and family in Polk County. In 1877, Small was arrested at Des Moines by Deputy Sheriff, William E. Appelgate, and again escaped from custody, but afterward gave bond for his appearance at the February term of Court, in 1878. At this time he was tried and found guilty of murder in the first degree. A new trial was asked and granted by Judge Shane. At the February term of the District Court, in 1879, the case was dismissed, Small paying all costs of prosecution.

The following pages appeared in a book titled: They Came to North Tama, written by Janette Stevenson Murray in 1953. These pages were originally printed in a series of three installments in the Traer Star-Clipper Newspaper, Traer, Iowa.

**History Does Injustice to Memory of Stephen Klingaman, Says Writer**

Janette Stevenson Murray Reveals New Angle to Famous Bunker Hanging.
DECLARES PIONEER WAS SCAPEGOAT OF CRIME.
Paints Him as Sturdy, Upright, Honest, Enterprising and Law-Abiding Citizen.

("Fact is stranger than fiction.” No novelist has probably ever conjured up a more strange net of circumstances than those in which Stephen Klingaman, one of the earliest settlers of north Tama, suddenly found himself as a result of his connection with the hanging of the Bunker brothers, notorious horse thieves of the ’50’s. In recounting this story, Mrs. Frederick G. Murray, of Cedar Rapids, formerly Janette Stevenson, of Traer, daughter of William Stevenson, unfolds one of the most colorful chapters in early Iowa history, much that has never before been published. Mrs. Murray’s extensive research covering many months of spare time reveals for the first time anew and interesting angle to the oft-published story of the hang of the Bunkers, which occurred not far from the present site of Traer—the story of Stephen Klingaman. The Cedar Rapids Gazette and Republican in its Sunday issue of November 25 published a part of this remarkable story. By courtesy of the Gazette and Mrs. Murray, the Star-Clipper is privileged to publish the entire manuscript.

(By Janette Stevenson Murray)
The little Iowa town of Traer in 1923 celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. At the high light of the pageant was a scene, “Hanging the Horse Thieves.” This represented an actual event that took place there seventy years before.

Stephen Klingaman, one of the principle actors in the real tragedy, was a pioneer settler on the site of Traer.

Unquestionably he was the most well-to-do and enterprising man of the neighborhood up to that fateful day—from that day on, the grim frontier tragedy threw an ever darkening shadow over the house of Klingaman. His character and reputation, more perhaps from his disappearance than from the deed itself, have receded with the years into an almost sordid memory: his estimable family shrank and faded from the community.

Yet in the opinion of the writer, the memory of Klingaman deserves a better fate. By telling something of the man himself, his enterprises and exploits as a pioneer, we may arrive at a truer estimate of his character, the part he played in the early history of Tama County, and perhaps render a tardy justice to this man who, though not chiefly responsible, was made the scapegoat of the historic hanging of the “Bunker Boys” which put an end to horse stealing in that part of Iowa.

The late John Young, of Traer, said: “Stephen Kingman’s unfortunate participation in the hanging of the Bunkers cut short a most promising career. He would have been an unusually strong and influential man in business and public affairs.”

Born in Pennsylvania of Dutch ancestry, brought up by a stepmother, Klingaman shouldered the responsibility of his brothers and sisters, being appointed their guardian by his father before his untimely death. Stephen early emigrated to Ohio and was followed by his family. Stephen was the flower of his family.

At Sunday school in Unionapolis, Ohio, (sic: Uniopolis) he was greatly attracted to the fair haired, smiling Anna Conner. The Conners lived three miles out with only a cow path to town and school. Since this ran through a big wood infested with wild cats, Anna received little schooling.

In 1845, Stephen, who was about 24, wanted to marry the winsome 17 year old Anna. Although sorry to give her up so soon, Father Conner was overheard saying to his deaf wife: “I’ll tell you Stephen Klingaman is a fine young man. I’m sure he’ll make a good home for Anna.”

Four years later Klingaman joined a company bound for California, shoeing the oxen to pay his way. His grandson still has his little hammer. They were six months crossing the continent. His wife and two children stayed with her parents. Several letters came the first year. Anna paid five and six dollars postage on each. Although none had come for two years (latter letters were lost), they were expecting him home. Sunday evening, before Thanksgiving, Anna, lonely and sad, was holding sleeping Callie with Lydia in her little chair, asleep also, her head on her mother’s knee, recognized Stephen’s footsteps. She tried to rise with her sleeping babies. He took them all in his arms.

When so many forty-niners fell by the wayside, Klingaman, fit, shrewd, energetic, honest, found gold and brought back a goodly stake. Eager to see the world, he returned by water, crossing the Isthmus of Panama. Few survived this trip because of yellow fever and malaria. Carrie remembered he brought many sea shells. He became a landowner,
contractor, builder of bridges, stores, "meeting houses"—a man of consequence in his Ohio community.

Like many others who had gone to California over the prairies in an ox train, Klingaman appreciated the Middle West and determined to locate there. In the summer of 1854, he visited Anna's relatives in Cedar County, Iowa. Leaving her here, he pushed on to Tama County, buying from Norman Osborn a quarter in section 10, part of the land on which Traer now stands. Osborn belonged to that restless class of pioneers who enter land from the government, sell out to the first real settlers and move westward. Leaving his brother to harvest the crop and put in the next one, Klingaman returned to Ohio.

Thinking a practical knowledge of medicine would be a great advantage, Klingaman spent much of his last year in Unionopolis studying medicine with Dr. Nickols. His daughter, Callie, remembers him reading big medical books, his shelf of medicines, and neighbors coming for help. Klingaman knew what to do for a sick horse; in fact he was a great hand with horses, always owning a large drove.

The next May, Klingaman set out for Lima, Ohio, with a caravan. Six weeks later, July 4th, Mary Klingaman, who kept house for her brother at Wolf Creek, was at a neighbor's (Giles Taylor, father of E.E. Taylor, editor of the "Traer Star-Clipper.") Their old cabin still stands in east Traer.) A man coming from Vinton stopped for a drink. He said, "The largest caravan I've ever seen is coming a little ways back."

"Oh, I know it’s Stephen," cried Mary. According to the story, she got a piece of ice from Mr. Taylor—he had it buried in sawdust from the nearby mill—and hurried home to get a cool drink ready.

There were six covered wagons, one a Conestoga made by Klingaman; three families, a number of unmarried brothers and sisters of these families, and a group of young men anxious to see Iowa. These were brought by Klingaman to drive his twenty-one head of loose horses and fifty head of cattle. The Klingamans rode in a two-seated covered carriage. The seats were taken out at night; Stephen, his wife and baby slept in it, the rest of the party in the covered wagons, except the young men, who had a big tent. Old Dutch Jake drove a wagon carrying the cook stove, supplies and new born calves.

Probably no other pioneer family rode into north Tama in a comfortable carriage, accompanied by so many relatives and retainers and with outriders driving so much valuable stock.

Shortly before the Klingamans arrival, John Connell, William Hitchner and Jonas Wood had set up a saw mill. The up and down saw, castings, and frame were purchased at Muscatine for $500. For a good price, the owners sold to Klingaman. He added a grist mill. The settlers were reportedly profoundly thankful. Besides custom work, Stephen manufactured flour sold at home and in neighboring communities. The housewives of that day say it made good bread.

Young James Wilson, afterward distinguished secretary of agriculture under McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft, ran this saw mill several years for Klingaman, sawing logs for many of the north Tama homes and fences. He was paid $.50 a day. Evidently Klingaman was a keen judge of men to pick out this promising youth.

The settlers were profoundly thankful when Klingaman added a grist mill with one run of stone. Besides custom work, he manufactured a flour sold at home and in neighboring communities. The housewives of that day said it made a good bread.
Near the saw mill, the enterprising Klingaman opened a blacksmith shop operated by one of his caravan colonists, started a brick yard, and built several houses for married workmen. This settlement was all on the present site of Traer. Here was a Pennsylvania Dutchman in the midst of the clannish Scotch of Tranquility and the aristocratic down East Yankees of Buckingham and West Union. These villages were a mile away to the north and east. Tranquility church was three miles west.

Klingaman was the first postmaster of the whole community. His house was large enough to accommodate the mail. It was said that no paper lay three days in the post office without young James Wilson knowing its contents. He read every spare minute and evening. They tell of his propping a book up on the endgate of his wagon while husking corn.

All Klingaman's ventures prospered. He was a keen business man, a member of the Masonic lodge in high standing. He spent money freely, buying sacks of coffee, boxes of tea, barrels of sugar, bolts of muslin and calico. Anna had everything she wanted, lovely shawls, blankets, quilts, as many as sixteen good dresses at one time, several of them beautiful silk. She had fine riding horses for herself and friends.

There was no hotel except the Hough House at West Union and the Wood "Tavern." Travelers were always wanting to stop over night. Callie remembers they could scarcely walk sometimes; the floors were covered so thickly with straw ticks. Her hospitable father welcomed everyone free of charge. Occasionally Anna complained, Klingaman said, "I'll try and make it up to you so it won't be a burden to keep them."

Newcomers in financial straits often stayed around helping until Klingaman found them places or loaned them money to buy land. Klingaman kept as high as twelve men working in his mills, shops, and farms. John Glenn, the star witness at the trial later on, did the milking and other chores. Dutch Jake looked after potatoes, wood and water. Mrs. Klingaman had a hired girl but could not bake enough bread so a brick oven was built holding thirty loaves and twenty pies at once. They baked every other day. There was a long table.

Of a western type, Klingaman always wore a broad brimmed hat, had plenty of assurance, a kind heart, was clever, aggressive, independent, a ready talker, and an indefatigable promoter of his community. But Klingaman's community failed him and his family when a great misfortune came.

The "Ridge Road," part of the old state road from Cedar Rapids to Eldora, crossed Wolf Creek at Klingaman's mill and led to the northwest through National Grove, then out where it wound around on the hills. There was Four Mile Grove, farther on Fifteen Mile Grove, and so on to Eldora and Steamboat Rock, where lived the Bunkers and later on the Rainsbargers, ringleaders of the Iowa bandits and horse thieves. [Wolf Creek runs west to east through northern Tama County.]

These groves were all stations on an underground railway extending from Pittsburg to Omaha. The horses, hidden in the groves during the day, were passed from one to another at night. With such a perfect system of stations and signals, a farmer missing his horse knew it useless to hunt more than a mile from his premises.

Horses were the most valuable as well as the most insecure property the early settler owned. The stable door was always locked at night with a good watch dog outside; if there were rumors of horse thieves in the neighborhood the owner slept in the
barn with his trusty rifle near by. It was almost impossible to borrow money, so if a horse was stolen there was no way of replacing it and the farmer was unable to get in his crop.

While Stephen Klingaman was busy at Wolf Creek, building and promoting his new industries, on the prairies east of Des Moines, Lemuel Small lost three valuable colts in December, '59. Suspecting the notorious Bunker boys, he set out with Constable Seaman for their home on the picturesque Iowa River in Hardin County. Small was probably made a constable for the occasion.

The Bunkers had platted a town on their land. Settlers were not attracted to the neighborhood of the vicious widow and her desperado brood of five sons and four daughters—in fact the law abiding citizens tried later on to drive her out of the county; so instead of Bunker Hill City, we have Eldora, a mile up the river.

Mrs. Bunker met Small and Seaman at the door with an ax, but these officers, not easily intimidated, got the ax, searched the premises, and finding no trace of either men or horses set out on the eastern trail. At Independence the constables captured Will and Charlie in bed. It was Tuesday morning, January 3. The same day they started for Des Moines. The Bunkers rode two of the stolen horses; to prevent escape, each man had his legs tied together under his horse's belly.

Constable Seaman had a brother, Mitchell, teaching school in the village of West Union, near the present town of Traer, so they planned to stay over night there. Small and the Bunkers slept in the Hough hotel: Seaman, with his brother in a house near by. As a matter of precaution, Seaman took the prisoner's clothes over to his brother's room.

The appearance of these Polk County officers with the notorious Bunkers was an exciting affair in the little settlement on Wolf Creek. In the morning a crowd of bystanders gathered while the travelers were getting ready to start. Before anyone noticed, Charlie Bunker got his horse out of the barn and away, galloping past where Traer now stands. Small started out after him. They rode several miles before Charlie, seeing that Small was gaining on him, gave himself up. Returning, they met Seaman with Will Bunker in tow at Klingaman's mill. His house was near by. They rode over to it.

Hearing a noise, 13 year old Carrie, looking out, saw four men on horseback. Her father was writing. According to an old settler, Klingaman had ridden a mule over to West Union earlier in the day. But Carrie remembered his writing all morning, at least after she was up; he always had a great deal of writing—post office business and other affairs.

It was bitterly cold. The officers and prisoners came into the living room with the family. Gettie, the seventh child, born Dec. 11, was only a few weeks old. The young prisoners, in ordinary rough winter coats and caps, sat down quietly. The officers, well dressed, mild mannered men in their early 30's, talked about following the Ridge Road, Carrie said, and asked her father to show them through National Grove as the road was angling, unmarked, and the prisoners threatened to be troublesome. "The Bunkers can tell us the way," they said, "But we can't be sure they'll direct us right." The officers insisted until finally Klingaman said, "I'll get the best horse I have and go with you to help." Like most horse fanciers of that day, Klingaman no doubt had a strong antipathy to horse thieves.
Carrie said they—her mother and the children—were all afraid. These Bunkers were desperate characters, daring members of a large gang of cutthroats, no doubt responsible for thefts all over this part of Iowa—especially some recent ones in North Tama. Just a few weeks before a span of fine black colts had disappeared northeast of Buckingham.

The three men with their prisoners turned off the "Ridge Road," entering the most southern point of National Grove about a mile west of the mill. They passed people who knew Klingaman. There was evidently a plan to sweat the Bunkers—make them confess. Perhaps the officers secured Klingaman's help and went up into the grove for this purpose. They were headed for Des Moines. The "Ridge Road" was out of their way.

Tying Charlie to a tree for safe keeping, they put a noose around the neck of the older brother, Will, bent over a young sapling and fastened the end of the rope to it. Another rope held the tree down. Will denied all knowledge of North Tama thefts and hidden horses. Several times they loosened the rope that held down the sapling and he was strung up. Choking had no effect.

The wits of the three men were befuddled with whisky, so the story runs, though Klingaman was a temperate man, not even caring for tobacco. They did not drink in Klingaman's living room with his wife and children about. Someone had a bottle in his pocket. They took it as a bracer.

Charlie broke loose, Klingaman and Seaman started in pursuit, leaving Small in charge of Will. Charlie was getting away so Small hurriedly tied the rope to a tree and joined in the chase. Struggling to free himself, will Bunker loosened the rope; the sapling flew up, carrying him with it. He was strangled when they came back with Charlie. There was nothing to do but hang Charlie also. "Dead men tell no tales."

This was the story that Klingaman told, as far as can be ascertained now, and it was generally believed. The three men soon came out of the grove and down the hillside. Seaman and Small crossed Wolf Creek, riding off toward Marshalltown. Klingaman went home, getting back before noon. That night two riderless horses were found near Horace Hartshorn's barn. Two days later 15 year old Freeman Kile and his dog were hunting pheasants. Walking with his head back, gazing intently among the branches, Kile suddenly bumped into a dead man hanging from a tree. Frightened, he turned and bumped into another. He dropped his bag of pheasant and fled. "Freeman never did get over that scare," said Aunt Sarah not long since. "His eyes always seemed to stick out."

They found Will Bunker on the sapling, but Charlie was hung from the branch of a large red oak. Neighbors remember it died soon after and was cut down. The boys were hung not over eight feet from the ground, but, to insure death, ropes were tied to their ankles and their legs drawn back. The ground showed evidences of a fearful struggle. The Bunkers had fought for their lives. The discovery of the bodies created great excitement. T. Walter Jackson, county coroner, lecturing the evening before at the Buckingham lyceum, was still in the village. He and Daniel Connell Jr., justice of the peace, Buckingham storekeeper, a good man, well educated for those days, went to the place. An inquest held in Buckingham school resulted in a charge of murder on Klingaman, Small and Seaman.

A Tranquility boy, the late Gilbert McDowall, stood in the school doorway. "It seemed strange," he told father a few years ago, "to see such great husky men lying in
death, the ropes still about their necks. I saw the doctors examine them for other signs of abuse and find none.”

Joshua Wood, who helped search the bodies, said only a counterfeit quarter was found. The officers would have taken their valuables when arresting them at Independence. John Thomas, a cabinet maker of the village, made the coffins. Joshua Wood and Horace Hartshorn dug the graves. The Bunkers, unclaimed by their family, were buried in the potter’s field in unmarked graves in the northeast corner of Buckingham Cemetery, according to my mother.

At the inquest, “Klingaman was badly frightened and would not talk.” The coroner’s warrant charged Seaman, Small, and Klingaman with murder. In the eyes of the law, Constable Seaman was responsible for the prisoners, but he escaped to Canada and was never seen again. Daniel Connell Jr., local historian, wrote in ’86, “He died years ago.”

Although Small did not go home to Des Moines at first, he went later on and was several times arrested. People helped him escape. He kept out of the way (in California and the Rocky Mountains) most of the time for twenty years, then he voluntarily surrendered saying, “I can’t live constantly tracked by officers.” He was tried, convicted of murder in the first degree with the death penalty, then granted a new trial. Because of a petition signed by 2,000 taxpayers and all the officers in Tama County, the case was dismissed February 19, 1879. Small paid the costs, $700.

Were there vigilantes at the hanging? Cedar Rapids lawyers connected with the Small case thought so. A Vinton lawyer said it was commonly believed two or three other men were present but no one ever got their names. John Hopkins said: “Klingaman had been in California at the time of the ‘Vigilance Committee’ was regulating things in that state, and it is supposed that the hanging of the Bunkers was not the first ‘hanging bee’ that he had had a hand in.” Although brought up on this Bunker story, we never even heard it suggest that there was an organization of vigilantes in North Tama. There might easily have been one for they existed throughout Iowa at this time.

Crowds of sympathizers made the lawyers think there were vigilantes: but these demonstrations were to be expected without vigilantes, for most farmers had lost horses and lived in constant fear of these desperadoes. Although disapproving of the hanging, people felt like Andrew McCosh, who was honest enough to say, “It was the best thing ever happened in the county. It put an end to horse stealing.”

But to return to Stephen Klingaman with whom this story is concerned. As we know he was arrested with a coroner’s warrant after the Bunkers were found and taken before Daniel Connell, justice of the peace. William H. Stivers appeared for the state; T. Walter Jackson, for Klingaman.

This was a sensational inquest (the real trial never came off) which lasted two days. The room was filled. The chief witness for Klingaman was his old Scotch coreman, the eccentric John Glenn, whose hillside dugout overlooked the road up to the grove and the spot where the hanging took place.

As a cross examiner, Stivers had no equal. For an hour he had heckled the exasperated Glenn who testified, “They were perseverin’ up the brae.” Glenn had to repeat this three times. Wishing to belittle the old man, Stivers said, “What is a brae, kindly inform the jury.” John Glenn replied testily, “It’s no the bray o’ an ass—that’s
yours, "pointing to the lawyer. "It's the brae (brow) o' the hill. " The roar of laughter that followed ended Glenn's cross examination. The old settlers all tell this story with relish.

Notwithstanding the public sentiment for Klingaman, the case consumed two days and resulted in holding him for trial. His bail was fixed at $5,000—high considering the price of land. He was remanded to Linn County jail. Unable to get bondsmen, he deeded property to persons who went on his bond. He was released. Klingaman was in the deepest despair. Anna afterward told the children of the weeping and sleepless nights.

The constables, Seaman and Small, were responsible for the hanging. They knew this and immediately disappeared. Klingaman was a smart man and would have escaped with them if he had felt implicated. The state let the real offenders go without punishment. Tama County pounced on Klingaman with a thirst for justice. For years the petty county officials, lawyers and judge had been dilatory enough in protecting people from horse thieves. Why such sudden zeal to brand a murderer one of Tama's first citizens—a man of hitherto unblemished character, always working for the upbuilding of his community?

Naturally this case of state-wide interest presented itself to the young lawyers as an opportunity to win both fame and money. The people favored Klingaman but seemed helpless. He was so quickly in the clutches of the law. They would have found a way later on, as they did for Small; but Klingaman, keenly sensitive to the disgrace, began fixing up his affairs. After some months, several cars of cattle being ready for market, he and his hired man drove them to Muscatine or some point on the Mississippi where Klingaman disappeared.

Klingaman never let on to the children he was going away. His understanding with Anna was that he would find a new home, perhaps in California, coming back to his hired men, although released for poaching the $5,000, never returned Klingaman's property to his wife and children.

If there had been a more decided public expression of Klingaman sentiment at the time of the tragedy, it would have saved him from the crushing load of ignominy and disgrace that caused his disappearance before the trial. We must remember that Klingaman was never tried. Nothing was ever proved against him.

It was believed that Klingaman went south. In the spring he was reported drowned. Kingman went south. In the spring he was reported drowned. Nothing was ever proved against him.

If Klingaman was caught south of the Mason and Dixon line when the war broke out, he would have a hard time getting back. But he was a fine swimmer, and Klingaman was caught south of the river.
Anna once had a letter from Stephen, written at her father’s home in Ohio, where he went from Muscatine to get some money loaned the Conners. He said he was going south, but no other word came. Month after month passed. Anna watched the mail until her heart was sick. She started at every footstep on the porch; it might be a messenger. She finally believed him dead. So did Stephen’s sister who reportedly said later: “He would never have stayed away all these years from his family. He had great ambitions for educating his children.”

Daniel Connell Jr. wrote:

“It was well understood Klingaman had escaped the boat, allowing he had been on it, and wandered about the country. After the war, it was an open secret that he was in Missouri, at least until the final arrest of Mr. Small.”

One of Klingaman’s caravan colonists, James Hamilton, left Tama County the same year Klingaman disappeared, went to Missouri, enlisted in the Confederate army, became a cavalry captain, and rendered effective service on the Kansas frontier. One wonders if Klingaman met up with this man.

Mother’s family occupied one of the Klingaman’s cabin in ’62, while their own home was building. One sultry evening the little girls of both families while wading in Wolf Creek, stepped into a deep hole. Sarah Klingaman and mother’s sister, Marion, were drowned. Callie was saved.

Lydia, the eldest Klingaman daughter, had married John Gross, the blacksmith beside the mill. He served in the Civil War and was killed in the battle of Champion Hills, May, ’63. He never saw his new born son.

The relatives to whom Stephen deeded his property retained it and dealt with Anna in a high handed way. She was a distinctly feminine type, gentle, housewifely—not fitted to cope with these overriding men or look after her financial interests. She wanted to get her children away from the cloud under which they lived; so when approached by her deceased cousin’s husband (David Reece) with the proposal of marriage, she accepted. They were married in 1863.

Anna took the big Conestoga wagon filled with household goods, the family carriage, and a cow. Little Gettie remembered when crossing the Cedar River (at Vinton?) on the ferry and the cow had to swim. She thought it would drown. Klingaman, a ruined man left a ruined family. His wife and children went out of Tama County with a team and one cow; while he came in eight years before with twenty-one head of loose horses, several teams, and fifty head of cattle.

The new farm (the Hickory Grove Farm) was sandy and heavily mortgaged, the house a mere shack on a bleak hillside. Anna used what money she had left to pay off the mortgage and built a brick addition. Four other children were born. There was hard work and poverty. The big wagon was traded for a calf. The carriage that brought the Klingamans in state from Ohio was sold to buy a tombstone for a stepson [must be a reference to the death of James Reece.] The Klingaman girls shared their nice clothes with stepsisters. Although forced to hire out at the wage of $1.50 a week, with no education beyond the country school, the daughters of Klingaman grew into good looking, refined women, with something of their father’s ambition, able like him to put things across.
About thirty years after Klingaman disappeared, a man with a drove of western ponies appeared at Charlie Klingaman's farm, not far from his stepfather's (David Reece) and wanted to stay for dinner. Charlie, the only son of Stephen Klingaman, was attracted to this man. He ate like his father, and had just such a walk, and wore the same broad brimmed hat. There was a scar on his father's forehead at one side; this man took pains to keep his hair down. He took great notice of the children; stayed around after dinner, talked of many places and things. Charlie is quoted as saying, "I had a very dear friend who went away and we never heard of him. I believe you are that man." The man turned away and said, "I know nothing." When Charlie pressed him, he went away saying, "You have a fine family."

The stranger stopped in town (Troy Mills?), talked with Callie's brother-in-law, also a mason. She was advised not to try to see the westerner. He must have gone on to Traer. An aunt there told of a man with ponies staying around several days. They never heard from him again but Charlie felt sure he was their father. Of course they never told their mother.

She always made the best of things and in her late seventies, as we saw her, was an unusually attractive old lady. June 8, 1913, she and her second husband celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Later in the year, they died within twenty four hours of each other and were buried in the same grave. The local paper said: "It had been their earnest desire and prayer that they might depart this life at the same time."

In an old daguerreotype, Stephen Klingaman is not only handsome but distinguished looking. His might have been the face of a minister or a judge. The fair hair brushed straight back from a high brow; level honest blue eyes, long straight nose, and firm mouth betoken a well-balanced man, a leader. Proudly displayed in the center of his old-fashioned broad black tie is the square and compass of masonry.

John Hopkins was evidently right when he said, "Klingaman might have been a very helpful citizen, had not one bad move spoiled his career and wrecked his fortunes."

What really did become of Klingaman? What misfortune or crooked dealings of interested people interfered with his sending or returning for his family? What secrets were kept? Did he come back years after to see his children and rather than disturb his wife's second marriage, go back into obscurity? Did his brothers, who went on long trips to California, Montana, and the Rockies, see him? Was he, as rumored, traced by a brother to a big cattle ranch in Texas where he was said to be serving as foreman at the age of 90? The evidence points to this.

It has remained a mystery—but it is certain that an hour in National Grove on that January morning nearly a century ago sent Stephen Klingaman into oblivion, changed the whole fortunes of his family, and had far reaching consequences for the little settlement on Wolf Creek.

[Note: if one travels northeast from Traer today, one will follow the Ridge Road, which leads to a sign marking the location of National Grove.]

The above article on Stephen Klingaman and the hanging of the Bunker boys also appeared in an edition of the Cedar Rapids Gazette on November 25, 1928.
A letter from Stephen and Anna’s daughter, Gertrude (Klingaman) Long, to a Nellie (Walton) Yeoul, reads that Stephen went to the gold rush in California and died there. The late Mrs. Lois (Fay) Evers wrote that Stephen made two trips to California during the gold rush; the first trip was in 1849, and the second trip resulted in Stephen drowning.

The following is a letter that was written at an unknown date by a descendant of Stephen and Anna Klingaman. This letter was written to Nellie (Walton) Yeoul, who appears to be a descendant of Stephen and Anna’s daughter, Maria Klingaman, and her husband James Reuben Walton. The author of this letter is unknown, but it has to be a daughter of James and Maria Walton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dear Nell,</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mother was born in 1856 [Has to be a reference to Maria (Klingaman) Walton.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her mother was Irish. She was Anna O’Connor, born in Ohio, but they dropped the ‘O’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Her first husband was Stephan Klingaman, born in Pennsylvania. He was Pennsylvania Dutch; a wonderful man, very ambitious. He was a wagon maker. He came to California in 1849 for the gold rush. He died and left grandma with several children. Perhaps hadn’t he died we might all have been better off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandpa owned the land that Tama, Iowa is on. Grandma was a jolly nice person, very witty and could see fun in everything. Do you remember her when she came to visit in Nebraska in about 1908?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want you to know this: Grandma was a friend to so many. She clothed and fed so many-one person in particular was a poor boy; grandma patched his trousers and put up lunch when he was going to school. He was a Wilson and later in life he was made the first Secretary of Agriculture in Washington, D. C. To show his appreciation when he was in office, he invited grandma to come to Washington D. C., but they didn’t except.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandma married Reese and he had 4 or 5 children; and then they had Curt Reece and Rena Herman. Grandpa Reece wasn’t very honest with grandma’s children. He saw to it that they got almost everything.</td>
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I do not know what happened to Stephen Klingaman, and I am not sure that anyone truly does or ever will. There are various stories that abound pertaining to the hanging of the Bunker brothers and the part that Stephen had in it. We do know that Stephen disappeared after these hangings, but we do not know his ultimate fate beyond that. We certainly will not solve the mystery of Stephen’s disappearance in this book.

We know from the 1860 U.S. Census that by July 25, 1860, that Stephen Klingaman was not living with his family. It appears that he had already disappeared by that time. The 1860 U.S. Census tells us that on July 25, 1860, that Anna Klingaman and her children were residing within Perry Township, Tama County, Iowa. As recorded by the 1860 U.S. Census, Anna’s household on July 25, 1860 consisted of: herself, age 28, born in New Jersey; daughter Lydia, age 14, born in Ohio; daughter Clarissa, age 12, born in Ohio; daughter Sarah, age 10, born in Ohio; son Charles, age 8, born in Ohio; daughter Maria, age 6, born in Ohio; and daughter Gertrude, age 1, born in Iowa.
Anna and her children would have been living close to the settlement of Wolf Creek, within or near the present day town of Traer, at the time of the 1860 U.S. Census. This census recorded that the post office for the enumeration district in which Anna’s household then resided within was Wolf Creek.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that Anna’s real estate at that time was valued at $6,000, a nice sum back in 1860. Her personal property was recorded in this census as being valued at $655. This census recorded that four of Anna’s children had attended school within the year. They no doubt would have attended school in or near the present day town of Traer at that time.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that Anna and her children were neighbors to the households of Hiram Klingaman and Peter Nungesser on July 25, 1860. Hiram and Peter would have been brother-in-laws to Anna. Hiram Klingaman’s occupation is listed as a miller in the 1860 census; so, it appears likely that he continued to work at the Klingaman Mill after his brother’s participation in the Bunker hangings and his apparent disappearance by the time of this census. It is my suspicion that both Hiram Klingaman and Peter Nungesser probably helped Anna make ends meet after Stephen’s disappearance.

Another tragic event, which was briefly mentioned in Janette Stevenson Murray’s 1953 article, occurred to the Klingaman family after the hanging of the Bunker boys. It occurred on the sultry evening of July 21, 1862. This event is recorded in the History of Tama County, Iowa 1883, p.868, which reads:

Marion Young, age 13, daughter of Samuel and Janet Young, and Sarah Klingaman, daughter of Stephen and Anna Klingaman, were drowned in Wolf Creek in July 1862. They were bathing and waded into a hole that was quite deep. Miss [?] Mary Klingaman, an aunt of Sarah [sister of Stephen, aged 40, married to Peter Nungesser at the time, or Mary Tam Klingaman, married to brother of Stephen], who was resting on the bank, rushed to the rescue and was nearly drowned. It was on the northwest quarter of section 10, and occurred about 10 o’clock at night. Other children were near the stream at the time and speedily gave the alarm to the neighborhood, but it was too late to save the girls. [Marion Young and Sarah Klingaman drowned on July 21, 1862.]

Sarah Klingaman is buried in Buckingham Cemetery, which is located in northern Tama County, Iowa, just north of the town of Traer off of the Ridge Road. In addition to Sarah, other relatives of hers are also buried in Buckingham Cemetery.

Janette Stevenson Murray, in her 1953 book titled: They Came to North Tama, wrote:

I remember it was a gala day for us children when some business or pleasure took father to the Ridge Road. Here there was uncertainty and anticipation. One never knew just what was around the next turn. It was a joy to get away from the monotony of the section line roads around our farm. These ridge roads, former Indian trails, were used in early days by travelers who kept to the watersheds as much as possible with their heavy
wagons and ox teams. Old settlers said that in 1852 there were no bridges between Wolf Creek and Cedar Rapids.

The old grist mill had stood just where the Ridge Road crossed the creek; there Stephen Klingaman had invested some of his California gold in land and a saw mill. It was here the tragedy occurred that makes his story one of the most dramatic in Iowa history.

Mother could point out the exact spot in Wolf Creek, a few rods below the bridge, where her 13 year old sister, Marion Young, and Stephen Klingaman’s daughter, Sarah, were drowned. Just this side, there was a ford where someone was always washing a buggy in my day. I think most of the buggies in town were washed here, especially those belonging to the livery barns.

The Youngs lived in a Klingaman house beside the mill while their own was building. It was in the early sixties. Just at dusk on a sultry evening, the children were playing in the shallow water of the ford. The curly-headed Marion Young with Carrie and Sarah Klingaman began wading down the creek, three abreast, their arms about each other. Mother, then 8 years old, called, “See me dive!” Raising up, she saw the girls suddenly disappear. They had stepped off a ledge where the mill race joined the creek and were in the swift current. Mother’s screams brought the McDowall boys. Carrie was saved; the other two were not recovered for hours. Grandmother Young heard mother screaming at the creek but could only hurry off on her crutches.

The previously mentioned monument, which commemorates the grist mill owned and operated by Stephen Klingaman, is located at the north end of aptly named Mill Street in the northwest corner of Traer, Iowa. Approximately 100 yards north of this monument is an old iron bridge which crosses Wolf Creek. Just to the north of this bridge is a Tama County gravel road which runs west named Ridge Road. Approximately one mile west on Ridge Road is a sign on the left hand side of the road which reads: National Grove. This sign marks the approximate location of the prairie savanna timber where the Bunker boys were hung. During the time that Stephen and Anna Klingaman resided near Traer, the Ridge Road went from Traer northwest to Eldora, Iowa. This road then followed, and still does, a ridge line running northwest from Traer, which to this day, allows a traveler a nice view of the Wolf Creek valley. When I drive upon this road today, I find myself going back in time imagining what it must have been like to gaze upon the valley of Wolf Creek by horse and buggy in the mid to late 1800’s.

In January 2005, I spoke with an individual that owns an acreage along the Ridge Road where the National Grove sign is located. This sign is located in this individual’s front yard. This property owner told me that local legend has it, that the trees used to hang the Bunkers in 1860 still stand and are located a short distance in a southwesterly direction from the National Grove sign. The sign marking the location of National Grove is part of an auto tour tourism loop of the Traer area.

A history on the Mill Street grist mill monument in Traer is as follows:
Little more than a wooded grove adjacent to a stream, Norman Osborne, homesteaded this section in 1852 from the federal government for $1.25 an acre. A man of parts and thirsting for land and opportunity, he saw its value as a mill site. This became North Tama's first business enterprise. The early settlers in traveling the state trail from Cedar Rapids to Eldora forded the sandy stream by the mill and continued on west following the Ridge Road overlooking the beautiful and bountiful Wolf Creek valley (previously known as Big Creek.)

For the first year the mill was an up and down sawmill. Then, James Connell, Jonas Wood, and William Hitchner combined to construct an earth, brush and log dam on the creek directing the water to a sluice and powering the mill wheel. Giles Taylor, Stephen Klingaman, W.W. Leekins and George and Andrew Sloss were other people involved with the mill.

In 1854, Stephen Klingaman purchased the mill and installed a buhr stone grist mill and successfully operated it for approximately 6 years—until he was involved with the Bunker Boys. He then vanished and the widow sold the mill to Mr. W.W. Leekins who nearly went broke attempting to improve the reliability of the water power by moving the dam further west to gain 6 foot of fall in an excavated canal. Leekins was then forced to take in a partner, George Sloss, who then upgraded the mill with many improvements, including a steam-powered engine. To the dread of all millers, a mysterious fire broke out one warm July evening in 1883 while the circus was in town. The mill burned to the ground, survived by only the grist stones which later settled into obscurity.

In 1968, the stones were salvaged from the foundation of a mortise and tenon barn that was razed in the process of building a new home by Dr. and Mrs. Haldy. Still unrecognized, the mill stones were used in a retaining wall and remained there until William “Grandpa” Neidick Sr. identified them because of their unique shape and color. The masonry structure that makes up the Mill Street Grist Mill monument displays the remains of the original millstone that helped nourish the early settlers of the area by grinding their grist into flour. The nature of this stone was well known throughout the world. French Buhr, a milky flint-hard mass of porous cells whose edges always remain crisp and extremely sharp and yet was less abrasive to the wheat and thus produced a whiter flour. The best and most popular stone ever discovered for milling.

This example of early American authenticity standing in rustic grandeur at the foot of Mill Street is truly the foundation stone for Traer's roots.

The landmark was designed, assembled, and donated by Dr. and Mrs. W.F. Haldy in conjunction with the Traer Historical Museum and was dedicated during Traer's Quasquicentennial celebration August 16, 1998.

It is my belief that David Reece clearly knew Stephen and Anna Klingaman when David and his second wife Kittorah lived near the Wapakoneta/Uniopolis area in Auglaize County, Ohio. I think that David and Kittorah were living in this area in close proximity to Stephen and Anna Klingaman prior to David and Kittorah's subsequent move to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. The Klingamans and Reeces could have possibly been neighbors to one another in the Wapakoneta area.
It makes sense that after Stephen Klingaman’s disappearance for Anna to have then married her deceased cousin’s husband; this being the widower, David Reece, who Anna no doubt knew through her cousins Juliana and Kittorah. I have come to the conclusion that David and Kittorah knew Stephen and Anna Klingaman from their common residency in the Wapakoneta, Ohio area. There are several pieces of additional evidence to support this conclusion; one of which comes from the fact that prior to David and Kittorah’s move to Iowa, they sold a town lot in Uniopolis, Ohio to Hiram Klingaman on February 3, 1851. Hiram Klingaman is a brother to Stephen Klingaman, who we read about in a previous history of Tama County, Iowa.

The names of Stephen and Hiram Klingaman appear on a record compiled by the Assessor’s Office of Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio enumerating all the white male inhabitants above the age of 21, residing in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on the first day of March 1851, and being residents of Ohio. This is the same document that David Reece and his brother Alfred were listed in prior to David’s move to Linn County, Iowa in June 1851. This document also lists a William and Josiah Conner, who are listed one right after the other on the list. I speculate that this William Conner is the father of Anna (Conner) Klingaman/Reece; and I also speculate that this Josiah Conner is Anna’s brother. From this record we can make the assumptions that William and Josiah Conner, father and son, were residing within Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio on March 1, 1851 and that they lived in close proximity to Anna and her husband Stephen Klingaman. Thus, we know that Anna (Conner) Klingaman and her future husband, David Reece, were then residing near one another with their respective spouses.

It is interesting to note that Anna was living with her parents during the U.S. Census of 1850 and that her husband, Stephen Klingaman, was not residing with them at the time. The enterprising Klingaman may have been in California at the time trying to make his fortune during the California gold rush. Irregardless of where Stephen was at the time of the 1850 U.S. Census, an inference can be made from the above Union Township Assessor’s document that he had returned to be with his wife by March 1, 1851.

It is recorded that Stephen Klingaman’s brother, Hiram Klingaman, married on July 6, 1848 in Auglaize County, Ohio to a Sophronia Kent. At least three of their children were born in or near the town of Uniopolis in Auglaize County, Ohio. It seems likely that Hiram and his siblings, including Stephen Klingaman, would have lived near one another in the Uniopolis area at the same time David Reece resided in the vicinity. It seems as though that these Klingaman siblings lived in the Uniopolis area prior to their subsequent move to Tama County, Iowa. The families of David Reece and Stephen Klingaman would have resided near one another in Auglaize County, Ohio, probably near Uniopolis, prior to each man’s subsequent move to Iowa.

Several facts, such as the ones previously mentioned, support my belief that David Reece and Stephen Klingaman knew one another back in Ohio prior to each man’s subsequent move to Iowa. One of the most compelling facts is that Stephen Klingaman became the estate administrator of David’s brother, Alfred, upon his death around 1854. I believe that the above facts are just some of the evidence that support my belief that
David Reece knew the Klingamans from their common residency in Union Township, Auglaize County, Ohio.

I would imagine that Anna really was looking to start over when she remarried to David Reece in June 1863. Some sources state that when Stephen Klingaman disappeared, Anna was left a widow with seven children to care for. It is reported that the youngest of those children, Gertrude, was only six months old when Stephen disappeared. Young daughter Sarah drowned shortly after Stephen's disappearance. This was followed by the death of Anna's son-in-law, John Gross, a Civil War soldier, who was married to Lydia, the eldest Klingaman daughter; he was killed in the Battle of Champion Hills, Mississippi on May 16, 1863.

With the loss of their respective spouses, both David and Anna would have each found themselves as single parents trying to raise several children. So, it makes sense that they eventually married in order to support their respective families. Upon marrying Anna, David Reece became the stepfather to the surviving children of Stephen and Anna Klingaman. When David and Anna married, it appears as though that each had five surviving children from previous marriages. We know that upon her marriage to David that Anna and her surviving children moved into his home upon the Hickory Grove Farm. David appears to have had five surviving children from his previous marriages residing with him at the time Anna and her children moved into his home. I assume that David, Anna and their ten combined children lived together upon the Hickory Grove Farm. When one sees the Hickory Grove farmhouse in person or through photos, one can not help but imagine that it must have been a tight living arrangement within that home to accommodate 12 people.

David's obituary reads that he and Anna lived on the Hickory Grove Farm all of their married lives, except for a short time spent in Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa. This obituary reference to time spent in Quasqueton must be a reference to when David was engaged in the manufacture of brick in that town when he first came to Spring Grove. David would have been married to Kittorah, his second wife, at that time.

Shortly after his marriage to Anna, David lost his 18 year old son, William Henry Reece, to the Civil War. William died on August 14, 1863 of an unknown disease at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, Missouri. With the death of William Henry, David lost his last remaining family member from his first marriage with Juliana Lane.

David was 40 years old when he and Anna, age 36, started a family of their own with the birth of their twin son and daughter, William Clinton and Marye Margaret Reece, on September 23, 1864. Anna probably gave birth to William and Marye at her home upon the Hickory Grove Farm. William Clinton was probably named after his half-brother, William Henry Reece, whose death occurred approximately one year prior to William Clinton's birth. Some sources list Marye Margaret's middle name as Elizabeth; however, her tombstone reads: MARYE M. REECE. I assume that the M stands for Margaret, which is probably a reference to David's first daughter, Sarah Margaret, who died so young. William Clinton died at the age of 10 months and 1 day on July 24, 1865. Twin sister Marye died less than a year later at the age of 1 year, 6 months and 24 days on April 17, 1866. William and Marye certainly would have died in their parent's home upon the family farm. David, Anna and their surviving children were probably present when William and Marye passed away. David and Anna undoubtedly
would have attended the burial of their twins in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery with their surviving children. William and Marye are buried side by side in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. The burial of their twins would have symbolized an all too common occurrence for both David and Anna; that being...living longer than many of their children.

As David and Anna laid Marye Margaret to rest in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, Anna was at that time pregnant with their third child, Curtis David Reece, who was subsequently born on their Hickory Grove Farm on September 19, 1866.

These two grave stones in the foreground mark the graves of twin siblings: Marye M. Reece, age 1½ years and William C. Reece, age 10 months. Marye's stone is on the left and William's is on the right. This photo was taken in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery on November 11, 2003. The photos on the next page were taken on February 25, 2006; they provide a closer look at Marye and William's grave stones. I assume that these stones are the original markers of Marye and William's graves.
THAT EVA
Daughter of
D. & A. REECE.
Died
Apr. 17, 1866,
aged
21 yrs.
2 mos.
2 ds.

WILLIAM C.
Son of
D. & A. REECE.
Died
July 21, 1865,
aged
18 yrs., 7 mos., 7 ds.
According to David and Anna’s obituary, they built a house on their farm. This must be a reference to an addition that they built onto their Hickory Grove farmhouse shortly after they married. From what I have been able to piece together, it appears that David and Anna built a brick addition to the home that David had prior to marrying Anna. This brick addition would encompass the south side of the Hickory Grove farmhouse, which still stands in its original location. It would have made sense for David and Anna to have built onto their existing home with the construction of this brick addition to accommodate his and her children upon their marriage.

As mentioned previously, the Hickory Grove farmhouse still stands upon the Hickory Grove Farm. The house can be found today by going east from the main intersection in Troy Mills on Coggon Road for 3.5 miles. The farmhouse is on the south side of Coggon Road at 2594 Coggon Road, Coggon, Iowa. It is my understanding that the farmhouse was originally constructed in 1857. Like any home, it has undergone changes including the adding of at least one addition. Prior to 1857, it is my belief that David and his second wife Kittorah lived in a log cabin, which was probably located at or very near the site of the present home. The home and the Hickory Grove Farm are today owned by an individual named Gene Enabnit who resides near Ely, Iowa. This property is still a working farm.

In the early years, the town of Troy Mills was a site of a mill that utilized water power from a dam on the Wapsipinicon River. Area farmers took there commodities to this mill for processing. David Reece farmed his entire life; he and his brother Henry and other relatives no doubt utilized the services of the mill at Troy Mills. Troy was also a way station of the first stage and mail line. David, his family, and their relatives no doubt knew the streets of Troy Mills and the surrounding area very well from their many years of residency in the area.

Militia records of Linn County, Iowa recorded that at the age of 44, which would have been the year of 1867, David Reece was a member of the Spring Grove militia. His brother Henry was a member as well. These records demonstrate that the pioneers of northern Linn County created a civil defense network (militia) of able bodied men, much like our modern day National Guard. The Spring Grove militia records do not indicate how long David was a member of the militia. In addition to David and Henry Reece, from 1861-72, the following men were also members of the Spring Grove militia: John Freeman, J.H. Swain, S.J. Wickham, J.H. Walton, Charles Cook, E.C. Cook and James Church. These men are mentioned in various places within this book.

The last historical record of a mountain lion in Iowa appears to have occurred in Appanoose County, where one was shot in 1867. At some point after settling near Troy Mills, presumably prior to 1867, David shot a mountain lion himself, which undoubtedly would have occurred near his farm. The fact that the last mountain lion in Iowa was recorded as being killed in 1867 demonstrates how quickly Iowa was losing habitat and the plants and animals that needed that habitat to survive. This loss of habitat was due to farming and other land use practices which occurred with the settlement of the state.

A Linn County, Iowa deed recorded that David Reece was a justice of the peace for said county on January 2, 1868. This deed recorded that David was then the justice of the peace of Linn County that presided over a land conveyance between a Reuben W. and Mary Ann Church, residents of Linn County, Iowa, and an individual from Buchanan.
County, Iowa. Reuben W. Church was David's brother-in-law from his first marriage to David's sister, Mary, who died in 1852. The Mary Ann listed in this deed was Reuben's second wife. This particular deed recorded that Reuben and Mary Church sold ten acres in the NE corner of the NW¼ of Section 13, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa on January 2, 1868. These ten acres involved in this conveyance were located a short distance southeast of David's farm. At the time of the above sale, Reuben and Mary may have been living within section 1 of Spring Grove Township. Unquestionably, David was living near the family of Reuben Church at the time of the above deed.

We know that David was a justice of the peace for Linn County as early as the year 1855. Whether or not he held that position continuously over the 13 year period from 1855 to 1868 is unknown.

David was 45 years old when Anna, age 41, gave birth to their fourth child, Anna Irene Reece, on November 6, 1869. Anna 'Rena' Reece was David and Anna's last child. She was very likely born in her parent's home upon the Hickory Grove Farm; as were many of her siblings.

By 1869, Iowa ranked ninth in the nation in lumber production. Logs were then being cut and floated from Wisconsin which fueled sawmill boomtowns along Iowa's Mississippi River towns. It was reported that in Clinton, Iowa, that so much sawdust was in the Mississippi that it clogged the river there and created new land.

In 1869, the Mormon Trail ceased to be used as a route to Salt Lake City, Utah. This was due to the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 at Promontory Point, Utah. Some of the Mormon Trail followed existing trails established by Indians, trappers and other early explorers. In other areas, Mormon pioneers made their own trail. The trail was used as an overland route from 1846 to 1869. It was in May of 1846, that 16,000 Mormons crossed the Mississippi River into Iowa to escape religious persecution in Illinois. Mormon pioneers subsequently traversed the mid-west, including Iowa, and entered the Great Salt Lake Valley of Utah on July 24, 1847. This trek to Utah was a distance of approximately 1,300 miles.

Of the entire Mormon trek to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, it was the first 300 miles across Iowa that most tried the stamina and courage of the Latter-day Saint pioneers. The first Mormons to leave their homes in Nauvoo, Illinois departed in the winter of 1845-46. Mere weeks into the journey—through sleet, blizzard, and mud—it became apparent to Brigham Young, their leader, that his people would never reach the Rocky Mountains in the time or in the manner that most had hoped for. So throughout the spring of 1846, thousands of refugees trudged across the windswept Iowa prairies, preparing the way for those yet to come: building bridges, erecting cabins, planting and fencing crops. By mid June 1846, nearly 12,000 Saints were still scattered across Iowa. The Rocky Mountain entry would be postponed.

During the 23 years that the Mormon Trail was used, approximately 6,000 Mormons died along the way. This trail was not only used by Mormons, it subsequently became a major route used by many immigrants in moving to places west including California. One can only imagine how many immigrants, including Mormons, in total, died along the Mormon Trail. Immigrants traveled upon the trail by wagon, by pulling carts, and by walking.
Iowa's population in 1870 was 1,191,792 persons, which was an increase in population of nearly 520,000 from ten years prior. In 1870, there were 31,080 residents in Linn County, Iowa.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that the David Reece household then resided within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. David's household would have been living upon his Hickory Grove Farm at the time of this census. This census recorded that David was then a farmer and his wife Anna was 'keeping house.' As recorded by the 1870 census, on July 6, 1870, the household of David Reece consisted of: himself, age 46; wife Anna, age 41; daughter Hannah, age 18; son *Abram, age 15; stepdaughter Maria, age 13; son Floyd, age 12; stepdaughter Gertrude, age 10; daughter Annette, age 10; son Curtis, age 3; and daughter Annie, 8 months and 12 days old. There was also a boy of 2 years of age residing within David's household at the time of this census; his name is unreadable in this census record. His initials appear to be C.W.L. I do not know who this child could have been. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa with the exception of Maria born in Ohio. Again, Maria and Gertrude are from Anna's marriage to Stephan Klingaman. This census also recorded that David's real estate at the time of this census was valued at $3,000. According to this census record, David's personal property was then valued at $1,025.

Iowa's population was approximately 1 million in 1870. There were only about 193,000 people in Iowa at the time David and his second wife settled near Troy Mills. From approximately 1850 to 1870, in a span of just about twenty years, Iowa's population increased by nearly 800,000 people. By 1875, Iowa's population was 1,353,118. The Iowa census of 1875 recorded 31,815 residents within Linn County that year. Only 7,274 legal voters were reported as living within Linn County in 1875.

David was 48 when his daughter Hannah, who was born to his second wife Kittorah, died at the age of 20 years, 4 months and 19 days on February 14, 1872. Hannah likely died in the presence of her parents and siblings upon their family farm. Hannah is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.
Lower Spring Grove Cemetery November 11, 2003. This monument marks the grave of Hannah Ellen Reece, age 20. The monument marking the graves of her uncle and aunt, Henry and Lucretia Reece, is located straight behind Hannah's. This is Hannah's original stone dating back to 1872.
The monument in the middle of this photo marks the grave of Hannah Ellen Reece. The grave of her mother, Kittorah, is marked by the monument to the right of Hannah's.
It is recorded that the last elk was killed in Iowa in 1871-72. Elk were common in Iowa at the time our ancestors settled the state. Unrestricted hunting and habitat loss ultimately led to their extirpation from the state. Seeing the need for conservation of our nation’s natural resources, 2 million acres in northwestern Wyoming were set aside by an Act of Congress in the creation of Yellowstone National Park in 1872. This was the world’s first national park.

The year 1874 marked the beginning of Iowa’s first in the nation ranking in coal production. This was a title the state would hold onto until 1900.

It is recorded that during the centennial year of the birth of the United States that the last bear was killed in Iowa in 1876. Within 100 years, the North American continent underwent dramatic change in the distribution of people from the United States. This obviously had an impact on natural resources not only in Iowa, but across the continent as well.

A milestone in communications was achieved on March 10, 1876 when Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone. This invention probably had more of an impact on the daily lives of ordinary people than any other single invention.

A directory of Linn County, Iowa found within the History of Linn County, Iowa 1878, lists David Reece as then the owner of 148 acres valued at $4,500. David’s address in 1878, as listed by this directory, was P.O. Box Troy Mills; and his occupation was listed as that of a farmer in section 12 of Spring Grove Township. David would have been farming his Hickory Grove Farm in 1878. This directory lists David and his wife Anna as members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Spring Grove, in which he was then a trustee. This directory also lists David as having been, up to 1878, Justice of the Peace for 11 years, and as having held some office nearly every year since coming to Spring Grove in 1851.

The above 1878 directory of Linn County, Iowa lists David Reece as a neighbor at that time to an A.W. Reece. This would have been David’s son, *Abraham Ward Reece. This directory lists Abram as a farmer residing in section 2 of Spring Grove Township in 1878. This directory also indicates that David was then a neighbor to: his brother Henry, who lived in section 2 west of the Hickory Grove Farm; to his stepson Charles Klingaman, who also was a farmer in section 2; and to his wife Anna’s brother, George Conner, who was a farmer in section 1 north of the Hickory Grove Farm. In addition, as indicated by the 1878 directory, at that time David lived in close proximity to several families that possessed a connection to the Reeces, either through marriage or by common migration to the area. One of these was listed in this directory as J.H. Walton, who was a farmer at that time in section 1, north of David’s farm. This would be Josiah Hammond Walton; the son of Joseph G. Walton and Deborah Gilbert. Joseph G. Walton was an uncle to David Reece; the former being the brother to David’s stepmother Polly. Josiah H. Walton came to Linn County, Iowa from Allen County, Ohio in 1847. He settled in section 1 of Spring Grove Township. Josiah is credited in the 1878 directory of Linn County, Iowa as the first man to enter land in the township; however, I do not believe that was the case, because other sources contradict that statement and credit Leonard Austin as being the first man to settle in Spring Grove in 1845.

Josiah H. Walton married Maria Cunningham on July 8, 1841 in Allen County, Ohio. They were married by an Allen County justice of the peace named M. Leatherman.
This would have been Michael Leatherman, who was likely a friend and neighbor to David Reece and his parents when they resided on the Reece family farm in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. I add this information pertaining to Josiah H. Walton to further demonstrate the interconnectivity of the Walton and Reece families and their common migration from the Allen County, Ohio area to near Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa.

The following history comes from the History of Linn County, Iowa 1878, pgs. 120-807.

**History of Troy Mills, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa**

Among the early settlers of this vicinity are J.H. Walton, Thomas Ward. David Fay, J.C. Dudley, J.S. Long, Jacob Eastman, H.H. Fay, Dr. Willard, A.V. Dix, Charles Hoover and Mr. Buckingham. [D.S. Fay and H.H. Fay would be brothers.]

Though an old settlement, it is of recent formation as a village.

The flouring mill, which was built many years ago by William Bruce, and known as the Hoosier Mills, is a good three-story frame building, with saw mill attached, having three runs of stone, operated by waterpower from the Wapsipinicon River. Mr. Bruce sold to George Stowell; he to Ward & Fairchild. The latter sold his interest to J.M. Carson, and Frederick Dubbs afterward purchased that interest. Mr. T.R. Ward is now the sole proprietor. Being situated in the midst of a rich farming section, the mills are prosperously conducted.

When a mail route was secured through this locality, the name was changed to Troy Mills. The stage line runs from Marion, through LaFayette and West Prairie, and from Troy north to Quasqueton. Goods were first sold by Mr. Bruce.

Though a village was not contemplated until 1869, a store was established here by J.S. Long, about 1865. He still continues business in partnership with his son. This store was followed by that of John E. Atwood and Isaac Holdman, which was transferred successively to P.K. Diltz, J. Booth & Son, Joseph Barnhill, and after several other changes, is now operated by Long & Brothers. The next store was established by J.G. Cherry, who sold it in 1878 to Keyes & Parkhurst, of Marion, who now conduct it as a branch store.

Troy Mills was laid off in the Spring of 1870 by T.R. Ward.

The first hotel was by J.G. Cherry, in 1871; the Troy House, now the Lagle House, by Snyder Dubbs, and the National Hotel, by Reuben Church, has conducted there. Mr. Cherry also opened the first saloon, followed by James Ringer. Mr. Cherry was also first to begin shoemaking there, in 1869, being followed by Lewis Shulme and Ed McCool.

Until the Fall of 1871, the nearest school was one mile south. In that was a frame building, 24 X 30 feet in size, was erected in the village, and first taught by Isaac Booth. The present teacher is Mary Allen.

The first drug store was opened by Dicks & Downs, in 1872, followed by Harmon & Beach, the present druggists.

A hardware store has been established by H.H. Fay, who is now Postmaster.
A livery stable is operated by Henry Long; a millinery shop by Mrs. E.J. Salmon; attorney at law, E.J. Salmon; harness shop, by John Stevens, 1878. Mr. E.D. Wilson was the first physician, in 1868, followed by Dr. J.A. Dix, 1872. There are now three blacksmith shops, by Jacob Eastman, William Buckingham and John E. Atwood; a wagon shop by M. Payton; two carpenter shops, by Philo Chester and D.S. Fay.

Methodist preaching had been held in the vicinity for many years before the organization of the village. Since that time the Pastors have been Rev. Mr. Belt, 1869, Rev. Mr. Young, Rev. Mr. Kirkpatrick, Rev. James Schull, and at present Rev. Mr. Belt officiates. Services are held in the Congregational church.

The Congregational Society was organized about two years before the village was laid out, by Rev. Mr. Spell, who was succeeded as Pastor by Rev. E.C. Downs, the Rev. Mr. Frye, then Rev. Mr. Lockridge, the latter of Center Point, while the former Pastors lived at Paris.

A Union Sabbath school is held in the church.

The Christian denomination have one of the oldest societies in the vicinity. They, however, have never erected a church, but hold services in the Congregational church.

An Odd Fellows Lodge was organized there in the fall of 1876.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that on June 26, 1880, that the David Reece household then resided within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa and consisted of: David, age 56; wife Annie, age 52; son Floyd, age 22; son Curtis, age 13; and daughter Rena, age 10. This census recorded their occupations at that time as: David a farmer; Annie a housekeeper; Floyd at home in school; Rena at school; and Curtis at home. This census record lists David’s father as being born in South Carolina. I have not found any evidence to support this.

At the time of the 1880 U.S. Census, David and Anna were living on their Hickory Grove Farm and they appear to have been living near her brother George Conner. George’s grandson, George V. Conner, wrote in his 1979 letter that his grandfather moved to Iowa around 1875, lived here for five years, and then moved back to Ohio. Evidently, Anna’s brother George and his wife Sarah were living somewhere within section 1 of Spring Grove Township at the time of the 1880 U.S. Census. They appear to have been living on at least a portion of the farm once owned by Anna’s sister-in-law, Nancy (Reece) Ward, and her husband Abraham.

Religiously, David and Anna were members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Spring Grove, in which he was a trustee. David was one of the organizers of the Spring Grove Church, which still stands today, but is no longer in use. This church is located east of Troy Mills at 2562 Coggon Road, which is a few hundred yards east of the home where David and Anna lived upon the Hickory Grove Farm. Their home can be found today in its original location at 2594 Coggon Road. David donated the land in which the Spring Grove Church was built upon in 1882. The Methodist congregation was formed in August 1856 by John P. Fay, a circuit rider from Ohio. The original class of 13 members conducted services in homes and the schoolhouse until the church building was completed in 1882. When Coggon Road was paved in 1952, the Spring Grove Church was moved back from the road to its current location. Afterwards, a
basement, classrooms and a new entrance were added. The church has been linked during the years with other area Methodist congregations. In February 1879 it merged with the Troy Mills Methodists to form the North Linn United Methodist Church. The first four Sundays of August 1982 marked the 100th anniversary celebration of the Spring Grove Church. The Spring Grove Church and nearby cemetery are all that remain of the Lower Spring Grove settlement established around 1851. The settlement was in existence until around 1879. It was located in the northern portion of Spring Grove Township, at the intersection of Seven Hills Road and Coggon Road (D62).

The following is a remembrance of the Spring Grove Church as written by someone who once attended service there.

The Spring Grove Church

In August 1856, John P. Fay, a circuit rider, organized the first Methodist Protestant Church Class 13. For 26 years they met in the homes and the Spring Grove School. In 1882 the church was built at a cost of between $500 and $600. The deed was issued to “Lower Spring Grove Methodist Protestant Association.” The land was donated by David Reece.

In 1939, the three branches—Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Protestant and Methodist South were merged. In 1951 an extensive remodeling program was started. Harrison Price was the contractor with volunteer help by men of the church. A basement was completed and the church moved back on it. The front vestibule and back stairway were added, also new pews and hardwood floors. The new pulpit and altar were gifts of the M.Y.F. and custom-made by Harrison Price. The W.S.C.S furnished the kitchen.

We had a good-sized congregation with six or seven nice-sized Sunday school classes. Our Christmas programs were always outstanding. I remember one when even the standing room was taken. In fact, the crowd was so large we heard a “crack.” No one stood up again until the program was over and all left. Once outside we found out a beam had broken.

We have many memories of the church—the kerosene lamp, the Aladdin lamp and at last electricity! The potbellied stoves and then the furnace. The Ladies’ Aid Society, the W.S.C.S. and now U.M.W. The Lois Circle was originally the Ladies’ Aid.

Rev. Clyde Scott was the minister when we remodeled. He helped get the Lord’s Acre sale started on the last Saturday of October. Our sales are still held on that date. These are but a few of the historical memories that are truly part of the heritage of Spring Grove Church.

by Mary Price
An organization known as the Anamosia Methodist Circuit of Spring Grove, Iowa came into existence in 1860. David Reece was secretary of this organization. The first minute entry of this organization records the meeting of August 11, 1860. The last minute entry was made January 25, 1873. Detailed financial reports show that records were kept diligently in earlier days. This organization was evidently a forerunner of what eventually became the Spring Grove Methodist Church, which was built on land David Reece donated to its construction in 1882.

This is the west side of the Spring Grove Church as seen from nearby Coggon Road. This photo was taken on February 25, 2006.
This is the west side of the Spring Grove Church as seen on February 25, 2006. Coggon Road is visible in this photo. A short distance west of this church is the Hickory Grove Farm. This church has not been active or used for a number of years.

According to a deed dated June 21, 1865, on that day, David and Anna Reece sold two acres, for the amount of $25, within the NE¼ of the NW¼ of the NW¼ of Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, to the trustees (in which David himself was part) of the parsonage on the Anamosa Circuit of the Methodist Protestant Church in the North Iowa Conference. These two acres appear to be the same ground whereupon the current Spring Grove Church, which was built in 1882, still stands. Evidently, at the time of the conveyance of these two acres, there was some type of building for Methodist worship, including a parsonage, which was located near where the Spring Grove Church currently stands today. David and Anna personally appeared before his brother, Henry Reece, a justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa, to personally acknowledge this conveyance as their voluntary act and deed.

David and Anna more than likely attended the Spring Grove Church faithfully from the time it was built up until their deaths. Since it appears that a Methodist place of worship had existed since at least 1865 on or near the present location of the Spring Grove Church, I would imagine that David and Anna probably attended Methodist worship there from at least 1865 to 1914. David and Anna would have had an easy walk from their Hickory Grove farm home to the Spring Grove Church and its predecessor to attend Sunday service. David and Anna were described in the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record of 1901 as then members of the Methodist Protestant Church (Spring Grove Church).
In a conversation that I had with a man named Bernard Reece of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who happens to be a descendant of David Reece’s brother Henry, Bernard told me that his father, Harlan, told him that David donated land to which a one-room log schoolhouse was built upon southeast of David’s home. Bernard also told me that his father stated that David was a teacher at this schoolhouse. This particular schoolhouse is gone; it once sat atop the hill along what is today Seven Hills Road, just south of where the Spring Grove Church is currently located. The one-acre lot where this schoolhouse was once located can now be found at the present address of 5766 Seven Hills Road. The original log schoolhouse was removed from this acre lot some years back and incorporated into the home currently located south of Lower Spring Grove Cemetery at 5722 Sutton Road. It is my understanding that the schoolhouse that once sat at 5766 Seven Hills Road, originally was located a short distance west of David’s home and was eventually moved to the Seven Hills Road location. The original location of this school west of David’s home may have been on land that David’s sister and her husband, A.J. and Nancy Ward, deeded for its construction.

In about 1880, a railroad running from Anamosa, Jones County, Iowa, to Quasqueton in Buchanan County, Iowa, was a proposed project. The Walker, Iowa News of March 23, 1883 reads: People at Troy Mills are much elated over the railroad prospects. They have news that encourages them to hope for the road at an early day. The Dubuque Telegraph Herald ran the following article: The place to be July 4, 1880 was in Troy Mills for the patriotic festivities. It seems however that the Buffalo Irish came down in full force to clean out Troy Mills people. The arrest of a local woman ‘alcohol hinted’ began a 400 person group participation riot. [“Stone and clubs were the chief weapons” the Herald staunchly observed although someone shot the marshal’s horse with a revolver.] It seems the Buffalo Irish bore a grudge against Troy Mills for voting a railway tax on them. The physical dialogue that ensued however impaired 30 people and 3 or 4 are expected to die.

December 30, 1884 marked David Reece’s 61st birthday. On that day a birthday party was held for him at his farm. A local Troy Mills paper wrote the following article regarding the event.

Birthday Party

At David Reece’s, on Tuesday evening December 30th, there was a very pleasant social gathering, the occasion being his sixty-first birthday. A complete surprise was planned and well executed by his wife and children, having so arranged that as the twilight began to gather, his children and grandchildren that live in this vicinity, with some intimate friends, to the number of twenty-five, simultaneously gathered and filled the house in about one minute’s time. As the rain was falling quite freely a single caller would not be expected. All seemed to be at home and took possession both of parlor and kitchen, arranging tables and chairs to their liking, but it was soon discovered that the tables were destined to bear their burden as well as the chairs, by the amount of various eatables that found a lodging place thereon. By the private conversation of some of the company it was evident that all was not in yet, and just as the tables were filled to their utmost capacity a nice easy chair, which had been purchased by his wife and children,
was brought in and presented to him. Rev. Mr. Selby, in behalf of the donors making a brief but appropriate speech, presenting this as a token of the affection and high esteem felt by his family for him, and shared in by the friends, and briefly referring to the number of years of association of family and friends and of usefulness in society, church and state, with earnest wishes that the future may be even more peaceful than the past.

The chair was then removed to the kitchen and placed at the table and its owner seated in it, which soon became the attractive place, but it could soon be seen that the table and not the chair was the object of attraction and sympathy, as all seemed willing and even desirous of relieving it of its burden. But just as all were in readiness, along came the delicious oyster, fresh and steaming, which for a time stayed further progress in that direction, but in due time the table was greatly relieved of its burden and none appeared to feel any worse for the part they had taken. As an hour or so was spent in social converse, with instrumental music and singing by the younger part of the company, a closing prayer was offered by Rev. Selby and all returned to their homes feeling that affection and friendship in every capacity brings its reward.

The 1885 Iowa Census recorded that David Reece, age 61, was then a farmer in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. According to this census, David’s household, in addition to himself, was then comprised of his wife Anna, age 55; son Curtis David, age 18; daughter Anna, age 15; and Simeon J. Wickham, born in Ohio, a farmer and widower, age 59. Wickham must have been a hired hand on David’s farm at the time of this census. Simeon J. Wickham was a pioneer of Spring Grove Township, having settled here in 1847. He owned a farm in section 2 west of David’s place. Mr. Wickham evidently went to work for David Reece as a farm hand after his wife Hannah passed away. Hannah’s maiden name was Conner; so, I imagine that she was somehow related to David by marriage, possibly being related to his three wives: two of which were Connors; all three wives are reported to have been cousins.

It is recorded that in 1885-86 that the last wolf was killed in Iowa. Prairie wolves, along with bear, elk and mountain lions, were found in Iowa at the time of settlement. All four were extirpated from Iowa within a relatively short period of time.

At the time that the last wolf was killed in Iowa, the gas car was built by the German Gottlieb Daimler. Within David Reece’s lifetime, he lived to see the mode of transportation shift from the horse to the gas powered automobile. Horsepower had been the primary mode of transportation for generations up until the automobile.

David was 62 years old when his 33 year old son, *Abraham Ward Reece, died of a heart attack on December 27, 1886. Abram and his family would have been living in close proximity to Troy Mills, and undoubtedly close to his father and stepmother, at the time of his death. It appears that Abram was a farmer in Spring Grove Township at the time he died. Upon Abram’s death, David once again must have attended another burial of a family member in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery as his son Abram was laid to rest.

As he did throughout his life in Iowa, David, in 1887, was living near the town of Troy Mills on his Hickory Grove Farm in Spring Grove Township. The following history and description of Spring Grove Township and of Troy Mills, comes from the Portrait and Biographical Record Album of Linn County, Iowa 1887.
Spring Grove Township

Spring Grove is in the northern tier of townships, and very favorably located. It is drained by the Wapsipinicon, which runs southeasterly through the northern part. Except along this river, which is pretty well timbered, the land mostly is rolling prairie interrupted now and then by pretty little groves. The soil is rich and easily cultivated.

The first man to enter a claim in this township was J.H. Walton, in 1847, who subsequently held the office of Justice of the Peace when Jackson and Spring Grove were attached to Maine Township. Coming in soon after Mr. Walton, and making claims were Jacob Eastman, H.H. Fay, David Fay, Thomas Ward, J.C. Dudley, J.S. Lang and Charles Hoover. After this, settlers were constantly coming in and securing their homes until the township was pretty well settled up and under fair cultivation. Most of the settlers came from the Eastern States. The population now numbers about 1,000 souls, and is composed of an intelligent and industrious class of people. The farms are under good cultivation, and the people are generally prosperous.

There is one village in the township---Troy Mills---where the people get their mail, and do their trading.

Troy Mills

This village is situated on the banks of the Wapsipinicon, and has a population of about 150 persons. The early settlers located about this site, though there was no effort made to establish a town for many years afterward. Probably the first industry that led to the starting of a town was the building of the flouring mills, to which was subsequently attached a sawmill, all run by water power. The place was known as Hoosier Mills. The mills were erected by William Wallace, who undoubtedly came from Indiana. When a post office was opened here it was given the name of Troy Mills. The first store was opened in 1865, by J.S. Lang. Five years later, the town was laid off, the other stores were soon opened. In 1871 a hotel was established. Following this was a drugstore.

The children of the village were obliged to go some distance south to a school which had been established long before the town was started. By the fall of 1871 a good schoolhouse was built in the village and a capable teacher secured.

The Congregational Society was organized, in 1868, by Rev. T. Spell. The society prospered and a neat little church was erected, in which are still held regular meetings.

The Methodists held meetings in various places about the settlement for several years. They finally organized a class, and occupied the Congregational Church.

The Christians have one of the oldest congregations in the township, and have the use of the Congregational building for worship.

There are now about five stores in the village, and blacksmith and shoe shop. The old mill occasionally does a little grinding. But this and other mills of its kind have had their day. Useful, indeed, they were to the pioneer, and they live with him in grateful remembrance. Modern improvements, however, and the present facilities for transportation, have so changed the condition of things that in a few years these old mills, moved by falling water, will only live in our memories.
David Reece was 67 years old in 1890 when historian Frederick Jackson Turner proclaimed that the American frontier, which had seemed so endless since the birth of the nation, was filled and was no more. Within David’s lifetime, he was born on the edge of the American frontier in Ohio, followed the expanding frontier when he immigrated to Iowa, and lived to see the closing of that frontier. Many prominent events in American history occurred during David’s lifetime.

During 1893-94, the nation saw the rise of bicycling for transportation and recreation. Bike sales surged to over 1 million from 20,000 the previous year. During this period the last whooping crane was observed in Iowa.

The 1894 plat map of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, found within section 2 of this book, tells us that by 1894, David had turned over his Hickory Grove Farm to his son, Curtis David Reece.

By 1895, David and Anna Reece were living near a man named Charles Klingaman, who was a farmer in section 2 of Spring Grove Township. Charles would be Anna’s son from her previous marriage to Stephen Klingaman. Charles would have been farming and evidently residing just north of the Hickory Grove Farm in 1895.

The 1890 U.S. Census recorded that on June 19, 1900, that David and Anna were then living upon their Hickory Grove Farm with their son Curtis and his family. Curtis D. Reece would have had charge of the family farm by this time. I believe that at the time of this census, that David and Anna were living in the south side addition of their brick home, while their son Curtis and his family were living in the north brick side of the home. Curt and his wife Eva would have been taking care of David and Anna at the time of this census.

The 1900 U.S. Census enumerator recorded that two households were living upon the Reece farm on June 19, 1900. This census recorded that the first household was headed by David Reece, age 76, born in December 1823 in Ohio; and his wife Anna, age 71, born in June 1829 in New Jersey. This census recorded no occupation for either David or Anna at that time; both surely would have been retired by then. This census recorded that David and Anna had been married for 36 years at the time of this census. This census recorded in that Anna was the mother of 11 children, with 7 living at the time of this census. This census record coincides with David’s brother Henry’s 1900 U.S. Census record, in that both list their father as having been born in Virginia, and their mother as being born in Ohio. I believe that David and Henry’s father was born in Virginia; however, I am certain that their mother was not born in Ohio. The second household recorded by this census as then living upon the Hickory Grove Farm was headed by Curtis D. Reece, age 33, a farmer; his household consisted of: wife Evelyn A., age 26; daughter Huldah I., age 3; and daughter Anna P., age 1.

The 1900 U.S. Census also recorded that on June 18, 1900, that David and Anna were then neighbors to the households of Charles Klingaman and Horace H. Fay. Again, Charles Klingaman was the son of Anna and her first husband Stephen. Horace H. Fay was the husband of Clarissa Klingaman; she being one of Anna and Stephen’s daughters. I believe that at the time of the 1900 census, that both Charles Klingaman and Horace H. Fay were living on farms that they owned and operated located across the road, which is north, from the Hickory Grove Farm.
This is a photo of David and Anna Reece and two of their four surviving children; namely: Anna Irene and Curtis David Reece. This photo was taken in Coggon, Iowa; it appears to have been taken sometime in the late 1800's. I would assume this photo was taken prior to the year 1893.
This photo, taken around 1900, is of the east side of David and Anna's Hickory Grove farmhouse. The north side of the home is brick and the south side would be the addition. At the time this photo was taken, this was the home of David and Anna and their son Curtis and his family. If you look real close you can see the old drinking water hand pump on the other side of the fence and in front of the door. This home still stands east of Troy Mills along Coggon Road.
These photos are of the east side of the Hickory Grove farmhouse taken on February 25, 2006. In the top photo you can clearly see the drinking water hand pump just off from the lower left corner of the house. Siding was placed around the entire home a number of years ago covering the brick.
Both photos are of the Hickory Grove Farm on February 25, 2006. The bottom photo is the view from nearby Spring Grove Church. Notice the church’s grassy parking lot in the foreground.
The U.S. population in 1900 was 75,994,575. Iowa’s population in 1900 was 2.2 million. By 1900, beavers and otters had been extirpated from Iowa. Much of the state’s wetlands had been drained.

By 1901, Anna Reece, age 72, was described by the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901 as the oldest living resident of Spring Grove Township. This claim cannot be correct, because at that time her husband was older than she and still living.

By 1901, David Reece had disposed of a portion of the 200 acres that he owned at one time; though he still retained 138 acres, all were under cultivation with the exception of a small timber tract.

By 1901, Curtis David Reece was married to Eveline Renfer, and he was operating the home farm for his father David who was retired. Curtis was born on the Hickory Grove Farm in 1866. He was reared on the home farm. In a letter from a daughter of Curtis David Reece, a Mrs. Walter A. Olson, she wrote that she was born Fern Reece and lived on her grandfather David Reece’s farm with her father Curtis. She wrote that Curtis was born on David’s farm, as were all of the kids with the exception of George (her brother) who was born in Coggon. Fern was 12 years old when her grandpa, David Reece, died. Fern wrote that there were hard feelings between her father Curtis David and his sisters in the settling of their father’s estate. Fern married Walter Olson in 1923 in Wadena, Minnesota; she eventually moved to Spokane, Washington.

David Reece was 77 years of age when his 80 year old brother Benjamin died on May 1, 1901. David and his 71 year old brother Henry attended Benjamin’s funeral service, which was held Friday afternoon, May 3, 1901 from Benjamin’s residence on Main Street in Anamosa, Iowa. Benjamin was buried at Riverside Cemetery in Anamosa.

David’s brother Henry died two months after Benjamin’s death. Henry died on July 25, 1901 at the age of 71 years, 11 months and 17 days. Henry died at his farm home just west of where David lived. Henry was buried from the Spring Grove Church on July 26, 1901; he was later laid to rest in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. David, Anna, their family and other relatives, certainly would have attended Henry’s burial at Lower Spring Grove.

For approximately 50 years, David lived a short distance to the east of his brother Henry and the farm that he operated. For a shorter period of time, David lived across the road from his sister, Nancy (Reece) Ward, until she and her family moved to California. David also appears to have lived approximately two miles south from his sister, Mary (Reece) Church, up until her death.

The following is a history of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa as written by Isaac Holman, a Troy Mills area historian. This article was written in 1906 and was published in a history book of Linn County, Iowa. In the following history, Mr. Holman includes several biographical sketches of early township pioneers, including one on our David Reece. This article describes how David and his family came to Spring Grove and goes into some detail about David’s life. In addition, this article gives us a glimpse of what life was like around Troy Mills and Spring Grove Township during the early years of their existence.

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Spring Grove Township
Reminiscences of Early Settlers

By Isaac Holman

Spring Grove Township is situated on the north tier of townships and in the third tier from the east line of the county, and has an area of thirty-six square miles. The Wapsi river enters the township from the northwest corner, runs in a southeasterly direction, and passes out of the township near the center of the east line or section 34. About one-third of the area of the township lies north of the river. The timbered land is mostly all situated north of the river in sections 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, although most of it has been cleared off and the land brought under cultivation. Along the river for from one and one-half to two miles on each side the land is mostly rough, hilly and sandy, but there is some very rich black soil in places along the river, most of which is now under cultivation. After the level plain is reached the soil is a deep, rich loam, very productive, gradually rolling or undulating plain of unsurpassed fertility and productiveness and in a high state of cultivation. The sloughs and wet places are gradually drying out, but there still remain a few which the farmers find it more profitable to dry out at once with drains rather than wait for the slower process of nature. I might safely say there is not a foot of wasteland in the township, every foot being utilized for some purpose. The old cruel barbed wire fences are being replaced with woven wire, and there are many fine farmhouses with all modern improvements, which have greatly improved the sanitary condition of the township.

Our township contains what in early times was known as Upper Spring Grove and Lower Spring Grove. Upper Spring Grove is situated in the northwestern portion of the township. I have heard it said that it was once known as Turkey Grove, but this claim is not well authenticated. Lower Spring Grove lies farther down the river, in the east portion of the township. The division line between the two groves is near the center of section 10. The names of Upper and Lower Spring Grove are still maintained and occasionally used. The population of the township is not far from 966, including the village of Troy.

As all names are more or less significant, I think the name Spring Grove was suggested by there being two very large flowing springs of pure cold water about a quarter of a mile apart, known as the Austin and Walton Springs, situated in the western part of Upper Spring Grove, about a mile northeast of Troy and in Buchanan County. If we go back sixty-one years we find that Leonard Austin, in 1845, was the first man to settle in Township 86 (Spring Grove), Range 7 West, it not yet being set apart as a civil township. His cabin was built on the southeast corner of section 1, of round logs, and roofed with rough clapboards and having a spacious fireplace. Such was the first cabin erected in our township.

The breaking plow was soon running, and Austin and his sons soon had a good sized field broken of as good soil as a crow ever flew over. The Austin farm lies along a good sized creek, of which more will be said hereafter. Walter Bersley now owns this farm.
A.J. Ward, [David Reece’s brother-in-law] a public-spirited man, settled on the southwest quarter of section 1 in 1845. Ward, like Austin, soon had a goodly portion of his land under cultivation. He taught several singing schools, and would go for miles to conduct a spelling contest. He also took great pains in teaching the rising generation morality and good principles. In those pioneer days he was just the right man in the right place, and many can look back and kindly thank him for his valuable instruction. H.H. Fay now owns the Ward farm.

In 1847 Josiah Walton, a man of ability and sound principles, settled in section 1. Mr. Walton was one of the first trustees of the township, and during his residence here held a great many township offices. He also occasionally practiced law in justice courts and was sometimes successfully pitted against high legal talent. He took an active part in locating roads and highways and looking after schools. He was an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church and made his influence felt in religious and political matters, being generally successful in any enterprise he undertook.

Mr. David Reece, the only living early pioneer settler of our township, started from Allen County, Ohio June 5, 1851. After wallowing in mud and mire for several days, he reached and crossed the Mississippi River at Rock Island. The ferryboat landed him and his family on Second Street. The next day he and two other families reached Prairie Creek, but the bridge was gone. A halt had to be called for a day or so until the creek ran down and they could repair the bridge, which they did by splitting a large log which happened to be near. While they were camped on this creek they had to unpack their goods and dry them, for the rain fell in such torrents that no ordinary sheeting on a wagon would shed the water. The party landed on Otter Creek on the seventh day of June, and remained there about four weeks, when Mr. Reece moved to Spring Grove Township and settled on the northwest quarter of section 12, where he still resides and owns the same quarter section that he first settled on. It is now well improved and in a high state of cultivation. He was active and energetic in all religious, moral and political matters, and was always found willing and ready to assist in building churches and schoolhouses and to locate needed roads. He closely watched the trend of public affairs and would condemn in unmeasured terms any useless expenditure of the public funds. He was one of the best hunters of pioneer days. His keen, steady eye would detect the slightest movement of the unwary deer, wolf or wildcat, or the movement, rustle of bushes. This, together with his unerring aim, made him one of the most famous hunters of our country. At one time he and his brother, Lewis, had thirteen deer hung up. (Ye hunters, beat this if ye can!)

I will now give a little of Mr. Reece’s experience in the wet year of 1851, which will apply to all who were here at that time. For a good part of May and June we had no bread and, as Mr. Reece says, he had to live on hog and hominy. There were no railroads to bring breadstuff, and the streams were so high that no mill wheel could be turned, and in many cases the water was over the mill burrs. The first downpour fell in the night of May 10, and after that one downpour followed another through part of May and June. Thousands of acres of wheat and corn were ruined by the water.

“\nThe lightning flashed across the sky
And ran along the arch on high;\n"
The deep-toned thunder loudly roared
And the rain in torrents poured.

The precipitation was immense and there has not been anything to compare with it since the state has been settled. I have always called this the year without bread. I am indebted to Mr. Reece for a great deal of the information contained in this sketch, hence I give more space to the reminiscences of his settlement.

In 1847 William Phillip, a local minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with two sons and a widowed daughter, came from Illinois. Mr. Phillip located in the northeast corner of section 12, now owned by Oliver Eastman. The sons and daughter settled in Jackson Township.

In 1849 George W. Carson settled in section 3 on a fine piece of land, and soon had a good farm under cultivation.

Along in the fifties the Bices, Andersons, Saxtons, Swains and Robinsons settled in the southeast part of the township in what is now known as West Prairie.

In 1852 L.D. and Phillip Peyton settled in sections 3 and 4.

In 1853 Moses, Lawrence and David Walton [a brother to Reuben and Peres Church] settled in section 2, and Henry Reece (David's brother), Charles Shepard and John Betzer located on the north side of the Wapsi.

In 1850 John Plummer settled on the south side of the river and was the first justice of the peace of the township.

In 1857 Elmer and John E. Atwood, father and son, settled in section 5 and established the first blacksmith shop in the township. They were fine smiths and could do any kind of work, being just the men needed, and "the ring of their anvil was ever music to the ears of the settlers." John E. is comfortably situated on his farm, enjoying the fruits of his labor.

Ed Jeffries came in 1855 and settled in the west part of the township.

Charles Cook came in 1857 and also settled in section 5, near Troy, and was a fine cabinetmaker. He made many nice coffins and trimmed them, and was the only undertaker for miles around.

The southwest part of the township was the last part settled. Among the early settlers there were A. Medcalf, E. Beggs, Dick Yonkers and Messrs. Bower and Hawkins.

In 1879 Peter Werner settled in the southwest part of the township, and at that time there were about 4,000 acres of raw prairie in that vicinity. Mr. Werner owns a fine farm, well improved, and he lives at home, somewhat aged but well preserved and vigorous in both mind and body. He is a man of refined tastes and has a fine education, being able to speak and write four languages.

Joseph Cherry, the subject of this sketch, was born in the county of Huntington, England, February 11, 1838. He lived at home under the care and protection of his parents until he was fourteen years of age, and after that he lived with cultured gentlemen until the age of nineteen. At that age he joined the British army at the time of the Crimean War, and remained in the service three years, when he was honorably discharged. In 1856 he was married to an English lady, when they emigrated to America. Mr. Cherry had heard many favorable accounts of America, which threw him into brown studies and which cost his parents and relatives much anxiety, but the die was
cast and America was his pole star. In 1856, after bidding their friends and relatives farewell, he and his wife stepped on the vessel that was to carry them to their future home. They were on the water one month and encountered one severe storm. After landing at Castle Garden they started to Illinois and reached their destination without any mishaps and remained there for eight years. Mr. Cherry says: “One year while I lived in Illinois my crop failed. I had no money nor anything to sell, but after roasting-ears were large enough to eat we lived on them until they got so hard we could not eat them longer. We then dried them on a stove, shelled the corn off and ground it in a coffee mill and made bread of it. We came to Iowa in 1863 and lived near Central City for three years. I then bought my first land, forty acres, in the northeast quarter of section 7, Spring Grove township, where I have ever since resided.” He has from time to time bought other land, and now owns many fine acres under a high state of cultivation.

Phillip Ondler was born in Germany, June 7th, 1832, and lived there with his parents until 1847, when they left the old country and landed at New York. In May of the same year they went to Ohio and landed at Dover. In 1867 he came to Spring Grove township. During that fall the whole county was afflicted with typhoid fever, and there were hardly well ones enough to take care of the sick. In 1869 he bought his first eighty acres, on which he built a house and commenced to improve it. He was soon able to purchase more land, and now owns nearly 300 acres of fine farm land. Mr. Ondler has always taken an active part in public affairs and in maintaining schools and good roads.

There are still a great many pioneers whom I cannot name, as space is too limited, but I will say that they all worked for the welfare of the township, and it is due to their unfailing efforts that Spring Grove township today stands in the high place it does in Linn county.

Nearly all early settlers came with small means, so far as dollars and cent are concerned, but they had plenty of will power and strong, willing hands, and the determination to make for themselves and their families good homes, and they failed not. All who used industry and economy blessed the day they anchored their prairie schooner on Iowa soil. A bright prospect was before them, and they had such an independent feeling and high hopes that no drawbacks discouraged them, but they pressed on and on. The forest was subdued; acre after acre was broken; thousands of rails were made and hauled out and built into fences to protect crops; year after year witnessed new improvements; more acres were broken and larger crops sowed, reaped and garnered, and as wheat raising began to fail the farmer began the more profitable business of raising horses, cattle, sheep and hogs.

Nature gave us the finest and most productive soils in the world, and by the magic touch of industry they have made our great state one of the richest agricultural states in America.

In 1848 or 1849 a log school house was built on the east line of section 12. The first school taught in the township was taught in this school house. Also Henry Holman taught in the winter of 1850 part of term, which was finished by G.W. Carson. Miss Cooper, of Quasqueton, taught one or two terms here also.

I think the first school house proper was built in 1854, and A.J. Ward taught the first school in that house. The first church was built in 1882, on the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter of section 12. A Miss Willets died in the spring of 1852 and was
buried near the old log school house, near the east line of section 12, this being the first death and burial in our township.

The first post office was established prior to 1851, Josiah Walton being postmaster.

From the first, Spring Grove, Jackson and Maine townships were one voting precinct. The elections were held twice a year at Ford's Grove, where the red school house now stands. Chandler Jordan was precinct clerk. The spring election was for the purpose of electing township officers and the fall election for county and state officers.

Mr. David Reece says: "Our market was Dubuque. We dressed and hauled our pork to that city and sold it for $2.50 to $3.50 per hundred. We also bought our footwear, clothing, etc.; paid $5 per barrel for salt, and other merchandise cost accordingly." In the winter of 1857, Mr. Reece, in company with two of his neighbors, hauled pork to Davenport, being nine days on the road. When they reached there they received $5 per hundred for the meat. The mercury stood from 18 to 30 degrees below zero each day they were gone.

Our township was organized and set apart as a civil township in 1854, as will appear from the following record. David Reece has the original record of the first election, and kindly permitted me to copy it.

"At an election held at the house of David Reece, in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, on the 3rd day of April, A.D. 1854, for the purpose of electing three trustees, one township clerk, two justices of the peace, two constables, one assessor and one supervisor for said township, the following named persons appeared and voted, to wit: David Reece, D.N. Saxon, L.D. Peyton, J.H. Walton, G.W. Carson, J.H. Swain, A.J. Ward [a brother-in-law of David Reece], Wm. Phillips, R. Gilbert, J. Swain, S. Ewing, R.W. Church [a brother-in-law of David Reece], and David Church [apparently a brother of R.W. Church].*

"At a meeting of the voters of Spring Grove township, in Linn County, Iowa, pursuant of previous notice, at the house of David Reece, in said township, on the 3rd day of April, 1854, said meeting was called to order by nominating A.J. Ward president of said meeting. The voters then proceeded to elect by ballot three judges of election, and by counting said votes it appeared that David Reece, Richard Gilbert and David G. Church were elected. They were then sworn into office by J.J. Nugent, justice of the peace of Maine township, said county."

"Said judges then appointed A.J. Ward and Sidney Ewing clerks of said election, who were then sworn."

"The polls were then opened, and there were thirteen votes taken, and by counting out said polls it was found that David Reece, Josiah Walton and Lorenzo D. Peyton were elected trustees of said township, and A.J. Ward, clerk: David G. Church, assessor; Richard Gilbert, supervisor; Sidney Ewing and John Plummer, justice of the peace; Reuben Church and James H. Swain, constables.

(Signed) "A.J. Ward, Township Clerk."

In the early pioneer days religious services were conducted in private houses by local preachers, but after the school houses were built they were used for religious
purposes. The pioneers who are now alive can look back with pleasure to the time they attended many good warm meetings in the school houses. Such a thing as an organ was not thought of. No choir conducted the singing, but there were generally two or three who led the singing, and all others who wished joined and sang with spirit and energy. “Come, Humble Sinners, in Whose Breasts a Thousand Thoughts Revolve,” “Am I a Soldier of the Cross?” and “The Angels That Watched ‘Round the Tomb,” were some of the popular songs of early days. These meetings were profitable spiritually to the whole community. As the population increased very rapidly the school houses would not hold the congregations, so churches had to be built. The members of the different congregations contributed liberally to the church fund, so that our township is well supplied with beautiful churches, with organs and otherwise beautifully decorated.

The Sunday school is one of the living institutions of our township. They were organized at a very early date, and as fast as there were a few settlers in any part of our township a Sunday school was organized, and today, on every Sunday morning, in all parts of our township, bright and intelligent children may be seen on their way to Sunday school.

The founding of Troy Mills may prove of some interest.

It was in June 1853, while Andrew Whisnand, Amos H. Long, H.M. Holman and a few other settlers were building a dam across the Wapsi river for a fish trap that they discovered the mill site where on the gristmill now stands. The matter was kept quiet until some time in August, when they had scraped enough money together ($60) to enter the mill forty, as it was then called, situated in section 5. Isaac Holman, the writer, was started to the land office at Dubuque, sixty miles distant, to enter the land. “I was mounted on “Old Pete,” a Canadian pony. I had not gone ten miles when Old Pete began to limp, but I kept on. Old Pete grew worse, but at the end of the third day I rode into Dubuque. My business done, I returned home, having considerable trouble to get old Pete home.”

Early in the fall of 1854 the building of the mill was begun. The work went on rapidly and in a short time the material was all on the ground ready to be framed. Henry L. Long, of Marion, framed the mill and did considerable of the millwright work. Two days were consumed in raising it, the frame being 20X40 feet. A brush dam was built with brush and stone, but the mill was not finished until the next spring.

Due to the demand for lumber, the mill had to be run day and night. The old mill was run until the saw lumber became scarce, when it was torn away, I think some time in the 80’s.

I think it was some time in 1869 or 1870 that William Bruce built the present grist mill. This mill did a thriving business in the manufacturing of flour, corn meal, buckwheat flour, etc., until wheat raising was virtually abandoned. It is useless to follow all the changes and different hands these mills passed through, but, as is well known, mills of all kinds were the most important establishments in the country. The grist mill and creamery adjoining same are now owned by William Tupper and, unlike many other mills and creameries which have been abandoned, are doing a good business all year round.

The first dwelling house in Troy was built in 1855 out of rough oak lumber by the mill company, and a cold and cheerless structure it was. It was occupied by Mahlon
Crosfield, the first settler in our village. Two or three years after this house was built there were several others erected, and so on until the present time. I think it was about the year 1863 that Jordan S. Long put up the first store building in Troy Mills and started a store. This was the first store in the village, although before he opened his store Mr. Long kept a few goods for sale while living on a farm about a mile north of town. At first he bought $10 worth of needles, thread and notions; soon he added another $10 to that. Such was the beginning of Troy’s first merchant. We now have three good drygoods and grocery stores, two hardware stores, one harness shop, one meat market, one barber shop, one wagon repair shop, two blacksmith shops and a hotel.

The Christians, Methodists and M.P. ’s all have good commodious churches with numerous devout members and able ministers. The Sunday schools are well attended and are very interesting and profitable to our village so far as morality is concerned.

Numerous telephones enter our village and we have communication with all parts of the surrounding country.

The population of the town is about 250 or 300. We have a fine public school building, two stories high, and employ from two to three teachers. The first post office was established in 1869, with Dr. E.D. Wilson as postmaster and Peter K. Dills deputy. The Troy Mills cemetery is located on a fine piece of ground for such a purpose, on the Troy and Walker road on section 6. Mrs. Charles Hulbert was the first person buried in it, in 1864.

When the above article was written in 1906, David and Anna Reece were neighbors to Horace and Clarissa (Klingaman) Fay, who owned the farm in section 1 north of David and Anna’s Hickory Grove Farm. The Fay farm was formerly owned by David’s sister Nancy and her husband A.J. Ward. Horace Herschel Fay was the husband of Clarissa Klingaman, Anna’s daughter. Horace H. Fay was the son of John Packard Fay and Mary Ann Ward. Mary Ann was a sister to A.J. Ward.

In September 1907, David and Anna would have been residing upon their Hickory Grove Farm with their son Curtis and his family. David and Anna reached a legal agreement with their son Curtis in September 1907 as to the future of the Hickory Grove Farm, the personal property contained thereon, and to the care of David and Anna. The following document was given to me by Curtis David Reece’s granddaughter, Renee (Reece) Murray. It reads as follows:

**Agreement**

This agreement entered into between David Reece of the 1st part and C.D. Reece of the 2nd part. That all personal property on the farm of David Reece belong to 2nd party. In case of the death of 2nd party before 1st party there be an equal division of said property. The said 2nd party also agrees to keep up all expense on said farm, pay taxes etc., also 2nd party agrees to board and clothe David Reece and Mrs. Reece as long as they live and in case of their death to pay all funeral expenses. 2nd party to pay doctor bills etc.
In consideration of which said 2nd party gets the use and proceeds of said farm described as follows: NW¼ NW¼ of 12-N½ NE¼ of Sec 11 N½ of NW¼ SW¼ Sec 11 Township 86, Range 7W 5 prime meridian.

David Reece

C.D. Reece

Signed before me this 30th day of September A.D. 1907 by David Reece and C.D. Reece.

N.B. Richardson
Notary Public
in and for Linn County, Iowa

In 1909, automobile manufacturer Henry Ford produced 19,051 Model T cars which got 25 miles per gallon. As a major mode of transportation, the horse was on its way out by 1909. The invention and practical use of the automobile is just one example of the technological change that David Reece experienced during his lifetime.

David Reece resided on and farmed his Hickory Grove Farm for 63 years. David spent his entire life farming. By 1910, David still resided on the home place; he was practically living retired, leaving the actual work to his son, Curtis David Reece, who was managing the homestead for his 87 year old father. Together, father and son were proprietors of the Hickory Grove Farm in Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Rural Route 3, Coggon, Iowa. David had made many improvements to his farm by 1910, which included a nice country residence, a good barn and outbuildings, and the fields each year yielded abundant harvests, for the land was described by one source as very rich and productive.

A 1910 biography of David Reece attributed him as having made the following statement: he stated that he could remember a time when much of the land was unclaimed, uncultivated and when comparatively few of the fields were fenced, but as the years passed, new settlers made their way into this part of the state, and recognizing the value of the rich prairie, converted it into beautiful homes and farms.

David and Anna were living on the Hickory Grove Farm with their son Curtis and his family on May 2, 1910. Curtis was then taking care of David and Anna during their old age and retirement. At the time, Curtis was continuing to farm the old home place that his father had homestead some 60 years prior.

The 1910 U.S. Census recorded that on May 2, 1910, that the household of Curtis D. Reece then consisted of: himself, age 43; wife Evalyn, age 36; daughter Huldah, age 12; daughter Anna, age 11; daughter Fern, age 8; son Charles, age 4; father David, age 86; and mother Anna, age 80. This census recorded that Anna was the mother of 11 children, 6 of whom were still living at that time. At the time of this census, David and Anna had been married for 47 years. This census lists David’s father as a native of Wales, and his mother as a native of Pennsylvania. I know that David’s father was not
born in Wales. This census record listing David’s father as a native of Wales has to be a reference to the country of David’s ancestral origins and not actually to where his father was born. My research indicates that David’s father and mother were likely born in Virginia.

This is a photo postcard of Anna and David Reece at their Hickory Grove Farm. The east side of their farmhouse is in the background. For some unknown reason David is on crutches in this photo. The back of this photo reads: Grandpa and Grandma Reece. I got this photo from the estate of Marion Ward Reece. This photo would have been taken around 1900.
By 1910, ninety-seven percent of Iowa's prairies had been converted to cropland. In just under 80 years, from the period that Iowa was opened to settlement in 1833 up to the year of 1910, Iowa had been transformed from its prairie past to its agricultural future. One can only imagine what our ancestors, like David Reece, thought of when they reflected back upon how the land had changed during the course of their lifetimes.

Politically, David Reece in the early days was a member of the Whig Party. He became a stanch supporter of the Republican Party when it was organized. David was active in Spring Grove Township politics. David held an office of some type nearly every year from 1851 to 1878. He was the first trustee elected in Spring Grove Township; for thirteen years he served as a justice of the peace; served two terms as assessor and one term as constable. The earliest documentation that I have found that identifies David as a justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa, is a deed from the year of 1855. By 1901, David had held every office in the township with the exception of clerk, which was held by his brother Henry. According to a 1901 biographical history of David's found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901: he always took quite an active and influential part in public affairs.
David Reece was married three times. According to at least two sources, he was the father of twelve children; however, I can only identify eleven children fathered by David. Perhaps it is possible that one child died in infancy and is unaccounted for. According to a 1910 biography of David’s, by 1910, of the twelve children born to David Reece, only four were living; these being: Floyd N., whom was living in Canada; Mrs. Nettie Ball, a resident of Quasqueton, Iowa; Curtis D., on the home farm; and Annie A., the wife of W.H. Herman, a farmer living north of Troy Mills.

The following is a 1911 history of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa.

**History of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa**

The first settler in Spring Grove Township was Leonard Austin, who with his family settled in section one of our township in the spring of 1845, and erected the first building from rough unhewn logs taken from the timber surrounding his building site. Mr. Austin was followed by A.J. Ward, who with his family settled near Mr. Austin during the fall of that year. Two years later, in 1847, Josiah Walton and Rev. Wm. Phillips settled as near neighbors to these hardy pioneers. These were soon followed by the Reeces, Holmans, Longs, McPikes, Peytons, Carsons, Whisenands, McKees, Fays, and Waltons, who settled in the northern part of our township and in the southern part of Newton Township in Buchanan County, and who are remembered as early pioneers.

The early settlers of the southeastern part of the township were the Bices, Andersons, Saxtons, Leathermans, Plummers, Swaims, Frank Door, E.B. Fisher, Bumgardners, Benedicts, McBurneys, Nutting, Carpenters, and Jordans. These settlers formed part of a settlement that extended into Jackson Township. They located there during the early part of the ‘50’s. About the same time the western part of the township south of the Wapsipinicon River was settled. Those early settlers were Edwin Jeffreys, A.G. Kibbe, Elmer and J.E. Atwood, father and son, Chas. Cook and sons, Edwin, Enos, George, and Charles, and George Parkhurst. All these early pioneers took an active part in helping to develop the new country.

In regard to religious worship the people of Spring Grove may be likened to the Puritans of the early colonial period, as among the earliest settlers came Rev. Wm. Phillips, a minister of the gospel who at first conducted meetings in his own home, and later became a “circuit rider,” holding meetings every Sunday either in some private house or in a school house. The Christian organization that is now at Troy Mills was organized by Henry Holman during the summer of 1853 in John W. McKee’s house near what is now Troy Mills. Mr. Holman preached the first sermon and continued as pastor until the organization was strong enough to secure a minister to take charge of the work. Isaac Holman, now a resident of Troy Mills, and a son of Henry Holman, was the first superintendent of the Sunday school organized in the township. Rev. N.A. McConnell, of Marion, was one of the ablest ministers of the early period, and would face the worst storms of the season in order to keep his appointment. The people living in the southeastern part of the township at first held services in private houses until the West Prairie school house was erected. Where for several years they had a place for worship. They now have a splendid church near the West Prairie schoolhouse.
The first justice of the peace of Spring Grove Township was John Plummer, but the best known justice of the peace for the early times were Elmer Atwood, Josiah Walton, and Wm. Bleakley. While the people of those days were not free from strife among themselves, yet they were obliged to band together to free themselves from a worse evil—the horse thief. The people finally with the help of the neighboring settlers took the law in their own hands and dealt summary justice to the offenders. One of these thieves was followed by a posse to his camp on Buffalo Creek in Buchanan County, and on his refusal to surrender he was shot to death. This put a stop to the stealing.

In politics the people of Spring Grove always took an active part, and for a long time claimed to be the banner Republican precinct of the state. During the Civil war the Republicans of West Prairie erected a flag pole on the bare prairie near where now stands the West Prairie church and raised the Stars and Stripes aloft and kept the flag there until long after the war closed. At one election during the Civil war not a democratic vote was cast. It was said that there were a few democrats in the township but they chose to stay at home rather than stand the jeers that were sure to assail them if they voted.

Troy Mills, the only village in the township, was founded in 1853, when a dam was built across the river at that place and a saw mill built. This mill continued to run about ten years when the present mill was erected. The mill did a flourishing business grinding all kinds of grain, but of late years has only been used as a grist mill. Jordon Long brought the first stock of goods to Troy Mills, amounting to ten dollars. Meeting with success in selling these, he turned all his attention to carrying on a general store, which he conducted for more than forty years. Dr. John Dix and E.C. Downs started the first drug store in the town but soon sold out. E.N. Beach, one of the best known men in the northern part of Linn County, came to Troy Mills at an early day and started a drug store and has conducted the same to the present time. Dr. E. Wilson was the only doctor in our township for several years and enjoyed a lucrative practice. The first blacksmith shop was started by Elmer and John E. Atwood in 1854, who conducted the same for nearly thirty years.

Only a few of the old settlers remain who helped to transform the wilds into what it is today. Those now living here, who came in the early '50's, are David Reece (my great-great-great grandfather), Isaac Holman, John E. Atwood, Mrs. Edwin Jeffries, Isaac Bice, Enos and Charles Cook. The others have either moved away or passed into that great beyond from which no traveler returns.

June 8, 1913 marked the 50th anniversary of David Reece's marriage to Anna (Conner) Klingaman. On that day, David and Anna celebrated their golden wedding anniversary at their farm. Gathered around them on that happy occasion were thirty children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, besides about sixty relatives and many friends. The following photos are of David and Anna with friends and family taken at their 50th wedding anniversary party. These photos have Hill written in the corner. This could be a reference to a hill upon the Hickory Grove Farm where the photos were taken. I assume that the following photos were all taken on June 8, 1913 at the Hickory Grove Farm.
In this photo we have David and Anna Reece with their children and their respective spouses. From Left to Right in this photo are: Curt and Eva Reece, Lon and Gettie (Klingaman) Long, Horace H. and Clarissa (Klingaman) Fay, Anna and David Reece in middle, [I believe the man standing behind David and Anna is her son Charles Curtis Klingaman.], Will and Nettie (Reece) Ball, Will and Rena (Reece) Hermann, and Floyd and Lulu Reece.
David and Anna Reece are seated in the middle of this photo. The identities of the other individuals are unknown.

The back of this photo reads: Grandma and Grandpa Reese. Grandma Herman's father and mother.
The inscription on the back of this photo reads: *Five generations.* Seated in the middle and to the left is Mrs. David Reece (Anna). Seated to Anna’s left is her daughter, Mrs. Cal (Clarissa) Fay. Seated in the foreground is Mrs. Hattie Selby, Clarissa’s daughter. Standing in the rear is the wife of Hattie’s son and their baby.
The following is an article that ran in a local Troy Mills, Iowa paper regarding David and Anna’s 50th wedding anniversary.

**Married Fifty Years**  
Mr. and Mrs. David Reece Celebrate Anniversary Saturday

Mr. and Mrs. David Reece  
Mr. Reece a farmer. Born in Ohio 1823; came to county 1851. Mrs. Reece born in N.J., 1829.

Mr. and Mrs. David Reece  

Mr. and Mrs. David Reece celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary at the old Reece homestead in Spring Grove township Saturday, a large number of their relatives being present and assisting in the celebration. A bounteous dinner was served and a very enjoyable gathering is reported.

The children presented Mr. Reece with a fine suit of clothes, and Mrs. Reece with a black satin dress, besides numerous presents of gold dishes, etc. from other relatives.

David Reece was born in Ohio, on December 30, 1823. Mrs. Reece was born in New Jersey, June 7, 1828, and emigrated to Ohio in 1834, and then to Tama county, Iowa, where she resided until their marriage, which occurred June 8, 1863.

David Reece, the only living pioneer settler of Spring Grove township, came to this locality from Allen county, Ohio, in the summer of 1851, settling in what is now Spring Grove township; in July of that year. This was a very wet season and a large amount of the crops were seriously damaged by the floods, causing great hardships among the settlers.

Mr. Reece was one of the first trustees elected in the township, the first township election being held in his log house. Only thirteen votes were cast at this election and Mr. Reece’s hat was the ballot box. His son, C.D. Reece, now has the original minutes of this meeting in his possession.
Robert Wilson of Cedar Rapids made a short talk on the prominent part that David Reece took in political affairs in the early 50’s as he himself came to Iowa at that time.

In these early days the settlers were obliged to market their produce in Dubuque and Davenport. They sold their dressed pork for $2.50 to $3.50 per hundred. Barrel salt cost them $5 per barrel and all other merchandise and wearing apparel cost accordingly, and several days were required to make the round trip to these cities.

How different now, with our modern conveyances we can reach these cities in a few short hours.

The following is a list of the guests present of this joyous occasion: ---Mrs. Harriet Keith and son Rowan; H.H. Fay and family and E.A. Fay and family of Coggon, Mr. and Mrs. Zeph Kidder of Kidder; Mrs. Hattie Selby and Mrs. Jessie Selby and son of Des Moines; Mrs. Florence Hill and daughter Fausta of Manly; Mrs. Alfred Walton, Creighton, Nebraska; Charles Klingaman of Winterset; Frank McDonald and wife of Bouton; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Staton and family, Mrs. Alice Cook and William Herman and family of Walker; Mrs. Velva Young and family of Independence; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Fenessley Jr. and daughter of Center Point, E.H. Reece and wife, Mrs. Lillie Steele and children and William Ball and family of Winthrop, F.N. Reece and wife of Independence, Alberta Canada; C.D. Reece and family, W.W. Reece and family; Earnest Nietert and family of Coggon; Mr. and Mrs. George Conner of Wapakoneta, Ohio; Mrs. John Naylor of Cridersville, Ohio; Mrs. Clara Schroyer of Salina, Ohio; Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Harting and Willis Mix of Uniopolis, Ohio; Robert Wilson of Cedar Rapids; Mrs. Amanda Mertz and Mrs. Emma Gotsch of Grundy Center; Jason Church and Mrs. Henry Long of Flora, Kansas; William Perkins of Carey, Ohio; Mrs. Lillie Church, Mrs. Ab Peyton, Mrs. Jane Arwine, Mrs. Lillie Powell, Mr. and Mrs. W.N. Walton, Mary Hoover, Mrs. Sarah Wickham, Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Long, Mr. and Mrs. J.L. Walton, Mrs. Media Elliott and Mrs. Effie Reece and children of Troy Mills.

A grand niece of Mr. and Mrs. David Reece, Miss Beatrice Blank, residing in Ohio and unable to be present, composed a poem for the occasion which was read at the gathering. The same was handed to this office, but a rush of work made it impossible for us to get it into type for this issue.

In the year of 1914, the last passenger pigeon died at a Cincinnati, Ohio zoo. They were once described as being so numerous that they blackened the sky. By 1914, many native plant and animal species once found in Iowa had been extirpated or were in decline due to loss of prairie habitat. The prairie chicken, which was found upon the prairies of Iowa at the time David Reece settled near Troy Mills, is just one example of a species that was in trouble by 1914.

At the age of 90, David Reece died at four o’clock on Wednesday afternoon, January 14, 1914 at his home on the Hickory Grove Farm, which by this time was the home of his son Curtis and his family. David’s obituary states that he died after a long illness. Anna followed David in death just twenty-four hours later. She was 85 when she died on Thursday, January 15, 1914. David and Anna were married for 50 years. One is left to believe that when David died, that Anna just could not live without him.
According to David and Anna’s obituary, it had ever been their earnest desire and prayer that they both might depart this life at the same time. In this they were not to be disappointed. Their departure was peaceful according to their obituary. According to their obituary, David was the last surviving member of the original Spring Grove pioneers.

Funeral practices at the time of David and Anna’s death were much different than they are today. Back then funerals were more of a family affair; often times the preparation of the body of the deceased took place in the home. Embalming was practiced in the home well into the 20th century. The practice of preparing the body in the home had pretty much disappeared by the 1920’s. Viewing in the home continued routinely through World War II, but disappeared as people moved into smaller homes without ‘parlors’ in the suburbs. It is very likely that David and Anna’s funeral preparation was a family affair; probably having taken place in their home to some extent. Over the course of David’s life, he probably played an intimate part in the funeral preparations and burials of his children that died so young. This would have been an experience that I do not think too many people in today’s day and age would be too comfortable with; this is not to imply that it was easy for David. It must have weighed
heavy on David’s mind when he thought about the fact that he outlived the majority of his children.

David’s cemetery records list his cause of death as old age. Anna’s cemetery records note that she had a hip fracture. I do not know for sure to what extent her hip fracture played in her death. However, it does appear that this ultimately led to her death.

Death transcripts of Linn County, Iowa record that David Reese, of Spring Grove Township, died at the age of 90 years, 4 months and 4 days. David’s occupation in the county death record is listed as that of a farmer. David’s death record lists his cause of death as acute bronchitis, debility of age. County death transcripts list that Anna Reese, of Spring Grove Township, was 84 years, 8 months and 3 days old at the time of her death. Anna’s county death transcript lists her cause of death as fracture of the hip, debility of age. Both David and Anna’s attending physician, as listed in their death transcripts, was one B.B. Yost. Both David and Anna’s Linn County death transcripts lists a Mrs. William Ball of Winthrop, Iowa as the informant; she would have been the one that provided David and Anna’s death information to the Linn County record. The informant, Mrs. William Ball, is David’s daughter Rebecca from his second marriage to Kittorah.

On Sunday morning, January 18, 1914, a double funeral was held for David and Anna at the Spring Grove Church, of which both were charter members. Rev. P.A. Keoppel of St. Anthony conducted their services. David and Anna were described in their obituary as having been active members of the Spring Grove Church for many years. David and Anna undoubtedly attended the Spring Grove Church numerous times over many years given the fact that the church was built on land near their home that they donated for its construction. Following the church service, David and Anna’s burial took place in one grave in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Their undertaker was J.E. Harris of Quasqueton, Iowa.

The following article ran in the Walker, Iowa News Letter on January 23, 1914.

DAVID REECE, died at the age of 90 years, 15 days, on January 14, 1914. His wife died 23 hours later on the 15th, age 85 years, 6 months. She fell on November 30, 1913. This fall caused her final illness. He died as the result of the shock of his wife’s illness. David Reece was born 12-30-1823 in Highland County, Ohio, the son of William and Rebecca Reece—of Welsh and English ancestry. His first marriage was in 1844 to Juliann(a) Lane. They had 2 children: William Henry and Sarah, both deceased. This wife died and he took as second wife Ketorah Connor. They had 6 children: two of whom died in infancy; Abram W. and Hannah E. also deceased; 2 survive: Floyd N. and Mrs. Rebecca Nettie Ball. This second wife died in 1862.

ANNA CONNER REECE, born near Salem, New Jersey, 6-7-1828, daughter of William and Clarissa Hoffman Conner. With parents, moved to Ohio while quite young. Married in 1845 to Stephen Klingaman. They had 7 children: Mrs. Lydia Proven, Sarah and George preceded their mother in death. She leaves Mrs. Clarissa Fay, Charley Klingaman, Mrs. Maria Walton, and Mrs. Getta (Gertrude) Long.

Anna and David Reece married at Vinton, Iowa in 1863. They had 4 children: Mary M. and William Clinton twins died in infancy. They leave: Curtis Reece and Mrs. Anna Irene Herman. David Reece came to Iowa in 1851, shortly afterward went to
Quasqueton, Iowa where he turned the first brick ever burned in Buchanan County, then returned to the farm in Spring Grove Township, Linn County. They leave 8 children: 43 grandchildren, 80 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great grandchildren. They are both buried in a single grave—Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

The above article appears to explain what ultimately led to David and Anna’s deaths. This article would explain the reason why Anna’s death certificate lists her cause of death as a hip fracture. From this article, we know that within two months after Anna’s fall on November 30, 1913, that she and David were deceased.

With heavy hearts, David and Anna certainly made several untimely visits to Lower Spring Grove Cemetery over the course of their lifetimes to attend funeral services for several members of their family. Upon their deaths, David and Anna were laid to rest near these family members. Members of the Reece family are buried in the old portion of Lower Spring Grove Cemetery in rows 3, 6, 14 and 15. The newer portion of the cemetery is on the east side and was obtained on May 3, 1940. David and Anna are buried in row 15 of the old portion of the cemetery. In chronological order and beginning at the north end of row 15 and going south, I found the following seven individual tombstones on July 22, 2003 with the following inscriptions: E.H. Reece, Abram and Angelina Reece, David and Anna Reece, Marye M. Reece, William C. Reece, Hannah E. Reece, and Kittorah Ann Reece. These monuments are the original stones and are in varying states of preservation...some good, some really weathered. It appears that an eighth tombstone once existed between the tombstones of William C. and Hannah E. Reece. I think that this missing eighth tombstone once marked the grave of James L. Reece. To the east of row 15 is row 14, which contains the graves of Henry and Lucretia Reece, David’s brother and sister-in-law. Their descendants are also found in row 14.

David and Anna were survived by four generations, consisting of 8 children, 43 grandchildren, 80 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great grandchildren. Their surviving children were Charles Klingaman, Mrs. James Reuben Walton (Maria Klingaman), Mrs. Alonzo Lowery Long (Margaret Gertrude Klingaman), Mrs. Horace Herschel Fay (Clarissa Ann Klingaman), Mrs. William Ball (Rebecca Annette Reece), Floyd Norval Reece, Mrs. William Hermann (Anna Irene Reece), and Curtis David Reece. Seven of the eleven children born to David Reece and his three wives died prior to his death. From Anna’s previous marriage with Stephan Klingaman, Anna was preceded in death by her children: Lydia Proven, Sarah and George.

It is known that two siblings survived David, his sister Nancy and his brother William. Nancy lived in California and William was a resident of Ohio at the time of David’s death. David’s sister Elizabeth may have been living at the time of his death; if she was she was probably living in Geary County, Kansas.

The following is a letter written by David and Anna’s granddaughter, Huldah (Reece) Kincade, regarding her grandparents David and Anna Reece. This letter was given to me by Huldah’s niece, Renee (Reece) Murray, a resident of Minnesota.
My grandpa Reece was born December 30, 1823 in Hyland County, Ohio. He had 3 brothers and 2 sisters. They were Benjamin, Lewis and Henry. Lewis and his wife lived in Greenville, Ohio. Once they came to Iowa to visit us and then wrote to grandpa and grandma and the folks [Curt and Eva Reece] when they went back and sent cards to us kids. Benjamin lived in Marion Co. Ohio. The sisters were Lizzie Johnson [sic] and Nancy Yeager [sic]. Lizzie Johnson lived in Kansas and Nancy lived in Ferndale, California. Uncle Henry came to Iowa in 1853 and homesteaded a place a mile or so from grandpa's place. Grandpa came to Iowa in a covered wagon with some other settlers in 1851 and settled in Spring Grove township.

Grandpa went to school in Ohio. They had long benches to sit on in school and nothing for desks. He said he would take a potato and a chunk of corn bread for his lunch, then roast the potato in the hot ashes in the fireplace.

Grandma didn't go to school much. She could barely read and write, but could write her name. They lived in the woods and her dad blazed a trail for her to follow to school. In the winter the snow got so deep she couldn't go. One place they lived they had greased paper in the windows to let in light. They didn't have a door at first but hung a blanket over the doorway. At night when the wolves were howling, the cow would come and stand in the doorway with her head in the house.

Grandma's father, William Conner, was born in Ohio but went to New Jersey for a few years. Grandma was born in New Jersey but they moved back to Ohio when she was 7 years old. She had 2 brothers and a sister, Josiah, George, and Maria. She was married when she was 16 to Steven Klingaman. He was born in Pennsylvania and went to Ohio. He was 23 when he was married in Ohio. They went to Iowa to live too, and settled near Traer.

When her [Anna's] husband went to California the second time and didn't come back Grandma and a boy who lived with them drove a team up to Linn county where she lived for a while. She was a cousin to grandpa's first wife and was married to him a year and a half after her cousins death.

He [David] came to Iowa in a wagon train. There were several families and it took them quite a while to get there. They forded the Mississippi at Rock Island, Ill. It had rained so much while on the trip, just poured sometimes, so after they crossed the river there were a few nice days, so they spread out all their goods to dry.

My grandpa was married to his second wife when they came to Iowa. He had first married Julie Ann Lain. She died after her second baby was born. The baby girl died too. After 3 years he was married again to Kittorah Ann Conner. Next spring he joined the wagon train and went to Iowa. He had a little boy, William Henry who was 6 years old.

They settled in Linn Co. Iowa in Spring Grove Township. After they built their houses and got settled they decided to build a schoolhouse. So they built one of logs. It was down the road about half a mile from grandpa's place on Walter Berley's farm.

They held church services in the homes and in the schoolhouse for about 26 years. In 1882 the church was built at a cost of between $500 and $600. It was built on land my grandfather deeded to the church. About that time the school house burned down and my grandfather deeded some land for a new schoolhouse. It was made from lumber. My dad and his sister (Curtis and Rena Reece) went to school there and my two sisters,
one brother, and me. My younger brother went to school in Minnesota. The school terms were spring, fall and winter.

At an election at the house of David Reece in Spring Grove Township in Linn County, Iowa, there were just enough people to take all the offices in 1854.

In 1862 his second wife died and more than a year later he married Anna Conner Klingaman and she was my grandmother. She had been married before and had 5 children (actually 7).

His second wife had 5 children; one boy, James Lewis, died when he was 4 years old. A girl, Hannah Ellen died at 21.

They (David and Anna) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 8, 1913. Both died the next winter, he on Jan. 14, 1914 and she died on Jan. 15, 1914. On Jan. 18, 1914 there was a double funeral at the Spring Grove Methodist Church. They are buried in the Spring Grove Cemetery in Linn County, Iowa, and so is his second wife, Kittorah Ann.

Grandma always liked to bake pies and when she helped with the work she baked 3 or 4 every Sat. Grandpa always gathered the eggs and sometimes carried in wood or water. He walked with crutches a long time and I can remember seeing him go to church with his crutches a few times.

Grandpa and Grandma liked to sit on the porch or by the stove and talk over things that happened years ago. Sometimes he would talk about going hunting. Once when his brother Lewis was there they had 13 deer hung up. Another story we liked to hear was about him shooting a panther. He was really a famous hunter.

So many times I have heard them (David and Anna) talk about William Henry. He enlisted when he was only 18 in Company F., Twentieth Iowa Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War and died at Jefferson barracks in St. Louise, Mo. of some disease he had contracted. He was the son of Julie Ann, grandpa’s first wife.

Grandpa’s parents were David and Rebecca Reece and Grandma’s were William and Clarissa Conner.

Grandpa was 90 years old at the time of his death and grandma was 85.

David Reece and his three wives (Juliana, Kittorah and Anna) are the parents of:

2. **Sarah Margaret Reece**, born August 23, 1847.
3. **Hannah Ellen Reece**, born September 26, 1851.
6. **Floyd Norval Reece**, born April 5, 1858.
7. **Rebecca Annette (Reece) Ball**, born May 20, 1860.
11. **Anna Irene (Reece) Hermann**, born November 6, 1869.
David Reece lived a life that encompassed two centuries: the 19th and 20th. I find it amazing to consider the changes that occurred during David’s lifetime. When David was born in 1823, the United States was a vastly different nation than it was when he died in 1914. Consider travel, for much of David’s life you either walked or utilized horse power to get to where you needed to go inside the continental United States. When David died the steam locomotive, the automobile, and the plane were transportation technologies in existence. At the time of David’s death, the burgeoning technologies of the automobile and the plane went on to shape everyone’s quality of life and how people traveled in the future. In my opinion, no more drastic technological change occurred during human history than occurred during the span of years that encompassed David’s life. These changes had a profound effect on the quality of life for not only David Reece, but for everyone on this planet. For good and for bad, these changes affect our quality of life yet today.

I believe that the most dramatic changes that occurred in Iowa during David’s life were changes in the character of the land, wildlife, and of its people. At approximately the time that David Reece came to Iowa, the state was in transition from its prehistoric past to its modern day existence.

Iowa was inhabited by at least 17 Native American groups at the time of Euro-American settlement. The Ioway, Sauk, Fox, and Sioux were the dominant tribes. Some late prehistoric villages supported over 2,000 people. These tribes planted corn, hunted, and trapped animals for food. Very little meat was wasted and pelts (furs) were used to make clothing and blankets. These people took only what they needed. Plants and animals were left to repopulate for the next hunting and gathering season.

Relics from the past can be found today if you have an eye for detail or are excavating. Mastodon tusks, wooly mammoth teeth, elk antlers, bison skulls, arrow or spear points, and even dinosaur bones can be found in the sandbars or cut away banks of Iowa’s rivers and streams.

Early explorers, who originally came from Europe to settle in America, ventured into Iowa for many reasons. Some were trappers or traders who lived off the land, trapped animals for their valuable pelts, and established trading posts as a means of getting supplies and selling their pelts to European fur companies. Others were missionaries looking to establish missions. Military men were sent to map and secure land deeded to the United States.

Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet made the first well-documented expedition into Iowa in 1673, but very little was written about other expeditions until Lewis and Clark came to explore the newly acquired Louisiana Territory. Arriving in Iowa in 1804, the expedition traveled up the Missouri River, following the instructions of President Jefferson, to find the source of the river, document physical features, and make contact with local Native American tribes. The explorers found wildlife abundant, killing as many as five deer a day. They caught channel catfish near present-day Council Bluffs, where they found the creatures “verry common and easy taken.” Near Onawa, Lewis described the number of pelicans seen as “almost in credible.” Near Sioux City, Clark commented on “verry plentiful” beaver, “verry fat ducks,” and plovers “of different kinds.”
What did early Euro-Americans see when they arrived in Iowa? Forests covered eastern Iowa. Trees lined river and stream corridors in the state’s interior and covered valleys in western Iowa. Prairies were abundant in central and western Iowa. Prairie potholes and meandering streams were found throughout Iowa’s interior. More than 450 species of vertebrates lived in Iowa when the Europeans first arrived. Journals documented sightings of white-tailed deer, beaver, wolves, bison, elk, black bear, passenger pigeons, prairie chickens, cranes, and swans.

The United States began opening up the Midwest for settlement by signing treaties with local Native American groups as early as 1804. The Black Hawk Purchase of 1832 made it legal for settlers to move into territories west of the Mississippi. More than 1,500 Euro-Americans came to Iowa in the summer of 1833. Most newcomers came seeking land and were pleasantly surprised by Iowa’s favorable climate, sufficient rainfall, generous growing season, abundance of timber, fertile land, and variety of wildlife.

The settlers began to create a life for themselves in Iowa. Land was cheap or free and could be acquired quickly. Euro-Americans first settled near the Mississippi because it was accessible by boat. Hardwood trees, such as oaks, provided logs for homes and furniture. Wood for fuel was abundant. Settlers knew how to break the dense roots in the prairie soil by the time the government opened Iowa for settlement, having already perfected these procedures in the Grand Prairie area in Illinois. Iowa’s streams provided adequate water flow for operating grist and lumber mills. Wildlife was abundant and provided food and pelts for settlers.

Bison, wolf, elk, white-tailed deer, beaver, and turkeys were extirpated (eliminated) from Iowa. White-tailed deer were abundant in Iowa, even on the prairies of extreme northwestern Iowa 200 deer could be seen in the early 1870’s. But, they were gone from Iowa by 1900.

Bison were not found in large numbers in Iowa, but in scattered small groups, making them easier to kill. They were gone from the state before the market hunting of the vast herds in the West peaked. Whenever a bison was seen an attempt was made to kill it. All reports of bison in Iowa after 1860 involve a chase and end with the death of the bison.

Historic accounts of travelers through Iowa note that elk were more abundant on the prairie than bison, thus the town names of Elkhorn, Elkhart, and Elk River. The winter of 1856-57 was very severe in Iowa, with deep snow and ice cover. Elk herded together and were killed in large numbers by settlers that year. Elk were not seen in Iowa in any number after that winter and were gone completely by 1871.

A bounty system was established for coyotes and wolves in Iowa in 1817. This was an attempt to eliminate these ‘vermin.’ This system, however, had a debatable effect. Many settlers ‘farmed’ wolves, killing or trapping only the young of the year, leaving the adults to reproduce and make next year’s income. One pelt (ears, lips, scalp) could be good for several bounties if presented in different ways in different counties.

Drastic habitat changes probably affected wolves the most. They were absent from the state by the 1910’s. Coyotes managed to adapt to changes in the landscape. Though their numbers were very low by the early 1900’s, coyotes were sighted occasionally throughout Iowa by the mid-1900’s. Populations have since recovered.
Iowa’s population grew rapidly with increased riverboat traffic up the Mississippi and the beginning of a railroad in 1853. Demand for land and natural resources increased. Ninety-five percent of Iowa’s wetlands were drained or filled in, 70 percent of Iowa’s forests were cleared, and 99.5 percent of Iowa’s prairies were plowed within a 100-year period.

Many habitats that once supported an abundance of wildlife species were converted to cropland, towns, railroads, and cities. Today, it is estimated that only one tenth of the state is similar to what our ancestors found upon settling here. These remaining areas are small, widely scattered remnants—compared to millions of acres of contiguous habitat that once existed. Animals that need large expanses of habitat (e.g., large predators) may be gone from Iowa forever. Others have adapted and survived.

Reintroduction programs, hunting and trapping laws, and habitat restoration projects initiated by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and other organizations have brought deer, turkey, beaver, and river otters back to the state. They once again are common. Trumpeter swans, peregrine falcons, sharp-tail grouse, prairie chickens, and barn owls, although not so common, also have returned to Iowa through restoration programs.

This monument marks the graves of David and Anna Reece. To the left of their monument is the stone marking the graves of Abraham and Angeline Reece; my great-great grandparents. This photo is looking northeast from Lower Spring Grove Cemetery on November 11, 2003.
This is a closer look at David and Anna's monument. I took this photo in the spring of 2001 with genealogist Daphane Hoover. Notice the reflection of myself standing in front of this monument and that of my camera flash in the stone.
Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, November 11, 2003. In the middle of this photo are the monuments marking the graves of David and Henry Reece and their descendants. To the right of David and Anna's monument is the monument and grave of their daughter Marye M. The grave of her twin brother William C. is marked by the monument located immediately to the right of Marye's stone.
Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, November 11, 2003. From the lower left corner of this photo, and extending to the right, are the following seven monuments, listed in chronological order, belonging to: Ether Hiatt Reece, Abram and Angeline Reece, David and Anna Reece, Marye M. Reece, William C. Reece, Hannah E. Reece and Kittorah A. Reece.
Nancy Ann Reece
6th child of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece

Nancy Ann Reece was born on May 16, 1826 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio; which, at that time was a community only in its second decade out of virgin wilderness. Nancy would have lived her early childhood years on the property that her parents owned along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio.

In 1830, Nancy would have been residing with her parents and siblings in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. The 1830 U.S. Census recorded that the household of William Rees, Nancy’s father, then consisted of 11 individuals, which included William himself. Unfortunately, this census did not record the names of these individuals and how they were related to the head of the household, William Rees. This census recorded that a female under 5 years of age then resided within the household of William Rees; this undoubtedly would have been our subject Nancy.

In 1833, Nancy accompanied her family in their move from Highland County to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Nancy would have been approximately seven years old at the time of this move. Upon moving to Allen County, her parents homesteaded on 160 acres which they subsequently farmed within the northwest corner of section 33 of Jackson Township. It is reported that Allen County was, until then, an unbroken beech-maple forest. It would have been in Allen County where Nancy spent the remainder of her childhood.

Nancy would have been living within her father’s household at the time of the U.S. Census of 1840. At that time she would have been living with her parents and siblings on the family farm in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. The 1840 U.S. Census recorded that a female between 10 and less than 15 years of age then resided within her father’s household. Again, the name of this female was not recorded nor was her relationship to William Reece, the head of the household. This young girl undoubtedly would have been his daughter Nancy.

It appears that Nancy’s education was acquired from the country schools located near where she lived as a child with her parents in the Ohio counties of Highland and Allen. Most of her schooling would have certainly come from country schools near her families’ farm in section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. I assume that Nancy would have lived with her parents and siblings on their family farm up until her marriage to A.J. Ward in 1843.

Nancy married Abraham J. Ward on March 2, 1843 in Allen County, Ohio. Nancy would have married Abraham just two months shy of her 17th birthday. Abraham was born about the year of 1822 in Ohio, possibly within Champaign County. He is the son of Joseph and Catherine Ward [she has an unknown maiden name.] Many sources refer to Abraham as A.J. Ward. A.J. Ward appears to have been raised in Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio.

Genealogist Neil Henderson of Hudson, Ohio wrote the following about A.J. Ward and his parents:
Abraham Ward’s parents were still more Ohio pioneers. Joseph Ward is reported to have taken a look at Allen County in 1824 when it was still wilderness, one of the last unsettled parts of the state. He was born about 1793 in Moorefield, Virginia and moved to Champaign County, Ohio in 1806 with his brother and grandfather. In 1825 or 27, he was one of the first party of settlers in Allen County, near present-day Lima. He is listed among the first land purchasers of Bath Township (1829), as are also his brother John (1829) and his father Abraham (1832). Joseph’s gristmill was the first in the county. He died in 1840. We have a copy of a mortgage he signed in 1835, which shows that his wife’s name was Catherine and that she signed with an X. Other signatures include that of his younger brother John Ward, who was the county recorder as well as the pioneer schoolmaster; and David Reece, J.P., who may or may not have been another of Nancy Reece’s relatives.

In a book titled: It Happened Here, Volume 1, History of Allen County, Ohio, the following excerpt is taken from:

It happened here when Morgan Lippincatt, Joseph Wood and Ben Dalph were out hunting in the early summer of 1826 and lost their way in the dense forest south of Sugar Creek in Allen County. While backtracking along the Indian trail that followed the banks of Hog Creek, east of present day Lima, they discovered the cabin of Samuel McClure and learned for the first time of the tiny Hog Creek settlement. Here they found the families of Samuel McClure, Joseph Ward and Joseph Walton, who had built cabins and were clearing land along Hogs Creek, less than five miles southeast of the Sugar Creek settlement. Samuel McClure had taken up land here in the fall of 1825, month of November. Joseph Ward was McClure’s first neighbor. He helped cut the road when McClure came, afterwards brought his family and put them into McClure’s cabin, while he built one for himself.

On July 18, 1829, the trustees of Bath Township met and elected directors and a treasurer of school district #2 on Hogs Creek. Samuel McClure, Joseph Ward and Joseph G. Walton were chosen.

Joseph Walton moved here in March of 1826. The Ward cabin was built where afterwards was known as Ward’s mill.

A.J. Ward’s grandfather is Abraham Ward, for whom A.J. was likely named after. The Biographical History of Allen County, Ohio, written in 1896, gives us the following history pertaining to the grandfather and to his sons.

Abraham Ward, in 1833, removed from Jackson Township, Pickaway County, Ohio, to Allen County, Ohio. He was born in what is now West Virginia. His ancestry were among those who settled early at Plymouth, Massachusetts; and who came originally from England. Abraham Ward was the son of Joseph Ward, a soldier in the Revolutionary war, who after the close of that war settled in Norfolk, Virginia. Later he removed to Moorefield, in Hardy County, now in West Virginia, where he died.
Abraham, following the example of his father, became a soldier in the war of 1812, in an Ohio regiment. He married Miss Christiana Johnson, by whom he had two children, Joseph and John. After the death of Mrs. Ward, Mr. Ward married again, but the maiden name of his second wife is not now known. By this second marriage he had four children—two sons and two daughters, and in the fullness of time he died in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

Joseph Ward, the elder son of Abraham Ward and his first wife, was born in Moorefield, Virginia, in 1793, and settled in Champaign County, Ohio, in 1812, where he lived until 1827, when removed to Allen County, locating on what is now known as the Felter Farm. He erected the first gristmill in Allen County, and upon this farm he died in 1839, leaving a family of four sons and two daughters.

John Ward, the second son of Abraham and Christiana Ward, was born in Moorefield, Virginia, in 1795, and removed to Champaign County, Ohio, in 1812, locating in Union Township. In January, 1830, he removed to Allen County, having in 1828 entered eighty acres of land in Bath Township. Upon arriving in Allen County and getting settled, he engaged in teaching a select school in the winter time, and in farming in the summer season. He took a very active part in the organization of Allen County, and was appointed the first clerk of the county court, under the old constitution, in which capacity he served until his death, December 25, 1842. He also filled the office of recorder several terms. Beside being active and prominent in these local ways, he was also prominent in the military affairs of the state, holding commissions as captain, colonel and brigadier-general. Politically he was a democrat and religiously he was a Presbyterian, assisting to organize the Presbyterian Church at Lima, and serving therein as an elder for many years.

According to genealogist Linda Kaufman, A.J. Ward’s parents: Joseph and Catharine Ward, appear to be the parents of:

1. Rebecca C. Ward [1815?-1836?]
2. Mary Ann Ward, born December 17, 1818; died March 4, 1882.
3. Abraham J. Ward, 1822-?????
4. John A. Ward, 1825-?????
5. Thomas Robinson Ward, 1827-1907
6. Isabel Ward, 1832-?????
7. George Harmer Ward, 1836-1862
In 1830, A.J. Ward would have been living with his parents in their home in Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio. His father’s household at the time of the 1830 U.S. Census included six children. The 1830 U.S. Census recorded the following information pertaining to the individuals then residing within Joseph Ward’s household:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 between the age of 30-40</td>
<td><em>Joseph, the father</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 under 5 years of age</td>
<td><em>son Thomas; unknown</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 between the ages of 5-10</td>
<td><em>sons A.J. and John</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 between the ages of 30-40</td>
<td><em>wife, Catharine</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 between the ages of 10-15</td>
<td><em>daughter Mary Ann; unknown, perhaps Rebecca.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also living within Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio, at the time of the 1830 U.S. Census, was Joseph Ward’s brother John and his family.

Between the years of 1830 and 1840, A.J. Ward was presumably living with his parents in Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio.

In 1840, A.J. Ward would have been residing with his parents in their home in Bath Township, Allen County, Ohio. The 1840 U.S. Census recorded the following information pertaining to the individuals then residing within Joseph Ward’s household:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 between the ages of 40-50</td>
<td><em>Joseph, who would have been about 47.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 under 5 years of age</td>
<td><em>son George</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 between the ages of 10-15</td>
<td><em>son Thomas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 between the ages of 15-20</td>
<td><em>sons A.J. and John</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 between the ages of 40-50</td>
<td><em>wife Catharine, who would have been about 43.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 between the ages of 5-10</td>
<td><em>daughter Isabelle</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Genealogist Linda Kaufman notes:

There should be a second son in the 10-15 age category in Joseph’s 1840 census record. This son was under 5 years of age in the 1830 census record. He seems to have died in infancy.

There is no older daughter in Joseph’s household in 1840. We know that his daughter Mary Ann married John Packard Fay in 1838. There is another Ward marriage recorded in Allen County, in 1834, between Rebecca C. Ward and James A. Hanson. James married Mary A. Mumaugh in August 1840. In 1850, James is living with Mary and a 15 year old son. In 1850, Catherine Ward, the wife of Joseph, is remarried to Benjamin Hanson, a relative of James Hanson. I think that Rebecca was actually Joseph and Catherine’s oldest daughter, and that she died shortly after her marriage, perhaps in childbirth, and hence is not mentioned in later books.

Living near Joseph Ward at the time of the 1840 Federal census is Joseph’s brother John and his family, who were living within the city of Lima. Joseph’s daughter Mary Ann and her husband John P. Fay were living just a few doors away from John Ward at the time of the 1840 census.
In 1845, two years after Abraham J. Ward married our Nancy Reece on March 2, 1843, they moved by wagon from Ohio to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. They appear to have been residing in Allen County, Ohio prior to moving to Iowa. Nancy is the first of my Reece ancestors to settle in Iowa. Upon coming here, A.J. and Nancy settled east of Troy Mills, Iowa, east of the Wapsipinicon River, in section 1 of Spring Grove Township.

According to a 1906 history of Spring Grove Township written by historian Isaac Holman: the A.J. Ward family settled on the southwest quarter of Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa in 1845. The first settler to settle in Spring Grove was Leonard Austin in the spring of 1845. A.J. Ward settled near Austin during the fall of 1845. Ward, like Austin, soon after arriving in 1845 had a goodly portion of his land under cultivation.

Iowa would have been a territory and not yet a state when Abraham and Nancy Ward moved to Linn County, Iowa. The 1833 Black Hawk Purchase Treaty legalized non-Indian settlement in the territory; settlement then began in earnest. Originally, Iowa was part of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and was politically identified with Louisiana until 1812, when it merged into the Missouri Territory; in 1834 it came under the Michigan organization, and, in 1836, under that of Wisconsin. Finally, after being constituted an independent Territory in 1838, it became a State of the Union in 1846.

In 1833, surveyor Joseph Street wrote the following after traveling through the Turkey, Wapsipinicon and Cedar River valleys in northeast Iowa: “I had never rode through a country so full of game.”

From the time of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, up to the date of the organization of the Iowa Territory in 1838, there had been a gradual increase in the knowledge of this land and a growing appreciation of its value. There had been parties of hunters and trappers who made temporary settlements on the banks of the Mississippi in the period from 1820 to 1830. It was not till steam navigation was established on the Mississippi that there grew up a demand for Iowa lands. Southeastern Illinois and northwestern Missouri were settled and the pioneers naturally looked to the equally desirable lands in Iowa. Various exploring expeditions also contributed to a desire to settle in the territory. Lewis and Clark added to the knowledge of its western borders by their expedition in 1805. Pike in the same year traversed another part of the territory, and these explorers brought back accounts of its great fertility and of its desirability for settlement.

The government established a broad strip of neutral ground between the Sioux in the north and the Sacs and Foxes in the south to keep these tribes at peace, and in 1830 acquired lands on the Missouri to be used as Indian reservations. Here and there in the Iowa Territory were white men who had gained the friendship of the Indians and lived with them. There were trading posts of the American Fur Company and miners at Dubuque, who were licensed by the government to work at that point. Iowa remained the home of the Indians until the close of the Black Hawk War, when General Winfield Scott, on September 15, 1832, concluded a treaty of peace with the Sacs and Foxes, by which the Indians' title was extinguished to that part of land known as the Black Hawk Purchase. This was the eastern part of Iowa and extended along the Mississippi, from Missouri on the south to the ‘Neutral Grounds’ on the north, and westward a distance of fifty miles. It
contained about six million acres and was to be surrendered by the Indians on June 1, 1833. This gave the first opportunity for the legal settlement of Iowa by citizens of the United States.

June 1, 1833, was fixed as the day on which the Indians were to be removed from the Black Hawk Purchase and the lands opened for settlement. The would-be settlers came in large numbers to the banks of the Mississippi, ready to cross and get the choice of the land. United States troops kept guard on the western shore of the river and prevented any persons from entering the Purchase before the appointed time. At precisely twelve o’clock, midnight, June 1, there was a wild rush of settlers from East and South and the settlement of Iowa was begun.

William Abbe is believed to be the first white settler to locate a claim within the boundaries of Linn County, Iowa. He came as early as the summer of 1836 from near Elyira, Lorain County, Ohio; seeking a location, coming via Rock Island. He settled near Mount Vernon, Iowa; settling near a little creek which was later named “Abbe’s Creek” in his honor.

John Deere invented the steel plow in 1837, which allowed the settlers on the prairie to break through the tough prairie soil. It is said that when the settlers first turned over the virgin Iowa prairie with the steel plow, that the cutting of the roots of prairie grasses made a sound like a zipper opening. Up to the time of settlement, the prairie had been untouched and was a soil type that took approximately 10,000 years to develop. The invention of the steel plow hastened the demise of the prairie ecosystem throughout Iowa and the Midwest.

The land upon which Abraham and Nancy Ward settled in Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, was located approximately 3.5 miles east from what is now the town of Troy Mills. Troy Mills was not founded until 1853, which was eight years after Abraham and Nancy’s arrival.

The census returns of 1840 show that there were no less than 1,373 residents in Linn County, Iowa at that time. During the three years after the 1840 census, the influx of settlers was unceasing, and by 1845, the same year that Abraham and Nancy arrived, there were probably 4,000 persons that had decided upon Linn County as their home.

Shortly after Abram and Nancy’s arrival in Linn County, Iowa, 16,000 Mormons crossed the Mississippi River into Iowa in May 1846 to escape religious persecution in Illinois. In exiting Illinois, Mormons left their temple and homes behind in the town of Nauvoo which they established in 1839. This exodus from Nauvoo began in the winter of 1845-46 when the Mississippi River was frozen. After crossing the Mississippi, Mormons traveled across southern Iowa by wagon and by foot. They spent the following winter near Council Bluffs at a place that is now known as winter quarters. From winter quarters, Mormons subsequently started a trek west along what became known as the Mormon Trail; they later arrived in the Salt Lake Valley of Utah in 1847. This was a trek of approximately 1,300 miles.

Of the entire Mormon trek to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, it was the first 300 miles across Iowa that most tried the stamina and courage of the Latter-day Saint pioneers. Mere weeks into the journey—through sleet, blizzard, and mud—it became apparent to Brigham Young, their leader, that his people would never reach the Rocky Mountains in the time or in the manner that most had hoped for. So throughout the
spring of 1846, thousands of refugees trudged across the windswept Iowa prairies, preparing the way for those yet to come: building bridges, erecting cabins, planting and fencing crops. By mid June, nearly 12,000 Saints were still scattered across Iowa. The Rocky Mountain entry would be postponed.

Abraham and Nancy Ward came to Spring Grove one year before Iowa was admitted into the Union. Iowa became the 29th State of the Union on December 28, 1846. At the time it was admitted into the Union, Iowa's population was 96,088.

The census of 1850 shows that there were then 5,444 inhabitants of Linn County, Iowa. The gold excitement in California, which began in the year of 1849, naturally drew many of the more venturesome spirits of Linn County westward, and a number of Linn County men joined the long procession on its wearisome way over the plains and mountains.

The following is a history of Linn County, Iowa.

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**History of Linn County, Iowa**

Linn County namesake, Senator Lewis Linn of Missouri, was a champion of development for the Western territories.

Linn County's earliest residents left their footprints in the form of mounds built up and down the Cedar River Valley. Little survives from this early prehistoric culture. The largest mound, located on the west bank of the Cedar River in Cedar Rapids, encompassed 15 acres. Its crown of clamshells designated it as a sacred site for early Native Americans. As the city grew, the mound was graded down to fill in low lying areas.

The territory that would become Linn County was acquired in two purchases following the defeat of the Meskwaki and Sauk Indians in the Black Hawk War of 1832. Early Linn County settlers found the area occupied by the Meskwaki and Winnebago Indians. Both tribes had been pushed west from the Eastern seaboard by encroaching European settlements. Although the land no longer belonged to Native Americans, small groups of nomadic Meskwaki continued to frequent their former hunting grounds until the turn of the century. They also played an important role in trade and assistance for the white settlers.

The first permanent white settlers in Linn County arrived around 1837. They staked claims near woods and waterways. Settlers found it easier clearing trees from land for cultivation than to break the deep-rooted prairie grass without a steel plow. Obtaining food and supplies was a constant struggle for early settlers. The nearest trading posts were a two-week journey by ox cart across trackless terrain. Every stream had to be forded. In winter, the trip to the Mississippi for provisions was practically impossible. Nor were there any good means for getting produce to Eastern markets except by waterways. Railroads didn't arrive in the county until the late 1850's. Prior to that, people relied on stagecoach lines, steamboats and walking as the primary modes of travel.

Land with waterpower potential was especially coveted for milling grain and setting up saw mill operations. At one time, Linn County had 22 operating mills. Many
fell victim to fire or flooding. And as rail spurs spread throughout the county, the need for community milling operations decreased.

One has to wonder what initially brought Abraham and Nancy Ward to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. What persuaded them to leave Ohio to settle within section 1 of Spring Grove Township? What persuaded them to settle there when they did? These are questions that we probably will never get a definitive answer to, but it is interesting to ponder.

One strong possibility is that A.J. and Nancy may have gained an interest in coming to Linn County, Iowa from knowledge of the area that they likely acquired from a William Franklin Ward. William F. Ward was born in 1807 to Abraham Ward; he being A.J. Ward’s grandfather. William F. Ward was from Abraham Ward’s second marriage. When his first wife Christiana died, Abraham Ward remarried; her name is unknown. From this second marriage William Franklin Ward was born. William F. Ward would be a half-brother to Joseph Ward, A.J. Ward’s father. It is reported that William Ward was from Otter Creek Township, Linn County, Iowa, which is the township directly south of Spring Grove Township. William Ward is accredited as one of the pioneer settlers of the county, having located here in 1842, which was three years prior to the arrival of A.J. and Nancy Ward. William and A.J. Ward, and their respective families, would have been living relatively close to one another when A.J. and Nancy moved to Spring Grove Township in 1845.

Abraham and Nancy Ward purchased their Spring Grove farm in section 1 from Alvah and Ann Buckingham. The Buckinghams acquired the property from the United States Government. The abstract belonging to the old Ward farm, now in the possession of the current owner of the property, Cecil Price, indicates that the land warrant deed conveying the Buckingham property to the Wards was dated April 19, 1850. Price’s abstract reads that the Buckinghams conveyed to the Wards the south 1/2 of the southwest 1/4 of Section 1, Township 86 North (Spring Grove Township), Range 7 West, which would have encompassed 160 acres. The date of April 19, 1850 found in the abstract is when possession of the land by the Ward’s took place. I believe that the Wards actually moved onto the Buckingham property in the fall of 1845.

Iowa land deed records tell us that Abraham J. and Nancy Ward of Linn County, Iowa, purchased the Buckingham property for the sum of $230 on April 19, 1850. The Buckinghams, Alvah and his wife Ann, were residents of Muskinghum, Ohio at the time they sold their property to the Wards. The deed record conveying the Buckingham property to the Wards reads that the Wards purchased, from the Buckinghams, the south half of the southwest quarter of section number 1, and the east half of the southeast quarter of section 2 in Township 86 North, (Spring Grove Township) Range 7 West, being the land located by United States military land warrant number 51,800 at the U.S. land office at Dubuque, Iowa. The total acreage of the Ward purchase from the Buckinghams would have encompassed 320 acres. I speculate that Alvah Buckingham was a military veteran, of what war I do not know, maybe the War of 1812, and he probably was given, in part, lands in sections 1 and 2 of Spring Grove Township as compensation for his service.
Shortly after arriving in Spring Grove, Nancy gave birth to her first child, William Reece Ward, on October 5, 1847. William was born in Linn County, Iowa according to Nancy's bible. According to her bible, Nancy's second child, Sylvester Americus Ward, was also born in Linn County on September 25, 1848. The dates and places of birth for both William and his brother Sylvester were found in a bible that once belonged to their mother. As indicated by sources, at some point Nancy also gave birth to a girl while living in Iowa. Her date of birth and order of birth in relation to her siblings is unknown. She apparently was born after William and Sylvester.

The land where Abraham and Nancy made their home within section 1 of Spring Grove Township is today located at 2573 Coggon Road, Coggon, Iowa. The current owner of the land and occupant of the house at the above address is Cecil Price. It is my understanding that Mr. Price's home is either the one in which Abraham and Nancy once lived in, or that it represents the location where the Ward home once stood. Mr. Price told me that his home is quite old, how old, he did not know. I believe that the Ward's lived at this location from approximately 1845 to 1856. To get to where the Wards lived, go east from the main intersection in Troy Mills on Coggon Road for 3.5 miles. The home is located on the north side of Coggon Road.

According to one source, the old Ward residence at 2573 Coggon Road is right across the road from what was the school where Abraham Ward taught. Across the road from the old Ward home presently stands the Spring Grove Church, which was built in 1882. Just west of this church is where David Reece, Nancy's brother, lived in section 12. David's home still stands today and is easily seen from 2573 Coggon Road.

Both Abraham and Nancy left family behind in Ohio when they moved to Linn County, Iowa. However, in the early 1850's, Nancy's siblings started to emigrate from Ohio; settling in or near Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. In 1851, Nancy's brother David homesteaded in section 12, adjacent to the Ward farm. At some point in the early 1850's, Nancy's sister, Mary Church and her husband Reuben, moved to Spring Grove. They likely settled in the northwest corner of section 1 north of the Ward farm. In 1853, Nancy's brother Henry homesteaded in section 2 approximately half a mile west of the Ward farm. According to one source, Nancy's brother Benjamin was a resident of Buchanan County, Iowa by January 1854.

Abraham J. Ward's sister, Mary Ann, and her husband John Packard Fay, along with their children, came to Spring Grove, Jackson Township, Linn County, Iowa in 1853 or 54. The Fay family resided in Lima, Allen County, Ohio in 1850 and apparently departed from that location when they immigrated to Linn County, Iowa. On June 18, 1855, John and Mary Fay's son, David S. Fay, married an Elizabeth Ward, the daughter of the previously mentioned William Franklin Ward.

Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto, a descendent of Nancy (Reece) Ward living in California, informed me that Abraham J. Ward made bricks in partnership with his brother-in-law, David Reece, in Iowa. Given the fact that David Reece's obituary states that he made brick in Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa, I speculate that his partnership with Abraham Ward may have taken place in Quasqueton sometime between 1851 and 1856.

An 1852 Linn County, Iowa land deed describes A.J. and Nancy Ward as then residents of Buchanan County, Iowa. According to this deed, on January 1, 1852,
Abraham J. and Nancy Ward of Buchanan County, Iowa, sold 40 acres to John W. Houglánd of Linn County, Iowa for $240. This property included all of the NE¼ of the NE¼ of Section 25, Township 85 North, Range 8 West, except a lot off of the SE corner of the above forty acre lot, thence north 19 rods, thence west 18 rods, thence south 19 rods, thence east to the place of beginning containing 2 acres and 22 rods. This property was located within Washington Township in Linn County; and is located approximately 10 miles south of Troy Mills near the present day town of Lafayette, Iowa. On January 1, 1852, Abraham J. and Nancy Ward appeared before Josiah H. Walton, a justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa, to personally acknowledge this conveyance as their voluntary act and deed.

By taking into account the above deed, it appears as though that at some point, A.J and Nancy Ward lived for a brief period in Buchanan County, Iowa. A second Linn County land deed reads that A.J. Ward was a justice of the peace of Buchanan County, Iowa on October 13, 1852. It appears that in 1852 that the Wards were residing within Buchanan County, which borders Linn County a short distance north of Troy Mills. Evidently, when the Wards resided within Buchanan County, they were living a few miles across the county line from Troy Mills. Most sources indicate that Abraham and Nancy resided within Linn County, Iowa; however, given the close proximity of Troy Mills to the county lines of Linn and Buchanan, it is not surprising that their county of residency went back and forth between the two during the course of their residency in the area.

Abraham and Nancy’s residence in Section 1, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, was located approximately one mile south of Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. The following is a history of Newton Township as written by area historian Isaac Holman. Abraham and Nancy would have lived in the area, and during the time, that Mr. Holman writes about in the following article.

There was in almost every pioneer settlement a certain piece of timber known as ‘hooking diggins’, which was destined for general slaughter and as the settlers came in most of them would work on this timber. Sometimes the settler’s cabin would be from one to two miles from ‘hooking diggins’ and he would have to walk that distance on a cold winter day to reach the coveted timber. They would chop till noon and then set down on a log and eat their frozen dinner. In the early settlement of this county, a broad, rich, fertile prairie was spread out before land hunter’s view. Many miles were often traveled over before his eyes rested upon the coveted location. The pioneers almost always located in or near the timber, even if they did not get as good land as they could have gotten further out on the prairie. It was thought in early days that timber land would in a short time bring fabulous prices, and that the prairie would never be settled more than a short distance back of the timber line. Mr. Holman had a conversation with one of the wealthy business men of Buchanan County, who located 2 miles from timber. Some of his friends in the timber told him he had gotten beyond the pale of civilization and that the country would never be settled that distance out from the timber. He said he was afraid he had made a mistake in locating so great a distance from timber. Such was the ideas in early times. There was a grove of trees located farther up the river than Upper Spring Grove, principally located in Cono Township, however a small portion of it is in
Newton Township. The land in the grove is nearly all black soil. [Later it was called Hoover timber, and is today called the Hoover Conservation Area, located in section 24.]

In 1850, a tornado passed through and there were not more than a dozen or so of the original trees standing in the Upper Spring Grove area. Rotten tree trunks not more than two feet in diameter were everywhere. Trees were growing out of the mounds made by roots of the overturned trees. This storm also damaged trees in Coggon.

The following history of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa was written by an A.W. Fisher and published in a 1911 history of Linn County, Iowa.

**SPRING GROVE TOWNSHIP**

Spring Grove Township is situated in the northern tier of townships in Linn County. It is bordered on the north by Newton Township, Buchanan County, on the east by Jackson, on the south by Otter Creek, and on the west by Grant. The land is generally an undulating prairie excepting a strip about two miles wide beginning at the northwest corner of the township in section six, and extending in a southeasterly direction to section twenty-four on the east side of the township, through which the Wapsipinicon River flows. The land near the river on both sides is not only hilly, but consists of a light sandy soil, and was almost covered with a heavy growth of timber in the early pioneer days. Back from the river about one mile the land is prairie and has a deep black loam.

The early settlements of Spring Grove Township were connected with the settlements in the neighboring townships, and divided themselves into three groups. The first one was on the north side of the Wapsipinicon River, while another settlement was made in the southeastern part of the township in what is called West Prairie, and the third settlement was in the western part of the township. The earliest settlers located along the Wapsipinicon River where the soil is of a poor quality than it was on the open prairie. The reason for their choice was to secure timber for their building and for fuel. In a few cases the settlers were grouped around springs that furnished them with water.

Game was abundant in those days and this helped the pioneer during the long cold winters. Large herds of deer were often seen along the timber near the river and on the prairies. Wolves were too plentiful to suit the settler as they prowled around his cabin during the night and carried off poultry whenever the chance offered. Panthers were rarely seen but were too numerous for the more timid in those days. Often cattle and hogs were missing and their loss was attributed to the work of the panther. The early settlers of Spring Grove Township did not escape the discomforts of the average pioneer. Their houses were, at the best, rudely constructed of logs, and the stoves used in those days were very poor. Many of the old settlers have informed me that their coffee, when they were lucky enough to secure it, was often frozen after being placed on the breakfast table.

The first settlement was on the north side of the Wapsipinicon River around two springs. One of them was in a grove in Newton Township, Buchanan County, and the other one a short distance southeast in a grove in our township. To distinguish them the early pioneers called them the Upper and Lower Spring Grove. The name of Spring
Grove then came in general use for the entire settlement and was adopted by our settlers as the name of their township.

The first settler in Spring Grove Township was Leonard Austin, who with his family settled in section one of our township in the spring of 1845, and erected the first building from rough unhewn logs taken from the timber surrounding his building site. Mr. Austin was followed by A.J. Ward, who with his family settled near Mr. Austin during the fall of that year. Two years later, in 1847, Josiah Walton and Rev. Wm. Phillips settled as near neighbors to these hardy pioneers. These were soon followed by the Reeces, Holmans, Longs, McPikes, Peyton, Carson, Whisenands, McKees, Fays, and Waltons, who settled in the northern part of our township and in the southern part of Newton Township in Buchanan County, and who are remembered as the early pioneers.

The early settlers of the southeastern part of the township were the Bices, Andersons, Saxtons, Leathermans, Plummer, Swaim, Frank Dorr, E.B. Fisher, Bumgardners, Benedicts, McBurneys, Nutting, Carpenter, and Jordans. These settlers formed part of a settlement that extended into Jackson Township. They located there during the early part of the '50's. About the same time the western part of the township south of the Wapsipinicon River was settled. Those early settlers were Edwin Jeffreys, A.G. Kibbe, Elmer and J.E. Atwood, father and son, Chas. Cook and sons, Edwin, Enos George, and Charles, and George Parkhurst. All these early pioneers took an active part in helping to develop the new country.

In regard to religious worship the people of Spring Grove may be likened to the Puritans of the early colonial period, as among the earliest settlers came Rev. Wm. Phillips, a minister of the gospel who at first conducted meetings in his own home, and later became a "circuit rider," holding meetings every Sunday either in some private house or in a school house. The Christian organization that is now at Troy Mills was organized by Henry Holman during the summer of 1853 in John W. McKee's house near what is now Troy Mills. Mr. Holman preached the first sermon and continued as pastor until the organization was strong enough to secure a minister to take charge of the work. Isaac Holman, now a resident of Troy Mills, and a son of Henry Holman, was the first superintendent of the Sunday school organization in the township. Rev. N.A. McConnell, of Marion, was one of the ablest ministers of the early period, and would face the worst storms of the season in order to keep his appointment. The people living in the southeastern part of the township at first held services in private houses until the West Prairie school house was erected, where for several years they had a place of worship. They now have a splendid church near the West Prairie school house.

The first justice of the peace of Spring Grove Township was John Plummer, but the best known justices of the peace of the early times were Elmer Atwood, Josiah Walton, and Wm. Bleakley. While the people of those days were not free from strife among themselves, yet they were obliged to band together to free themselves from a worse evil—the horse thief. The people finally with the help of the neighboring settlers took the law in their own hands and dealt summary justice to the offenders. One of these thieves was followed by a posse to his camp on the Buffalo Creek in Buchanan County, and on his refusal to surrender he was shot to death. This put a stop to the stealing.

In politics the people of Spring Grove always took an active part, and for a long time claimed to be the banner republican precinct of the state. During the Civil War the
republicans of West Prairie erected a flag pole on the bare prairie near where now stands the West Prairie Church and raised the Stars and Stripes aloft and kept the flag there until long after the war closed. At one election during the Civil War not a democratic vote was cast. It was said that there were a few democrats in the township but they chose to stay at home rather than stand the jeers that were sure to assail them if they voted.

Troy Mills, the only village in the township, was founded in 1853, when a dam was built across the river at that place and a saw mill built. This mill continued to run about ten years when the present mill was erected. The mill did a flourishing business grinding all kinds of grain, but of late years has only been used as a grist mill. Jordon Long brought the first stock of goods to Troy Mills, amounting to ten dollars. Meeting with success in selling these, he turned all his attention to carrying on a general store which he conducted for more than forty years. Dr. John Dix and E.C. Downs started the first drug store in the town but soon sold out. E.N. Beach, one of the best known men in the northern part of Linn County, came to Troy Mills at an early day and started a drug store and has conducted the same to the present time. Dr. E. Wilson was the only doctor in our township for several years and enjoyed a lucrative practice. The first blacksmith shop was started by Elimer and John E. Atwood in 1854, who conducted the same for nearly thirty years.

Only a few of the old settlers remain who helped to transform the wilds into what it is today. Those now living here, who came in the early 50’s, are David Reece, Isaac Holman, John E. Atwood, Mrs. Edwin Jeffries, Isaac Bice, Enos and Charles Cook. The others have either moved away or passed into that great beyond from which no traveler returns.

On December 9, 1853, A.J. and Nancy Ward of Linn County, Iowa, sold a square half an acre of land, for the amount of $5, to school district number 5 of Main Township, Linn County, Iowa. This half and acre was located in the SW corner of the East ½ of the SE ¼ of Section 2, Township 86 North (Spring Grove Township), Range 7 West. A.J. and Nancy Ward personally appeared before J.J. Nugent, a justice of the peace of Linn County, on December 9, 1854, to personally acknowledge this conveyance as their voluntary act and deed. I assume that the Wards sold this half an acre for the construction of a country school. It is possible that Abraham Ward may have eventually taught at this school. According to local history, it appears that a schoolhouse was built upon the half an acre that the Wards deeded to the Main school district. It also appears that this school was eventually moved from its original location and placed on an acre of land that David Reece (Nancy Ward’s brother) donated for a country school in section 12. This school was located on the east side of David’s Hickory Grove Farm at what is today 5766 Seven Hills Road, Coggon, Iowa.

On April 3, 1854, the first Spring Grove Township election was held in the old log home of David Reece, A.J. Ward’s brother-in-law. A.J. Ward attended this election, which was for the purpose of electing three trustees, one township clerk, two justices of the peace, two constables, one assessor and one supervisor for said township, the following named persons appeared and voted, to-wit: David Reece, D.N. Saxon, L.D.
Swain, S. Ewing, R.W. Church, and David Church. David Reece's old soft woolen hat
was used as the ballot box during this election. There were only thirteen votes cast
during that election for at that time there were only thirteen voters in the township. There
were just enough voters to fill the offices. David had the honor of casting the first ballot
in the township.

The following entry in the records of the Linn County Supervisors was made the
day after the election held at David Reece's home. The entry reads: And to wit April 4,
1854 comes A.J. Ward who was duly elected Justice of the Peace in Spring Grove
Township on the 3rd day of April 1854 in and for said county for the term of 2 years. And
filed in this court his bond and is duly qualified a such justice.

When Nancy Ward's parents died she inherited a title interest to their estate which
included town lots number 21 and 22 in Lafayette, Jackson Township, Allen County,
Ohio. A quit claim deed dated January 18, 1854 reads that A.J. and Nancy Ward of Linn
County, Iowa, quit claim their title interest to town lots number 21 and 22 in the town of
Lafayette, Allen County, Ohio, for the sum of $10, to Benjamin H. Reece. Benjamin
would be Nancy's brother. Nancy's brother, David Reece, and her brother-in-law,
Reuben Church, were listed in this deed as being present during the conveyance of these
properties. On January 18, 1854, A.J. and Nancy Ward personally appeared before
Johnathan J. Nugent, a justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa, to personally
acknowledge this as their voluntary act and deed.

In addition to acquiring a title interest in the above town lots, Nancy also had a
title interest to a one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of her parent's farm in Section 33,
Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. This fact is demonstrated by a quit claim deed
dated April 24, 1854. Abraham and Nancy sold her one-eighth interest in her parent's
farm to her brother Henry for $150 on April 24, 1854. This quit claim deed reads that
Abraham and Nancy personally appeared before John P. (Packard) Fay, an associate
judge in and for Allen County, Ohio, on April 24, 1854, to acknowledge this conveyance
as their voluntary act and deed. This deed reads that it was executed in the presence of
Abraham's sister Mary Ann Ward. Isabella Ward is also a sister to Abraham.

The preceding quit claim deed reads that Abraham and Nancy Ward personally
appeared before John P. Fay, Associate Judge of Allen County, Ohio, on April 24, 1854,
to acknowledge this conveyance as their voluntary act. The deed also reads that Nancy
was examined by Fay, separate from her husband, and that she acknowledged the signing
and sealing of this conveyance as their voluntary act. I do not understand how Abraham
and Nancy could have made a personal appearance, as this deed claims, in the presence
of Judge Fay when they were residing in Iowa at the time. It seems unlikely that the
Wards would have made a trip in 1854 to Allen County, Ohio from their home in Linn
County, Iowa. I wonder if the signing, sealing, and conveyance of this land, as described
in the above deed, was done by mail or through a third party while the Wards were
residing in Iowa. This deed suggests that the Wards were in Ohio at the time of this
conveyance, which I do not believe was the case.

According to historian Isaac Holman, it is thought that the first school house
proper to be built in the township of Spring Grove was built in 1854, and that A.J. Ward
taught the first school in that house. Ward taught several singing schools, and would go for miles to conduct a spelling contest according to Holman. Holman wrote the following about Ward in 1906: *He took great pains in teaching the rising generation morality and good principles. In those pioneer days he was just the right man in the right place, and many can look back and kindly thank him for his valuable instruction.*

In addition to owning land within sections 1 and 2 of Spring Grove Township and in section 25 of Washington Township, Linn County, Iowa, Abraham and Nancy at one time also owned land in section 12 of Spring Grove Township. On June 21, 1854, for the amount of $50, A.J. Ward, a resident of Linn County, Iowa, bought land within the NE¼ of the SW¼ of Section 12, Spring Grove Township, from his brother-in-law and his wife, David and Kittorah Ann Reece.

Also on June 21, 1854, A.J. and Nancy Ward of Linn County, Iowa, sold five acres for $55 to a Henry B. Kelsey. This land was located 20 rods east of the SW corner of the NE¼ of the SW¼ of Section 12, Township 86 North (Spring Grove), Range 7 West, thence east 20 rods, thence north 40 rods, thence west 20 rods, thence south 40 rods to the place beginning containing five acres. This property appears to be the land that A.J. Ward previously bought from David Reece. A.J. and Nancy Ward personally appeared before Linn County Justice of the Peace Sidney Ewing and acknowledged this conveyance as their voluntary act and deed.

The 1854 Iowa Census recorded that the household of A.J. Ward then resided in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. The Ward family was evidently living in section 1 when this census was taken. This census recorded that at the time of this census, the A.J. Ward household consisted of: 4 males, 1 female, 2 voters and 2 militia members, for a total of 5 individuals in the household at the time of this census. Obviously, one of the males, as recorded by this census, would have been A.J. Ward himself. Two of the males in this census record would have been A.J.'s sons: William and Sylvester. We do not know the identity of the fourth male who is listed in this census record. In regards to this 1854 census record, genealogist Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto notes: *the Ward sons (William and Sylvester) would have been well under age so there was another adult male living in the household, and the child that died on the trail to California 2 or 3 years later was not yet born.* The one female listed by this census within Abraham’s household would have been his wife Nancy. A.J. Ward himself would have been one of the adult males in this census record listed as a voter and militia member.

The family of Abraham and Nancy Ward lived in Iowa when much of the state was remote and sparsely populated; a true wilderness setting. The 1854 Iowa Census brings this to light. The census that year recorded only 133 residents within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This was a total population for an area encompassing 23,040 acres. At the time of the 1854 census, A.J. Ward was the assessor of Spring Grove Township. The 1854 census for the township of Spring Grove concludes with: *I hereby certify that the above is a correct return of the census of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. A.J. Ward, Assessor.*

The following entry in the records of the Linn County Supervisors was made on September 19, 1854: *A.J. Ward on September 19, 1854 came before board who on this day was duly appointed by the trustees of Spring Grove Township a Justice of the Peace*
to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Sydney Ewing late justice of said
township hold his office as such justice to the 1st election to be held in April 1855 and to
his successor is duly elected and qualified and files herein his bond and is duly qualified
as such justice.

It would appear that A.J. Ward was already a justice of the peace of Spring Grove
upon filling the vacancy made by the resignation of Justice Sydney Ewing. Documentary
evidence indicates that Ward also held the office of township assessor at the same time he
was justice of the peace. Linn County marriage license records indicate that Abraham J.
Ward, acting as justice of the peace, married a few couples between the years 1849 and
1854.

A.J. Ward was recorded as being a justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa in
April 1855. A deed of conveyance between brothers David and Henry Reece, A.J.
Ward’s brother-in-laws, dated April 4, 1855, concerning ten acres sold to Henry by
David, lists A.J. Ward as the justice of the peace that handled this conveyance. This deed
is proof that A.J. Ward was still residing within Linn County, Iowa by April 1855.
Shortly after this deed of conveyance took place, A.J. Ward and his family moved to
California.

According to histories pertaining to Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa,
Abraham J. Ward was described as a musician, teacher and township clerk. We also
know that he served as township assessor as well as a justice of the peace. During A.J.
Ward’s residency in Iowa, he was not only a justice of the peace for Linn County; he was
also a justice for Buchanan County as well.

The Ward family eventually left their home in Linn County, Iowa and moved to
California. Genealogist Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto informed me that all indications are
that the family of Abraham J. Ward came to California in 1856. It is very likely that their
move to California was financed, in part, through the sell of Nancy’s inheritance of her
parent’s estate, consisting of 20 acres of their farm, which occurred in 1854.

Matsumoto notes: A.J. Ward does not appear in the 1856 Iowa census for Spring
Grove Township or for any township within Linn County, Iowa, which suggests that this
is the year that the family traveled to California.

Genealogist Neil Henderson wrote: As a young mother in Iowa, Nancy was once
more a first generation pioneer, just as her parents were in Ohio. As a child, Sylvester A.
Ward crossed the plains and mountains to California in an ox-drawn covered wagon with
his family. An older sister died of malaria along the way, but older brother William
Reece Ward survived along with Sylvester and his parents. By 1857, the Ward family
reached Vallejo, and later Petaluma, California.

Matsumoto wrote: I have it that Abraham and Nancy left Iowa for California in
the late winter or early spring of 1856. The legend that came down in the families of
each of her children is that when she got to California in September and saw green grass
for the first time in months she said, “Not one step farther will I go!” Apparently the trip
was rough and a part of one of the wagon trains to which they had attached themselves
had been attacked by Indians. She also lost a little girl to cholera on the trail.

Her husband Abraham Ward went to work making bricks in Vallejo and she
became the housekeeper for a hotel. We’re not too clear on the chronology after this
point because her kids were always pretty reticent. But by 1860 my great grandfather,
Sylvester Ward, was living in Petaluma with a family from Vermont, to whom he had no obvious attachment. Probably that is where he was apprenticed to the harness maker trade. We can’t find any of the other family members in the census but the census schedules from the most likely county are missing.

Matsumoto informed me that Abraham worked in the brick works in Vallejo for a time after coming to California. Research provided to me by Matsumoto indicates that there was a brick yard in Vallejo in the early 1850’s. It was located near where Tennessee Street ends at the Mare Island Straits. It was probably a small operation and did not last very long. The area is rich in materials used in making brick.

Matsumoto wrote:

In November of 1859 Nancy gave birth to twins: the little boy died immediately but the little girl lived. We don’t know if Abraham was still in the picture by the time of this birth. All indications are that he left the family at about this time. Family legends vary; either he went to the gold fields or he went to the Oregon Territory. Either way, he was never seen or heard from again.

After Abraham moved his family to California he left them in Vallejo and vanished. His two sons, when they died in the 1920’s and 30’s were still wondering about him.

I know that Abraham’s middle initial was J but I don’t know what that stood for. I don’t even know when he was born and I’m guessing at the county in Ohio in which he was born. I know that he was a school teacher and had beautiful handwriting, was musically inclined and at least twice in his life he worked in brickyards.

After a couple of years Nancy went to court and divorced Abraham by testifying that she had no knowledge of his whereabouts. At least that’s what we’re told she did. There are 3 counties in which she could logically have been living at this time but none of them seem to have a record of this divorce. The lack of record in California at this time is no surprise.

On July 18, 1864 she married John Henry Johnston. Her name on the marriage record is Annie Ward. He was a hotel manager and he died 3 years and 2 kids later.

It is recorded in Nancy’s bible that her daughter, Jennie (Rebecca Jane), was born on November 23, 1859 in Petaluma, Sonoma County, California. [Jennie is one of the twins that Matsumoto wrote about in the preceding paragraphs.] Matsumoto wrote: Jennie was most always known as Jane within the family but some newspapers and census records have her name as Jennie. She was born November 23, 1859 in Vallejo, Solano County, California. Her twin brother [may not have been named] died that day.

Jane married Edward Carr on March 4, 1882 in Ferndale, Humboldt County, California and died June 25, 1949 in Eureka, Humboldt County, California.

The children of Abraham and Nancy Ward are:

1. William Reece Ward, born October 5, 1847; died July 11, 1922.
2. Sylvester Americus Ward, born September 25, 1848; died in 1930.
3. A daughter, unknown name and date of birth; died during family move to CA.
5. An infant boy, unknown name, if any, born November 23, 1859; died same day.

What became of Abraham J. Ward is still a mystery. One thing is for certain, he disappeared shortly after arriving in California with his family. As Matsumoto alluded to, stories abound in regard to his disappearance. Wayne Ward, a living descendent of Abraham’s from South Dakota, told me that he believes that Abraham may have gone to the Nome and Sitka, Alaska areas to mine for gold. Wayne believes that Abraham may have died in Alaska. This information is yet unverified. The fact remains, that no one to this day knows what happened to Abraham J. Ward.

Nancy remarried to a John Henry Johnston on July 18, 1864. He was born about the year 1826. John Henry Johnston and Nancy (Reece) Ward are the parents of:


It is recorded in Nancy’s bible that her daughter, Ella Etta Johnston, was born on October 23, 1866 in Pacheco, Contra Costa County, California. Neither Ella, nor her brother Ames, would have had an opportunity to get to know the man that was their father, because he died at an early age.

John Henry Johnston registered his name at a Solano County, California voter’s poll on July 20, 1867. His poll entry lists that he was 41 years old at the time; a hotel keeper; a native of California; and lists his residence as on Georgia Street in Vallejo, California. Shortly after this voter’s poll entry, John Henry Johnston died on November 15, 1867.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that Nancy and her children were living in Vallejo, Solano County, California on July 2, 1870. Nancy’s household at that time included: herself, age 44; son Sylvester Ward, age 21; daughter Rebecca Jane, age 10; son Ames Simpson, age 5; and daughter Etta Ella, age 3. This census recorded that Nancy was born in Ohio; that Sylvester was born in Iowa; and that Rebecca, Ames and Etta were born in California. Sylvester is recorded in this census as a laborer; Rebecca is listed in this census as in school. This census also recorded that two men were living within Nancy’s household at the time of the census. They were: Ray Hudson, age 29, a laborer; and John Falls, age 19, a carpenter. This census recorded that Nancy was ‘keeping house’ at the time of the census, and that her real estate was then valued at $150.

According to Matsumoto, at the time of the 1870 census Nancy was running a boarding house. Her oldest son William is missing from the 1870 census record because he had already moved his new wife to Ferndale, Humbolt County, California. Nancy and the rest of her family would later move that same year to Ferndale according to Matsumoto. Matsumoto informed me that the two individuals named Ray Hudson and John Falls found within Nancy’s household in the 1870 census were boarders.
Matsumoto wrote: Nancy had supported herself and her family as the housekeeper in a hotel after Abraham Ward disappeared. She later married John Henry Johnston, who was a hotel manager. After his death she rented a house and continued to take in boarders.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that Nancy and her family were then living in Ferndale, Humbolt County, California. This census recorded that Nancy’s household then consisted of: herself, age 54; son Ames, age 15; and daughter Etta, age 13. This census recorded that Nancy was then ‘keeping house’ and that Ames and Etta were then at home. This census lists Nancy’s father as being born in North Carolina and her mother as being born in Pennsylvania.

The Humbolt County, California Directory 1893-1899 lists: Mrs. Nancy A. Johnston as a resident of E side, Main N of Shaw Avenue in Ferndale. Nancy is listed in this directory as residing with her granddaughter Zoa Ward; she being the daughter of Nancy’s son Sylvester. Zoa Ward is Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto’s great aunt. According to Matsumoto, the house Nancy resided in during this time was built by her son Sylvester and sold to Nancy when he moved his family to Coos County, Oregon. Ninety years later, according to Matsumoto, this house served as the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce and was later torn down.

At the time of the 1900 U.S. Census, Nancy was living within Ferndale, Humbolt County, California in a home owned by her son-in-law, Fred Cruickshanks. His home was located on Main Street in Ferndale. Fred is listed in the 1900 census as a blacksmith. Fred Cruickshanks’ household at the time of this census included: himself, age 36; wife Ella, age 33; daughter Jessie, age 7; son Reece, age 5; daughter Abigail, age 4; mother-in-law Nancy Ann, age 74; and niece Ethel, age 17. Fred’s wife Ella is Etta Ella, Nancy’s daughter by Johnston. Ethel Ward is the daughter of Sylvester Ward, Nancy’s son, and she would be a grandmother of Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto. This census recorded that Nancy was the mother of 9 children, with 5 living at that time. This census also recorded that Nancy’s father was born in North Carolina, and that her mother was born in Pennsylvania.

According to Matsumoto, at the time of the 1910 U.S. Census, Nancy would have been living in Ferndale, Humboldt County, California in the household of her daughter and son-in-law, Etta Ella and Frederick Cruickshank.

The following article appeared in a paper named the Ferndale Enterprise in May 1912.

"Grandma" Johnston, a pioneer resident of this town, celebrated her 86th birthday last Thursday by taking a ride around the valley and across the river, accompanied by her daughter Mrs. E.B. Carr of Arcata and Mrs. Fred Cruickshanks of Ferndale, Mrs. W.B. Alford also making one of the party. They made a short call at the Samuel’s home at Rohnerville and at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Hill at Alton where a tea was served by the hostess. Mrs. Johnston is quite well for one of her years and has a wonderful memory in regard to pioneer days in this section and the people who have made Humboldt history. She came to California in 1857 and to Humboldt in 1870, making the trip from San Francisco in the old steamer "Pacific".
The following articles were collected by Patricia Dupes-Matsumoto who shared them with me. She copied them from the Eureka, California newspaper. According to Matsumoto, one of Nancy’s daughters was a stringer to the paper and the other was the widow of the owner of a different newspaper. Matsumoto would be referring to Rebecca Jane ‘Jennie’ (Ward) Carr as the widow of the owner; her husband, Edward B. Carr, was the owner of the Ferndale Enterprise newspaper.

HUMBOLT TIMES STANDARD

SEPERATION BY DEATH WAS BRIEF

Mrs. Nancy Johnson of Ferndale received the sad news of the death of her brother and sister in law, who passed away within a few hours of one another recently at their home in Spring Grove Township, Iowa. The brother, David Reece, died at four o’clock in the afternoon and his wife just twenty four hours later. David Reece was born in Highland County, Ohio, December 30, 1823, being at the time of his death over 90 years of age. His wife was 85 years of age.

Mr. Reece had resided in the town where he died since 1851 and had held various offices of trust in his township. The first township election was held in his log cabin and there were just enough voters present to fill the offices. On this occasion Mr. Reece’s hat was used for the ballot box. He was one of the first trustees in the township and afterwards held various other offices.

A double funeral was held in the Spring Grove Church. It had ever been their earnest desire that they might depart this life at the same time, and in this they were not disappointed. There was left to mourn their death, besides Mrs. Johnston of Ferndale, four generations consisting of 8 children, 42 grand children, 80 great-great grandchildren and 3 great-great-great grandchildren, also a host of friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Reece had celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on the 8th of last June (1913).

If I understand Matsumoto correctly, the find of the above newspaper article was an important clue for those researching Nancy (Reece) Ward/Johnston’s genealogy in connecting her with her sibling, David Reece. I find it surprising that news of David and Anna’s deaths was printed in a California newspaper.

HUMBOLT TIMES STANDARD Saturday, February 24, 1917

Mrs. Nancy Johnston a pioneer resident of this section hasn’t been enjoying her usual health these past few days but is reported improving.
**GRANDMA JOHNSTON POORLY.**

"Grandma" Johnston was reported quite poorly Monday. This aged lady is nearing her 91st birthday. A resident of California 60 years and of Humbolt 47 years.

**MRS. E.B. Carr and grandson Thomas Bair of Eureka have been visiting her mother Nancy Johnston and her sister Mrs. F. Cruickshanks and will return to Eureka.**

**Mrs. N. Johnston, more familiarly known as Grandma Johnston, celebrated her 91st birthday Wednesday. This popular pioneer mother has been a resident of this section for 47 years.**

**Fred Cruickshank, proprietor of Ferndale Iron Works, and his wife will leave Saturday for Redding to attend Grand Lodge, Knights of Pythias and Grand Temple, Pythian Sisters next week.**

**“Grandma” Johnston has not been enjoying her usual health the past few days. It is hoped her troubles will be temporary.**

**Fred Cruickshanks, proprietor of Ferndale Ironworks, arrived Monday evening from Redding where he represented the local Knights of Pythias in Grand Lodge and spent a few days in Bay cities enroute for home. Mrs. Fred Cruickshanks arrived home Tuesday evening; called by the serious illness of her aged mother Mrs. Nancy Johnston. Mrs. Cruickshank represented Ferndale Temple, Pythian Sisters in Grand Temple session in Redding and has been at Martinez visiting her niece, Mrs. Jessie Loughead. She was accompanied by Mrs. Loughead, a former well known Ferndale girl.**
Grandma Johnston who has been ill for the past few days is rapidly failing. No hopes of her recovery are entertained. The lady who has been a resident of this section for the past 37 years recently celebrated her 91st birthday.

Nancy (Reece) Ward/Johnston died on May 29, 1917 in Ferndale, Humbolt County, California. She died at the age of 91 years and 13 days; she was lauded as a Ferndale pioneer, with 47 years residence in that California community. Nancy’s obituary identifies William Lewis Reece as her only surviving sibling, living in Greenville, Ohio. Nancy is buried in Ferndale Cemetery, Ferndale, Humbolt County, California.

HUMBOLT TIMES STANDARD Wednesday, May 30, 1917

DEATH OF PIONEER WOMAN OF FERNDALE

Mrs. Nancy Johnston better known as Grandma Johnston passed to her long rest about 5 o’clock Tuesday afternoon at the home of her daughter Mrs. Fred Cruickshanks after only a few days illness. This beloved pioneer who celebrated her 91st birthday on the 16th of the present month, taking an auto ride and in the afternoon having her picture taken in the local studio.

Mrs. Johnston was born in Highland County, Ohio on May 16, 1826; where in 1842 she was married to Mr. Ward and later moving to IA, KS and NE. Coming across the plains to California in 1857 and living for a time in Petaluma and Sacramento. She came to Humbolt in 1870 on the old steamer Pacific which made the trip 2 times each month. After the death of Mr. Ward she was married to Mr. Johnston who answered the final call many years ago. The deceased had been a member of the Methodist Church since she was 13 and was a charter member of the local chapter of the Eastern Star. She is survived by 3 sons and 2 daughters: Sylvester Ward of Kelso, Washington; William Ward of Bakersfield; Ames Johnston of Port Orford, Oregon; Mrs. Jennie Carr of Eureka; Mrs. Etta Cruickshanks of Ferndale; and the following grandchildren: Mrs. Theo Rasmussen of Ridgefield, Washington; Mrs. Charles Payton of Hillsborough, Washington; Mrs. Jessie Loughead of Martinez, California; Miss Ethel Ward, a trained nurse, now at the Presidio serving the government; and Herman Ward of Grand Island, California. The funeral will be held Thursday, Rev A.M. Cates, pastor of the Methodist Church officiating.

HUMBOLT TIMES STANDARD Thursday, May 31, 1917

The funeral of Mrs. Nancy Johnston previously announced for Thursday afternoon has been postponed until 2 pm Friday from the Methodist Church. The lady’s son, William R. Ward of Bakersfield was unable to reach here until Thursday p.m.
DEATH OF MRS. N. A. JOHNSTON

Pioneer Ferndale lady, ripe in years, goes to her final reward, after short illness. Mrs. Nancy A. Johnston, one of Ferndale’s best known and most beloved pioneer women, passed to her final reward last Tuesday afternoon at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Fred Cruickshanks, in this town, where she made her home for many years past. For several days she had been steadily failing and the end came not unexpectedly.

Mrs. Johnston was born in Highland County, Ohio on May 16, 1826 and on the 16th of last month celebrated her 91st birthday. She was in quite good health until a few days before her death and retained her faculties to a marked degree.

She came across the plains by ox team in 1857, at a time when the Indian peril was very real, and it was necessary for guards to be on watch day and night. From these primitive conditions Mrs. Johnston lived to see the era of the automobile and flying machine, and the span of years which her life represented was certainly a remarkable one.

After her arrival in California she lived for some years in Petaluma, but came to Humbolt in 1870 and for the past 47 years had been a resident of Ferndale. She was one of the charter members of the Ferndale Chapter of the Eastern Star of whom there are now only 2 survivors.

Mrs. Johnston was the mother of Mrs. Fred Cruickshanks of Ferndale, Mrs. E.B. Carr of Eureka, W.R. Ward of Bakersfield, S.A. of Kelso, Washington, and A.S. Johnston of Port Orford, Oregon. She is also survived by a brother, W.L. Reece of Greenville, Ohio, 12 grandchildren, and 9 great-great grandchildren.

To the surviving relatives a full measure of sympathy is extended. The funeral will be held this Friday afternoon at 2 p.m. from the Ferndale Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. A.M. Cates officiating.

FUNERAL OF MRS. NANCY A. JOHNSTON

The funeral of the late Mrs. Nancy A. Johnston was held last Friday afternoon from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ferndale and was largely attended by sorrowing friends. The services began at 2 p.m., Rev. A.M. Cates officiating who was assisted by a choir. Many beautiful floral offerings were in evidence. The pallbearers were Ben Marolf, Mark Bugbee, William Trigg, W.B. Alford, W.T. Smith and P.E. Johnson. Interment was in the family lot in the Ferndale Cemetery.

HUMBOLDT TIMES STANDARD Tuesday, June 5, 1917

Mrs. E.B. Carr who has spent the last 2 weeks in Ferndale with her mother, the late Nancy Johnston, has returned home.
The known children of Nancy (Reece) Ward/Johnston and her two husbands are:

2. **Sylvester Americus Ward**, born September 25, 1848; died in 1930.
3. A Ward daughter, unknown name and date of birth; died in family move to CA.
5. An Infant boy Ward, unknown name, born November 23, 1859; died same day.

Nancy is the mother of nine children according to the 1900 U.S. Census. It is reported that a daughter of Nancy and Abraham Ward’s died in the family move from Iowa to California. Her name and order of birth in relation to her siblings is unknown. The addition of two more children beyond the seven listed above would make Nancy a mother of nine. Other than the 1900 U.S. Census record, I have not found any other sources describing Nancy as being the mother of any other children beyond the seven described to this point.
Rebecca 'Jennie' Jane (Ward) Carr
Henry Reece, known to everybody as Uncle Henry, was born on August 8, 1829 in Highland County, Ohio. He would have been born in Paint Township, probably on a farm owned by his parents along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek.

Henry would have been one year or less in age at the time of the 1830 U.S. Census. At that time he and his parents were residing within Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. Census records tell us that Henry's father's household in 1830 was comprised of 11 individuals. In 1830, the household of William Rees, Henry's father, would have included himself, his wife Rebecca and their children including Henry.

At approximately three years of age, in the year of 1833, Henry moved with his parents and siblings from Highland to Allen County, Ohio. Henry and his siblings would have spent their childhood years living with their parents in the Ohio counties of Highland and Allen. Shortly after arriving in Allen County, Henry lost his mother during his early childhood. Henry appears to have been about 4-5 years old when his mother died.

Henry and his siblings likely helped their parents make a living through farming when the family resided in Highland and Allen counties. Henry and his siblings probably started working while quite young on the family farm.

Henry, no doubt, acquired most of his education at a country school(s) near his childhood home in Allen County, Ohio. Henry would have attended school near the farm
that his parent’s homestead in 1833 within Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Henry more than likely would have attended school with his siblings.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1840, Henry appears to have been living within his father’s household. In addition to Henry, this household would have then included Henry’s father, stepmother and four of Henry’s siblings. The family resided within section 33 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio at the time of this census. They no doubt were then residing on the family farm that was purchased in 1833.

Unfortunately, the census of 1840 did not record the names of the individuals that then resided within the household of William Reece, Henry’s father; nor did it record how they were related to one another. This census record lists a male between 10-15 years of age as then residing within the household of William Reece. Henry would have been approximately 11 years old in 1840 when this census was taken. I believe that Henry Reece was the 10-15 year old boy listed within William Reece’s household in the 1840 census.

The majority of Henry Reece’s childhood years were spent in Allen County, Ohio; certainly on his parent’s 160 acre farm. Henry subsequently grew to manhood in his native state of Ohio. At some point between 1840 and 1850, Henry left his parent’s home to start out on his own.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that on August 8, 1850, that the household of Benjamin Hiatt Reece, Henry’s brother, lived within the town of Van Wert, Van Wert County, Ohio. As recorded by this census, Benjamin Reece’s household on August 8, 1850 consisted of: himself, age 30; Ann, age 21; Alice, age 2; and Henry Reece, age 20. This census did not record how these individuals were related to Benjamin, the head of the household, but one can safely assume that Ann was Benjamin’s wife; Alice was their daughter; and that Henry would have been Benjamin’s brother.

The 1850 census recorded that Benjamin was a merchant, and that Henry was a laborer at the time of this census. Henry was probably working as a farmer laborer at the time. For whatever reason, Henry appears to have been living with his brother Benjamin at least two years prior to Henry’s eventual marriage.

One of Henry’s biographical histories reads that he was twenty years old when his father died. In actuality, Henry would have been 21 when his father died on September 20, 1850. Henry’s stepmother, Mary, died on April 25, 1851 when he was still 21. It is very likely that Henry was living with his brother Benjamin when their father died. Henry may have also been residing with Benjamin when their stepmother died. It is not known how long Henry resided with Benjamin.

At the age of 22, Henry married Miss Lucretia Nash in Allen County, Ohio on August 5, 1852. Lucretia was born on October 12, 1831 in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. She is the daughter of John and Jane (Boyle) Nash. John was born in Virginia and Jane was born in Pennsylvania. John and Jane Nash are the parents of:

1. **Mary (Nash) Norris**, born February 3, 1815; she married Thomas Norris; he died on July 11, 1906. He is buried in Troy Mills Cemetery.
2. **Anne (Nash) Reece**, born in 1829; she married Henry Reece’s brother, Benjamin.
3. **Thomas Nash**; he married Augusta; he died December 23, 1902 in Lima, Ohio.
7. Lucretia (Nash) Reece, born October 12, 1831.
8. Arthur Nash; he married Julia.
9. Harry Nash; he never married.

Four years prior to Henry Reece’s marriage to Lucretia Nash, her sister Anne married Henry’s brother Benjamin. Benjamin Reece and Ann Nash were married on March 9, 1848 in Allen County, Ohio.

Lucretia and Anne Nash were both born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Shortly after Lucretia’s birth in 1831, she would have accompanied her parents and siblings in the family move from Fayette County, Pennsylvania to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Lucretia and Ann’s father, John Nash, owned land within section 28 of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio in 1833. Henry Reece’s father, William, was listed as a landowner in 1833 in section 33 of Jackson Township, which would have been in close proximity to the land owned by John Nash in section 28. I believe that the family of John and Jane Nash resided near Henry Reece’s parents when Henry first came to Jackson Township in 1833 with his parents. The 1834 Jackson Township tax roll includes, in part, Thomas Nash and our William Reece. Thomas Nash may be a brother to John Nash. William Reece and Thomas Nash subsequently became two of the first three trustees of Jackson Township.

It certainly appears that members of the Nash and Reece families knew one another for many years from their residency in or near Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; thus explaining how the daughters of John Nash met and subsequently married the sons of William Reece.

John Nash was born in Virginia and later immigrated to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. John Nash and William Reece, Henry’s father, were early pioneers of Jackson Township. John and his wife Jane were farmers in or near section 33 of Jackson Township. Specifically, it appears that the Nash farm was located in section 28 of the township. The Nash farm would have been located near the farm owned by Henry’s parents in section 33.

John and Jane Nash undoubtedly knew the parents of Henry Reece. This is demonstrated, in part, by the fact that when Henry’s father died on September 20, 1850, John Nash became one of the appraisers of William Reece’s estate.

As recorded by the 1850 U.S. Census, on July 29, 1850, the household of John Nash resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio and consisted of: John, age 54, a farmer; Jane, age 44; Margaret, age 23; Lucretia, age 19; Thomas, age 16; Mary, age 10; William, age 8; Martha, age 6; and Rachel Nash, age 4. Jane Nash and the children listed in this census record were all born in Pennsylvania according to this census. All of these children appear to be John and Jane’s.

The 1850 U.S. Census record helps demonstrate how Henry Reece and his brother Benjamin ended up marrying sisters Lucretia and Anne Nash. Henry and Benjamin
would have spent their childhoods growing up on their parent’s farm, and during that time they were neighbors to the Nash family. Henry, Benjamin, Lucretia and Anne would have known one another throughout their childhood years; thus explaining how the couples eventually married.

At the time of the U.S. Census of 1850, Lucretia Nash was living with her parents in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; apparently on a farm that they owned. As recorded by this census, Lucretia’s father’s real estate, which we can assume was a farm, at the time of this census was valued at $2,000. At the time of this census Lucretia lived near, and was actually neighbors to, the farm owned and operated by William Reece and his family. Two years after this census Lucretia married William’s son Henry.

John Nash. The father of Lucretia (Nash) Reece.

Henry appears to have been living in or near Allen County, Ohio during the mid 1840’s and early 1850’s when his siblings: Nancy, Mary, and David, left Ohio and settled in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Henry’s sister Mary died shortly after settling in Spring Grove; she died on August 29, 1852. Mary died just 24 days after Henry and Lucretia married.
This is a tin-type photo of a young Henry Reece

This is a tin-type photo of a young Lucretia (Nash) Reece
Henry and Lucretia started a family at the ages of 23 and 21 respectively, when she gave birth to their first child, Ether Hiatt Reece, on April 20, 1853 in Allen County Ohio. Ether’s obituary reads that he was born in Allen County. This obituary, along with other sources, leads me to believe that Henry and Lucretia were living in Allen County from the time they married up until shortly after Ether’s birth.

Lucretia had lived for some time in Ohio prior to her and Henry’s subsequent move to Iowa. Henry and Lucretia left Allen County, Ohio and moved to Iowa, then known as the “Far West,” in 1853. Henry and Lucretia would have left Allen County shortly after the birth of their son Ether. It appears that Henry, Lucretia and Ether came to Iowa together, undoubtedly by wagon, and probably in a wagon train. That must have been quite a journey with a new born baby to look after.

According to historian Isaac Holman, Henry Reece settled in section 2 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa in 1853. An article written regarding the 50th wedding anniversary of Henry and Lucretia’s son, William Weston Reece, reads that his parents bought their farm for $1.25 per acre in 1853, when Franklin Pierce was president. A 1901 biography of Henry Reece found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901, reads that he came to Spring Grove at the age of 25, which would have been the year of 1854. Lucretia’s obituary reads that she and Henry moved to Iowa in 1854. I believe that these references to 1854 as the date to when Henry and Lucretia came to Spring Grove are incorrect. Huldah (Reece) Kincade, who was a granddaughter to Henry’s brother David, wrote that Henry came to Spring Grove in the year of 1853.

Henry and his brother David both appear to have been members of The Old Settlers Association. This organization’s membership consisted of early settlers of Linn County and the surrounding area. Both David and Henry are listed in a publication of this organization as old settlers; presumably they held membership in this organization as well. Henry and Lucretia are listed in one publication of The Old Settlers Association as having settled near Troy Mills in 1854. I do not know if this is a reference to the year that Henry and Lucretia actually settled in the area or when their membership in the organization began; either way, I still believe that they settled near Troy Mills in 1853.

Henry and Lucretia were probably greeted enthusiastically by his brother David, his sister Nancy, and their respective families, when they arrived in Spring Grove from Ohio in 1853. Their sister, Mary (Reece) Church, had resided in the area as well prior to Henry and Lucretia’s arrival, but just prior to their arrival here, Mary died in August 1852. Upon coming to Spring Grove, Henry and Lucretia started a new life out of the Iowa prairie, as his siblings had done and were doing by the time of his arrival.

Upon their arrival in Linn County, Iowa, Henry and Lucretia Reece settled in section 2 of Spring Grove Township; having previously purchased 80 acres of wild land in Spring Grove through his brother David, who came here in 1851. Henry’s purchase was located 3 miles east of Troy Mills, Iowa, which was established in 1853, the year of Henry and Lucretia’s arrival to Spring Grove.

On Henry’s arrival to the township, there were but a few families in the township or section of the country. Soon after arriving in the township, Henry commenced the development of his farm. He placed the land under cultivation and erected thereon good and substantial buildings. Henry’s farm was located a short distance west of his brother David’s farm later known as the Hickory Grove Farm. Upon settling on section 2 of
Spring Grove Township, Henry and Lucretia lived here on their farm for the remainder of their lives.

Lucretia’s sister, Mary (Nash) Norris, at some point moved to the Troy Mills area as did Lucretia. Whether or not Mary came to the Troy Mills area with her husband Thomas is unknown. It is possible that Mary may have accompanied Henry and Lucretia to the Troy Mills area in the same wagon train.

On January 18, 1854, for the sum of $275, Henry acquired his brother David’s estate title interest to a one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of their late parent’s 160-acre farm in the northwest corner of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio; this being their childhood home. Henry’s father and stepmother died during the years of 1850 and 1851 respectively. Upon their deaths, Henry and his siblings acquired a one-eighth equal title interest to the 160 acre family farm, which their parents homesteaded in 1833 upon moving to Allen County from Highland County, Ohio.

On April 17, 1854, for the sum of $275, Henry acquired his brother Benjamin’s estate title interest to an undivided one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of their parent’s farm in Allen County, Ohio. Also, on April 17, 1854, for the sum of $275, Henry acquired his brother William L. (Lewis) Reece’s estate title interest to his undivided one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of the NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. At the time, William L. Reece was a resident of Allen County, Ohio.

On April 24, 1854, for the sum of $150, Henry acquired from his sister Nancy and her husband Abraham Ward, their title interest to a one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of the NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

On June 13, 1854, Stephen Klingaman, acting as administrator of the late Alfred Reece estate, sold a one-eighth undivided equal part (20 acres) of the NW¼ of Section 33, Township 3 South (Jackson Township), Range 8 East within Allen County, Ohio, to our Henry Reece for $195. This sell was subject to the dower estate of Mary Reece, the wife of the late Alfred Reece. [Under old English law the widow was entitled to one-third of her husband’s estate.] Alfred and Mary Reece are a brother and sister-in-law to Henry Reece. Alfred Reece, like his siblings, acquired a one-eighth equal title interest to their late parent’s farm in Allen County, Ohio. Upon Alfred’s death in the early 1850’s, Stephen Klingaman, acting as estate administrator, sold this one-eighth title interest to Henry Reece to settle Alfred’s affairs.

On April 2, 1855, Henry was elected to the position of Spring Grove Township Clerk. A public record of the Linn County Commissioners reads: Be it remembered that on the 7th day of April 1855, comes Henry Reece who was on the 2nd day of April 1855 duly elected Township Clerk of Spring Grove in Linn County, Iowa; he files herein his bond and is duly qualified as such according to law. Henry went on to hold this office for many years.

During the same election of April 2, 1855, Henry’s brother David was also elected to public office. On that day, David was elected to the position of Linn County Justice of the Peace. Like Henry, David also appeared before the Linn County Commissioners to file his bond and to accept his appointment on April 7, 1855.

Linn County Commissioner records also recorded that Henry was elected Spring Grove Township Clerk during an election held on April 7, 1856. On April 9, 1856,
Henry filed a bond, was found by the commissioners to be duly qualified to be such township clerk, and took the oath of office as prescribed by law.

Henry was 26 years of age when Lucretia, age 23, gave birth to their second child, Rebecca Jane Reece, on August 19, 1855 at Troy Mills, Iowa. Friends and family called her Janie. All of Rebecca’s siblings were born in the vicinity of Troy Mills. In all likelihood, Rebecca, along with her siblings, were all probably born at their parent’s farm home in section 2 of Spring Grove Township.

The Spring Grove Township census of 1856 recorded that the household of Henry Reece then consisted of: Henry, age 27; wife Lucretia, age 24; son Hiatt, age 3, Newton, age 10; and Alice, age 6. Newton would be: Newton S. Reece, the son of Henry’s brother Alfred. Newton lived with his aunt and uncle, Henry and Lucretia Reece, for at least 4 years, possibly longer. I speculate that Newton went to live with Henry and Lucretia because his father had recently died and Newton was left needing a home. Alice, age 6, found in this census record would be: Alice Jane Reece, the daughter of Henry’s brother Benjamin. For an undetermined amount of time, Henry and Lucretia raised Benjamin Reece’s daughters, Alice Jane and Agnes Ida Reece. Benjamin evidently needed helping raising his daughters when his wife died; this would explain why his daughters are reported to have been raised by Henry and Lucretia.

Henry was 29 when Lucretia, age 27, gave birth to their third child, Arthur Lewis Reece, on November 2, 1858 east of Troy Mills.

A great-grandson of Henry Reece’s, a Cedar Rapids, Iowa resident by the name of Bernard Reece, told me that his father, Curtis Harlan Reece, the son of William Weston Reece, told him that at some point after arriving in Spring Grove that Henry walked to Dubuque, Iowa to register his 80-acre purchase from his brother David. Henry’s purchase would have been recorded with the land office located in Dubuque. Bernard also told me that the impression that he got from his father’s stories was that David also accompanied Henry in walking to Dubuque to register their homesteads. It is approximately 40 miles from where Henry and David lived to the town of Dubuque. That would have been quite a walk. One would think that they would have been able to find a horse somewhere to make that journey.

A published 1953 newspaper article regarding the 65th wedding anniversary of William Weston Reece, the youngest child of Henry and Lucretia, reads that William’s uncle walked from Spring Grove to Dubuque to register the 80 acre farm in 1853. This article reference to his uncle would be a reference to Henry’s brother David. The article reference to 80 acres must be the 80 acres that David sold to Henry upon his arrival in Spring Grove in 1853.

After Henry’s initial 80-acre purchase from his brother, he subsequently bought an additional 30 acres of timber in Spring Grove, and Henry’s entire holdings at that time amounted to 120 acres. These 30 acres of timber appear to have been purchased in 1855 through his brother David and his wife Kittorah; the land being located in section 12 of Spring Grove Township. Henry also bought other land and at one time owned two hundred acres, which were described as all well improved with exception of the timber tract.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that the Henry Reece household of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa then consisted of: Henry, age
30, a farmer, born in Ohio; wife Lucretia, age 37, born in Pennsylvania; son Hyatt, age 7; daughter Rebecca, age 5; son Lewis A., age 3; Newton S., age 15; and Alice J., age 11. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa with the exception of Hyatt, Newton S. and Alice J., all born in Ohio. This census is incorrect in listing Lucretia’s age as then being 37; she would have actually been 28 years old at the time of this census. Again, the Newton S. Reece and Alice J. Reece listed in this census record are Henry’s nephew and niece.

Henry and Lucretia’s fourth child, Mary ‘Lennie’ Linnabell Reece, was born on November 16, 1864. I believe that Mary was more than likely born east of Troy Mills on her parent’s farm in section 2.

Henry was 38 when Lucretia, age 36, gave birth to their fifth and youngest child, William Weston Reece, on July 28, 1868. William was born at his parent’s farm; and like his siblings, he was reared on the farm. William Weston attended the Lower Spring Grove Country School, as did his sister Rebecca Jane. It is likely that their siblings also attended the same school. This school was apparently located near the farm of David Reece, their uncle, in or near Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa.

Henry and Lucretia Reece are the parents of:

1. Ether Hiatt Reece, born April 20, 1853; died January 20, 1933.
2. Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton, born August 19, 1855; died November 27, 1875.
3. Arthur Lewis Reece, born November 2, 1858; died February 14, 1911.

Militia records of Linn County, Iowa recorded that at the age of 38, Henry Reece was a militia member; as was his brother David. These records tell us that the pioneers of northern Linn County created a civil defense network (militia) of able bodied men, much like our modern day National Guard. These militia records do not indicate how long Henry was a member of the militia. These records also recorded that Henry was also a militia member at the age of 42.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that the Henry Reece household of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa then consisted of: Henry, age 40, a farmer; wife Lucretia, age 38, ‘keeping house’; son Ethan, age 17; daughter Rebecca, age 14; son Arthur, age 12; daughter Mary, age 5; and son William, age 1. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa, but I am sure that Ethan (Ether) was born in Allen County, Ohio. This census recorded that Henry’s real estate was then valued at $2,600. It also recorded that his personal property was then valued at $250.

Henry Reece lived in close proximity to a John B. Walton, who would have been his uncle. John would have been a brother to Henry’s stepmother Mary. John had a farm near Troy Mills; he died on May 10, 1869; his farm was subsequently sold at public auction. On November 28, 1870, Henry Reece, being the highest bidder, bought 40 acres of the Walton estate in Section 2, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, which was near Henry’s farm. Henry later went on to become the executor of John B. Walton’s
estate. John B. Walton, as did others, came from Ohio and settled near Troy Mills, Iowa. John appears to have resided near Lafayette, Ohio, which is the vicinity where Henry grew up and where his parents lived. The Waltons followed the same migration as did the Reeces from Ohio to Troy Mills, Iowa.

Henry was 46 when his oldest daughter, Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton, died on November 27, 1875 at the age of 20 years, 3 months and 3 days. She appears to have died in or near Troy Mills, Iowa.

Rebecca ‘Janie’ Reece married William ‘Bill’ Henry Peyton, the son of Lorenzo Dow Peyton and Sarah Hart, on May 16, 1874 in Linn County, Iowa. Bill was born on March 21, 1852 near Tipton, Iowa. Bill and Janie were married for one year, six months, and eleven days at the time of her death. As told to me by Daphane Hoover, her great-aunt stated that Rebecca died during childbirth and that her baby also died. The belief that she died during childbirth is substantiated by other sources; however, at least one source states that Rebecca died of pneumonia. Rebecca and her baby are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton

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William 'Bill' and Janie (Reece) Peyton
This is the monument marking the grave of Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. This photo was taken on February 25, 2006. Notice the area where a picture once would have been placed atop the stone.
The 1878 directory of Linn County, Iowa listed Henry Reece as then a farmer in Section 2, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This would have been the farm that Henry and Lucretia homesteaded in 1853.

The 1878 directory describes Henry as then the owner of 170 acres valued at $25 per acre. This directory listed Henry's address at that time as P.O. Box Troy Mills. This directory reads that Henry took an active part in educational interests of the township of Spring Grove. By 1878, according to the directory, Henry had been secretary of the board of education for many years and then director. This directory reads that in earlier days, Henry was engaged in teaching, but does not go into detail. I do not know the full extent to which Henry was involved in teaching. Henry may have taught school in a local schoolhouse near his farm as his brother David did. This directory reads that by 1878, Henry, as a Republican, held the office of town (sic, township?) clerk for the previous 18 years, besides two terms a year earlier; had also been trustee one term, and justice of the peace one year. This directory describes Henry as having cast his vote in his early life with the Whig Party. Henry is described in this directory as having been an active supporter of the Republican Party since its organization. This directory lists Henry and his wife Lucretia as then members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Spring Grove. This directory lists Henry as then being a neighbor to his nephew, Abram Ward Reece, the son of his brother David. In addition, Henry is also listed in this directory as then being a neighbor to his brother David.

By 1878, Henry and Lucretia would have been attending Sunday services at the Spring Grove Church, which was located a short distance east of their farm. They probably attended church there regularly for many years.

On January 25, 1880, Henry and Lucretia’s two year old granddaughter, Mary Jane Reece, the daughter of their son Hiatt and his wife Rachel, fell backward into a pail of scalding water as her mother was preparing to mop the floor. According to one source, Mary was so badly scalded that she lived only 24 hours. Mary died the next day, January 26, 1880. Mary Jane is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Her grave stone reads: MARY JANE, daughter of E.H. and Rachel Reece, died January 26, 1880, aged 2 years, 7 months, and 24 days. Mary Jane shares a stone with her aunt, Mary Linnabell Reece.

Henry and Lucretia surely attended Mary Jane’s burial at Lower Spring Grove.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that on June 25, 1880, that the Henry Reece household of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa then consisted of: Henry, age 50; wife Lucretia, age 48; son Arthur, age 22; daughter Mary B., age 15; son Willie, age 11; daughter-in-law Rachel, age 22; and granddaughter Myrta Reece, age 1. Their occupations were listed in this census as: Henry a farmer, Lucretia a housekeeper, Arthur a farmer, Mary at home, Willie in school, and Rachel a housekeeper. I believe that Henry and Lucretia’s daughter-in-law, Rachel, age 22, moved into her father and mother-in-law’s home with her baby Myrta, age 1, because Rachel evidently had a falling out, or was in the process of going through a divorce, with Henry and Lucretia’s son, Hiatt. It is speculated that Hiatt and Rachel divorced because of the tragic event which resulted in the death of their daughter, Mary Jane, in January 1880.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that Henry’s father was born in South Carolina and that his mother was born in Pennsylvania. I have yet to find any evidence to support this. This census also lists Lucretia’s parents as having both been born in Pennsylvania.
This photo of Henry Reece was taken at Marion, Iowa.
This photo of Lucretia Reece was taken at Marion, Iowa.
This photo of Lucretia was taken at Marion, Iowa.
Henry and Lucretia Reece were members of the local Methodist Protestant Church of Spring Grove. Henry and his brother David helped organize the Spring Grove Church, which was built in 1882 on land that David donated. The church today is located just east of David’s house, which still stands. Henry was converted when about 18 years of age and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but on coming to Iowa he joined the Methodist Protestant Church. Henry was a devoted Sunday school worker and had been superintendent of the Spring Grove Sunday school association. Lucretia at an early age converted to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Lucretia’s obituary states that in 1854, after moving to Linn County, she transferred her membership to the Methodist Protestant Church. A 1901 biography of Henry and Lucretia, found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901, describes them at that time as members of the Methodist Protestant Church (Spring Grove Church).

On September 11, 1882, Henry and Lucretia’s youngest daughter, Mary Linnabell Reece, died at the age of 17 years, 9 months, and 25 days, after becoming ill with measles. Mary joined the Methodist Church at the age of 14. When she became ill, she told her parents she was going home to that city above, where she would wait for them. She wasted away and died six months later. Mary is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

The following is Mary Linnabell’s obituary which ran in a local Troy Mills paper.
REECE—Mary, daughter of Henry and Lucretia Reece, was born November 16, 1865 [sic], and died September 11, 1882, aged sixteen [sic] years, nine months and twenty-six days. Mary was converted and joined the Methodist Protestant Church in the winter of 1880, and was a consistent Christian and a faithful member of the church. Her constancy was apparent to all. We miss Mary in all our social gatherings, but most of all in the Sabbath-school and meeting; her voice we no more hear singing in the congregation, but we believe that her voice will be heard in the heavenly choir. Her illness was long protracted. She was taken down with the measles on March 22nd, and being constitutionally weak lunged, ultimately they became the seat of disease, and for nearly six months she gradually wasted away. Everything that could be done for her was done, but all to no purpose. It was the voice of Jesus saying, “It is enough; come up higher.” Her parents, who stood over her day and night for many weeks, were much consoled when she told them that she was going home to that city above, where she would await their arrival. Her funeral was largely attended, no less than forty teams being in attendance. The funeral sermon was preached by the writer from Psalm XC. 12

-----M.H. Noe. [Rev. M.H. Noe was a neighbor to, and certainly a family friend of, Henry and Lucretia Reece.]

The following notice pertaining to Linnabell’s death ran in a paper titled the Independence Buchanan County Journal.

Reece—Miss Mary Reece, who had been very low with consumption for several months, died last Sunday night. The funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Noe on Tuesday following. The Independence Buchanan County Journal, September 22, 1882.

The preceding notice mentioned that Linnabell had been very low with consumption. Consumption was another name for Tuberculosis. It is my understanding that the victims of consumption, more or less, appeared to be consumed by it, hence the name.
This is a tin-type photo of Mary Linnabell Reece.
This monument in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery marks the graves of Mary Linnabell Reece and her niece, Mary Jane Reece. This photo was taken on February 25, 2006. This is the west side of the monument. The south side of this monument is inscribed with Mary Jane's name as is seen in the next photo.
A Walker, Iowa newspaper noted that Henry and Lucretia completed their new home on their farm in 1883. Henry and Lucretia lived on their farm east of Troy Mills for approximately 55 years. During those years, Henry and Lucretia were neighbors to Henry's brother David and his family. Henry and Lucretia lived for a short time in close proximity to his sister, Nancy (Reece) Ward, prior to her move to California with her family. Henry and Lucretia also lived in close proximity to the husband and descendents of Henry's late sister, Mary (Reece) Church, who died prior to Henry's arrival to the Troy Mills area.

The 1885 Iowa Census recorded that the Henry Reece household then included: Henry, age 56, a farmer; wife Lucretia, age 53; son Arthur L., age 27; daughter-in-law Rosetta, age 19; and son William Weston, age 16. Rosetta is the wife of Arthur Lewis Reece. I would imagine that at the time of this census, that both sons, Arthur and William, were helping their father farm the old Reece homestead.

Henry and Lucretia's son: Arthur Lewis Reece
According to one source, Henry Reece farmed his old homestead the greater portion of his life, a total of 26 years. As Henry became aged, he turned over the farm to his son, William Weston Reece, who later secured the entire estate by buying out the other heirs. William was born on his parent’s farm in 1868, which was thirteen years after his parents settled upon the homestead. William spent a greater portion of his life on the home farm. William took charge of the farm when he was 21 years old, which would have been the year of 1889. In 1911, William lived on and farmed his parent’s old homestead; at that time, William owned a total of 164 acres in Spring Grove Township. Will and his wife Bessie improved the farm, built a new barn, wind mill and granary. According to descendant Bernard Reece, William moved off the family farm that his parents originally homesteaded in 1853, when William lost it in 1929. I assume that William lost the farm due to the Great Depression.

The old Henry Reece homestead can be found today at 5853 Dix Road, Coggon, Iowa. To get there, drive east from the main intersection in Troy Mills on the Coggon Road for 3 miles, then turn north onto Dix Road. The first farm on the east side of Dix Road is where Henry and Lucretia lived. Their house is no longer there; although, there is a home there now that I assume is in the location where the old Henry Reece homestead once sat.

Politically, in the early years Henry was a member of the Whig Party. He became an active supporter of the Republican Party when it was organized. Soon after coming to Linn County, he was elected township clerk, and so acceptably did he fill that office that he was constantly re-elected and served for the long period of thirty-two consecutive years. He also served as township trustee, justice of the peace, and school director. Henry appears to have been the township clerk from 1859 to 1891. It is recorded that Henry was a justice of the peace of Linn County, Iowa in the year of 1865; he was certainly a justice in other years as well.

On a December 17th day in the 1890’s (probably 1896), the weather being unfavorable, friends and neighbors came in buggies and wagons to the home of Henry and Lucretia Reece to give them a surprise party. They gathered upon their house and yard to thank him for his 37 years of public service. The Troy Mills cornet band played and a dinner were held on the property. One of the band members very likely included Henry’s nephew, Curtis David Reece. The following is a local Troy Mills newspaper article describing the event. The article reads as follows:

December 17th is a day long to be remembered by the many that gathered at the house of Henry Reece and his estimable wife. Although the weather was unfavorable, yet the people came in buggies and wagons until there was a large crowd formed in line headed by the Troy Mills cornet band, which began playing as they marched and took possession of the house and yard, which the host and hostess were quite willing that they should, a general hand shake prevailed, and everyone was talking, they seemed to be trying to see who could talk the most.

The tables were soon spread by willing hands, when the band struck up a lively air, followed by the presentation speech by Rev. Bolton. He said, “It is good to have such social gatherings, especially here in Iowa or we would not be as social as we ought without them. We as a token of respect, to a citizen, friend and neighbor and as an
official for 37 years, make him this present.” During which time Mrs. Reece had cooked 57 dinners for the officiary, which they felt it a pleasure to show their respect for. Two years ago, he said, the party to which Mr. Reece belonged placed another on the ticket in his stead, but when the people come to the polls they began to cry, 'where's Reece' 'where's Reece' and enough voted for him to elect Mr. Reece to his old position. We present this book case and writing desk combined, as tokens of respect, and this rocking chair to Mrs. Reece, and if there is anybody in the county who is worthy of it, she is Mrs. Reece.

Mr. Reece's response is very impressive. He said: “I can not express the thanks I feel for this social gathering from friends and kindred.” He had only to hope they were deserving, and in regard to the election referred to he had sometimes been sorry that he had ever allowed his name, put on the ticket for he believed that Mr. Martin would have filled the office with credit. He only consented as Mr. Martin was left without a companion at that time and he might not remain in the country. He hoped he had not, by word or deed, done anything that would mar any person's feelings.

There was a surplus of $18.50 which was presented to Rev. Bolton by Dr. Wilson. The worthy gentleman responded with: “Friends and brethren, I thank you, indeed I do thank you.” There were 175 persons who took dinner. A few hours were spent socially, then they went home, feeling it was a day well spent.

Signed: One who was there.

Henry and Lucretia wrote a response to the event described above which was published in a local Troy Mills newspaper. It reads as follows:

We take this method of further expressing our gratitude to the many friends who so unexpectedly came in upon us the 17th. We acknowledge the surprise a perfect one, almost as if a cyclone had come down upon us from a clear sky, encircling us with its whirl, yet leaving us at the same place, scarcely known from whence it came or whither it went. But unlike in effect, not bearing any destructive element, but moved by the power of social affection, not scattering or carrying away, but uniting and leaving the stronger bonds of friendship. And we will ever keep a welcome place by our fireside and a warmer place in our hearts for the boys of the Troy cornet band, who, almost within our dooryard, gave us the first knowledge of the so well arranged surprise and also gave us some fine music during the day.

We are specially thankful for the valuable presents left with us, and, although in the presentation reference was made to the appreciation of our long service as a township official, we claim no reward in that respect. All that we have done in that capacity was but duty in filling the position entrusted to us. But we are convinced that there was a nobler thought, a higher motive in it, the manifestation of that friendship which is one of the richest blessing of life, and if in the reception of and in consideration of such exhibitions of friendship tears did unbidden start, think it not unmanly, not unwomanly. If in grief there is relief in tears, may it not be so in joy? Be assured these presents will ever be cherished as mementos made doubly dear in view of the source from
which they came—remembered as tokens of friendship and esteem, and in the future to retain that friendship unbroken and undiminished shall be our chief aim and desire.

-----Henry and Lucretia Reece

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that on June 18, 1900, that Henry and Lucretia were still residing upon their original homestead. However, by this time the farm was under the charge of their son, William Weston Reece. There were actually two homes on Henry and Lucretia’s old homestead at the time of this census; one for Henry and Lucretia, the other for William Weston and his family. This census recorded that on June 18, 1900, that Henry’s household consisted of: Henry, age 70, born in August 1829 in Ohio; and his wife Lucretia, age 68, born in October 1831 in Pennsylvania. This census recorded that Henry and Lucretia had been married for 47 years. This census recorded that Lucretia was the mother of 5 children, with 3 living at the time. Those three children living at the time were her sons: Hiatt, Arthur, and William. Lucretia’s two children that had passed away by the time of this census were her daughters: Rebecca and Mary. This census record lists Henry’s father as being born in Virginia, and his mother as being born in Ohio. My research leads me to believe that Henry’s father was born in Virginia; however, I am certain that his mother was not born in Ohio.

The household that Henry and Lucretia lived next to on their old homestead at the time of the 1900 census was headed by their son, William W. Reece, age 31; his household then consisted of his wife Elizabeth, age 31; daughter Mary, age 11; son Charles P., age 7; son Curtis H., age 6; and William M., age 17. This William M. would be my great-grandfather, William Willie Milton Reece. Willie’s relationship to the head of the household, William W. Reece, is listed as that of servant in this census record. Willie’s occupation is listed as that of farm laborer in this census record. From this census record, we know that Willie was a farm laborer on the farm of William Weston Reece at the time of this census. This census recorded that William Weston Reece owned his farm, free of any mortgage.

The 1900 U.S. Census also recorded that on June 18, 1900, that the households of Henry and William W. Reece then resided in close proximity to a farm that was being operated and rented by Hiatt and Angeline Reece. Hiatt Reece is Henry’s son and a brother to William W. Reece. Hiatt and Angeline are the stepfather and mother of my great-grandfather, William Milton Reece. Hiatt Reece’s household on June 18, 1900 consisted of: himself, age 47; wife Evangeline, age 42; and daughter Maud, age 14.

Henry was 71 years of age when his 80-year-old brother Benjamin died on May 1, 1901. Henry and his 77-year-old brother David attended Benjamin’s funeral service, which was held on Friday afternoon, May 3, 1901, from Benjamin’s residence on Main Street in Anamosa, Iowa. Benjamin was later buried at Riverside Cemetery in Anamosa.

A 1901 biographical history of Henry’s, found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901, reads that he and his wife were the parents of five children, namely: Ether H., who married Mrs. Reece, the widow of his cousin; Arthur Lewis, who married Rosa Peyton; William Weston, who married Bess Shaffer; and Rebecca J. and Mary L., both deceased at the time.
Henry Reece died two months after his brother Benjamin passed away. Henry died on July 25, 1901. All indications are that he died a natural death. Henry died on the farm that he homesteaded in section 2 some 47 years prior to his death. Henry is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

The following is Henry's obituary which ran in a local Troy Mills paper.

Henry Reece, formerly known to everybody as Uncle Henry, was born in Highland County, Ohio, August 8, 1829, and died July 25, 1901, being 71 years, 11 months and 17 days old. He moved to Allen County, Ohio with his parents in 1833, where he resided until he was 25 years old, when he moved to Iowa, then known as the "far west." He was joined in marriage to Lucretia Nash August 5, 1852. To this union were given five children, three sons and two daughters. The daughters both passed on before the father, leaving the widow and sons to mourn their loss.

He was converted when about eighteen years of age and united with the M. E. church, but on coming to Iowa cast his lot with the Methodist Protestant church, of which he remained a consistent and useful member until he died. Uncle Henry was universally esteemed by those who knew him for his moral worth and Christian integrity, consistent in life, a good neighbor, a kind father, a loving husband and above all seeking to honor Christ "He being dead yet speaketh." He was a devoted Sunday school worker and had been superintendent of the Spring Grove Sunday School association and will be greatly missed in all this work he loved so well.

His death was triumphant. He realized from the first that this was his final summons and set his house in order with calmness and joy. He gave charge to his sons and exhorted them to serve their father's God. Likewise to his grandchildren and relatives with the loving neighbors who were present. He called in all old neighbors and brothers in Christ, to sing the songs of the long ago, joining in with feeble voice when he could. Glimpses were given him of the glory world and of loved ones gone before and so triumphing over hell and the grave and exulting in joy unspeakable and full of glory and magnifying Christ to the last he passed to be forever with the Lord.

Henry was buried from the Spring Grove church on July 26, 1901, Rev S.S. Scull preaching the sermon from Rev. xiv: 13, to a large concourse of sorrowing friends. "He sleeps the sleep from which none ever wakes to weep."

Descendant Bernard Reece recalled a story with me pertaining to the circumstances that ultimately led to Henry's death. As the story goes, after Henry gave over his farm to his son, William Weston Reece, a house was built for Henry and Lucretia across the driveway from the main farmhouse. I speculate that this home built for Henry and Lucretia may have been built in 1883. Henry in his old age took care of domesticated bees on the farm. Bernard stated to me that he was told that this work proved to be too much for Henry, and that it factored into his death. Bernard told me that he was actually born in the house that was built for Henry and Lucretia off from the main farmhouse; this main farmhouse became the home of their son William Weston and his family upon his acquisition of the family farm. Both the main farm home and the home that was built for Henry and Lucretia are gone, having been torn down years ago.
A record of Henry’s death found in a Linn County, Iowa death record lists his cause of death as ‘overheat’. This lends credence to Bernard Reece’s story on what possibly led to Henry’s death. Henry’s death record lists the following information: he died at the age of 71; he died on July 25, 1901; he was farmer; he was married at the time of his death; he was born in Ohio; and he died in Spring Grove Township.

We know for certain that Henry was survived by his sister Nancy, a resident of California; his brother, William Lewis, a resident of Ohio; and his brother David, a resident of near Troy Mills, Iowa. It is probable that Henry’s sister Elizabeth may have been living at the time of his death. I come to this conclusion because Elizabeth was listed as a surviving sibling to her brother Benjamin in his obituary two months prior to Henry’s death.

After Henry died, Lucretia appears to have continued to live in the home that was built for her and Henry on their farm adjacent to the main house. It is likely that Henry and Lucretia both died in this home set off from the main house. Lucretia died from a cerebral hemorrhage in Linn County, Iowa on September 13, 1908. Lucretia died on the farm that she and Henry homesteaded some 55 years prior to her death. Her funeral service was held at the Spring Grove Methodist Protestant Church on September 14, 1908. Rev. S.H. Clark, Pastor, conducted the service. Lucretia was later laid to rest in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery next to Henry.

A Linn County, Iowa death record pertaining to Lucretia’s death lists the following: she died at the age of 76 years, 11 months and 1 day; she was a housewife; she died on September 13, 1908, she was a widow at the time of her death; she was born in Pennsylvania; her parents were John Nash and Jane Boyle; and she died in Spring Grove Township of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Lucretia’s death record lists her attending physician as A.J. Meythaler; he signed her death certificate of September 14, 1908. W.W. Reece is listed on Lucretia’s death record as the informant of death; this would be her son, William Weston Reece. Her death record also reads that she was buried on September 15, 1908 by undertaker C.E. Weeks of Coggon, Iowa.

The following is Lucretia’s obituary which ran in a local Troy Mills paper.

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**Death of Mrs. Reece**

Aunt Lucretia Reece, widow of Henry Reece, was born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, October 12, 1832, and died September 13, 1908, aged 76 years, 11 months and 1 day. Her parents were John and Jane Boyal Nash. In 1851 [sic] she was united in marriage to Henry Reece in Allen County, Ohio, and to this union were born five children, E.H. Reece, A.L. Reece, Rebecca Jane and Mary Belle Reece, and W.W. Reece. Both daughters preceded their mother to the great beyond, but the three sons were present at the funeral services, which were conducted by the writer at the Spring Grove M.P. church, September 14, 1908, there being a large congregation present to show their respect to one who was loved by all who knew her.

At an early age she became converted and united with the M.E. church. In 1854, with her husband, she moved to Iowa, after which she transferred her membership to the Methodist Protestant church of which she has been a faithful and conscientious member,
honoring God by being faithful unto Him. God honored her and gave her the universal respect and confidence of all who knew her deep spirituality and her ever faithfulness in the Christian life.

-----Rev. S.B. Clark, Pastor.

Henry and Lucretia Reece are buried within row 14 of the old portion of Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Within that row are other members of the Reece family. Starting from the north end of row 14 and going south, I found six original tombstones on July 22, 2003; they are, in order, inscribed with the following: William and Bessie Reece, Wilma I. Reece, Clyde E. Reece, Mary L. Reece and Mary Jane Reece, Rebecca J. Peyton, and Henry and Lucretia Reece. William is Henry and Lucretia’s son, William Weston Reece; Bessie is his wife. Wilma I. Reece is the daughter of William and Bessie. Clyde E. Reece is the son of William and Bessie. Mary L. Reece is the daughter of Henry and Lucretia. Mary Jane Reece is the daughter of E.H. and Rachel Reece; they being Henry and Lucretia’s son and daughter-in-law. Mary L. and Mary Jane’s inscriptions are found on the same stone. Rebecca J. Peyton is Henry and Lucretia’s daughter. The row of tombstones immediately west of row 14 is row 15. Row 15 contains the graves of Henry’s brother David and his descendants.

Henry and Lucretia Reece are the parents of:

1. Ether Hiatt Reece, born April 20, 1853; died January 20, 1933.
2. Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton, born August 19, 1855; died November 27, 1875.
3. Arthur Lewis Reece, born November 2, 1858; died February 14, 1911.

Henry and Lucretia’s children are buried in Lower Spring Grove and Troy Mills cemeteries.
Photo of a flower arrangement from Henry's funeral.
Looking northeast from Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, November 11, 2003. The large monument on the right marks the graves of Henry and Lucretia Reece. The white monument to the left of theirs marks the grave of their daughter, Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton. To the left of Rebecca's grave is the monument marking the graves of Henry and Lucretia's daughter, Mary Linnabell, and their granddaughter, Mary Jane; she being the daughter of Hiatt and Rachel (Walton) Reece. Further to the left of these stones, and half out of this photo, are the monuments marking the graves of: Clyda E. Reece, Wilma I. Reece, and William W. and Bessie E. Reece. William W. Reece is the son of Henry and Lucretia and Bessie is his wife. Clyda and Wilma Reece are Will and Bessie's son and daughter. All of the grave stones listed above are in chronological order as they actually appear.
Looking north from Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, November 11, 2003. The monuments in the middle of this photo mark the graves of David and Henry Reece, their respective spouses, and their descendants.
Photos of James and Rachael (Nash) Fisher. Rachael is a sister to Lucretia (Nash) Reece. James is Rachael's husband.
Photos of Thomas and Augusta Nash. He is a brother to Lucretia (Nash) Reece. Augusta is Thomas’ wife.
We do not know for sure who this woman is. She is probably a Nash, and may possibly be a sister to Lucretia (Nash) Reece. This may be Mary or Ann Nash. Ann was the wife of Henry Reece’s brother Benjamin. This photograph was taken in Lima, Ohio.
William Lewis Reece
8th child of William and Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece

William Lewis Reece is the youngest child of William and Rebecca Reece. He was born on April 8, 1833 in Paint Township, Highland County, Ohio. He was probably born on a farm owned by his parents along the Rocky Fork of Paint Creek.

William was probably named after his father. Many sources commonly referred to William by his middle name Lewis, which I believe has led to some confusion by genealogists. Several genealogists over the years have come to the conclusion that a William and Lewis Reece are children of William and Rebecca Reece. I believe that William and Lewis are one and the same man; he being the subject of this biography, William Lewis Reece.

Shortly after William Lewis' birth, within the year of 1833, he and his siblings would have accompanied their parents in the family move from Highland County to Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. It appears that this move occurred in May 1833. Upon moving to Allen County, Lewis' parents purchased 160 acres that they subsequently farmed in the northwest quarter of section 33 of Jackson Township. Lewis would have spent his childhood growing up in Allen County on the 160 acres that his parents owned in Jackson Township.

Lewis never had the opportunity to get to know his mother because she died shortly after his birth. It is believed that his mother, Rebecca, may have died around 1834-1835, which would have been shortly after the family moved to Allen County from
Highland County, Ohio. Lewis’ father remarried in 1837 when he was four years old. Lewis’ stepmother, Mary, was probably the only mother that he ever knew.

As recorded by the U.S. Census of 1840, at that time Lewis’ father’s household resided within Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Lewis would have been living with his father, stepmother and siblings at the time of this census. At that time the family would have been living upon their farm within section 33 of Jackson Township.

Allen County, Ohio tax records tell us that from 1845 to 1848, several Reeces were then personal property taxpayers of Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. During that time, William, David, Benjamin, William L. and Alfred Reece were all recorded as being personal property taxpayers within Jackson Township. These men would have included the subject of this biography, William Lewis Reece, and his father and brothers: David, Benjamin Hiatt and Alfred Reece. They all no doubt would have resided in or near Jackson Township during that time.

According to tax records, in 1848, William, William L., B.H., David, and Alfred Reece were all recorded as being personal property taxpayers of Jackson Township. This William Reece would have been the father of our subject, followed by his sons: our William Lewis, Benjamin Hiatt, David and Alfred. They all appear to be individually listed as heads of households in the original tax record of 1848. William Reece and his sons: William Lewis, Benjamin, Henry, David and Alfred, all appear to have been Jackson Township property owners prior to 1847. I can not determine definitively if all of William Reece’s sons were property owners prior to 1847, because I do not understand the tax recorders notes in the original record. Given the fact that William Lewis Reece was born in 1833, he would have been approximately 15 years old in 1848, which seems to be a young age to be listed as a personal property taxpayer and the head of a household.

The 1850 U.S. Census recorded that on July 29, 1850, that our William ‘Lewis’ Reece was then a 16 year old laborer living with his father and stepmother, ages 59 and 61 respectively, in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. Lewis was probably working as a farm laborer for his parents or a neighbor at the time of this census. His parents were farmers at the time of this census and would have been farming their 160 acres in section 33 of Jackson Township. This census also recorded that Lewis was then living within his father’s household with his grandmother, Hannah (Glaxier) Walton, age 85; and his nephew, William Henry Reece, age 5.

The 1850 census recorded that Lewis’ nephew, William Henry Reece, had attended school within the year. This census record lists Lewis as then a laborer and does not indicate that he had attended school within the year as did his nephew. One can assume that Lewis had not attended school within the year leading up to the census of 1850. He surely had attended some level of education by 1850 by having attended country schools near his childhood home; the home of his parents in section 33 of Jackson Township.

Shortly after the U.S. Census of 1850, Lewis’ father died on September 20, 1850 when Lewis was 17 years old. Within a year of his father’s death, Lewis’ stepmother, Mary, died on April 25, 1851 when Lewis was 18. Lewis probably played an important part in running the family farm when his parents were alive. I speculate that upon his father’s death that Lewis’ role in the family farm operation probably accelerated. Lewis
probably started out on his own earlier than he probably intended on due to his father and stepmother's deaths.

Our subject would have been 21 years old on April 17, 1854. On that day, for the sum of $275, William L. (Lewis) Reece sold his title interest and estate legal and equitable in an undivided one-eighth equal part (20 acres) of the NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio to his brother Henry. At the time, Lewis was a resident of Allen County, Ohio. These twenty acres were part of the estate of William and Henry's late parents. On April 17, 1854, William Lewis Reece personally appeared before John Webster, Justice of the Peace of Allen County, Ohio, to acknowledge the above conveyance as his voluntary act.

A deed of quit claim dated January 30, 1855, between a Mary Reece of Auglaize County, Ohio and our William L. Reece of Allen County, Ohio, reads that for the sum of $58 paid by William L. Reece, Mary Reece quit claim to 160 acres within the NW¼ of Section 33, Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. This property was part of the estate of Lewis' late parents. The Mary Reece mentioned in this quit claim deed would have been the late Alfred Reece's wife. Alfred and Mary Reece are a brother and sister-in-law to our William Lewis Reece. This $58 payment made to Mary by Lewis must have been her dower right to her late husband Alfred's 20-acre inheritance of his parent's farm. [Under old English law the widow was entitled to one-third of her husband's estate.]

We know from the previous deed dated January 30, 1855, that Lewis was then residing within Allen County, Ohio. He appears to have resided within Allen County from 1833 to 1855.

Genealogist Neil Henderson wrote that Lewis, in his early twenties, was a hunter and it would have been during his hunting days that he visited his brothers and sisters in Iowa. Historian Isaac Holman wrote that on one occasion, Lewis and his brother David hunted together in the area of Troy Mills, Iowa and that they had thirteen deer hung up. I presume that their hunting trip on that particular day occurred at or near David's Hickory Grove Farm. As reported by Henderson, Lewis once had a horse shot out from under him by Indians. Unfortunately, I do not know the rest of this story and Henderson did not go into detail.

At the age of 25, Lewis married Henrietta V. Bodge on December 13, 1858 in Worthington, Franklin County, Ohio. Henrietta was born on December 27, 1840 in Worthington, Ohio. Henrietta would have been two weeks shy of her eighteenth birthday when she and Lewis married.

Lewis and Henrietta's first child appears to have been their daughter Lenna. Census records suggest that Lenna was born in 1861. Lewis and Henrietta would have been approximately 28 and 21 years old respectively when Lenna was born.

At the age of 31, Lewis served in the U.S. Civil War. Prior to his entry into the war, his 18 year old nephew, William Henry Reece, had died in 1863 serving in the Union army in St. Louis, Missouri. When Lewis left his home to serve in the war, he would have left Henrietta and Lenna at home to await his return.

The following description of William Lewis Reece's Civil War record comes from the Official Roster of The Soldiers of the State of Ohio...1861-1866, vol. 8, 1888:  
William held the rank of Sergeant in Company I, 135th Ohio Volunteer Infantry from May 2, 1864 to September 1, 1864. The regiment served in Maryland: Cumberland,
Martinsburg, mostly guarding B&O; skirmish 6 July John Brown’s School-house; Maryland Heights. [I assume that B&O stands for buildings and ordinance.]

The 135th Regiment, Ohio Infantry, in which Lewis served, was a National Guard unit. It was organized at Camp Chase, Ohio, and was mustered into service on May 11, 1864. On that day the regiment left Ohio for Cumberland, Maryland. The 135th was assigned to duty as railroad guards on the Baltimore Railroad at North Mountain, Opequan Station and Martinsburg until July 3, 1864. The regiment conducted operations about Harper’s Ferry from July 4-7, 1864. The regiment participated in actions at Maryland Heights July 3-7, 1864. The regiment performed guard duty at Maryland Heights until September 1864. On September 1, 1864, the regiment was mustered out of service.

Seventy-three members of the 135th Regiment, Ohio Infantry were lost during the unit’s brief service in the Civil War. Seven enlisted men were killed or mortally wounded and 66 enlisted men died due to disease.

Neil Henderson wrote: William seems to have started out in the mercantile business in Ada, Hardin County, Ohio. Not far from Allen County where his parents married and lived their lives. From 1857 to 1876, possibly longer, he lived in Ada, Ohio. He opened a general store in 1858. William was a brick maker, and a clerk in a general store in Iowa at some point in time. He opened and ran the Exchange Bank of Ada from 1869 to 1883. He was postmaster in Ada for about six years. I guess one could do all those things in a fairly short time as a vigorous young man in the 1850’s.

Lewis and Henrietta’s second child appears to have been their son William J. Reece. He appears to have been born in 1868 when his father and mother were approximately 35 and 28 years old respectively.

The U.S. Census record of 1870 tells us that Lewis and his family were then residing within Liberty Township, Hardin County, Ohio. This census record lists Lewis’ post office as Ada, Ohio. His household was no doubt living in or near the town of Ada at the time of this census. Ada is located a short distance from the family farm that Lewis’ parents owned in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio.

As recorded by the 1870 U.S. Census, on July 12, 1870, the household of W.L. (William Lewis) Reece consisted of: himself, age 37; H.V., age 30; L.A., age 9; and W. J., age 2. This census did not record how all the individuals within Lewis’ household were related to one another. But we can assume that H.V. is Henrietta V., Lewis’ wife; that L.A. is their daughter Lenna; and that W.J. is their son William.

The 1870 census recorded that all members of Lewis’ household at that time were born in Ohio. As recorded by this census, at that time Lewis was working in the dry goods retail profession; his wife Henrietta was ‘keeping house’; and their children were at home. This census recorded that Lewis’ real estate and personal property were then valued at $3,400 and $7,000 respectively.

Lewis and Henrietta’s third child seems to have been their daughter Ettie, who appears to have been born in 1875. Five years later, their son Earnest was born in 1880. He appears to have been their fourth child. At the time of Earnest’s birth, his parents would have been approximately 47 and 40 years old respectively.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that the household of William L. (Lewis) Reece then consisted of: himself, age 46; wife Henetta, age 39; son William J. Reece, age 12;
daughter Ettie, age 5; and son Ernst, age 3 months. At the time of this census, Lewis and his family were living in Ada, Hardin County, Ohio. This may or may not have been the same home they resided at ten years earlier during the 1870 census. According to the 1880 census, Lewis was then a banker; his wife was ‘keeping house’; and their son William was then attending school. This census recorded that Lewis, Henrietta and their children were all born in Ohio. This census also recorded that Henrietta’s father was born in Maine and that her mother was born in New York.

It appears from U.S. Census records that Lewis and his family resided in Ada from 1870 to 1880. At some point after the 1880 census, Lewis and his family apparently moved to Greenville, Darke County, Ohio. Greenville is located approximately 60 miles southwest of Ada.

According to Neil Henderson: William was active in community service; serving on the board of education in Ada for 18 years; was trustee of the Methodist Episcopal Church; promoter of Ohio Northern University; charter member and secretary of the Ada Lodge (Masonic); he worked with the Darke County, Ohio, Soldiers Relief Commission for 15 years; and was president of the board of public service for 2 years and 8 months.

From 1883 to 1920, William lived in Greenville, Darke County, Ohio at 703 Central Ave; at the corner of Central and Sater Streets. William and Henrietta ran a Fred Harvey restaurant for about a year in Kansas City in the late 1880’s. About 1889, William began a merchant tailoring business in Greenville, Ohio, retiring in 1906. Some time in there he was a freight agent for 4 years. He was also a tailor in St. Louis, Missouri for a time. In Greenville, William was on the board of cemetery trustees and president of the board of public service for three years.

Lewis’ sister, Nancy (Reece) Ward/Johnston, died at the age of 91 on May 29, 1917 in Ferndale, Humbolt County, California. Nancy’s obituary reads that she was survived by her brother, William Lewis Reece, a resident of Greenville, Ohio. From Nancy’s obituary, we know that Lewis and Henrietta would have been residing in Greenville when Nancy died. Nancy’s obituary identifies our W.L. Reece as her surviving sibling.

The 1920 U.S. Census recorded that William (Lewis) Reece was then 77 [sic] years old, a retired tailor, living in Greenville, Darke County, Ohio. This census is incorrect in listing his age as 77; he actually would have turned 87 years old in 1920.

Lewis and Henrietta both died in 1920. He died at the age of 86 on January 25, 1920 in Greenville, Ohio. Since I do not know for sure when Lewis’ sister Elizabeth died, it would appear that Lewis was the last surviving child of William and Rebecca Reece. Lewis’ funeral was held at his residence by a Rev. Marbet, pastor of the Presbyterian Church. He was buried on January 27, 1920 at Greenville Union Cemetery, Greenville, Ohio. Henrietta died on May 1, 1920. She reportedly died near Dayton, Ohio. If this is correct, she may have moved to or near Dayton from Greenville after Lewis’ death. Dayton is approximately 30 miles southeast of Greenville.

The way I understand it, after Lewis’ death, Harlan Reece and his brother (they were descendents of Lewis’ brother Henry) traveled from their homes in Iowa to Ohio to claim part of Lewis’ estate. However, when they got to Ohio, they could not prove they were relation of Lewis’ entitled to a part of his estate. So, Harlan and his brother returned to Iowa knowing that they were in fact relatives to Lewis. Harlan is the father of
the Bernard Reece previously mentioned in this book. Harlan told this story to Daphane Hoover who in turn shared it with me.

Neil Henderson wrote: Three of William and Henrietta's five children survived them. Their son William B. Reece in 1908 was clerk in the general offices of the Pierre Marquette Railroad at Detroit, Michigan. In 1908, son Earnest H. Reece was advertising manager and secretary and treasurer of the Terre Haute Tribune and daughter Mrs. Lenna Mosier of Cincinnati was a traveling sales lady for the Artists Model Corset Company of Cleveland. A daughter Mildred died in 1906.

In the above paragraph, Henderson makes mention that Lewis and Henrietta had a daughter named Mildred and that she died in 1906. I have no further information about her beyond what Henderson has provided.

Lewis was 75 years of age when he and Henrietta celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1908. In regards to a 1908 article written about Lewis and Henrietta's golden wedding anniversary, Henderson wrote: On closer inspection, I find that by 1920 that Lenna Mosier was Mrs. L.A. Miller and living in Detroit, Michigan. Tracing possible descendants of William and Henrietta is likely to be fairly challenging. No grandchildren were mentioned in the 1908 article or in William and Henrietta's 1920 obituaries. If ever there was a time to mention grandchildren, one would think that was a time. To quote the 1908 article: "Although none of their children were present, the aged couple were well content because all of them were so well situated in a business way that they could not be spared from the responsible positions which they hold in order to be at home for a proper celebration of the event."

Henderson continues...However, by 1920 Earnest Reece, presumably the youngest son of William and Henrietta, was back living in Greenville, Ohio. He would be, I suppose, older than 35, perhaps in his fifties. So he might yet have had descendants born after 1920.

Neil Henderson of Hudson, Ohio provided much of the above biographical information pertaining to William Lewis Reece. Most of his information came from the Greenville Morning News, December 1908, and some came from Warner & Beers History of Hardin County, which is where Ada is located.

More research needs to be conducted to get a more detailed biography on our subject, William Lewis Reece.

William and Henrietta Reece appear to be the parents of:

1. **Lenna A. (Reece) Mosier/Miller**, born in 1861.
5. **Mildred Reece**, born ???:; died in 1906.
This is a son of William and Henrietta Reece. We do not know which one. The back of this photo reads: *Lewis' son*. I believe that this is probably their son Earnest H. Reece.
This photo of William Lewis Reece appears to have been from a picture postcard. I believe that William probably sent this to a relative living near Troy Mills, Iowa at the time. The signature is Lewis'.
William Henry Reece
1st child of David and Juliana (Lane) Reece

William Henry Reece was born on January 12, 1845 in Ohio. Sources identify his county of birth as being either Allen or Auglaize. These sources conflict when it comes to where William Henry was born. A letter written on November 25, 1979 by George V. Conner, whose grandfather was a brother to William’s stepmother Anna, reads that William Henry was born in Auglaize County, Ohio. However, tax records of Allen County, Ohio tend to suggest that William was likely born in that county and lived there until at least 1848.

I assume that William Henry was likely named after his grandfather and uncle; they respectively being: William and Henry Reece, both of whom were living when William Henry was born.

William Henry was two years old when his parents had their second child, Sarah Margaret, who was born on August 23, 1847. Sources indicate that Sarah was born in Allen County, Ohio. At the time of Sarah’s birth, William and his parents appear to have been living together in or near Lima, Allen County, Ohio.

Within two months after Sarah’s birth, Sarah and William’s mother, Juliana, died at the age of 20 on October 25, 1847 in or near the vicinity of Lima, Allen County, Ohio. Whether or not she died due to complications of giving birth to Sarah is unknown, but it is certainly possible. Less than two weeks after Juliana’s death, four month old Sarah died on November 2, 1847, reportedly in Allen County. I do not know where Juliana and
Sarah are buried, but I assume their graves are located together in or near the towns of Lima or Lafayette in Allen County, Ohio.

According to the 1850 U.S. Census, on July 29, 1850, William Henry, at the age of five, was then living with his grandparents, William and Mary Reece, in Jackson Township, Allen County, Ohio. At the time of this census, William Henry more than likely would have been living at William and Mary’s farm located in section 33 of Jackson Township. I assume that William Henry’s grandparents were raising William at the time of this census because his father, a widower, evidently needed help raising him. William’s father appears to have been living with his brother Alfred in Auglaize County, Ohio on July 29, 1850.

In addition to living with his grandparents on July 29, 1850, the census that year recorded that William Henry then shared their household with his 85 year old great-grandmother, Hannah Walton, and his 16 year old uncle, William Lewis Reece.

The 1850 U.S. Census record tells us that William Henry had attended school within the year. At approximately the time of this census, William no doubt would have attended a country school in the vicinity of his grandparent’s farm in section 33 of Jackson Township within Allen County. Given the fact that the 1850 U.S. Census record pertaining to his grandfather’s household was taken on July 29, 1850, William Henry was probably not attending school at that specific point in time because school was then more than likely in summer recess. In relation to the 1850 census, William likely had last attended school at some point during the spring of 1850.

William probably attended country school with his first cousins; namely: Hannah, David and William Church; they being the children of William Henry’s uncle and aunt, Reuben and Mary (Reece) Church. Reuben and Mary Church were farmers and they were neighbors to William Henry and his grandparents, William and Mary Reece, at the time of the 1850 census.

William’s father, David, remained single for three years after Juliana’s death in 1847. It is very likely that William’s grandparents helped in raising him during the three-year period that his father was single. William was five when his father remarried to Miss Kittorah Conner on September 13, 1850. Kittorah was a cousin to William’s mother.

It appears that William Henry moved back into his father’s home when he married Kittorah. I speculate that William may have left his grandparent’s home to live with his father and stepmother about two months after July 29, 1850. I believe that David, Kittorah, and William Henry lived together in or near Uniopolis, Auglaize County, Ohio after David and Kittorah’s marriage.

In June 1851, William accompanied his father and stepmother in the family move from Ohio to Linn County, Iowa. They departed from Allen County, Ohio in a wagon train bound for Iowa. William was six years old at the time. He and his parents reached Linn County after traversing the prairies of several states. During their journey, William’s stepmother would have been approximately six months pregnant. Upon reaching their final destination, William’s parents homesteaded in Section 12, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa in July 1851. They subsequently built a farm in section 12 which I like to call the Hickory Grove Farm. One can only imagine the
journey that William experienced as a six year old boy crossing the midwestern prairies on such a long journey by wagon.

Three months after William arrived in Iowa as a six year old boy, his stepmother Kittorah gave birth to his half-sister Hannah. She was born on September 26, 1851. Within the next seven years, from 1853 to 1860, William became a half-brother to four more siblings; namely: *Abraham Ward Reece, born October 7, 1853; James Lewis Reece, born October 27, 1855; Floyd Norval Reece, born April 5, 1858; and Rebecca Annette Reece, born May 20, 1860. All of these siblings were more than likely born at their parent’s Hickory Grove Farm in William’s presence. Like his siblings, William’s youth would have been spent growing up on his parent’s farm.

William was seven when his aunt, Mary (Reece) Church, died in Spring Grove on August 29, 1852. She was buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, just east of William’s childhood home. It is very likely that William accompanied his parents and other family members as they attended Mary’s funeral and burial.

The majority of William’s education would have certainly been acquired through his attendance of country schools located near his parent’s Hickory Grove Farm. He no doubt would have attended school with his siblings. They probably walked to school together from the family farm.

William was 14 when James, his four year old half-brother, died on September 4, 1859. Once again, it is very likely that William accompanied his parents as they attended James’ funeral and burial at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

In 1860, William was living with his parent’s upon their Hickory Grove Farm. At that time William was 15 years old. The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that William was then living with his father David, age 36, stepmother Kittorah A., age 30; sister Hannah A., age 8; brother *Abram W., age 6; brother Norval F., age 2; and sister Rebecca A., age 3 months. At the time of this census the nation was heading toward a crisis that threatened its very existence, that being the U.S. Civil War. The Reece family surely kept up with the news of possible war between the states; they certainly would have pondered the impact that such a war would have on them.

William Henry was 17 when his stepmother, Kittorah, died at the age of 35 on February 26, 1862. Her burial took place in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. William would have undoubtedly attended Kittorah’s funeral and burial. Upon her death, William, for the second time in his short life, found himself without a mother.

William found himself going to war six months after Kittorah’s death. William was 16 years old when the U.S. Civil War erupted with the Confederate attack on the Federal garrison at Fort Sumter, South Carolina on April 12, 1861. The primary cause of the war was the issue of slavery. However, the issue of state sovereignty was also a leading cause of the breakup of the Union. The issue of state sovereignty centered on the debate between Federalism vs. States’ Rights. Federalism is a system of government in which power is divided between a central authority and constituent political units (states). The State’s Rights argument is the political position advocating strict interpretation of the Constitution with regard to the limitation of federal powers and the extension of the autonomy of the individual state to the greatest possible degree. As a result of the Civil War, the United States has today a federal form of government.
William Henry probably would have been working on his father’s farm when the Civil War began. At the age of 17, sixteen months after the start of the war, William enlisted into the Union army on August 9, 1862 from Spring Grove, Iowa. William was mustered into Federal service on August 21, 1862. He served in Company F, 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry Regiment; his company was commanded by a Judge Hubbard.

William was one of the 75,797 white soldiers from Iowa that served in the Union army during the Civil War. This figure was almost half the men of the usual age for military service. Of these 75,000-odd men who left Iowa for the war, 13,001 died: 3,540 either killed or mortally wounded; 8,498 of disease; 515 as prisoners; 227 from accident; and 221 of various non-battle causes. In addition, some 8,500 were wounded in action. Seventeen per cent of the Iowans that enlisted either were killed or wounded during the four years of the war. Such was the price one state paid for the preservation of the Union.

Iowa provided 46 infantry regiments, plus one colored regiment (not all Iowans), 4 companies of light artillery, and 9 cavalry regiments for the Union army. Two regiments, the 42nd and 43rd, were designated but never organized. The last Iowa regiment mustered was the 48th. The First Iowa Infantry, mustered in May 1861, was a three-month regiment; the 44th through the 48th, mustered in 1864, were 100-day regiments; the rest were three-year enlistments, with many of the men re-enlisting as ‘veterans.’ Most of these regiments saw action in some of the most important battles and campaigns of the war.

The regiments, as they organized at the beginning of the war, usually elected their own officers. Each regiment consisted of 10 companies, lettered “A” through “K” (omitting “J”), with roughly 100 men per company. Although most of the men were completely untrained in the arts of war, some few learned fast and rose rapidly in rank.

While these men marched and fought, they kept diaries, they wrote long letters home; they even wrote letters to their local newspapers. From these diaries and letters, and from the books written by some of them after the war, as well as from the published records of the government, the experiences of each regiment can be traced.

Prior to leaving home to serve in Company F of the 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry Regiment, William Henry Reece undoubtedly would have said goodbye to his father and to the rest of his family before departing what had been his childhood home for the previous eleven years; that being the Hickory Grove Farm. One can only imagine what the scene of goodbye must have been like when William Henry left the family farm for the war. As it turned out, when William said goodbye to his family and to the family farm, it was the last time that either would see William Henry.

While William Henry was away serving in the war, his father remarried on June 8, 1863 to a widow named Anna (Conner) Klingaman. She was a cousin to William’s mother and stepmother, Juliana and Kitorah. Upon Anna’s marriage to David Reece, she brought her children from her previous marriage to live with her and David upon the Hickory Grove Farm. These children subsequently expanded William Henry’s immediate family by becoming his step-siblings. William may not have really known his step-siblings well prior to his father’s marriage to Anna Klingaman. As it would turn out, William never got a chance to become a real brother to these siblings.

Several relatives of William Henry Reece served in the Union army during the Civil War as he did. Among these relatives were: his first cousin, William W. Church,
who served in Company H, 14th Iowa Volunteer Infantry; his first cousin, James Peres Church, who served in Company F, 4th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry; his uncle, Cyrus J. Conner, a brother to his stepmother Anna, who served in Company A, 180th Ohio Volunteer Infantry; his uncle, William Lewis Reece, a brother to his father David, who served in Company I, 135th Ohio Volunteer Infantry; and his brother-in-law, John Gross, the husband to his step-sister Lydia Klingaman, who served in Company E, 24th Iowa Volunteer Infantry.

In addition, William Henry Reece served alongside comrades in the 20th Iowa Regiment who were undoubtedly his friends and neighbors from the area of Troy Mills, Iowa. William also served in the same company and regiment as did a few members of his distant relation. I would not at all be surprised if William himself was unaware of the extent to which he was related to some of the men he served with. For example, William served alongside John Henry Fay, who served in Company H of the 20th Iowa Volunteer Regiment. John Henry Fay was a half-brother to Horace H. Fay. In 1865, Horace H. Fay married William’s step-sister, Lydia Klingaman, as a result of her losing her husband, John Gross, to the Civil War. John Henry Fay was married to Isabella Ward, who was the sister of Abraham J. Ward, William Henry’s uncle. After John Henry Fay died at the age of 31 in October 1863, his wife Isabella remarried to James Rupert Church. James is a nephew of Peres and Reuben Church, uncles of William Henry Reece. James R. Church is recorded as having served in the 20th Iowa Volunteer Regiment, Company F, which is the same company that William Reece served in. In addition to James, a Samuel Church is also recorded as having served in Company F. James and Samuel are brothers and sons of David Glazier Church and Mary J. Saxton. D.G. Church was a brother to Peres W. and Reuben W. Church, William’s uncles.

William W. Church, William Henry’s first cousin, the son of Reuben W. and Mary (Reece) Church, was wounded in the back at the Battle of Pleasant Hill, Louisiana and was later discharged on March 17, 1862. He later recovered from his wounds to the extent that he re-enlisted on December 4, 1862 and served in Company K, Iowa 6th Cavalry. James Peres Church, William Henry’s first cousin and a brother to William W. Church, was injured in the Battle of Nashville, Tennessee on March 8, 1862. John Gross, William Henry’s brother-in-law, was killed in action on May 16, 1863 at the Battle of Champion’s Hill, Mississippi. The John Henry Fay mentioned previously, died October 8, 1863 in Linn County, Iowa; presumably from wounds he sustained in the Civil War. John is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery as is William W. Church.
This is a photograph of William Henry Reece. It was probably taken shortly before he left home to serve in the Civil War.
This is James Peres Church, William Henry Reece’s first cousin, who was injured in the Battle of Nashville, Tennessee on March 8, 1862. He served in Company F, 4th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Cavalry.

A part of the History of Linn County, Iowa 1878 reads as follows:

The Rebellion of 1861

Almost simultaneous with the news of the attack on Sumter, came the call from President Lincoln for troops. In the remote towns and rural localities, where telegraphic communication had not then penetrated, the appeal and the response were recorded at the same time.

On the 15th of April the President issued his call for 75,000 ninety-day troops. The State of Iowa was peculiarly fortunate in having as its chief executive Samuel J. Kirkwood, whose loyalty and unceasing devotion to the cause of the Union has embalmed his name forever in the annals of the State. Within thirty days after the President’s demand was made public, Iowa had a regiment in the field.

The First Iowa was mustered into the United States service in one month after the appeal went forth, and Linn County stood represented in that heroic band by a full company, under command of Captain T.Z. Cook. Foremost in the rank of prosperous States in times of peace; first to march to the front in times of war, Iowa should be known hereafter not only as the beautiful, but also as the brave, State.

A special session of the Board of Supervisors of Linn County was called at once, upon the breaking-out of the war, and steps were taken to provide relief for the families of such men as were willing to volunteer, but who had not the means wherewith to
maintain their families during the time that must elapse between going from home and receiving their first pay.

Subsequently the Board adopted a resolution, of the same general tenor, at the September session, 1861. Appended is a copy of that document:

Resolved, That the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors issue an order or orders for the benefit and relief of any family of our volunteers now in the United States service, upon the certificate and approval of the resident Supervisor of the township in which the family or applicant resides.

A scene in Marion is thus described:

One of the great events of the beginning of the war that occurred in Marion was the departure of the Lyle Guards for the war. They numbered eighty-four, most of them young and just entering upon the threshold of life. As the time for their departure drew nigh, the friends, relatives and sweethearts of the volunteers crowded in Marion from all quarters, and for forty-eight hours preceding their departure was a continued ovation. On Wednesday evening, June 10th, the Rev. Samuel Pancoast preached a discourse to them in the presence of one of the largest audiences that ever listened to a sermon in Marion. As no building in town could accommodate the people, the services were held in the open air, in front of Mr. Carskadden's building, where a temporary stand had been erected for the purpose. The reverend gentleman selected for his theme the fourteenth verse of the third chapter of Luke: "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your ways."

The press of the county was emphatic in its advocacy of the Union cause. From the files of the papers published at that time, it is evident that the newspapers, as well as the pulpit, were thoroughly in accord with the people. In this instance, neither the one nor the other medium of leadership seems to have taken a conservative position. The expressions of intense feelings are numerous.

We quote from the Cedar Valley Times of April 18, 1862:

The true position is to support the Administration, right or wrong....More than ever, it is now the duty of every true man to respond to the call of his country. Party ties are broken, party divisions are forgotten, in the common necessity which summons every true American to the standard of his country—to the defense of our Union, our Constitution, our liberty and our rights......Every man to his post, that post the support of the Administration.

In another portion of the same issue appeared the following appeal to the people:

The flag of our country is assailed. The glorious old Stars and Stripes have been hauled down and trailed in the dust at Sumter. A meeting to obtain an expression of the feelings of the people will be held at Carpenter's Hall, Thursday evening, 18th. Every true man, without distinction of party, who loves his country and the flag under which we have achieved so many glorious victories, is expected to be in attendance.

The meeting was held, and the utmost enthusiasm characterized all its proceedings. Dr. Camburn occupied the chair: I. Van Meter acted as Secretary and both
these gentlemen made stirring addresses upon ascending the platform. Hon. W.H. Merritt, E.N. Bates, Dr. Taylor, Hon. H.G. Angle, P.W. Earl, William Greene and others spoke, giving expression to uniform sentiments of loyalty and determined zeal in the cause of their common country.

A note was read, which produced a marked sensation. It was from the war Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood, and was as follows:

If Linn County shall tender me a full company of seventy-eight good men, properly officered, by Thursday of next week, I will offer the company as one of the regiments required of this State by the President of the United States ..........Samuel J. Kirkwood, April 17, 1861.

All day long the Union banner waved over the city of Cedar Rapids, during those terrible times, as it did in almost every city, village and hamlet north of Mason and Dixon's Line. Martial music rang shrilly on the air, and bands of men, eager to be the first upon the roll of fame, hurried to the scene of enlistment. The spirit of '76 burned in every breast. The plow, the workshop, the store, the counting house, the pulpit and the press all were represented in the great concourse of patriots. Money was poured out without reserve.

Wednesday, April 24, within the time prescribed by the Governor, the company was raised. The following officers were chosen by the volunteers: T.Z. Cook, Captain; J.C. Marvin, First Lieutenant; George W. Stinson, Second Lieutenant; J.H. Stibbs, Third Lieutenant.

The churches were opened and services held for the especial benefit of the volunteers. The women, ever ready to perform noble deeds, proved themselves true daughters of those heroines who stanch the blood which flowed from the wounds of Revolutionary heroes. Ever present to cheer and encourage, the women of Cedar Rapids, Marion, Mt. Vernon, and every town and village in the county, aided most royally in the times when the bravery of women meant heartache and desolated homes. The sacrifices made by the women of the North can never be related, but the beauty of their conduct will increase in brilliancy as time rolls on, and the women of '76 will no longer be named singly as typical of devotion. Conjointly must this country speak of the women of '76 and the women of '61.

Forty volunteers arrived in Cedar Rapids, from Mt. Vernon, on the 21st of April. From this number the first company was filled up. The remainders were placed under Capt. Potts, who was recruiting for the Second regiment.

While a meeting was in progress in Carpenter's Hall, on the evening of the 21st, news was received that a battle had been fought at Ft. Pickens, Florida, and that the rebels had been beaten. The enthusiasm is described as "a tempest of applause and cheers."

Rev. A.G. Eberhart, Pastor of the Baptist Church of Cedar Rapids, delivered an eloquent address Sunday evening, April 20th. He remarked: "I am sorry that my age will not permit me to go, but I thank God that I have three sons who are able. I am sorry I have no more to offer."

The first company of Linn County men was sworn in by E.N. Bates, Wednesday, May 1, 1861, and numbered 100 strong.
Saturday, May 4th, the formal presentation of a flag to the first company took place. The scene was in front of Greene's Hotel, corner of Commercial street and Iowa avenue. Mr. S. Hesselberger delivered the presentation speech, which was one of hope, encouragement and praise.

The ladies of the city, at the same time, furnished each volunteer with a copy of the Holy Bible, as a reminder of the constant watchfulness of the God of battles over those who go forth to fight for the right.

The event was a solemn one, and is fresh in the memories of all who participated therein and still live.

Monday morning, May 6th, the company departed on their holy mission. The account of the incident published in the Times, contains the following clause, which possesses a touching interest at this moment:

It was a sad parting to many. The warm tears of the fond mother told that; the kiss of the loving sister told it; the embrace of the father, as in his proud dignity he brushed away the moisture that would gather in his eye; the hand-grasp, firm and true, of the brother; the hopeful but sad look of the lover; yea, and the unutterable anxiety and love struggling with duty of the wife; all these were there; and oh, much more sacred seemed the cause that could command and receive such sacrifices from loyal and true American hearts.

From the Linn County Register, April 20th, 1861, announcing the breaking out of the war:

Already, some seventy-five persons, in the vicinity of Marion, alone, have signified their intention to volunteer under the call of President Lincoln. We are informed that the same enthusiasm prevails at Mt. Vernon, Cedar Rapids, and other points in the county. Farmers partake of the general feeling, and are anxious to do their part in this emergency. The Adjutant General of the State has been informed that at least one company from this county will be in readiness to march at a moment’s notice. Three or four companies might be raised here at once.

Marion was not one whit behind the Rapids in point of loyal enthusiasm. Instantly upon the receipt of the news, meetings were called and enlistments began. The Register of April 27th said:

The war feeling is intense. On every corner the people are assembled, in squads of a dozen or more, discussing the chances of the conflict. Men in the country leave their plows, and rush into town, to inquire about the news.

The first company was filled within a few days, and H.W. Gray elected Captain; T. Caldwell, First Lieutenant; Thomas Corbett, Second Lieutenant. The company was sworn in April 30th. Owing to some misunderstanding, the company did not leave for the service until July 11th. They were assigned to the Sixth regiment—Col. McDowel.

The first regiment was engaged at Springfield, Missouri, August 20, 1861. Company K was composed of the Linn County boys.

From the Register of May 8, 1862, the following significant item is taken:
A member of Company A, Sixth regiment, writing from Pittsburg Landing, says, that out of the eight-four young and enthusiastic men composing this company, which left Marion last July, only thirty-nine remain fit for duty. Disease, battle and accident have decimated their ranks.

The story is too fresh in the minds of all to need reproduction here.

The 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry Regiment, within which William Henry Reese served, participated in the following during the Civil War.

1. Schofield’s Campaign in Southwest Missouri, October 1862 to January 1863.
2. Occupation of Newtonia October 4, 1862.
5. March to Huntsville, Arkansas, January 2-18, 1863, to Elk Creek January 22-
February 15, and to St. Louis, Missouri, arriving April 24, 1863.
6. Guard Arsenal till May 15, 1863 (Companies A and F at Defense of Cape
Girardeau, Missouri.)
7. At Pilot Knob, Missouri, till June 3, 1863.
8. Moved to St. Genevieve, Missouri June 3 and to Vicksburg, Mississippi June 6-
14, 1863.
10. Expedition to Yazoo City, Mississippi, July 12-22, 1863.
11. Capture of Yazoo City, July 14, 1863.
12. Moved to Port Hudson July 24 and to Carrollton, Louisiana August 16, 1863.
13. Expedition to Morganza, Louisiana, September 5-12, 1863.
16. At Morganza till October 10, then moved to Carrollton, Louisiana.
17. Expedition to Rio Grande, Texas, October 27-December 2, 1863.
18. Brazos de Santiago, Texas, November 4, 1863.
19. Point Isabel, November 6, duty at Brownsville, Texas, Point Isabel and Mustang
Island till June 24, 1864.
20. Moved to Brazos de Santiago, then to Brownsville, and duty there till August 2,
1864.
22. Siege of Fort Morgan, August 9-23, 1864.
24. Moved to Morganza, September 7-12, then to Duvall’s Bluff, Arkansas, October
12, and duty there and at Brownsville till January 1865.
25. Moved to New Orleans January 28, then to Barrancas, Florida February 17, 1865.
27. Steele’s march from Pensacola, Florida to Blakely, Alabama March 20-April 2,
1865.
28. Occupation of Canoe Station, March 27, 1865.
29. Siege of Fort Blakely, Alabama, April 2-9, 1865.
30. Assault and capture of Fort Blakely April 9, 1865.
31. Moved to Mobile, April 14, and duty there till July 1865.
32. Mustered out July 8, 1865.

The following is a history of the 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry contributed by a Randy Allen, which I found on the internet.

**Historical Sketch of the 20th Regiment Iowa Volunteer Infantry**

[William Henry Reece, Volunteer]

The ten companies which were assigned to the Twentieth Regiment were ordered into quarters by the Governor on dates ranging from July 15 to August 15, 1862. The designated rendezvous was Camp Kirkwood near Clinton, Iowa, and there the companies were mustered into the service of the United States on the 22nd, 25th, and 27th days of August 1862, by Captain H.B. Hendershott, of the United States Army. The aggregate strength of the regimental muster in was 904, rank and file.

[Report of Adjutant General of Iowa, vol. 1, 1863, pages 718 to 750, original roster of the regiment.]

Like most of the regiments which had preceded it, the Twentieth had but a brief opportunity for instruction before leaving the state. It was armed with Enfield rifles (at the time considered one for the most effective weapons,) and was furnished with the usual equipment for active service. On the 5th of September, was conveyed down the river by steamboat to St. Louis and upon its arrival they went into quarters at Benton Barracks, where it remained but a short time, and proceeded thence to Rolla, marched for Springfield, Missouri, where it arrived September 24th, having covered a distance of 122 miles.

In this, their first experience in marching, the men suffered much hardship, because of the fact that they had not yet become inured to the exposure and fatigue of an active campaign. It was their first lesson in the hard school of the soldier in time of war. Fortunately for the regiment, Colonel Dye had been a Captain in the regular army and was a thoroughly trained soldier, and a few others among the officers and men had seen service as volunteers in other Iowa organizations. Having a leader with a military education and with the help of those who had some actual experience in warfare, the officers and men made rapid progress in learning their duties as soldiers.

Upon its arrival at Springfield, the regiment was assigned to a brigade consisting of the Twentieth Iowa, First Iowa Calvary, Thirty-seventh Illinois Infantry, and one section of the First Missouri Light Artillery. This was the Second Brigade of the Second Division of the Army of the Southwest, commanded by General J.M. Schofield. The division was commanded by General Totten, and the brigade by Colonel Dye of the Twentieth Iowa, leaving Lieutenant Colonel Leake in command of the regiment.
The Twentieth Iowa was now about to enter upon a campaign which was to put to
the severest test the bravery, fortitude and discipline of its officers and men. The
hardships to which they had thus far been subjected were slight in comparison with those
they encountered while marching and counter-marching in pursuit of their elusive enemy.
From the 30th of September to the 7th of December, on which later date the battle of
Prairie Grove was fought, the regiment passed through an experience, the details of
which are described with great particularity in the history of the regiment written by
Colonel Dye, and in the prefix to the official report of Lieutenant Colonel Leake,
describing the conduct of his regiment in the battle of Prairie Grove. (Report of Adjutant
General of Iowa, vol. 2, 1863, pages 826 to 830. Report of Adjutant General of Iowa,
vol. 2, 1865, pages 113 to 1120.) The following extracts taken from Lieutenant Colonel
Leake's report will serve to describe the great hardships endured by the regiment during
this period of its service:

On the 15th day of October at Cassville, Missouri, the army was reorganized and
called the "Army of the Frontier," the First Division under command of General Blunt,
the Second Division under the command of General Totten, and the Third Division under
the command of General Herron. The First Iowa Calvary was taken from Colonel Dye's
brigade and transferred to the Third Division and in its place a battalion of the Sixth
Missouri Calvary, under command of Major Montgomery, was assigned to the Second
Brigade, Second Division. General Schofield still commanded the whole. Thus
organized as an army, on the 28th of October we had penetrated as far south as
Fayetteville, Washington County, Arkansas, having driven the enemy before us. Beyond
and south of that place, on the 30th of the same month, General Schofield retired from
Fayetteville, and placed the army in position on the line of the road leading from
Huntsville to Bentonville, the First Division on Prairie Creek, six or seven miles west of
Bentonville, the Second Division at Osage Springs, and the Third at Cross Hollows, to
await the future movements of the enemy.

The army remained in this position until the 2nd of November, when in pursuance
of orders from Major General Curtis commanding the department, the Second and Third
Divisions commenced their return march to Missouri. The First Division under General
Blunt retained its position west of Bentonville. A few days afterwards intelligence was
received that the post at Clark Mills, on the road from Springfield to Forsyth, garrisoned
by five companies, three of state militia, and two of the Tenth Illinois Cavalry, had been
surrendered, and that the enemy were marching in large force on Springfield, to protect
which the Second Division was moved on the 10th of November, making the march of
thirty-five miles in twelve hours.

The Second Division moved on the 17th, the night of the 17th, and the 18th, through
a drenching storm westerly thirty-six miles to Camp Lyon...up to this time the regiment
had marched since leaving Rolla, the distance of 520 miles. We rested at Camp Lyon
from all our fatigues and exposure until the morning of December 4th.

During the stay at Camp Lyon, the men were provided with everything needed for
comfort except shoes and stockings. Only one hundred pairs of shoes, one hundred and
eighty pairs of infantry boots, and one hundred and eight pairs of socks could be
obtained. These were distributed through the regiment to those who were most in need of
them. No shoes had been provided since the first pair obtained before leaving Iowa, and they were almost entirely worn out by the continuous marching over hundreds of weary miles of stony road, and through numerous creeks and rivers.

On the evening of December 3rd, a courier arrived at Camp Lyon with a message from General Blunt, asking for reinforcements, his division being threatened with attack by a greatly superior force of the enemy. General Blunt was a skillful officer and, as his troops consisted mostly of cavalry and mounted infantry, he had been able to elude the enemy and avoid a general engagement, but the rebel forces had cut off his retreat and he was in a very critical position. The Second Division promptly responded to his call for assistance and made a most wonderful record of forced marches, which are thus described by Lieutenant Colonel Leake, in continuation of his report from which the previous extracts were made:

On the morning of the 4th of December, reveille was beaten at one o'clock, and at four o'clock the regiment commenced its march. Between four and five o'clock p.m. it encamped on Flat Creek, having marched 25 miles. The next day we moved at 5 o'clock a.m., passed through Cassville and Keitsville, and encamped one and a half miles beyond the latter place, having marched twenty-one and a half miles.

On the morning of the 6th, we left camp at 5 o'clock, passed through Pea Ridge and Sugar Creek, and reached Cross Hollows, Arkansas at about 5 o'clock p.m. twenty-six and a half miles. Here we halted for rest and supper. At eleven o'clock p.m. we moved on marching all night, passed through Fayetteville after daylight, and halted one mile beyond, on the road to Cane Hill, for rest and breakfast. After the lapse of about an hour and a half, having learned of the capture of a portion of the train of the First Arkansas Cavalry, a few miles beyond, I was ordered to detail a company under the command of a reliable officer, to protect our train (in addition to the regular division and brigade guards, already large,) to which duty I assigned Company B, under command of Captain Coulter; so that Company B was deprived of the privilege of being in the engagement.

We then marched on rapidly, until we arrived at the battlefield between eleven and twelve o'clock on the morning of the 7th, a distance of nine miles. The regiment thus marched the distance of one hundred miles in eighty consecutive hours, the last fifty-three and one-half of which we accomplished in thirty-one hours. Very many of the command marched with shoes so much worn that their feet were upon the ground, and were badly bruised and cut up by the stony road. Many of the boots furnished at Camp Lyon fitted the feet of the men so ill that they became inflamed and blistered by the continuous marching, and a few carried their boots in their hands and marched to the field in their bare feet, whilst many fell out by the way, unable to march farther. Under these circumstances, we went into the engagement with only two hundred and seventy enlisted men, and twenty-three commissioned officers.

From the foregoing description of the energetic manner in which the Twentieth Iowa, with its brigade and division, pressed forward by day and night marches to the relief of General Blunt's command, it will be seen that they were the first troops to engage the enemy.
Continuing his report, Lieutenant Colonel Leake describes minutely the positions of the opposing forces at the commencement of the battle. The enemy was posted upon a heavily wooded hill, the approach to which was across a prairie about 1,000 yards wide. General Blunt states in his official report that he had been skirmishing with the advance of the enemy, holding them in check until his reinforcements should arrive, but the enemy got between him and the troops coming to his assistance, and the battle had been raging for several hours before his division came up and attacked the enemy in the rear. He, therefore, furnished the reinforcement, instead of receiving it. The compiler again quotes from the report of Lieutenant Colonel Leake, as follows: These dispositions having been made at one o’clock p.m. the engagement was opened by the firing of a gun from the battery under the command of Lieutenant Marr. At about two o’clock the order was given to advance the battery, and I received orders to advance the regiment forward in support. We advanced in this order across the open field, to within about two hundred yards of the foot of the hill, and in front of the house of H. Roger, when the battery was ordered back, and the regiment left in that position. I presently received orders from Colonel Dye, in pursuance of which the regiment moved to the right into the adjoining field and in front of the orchard on the left of the house of William Rogers, to check a movement of the enemy to outflank us on the right.

At this time the Twentytenth was on the extreme right of the Second and Third Divisions. This movement was executed under a galling fire which we returned, advancing to within a few paces of the edge of the orchard. At this time a force appeared on our right advancing up the valley. Fearing that we were being outflanked by the enemy, I was ordered to fall back across the field and take position behind a fence in our rear, which was executed in good order under fire. I then threw out companies A and F, under command of Captains Bates and Hubbard, from the right wing shortly after, as skirmishers.

A cavalry force appeared upon our right and rear, whereupon the skirmishers were recalled and a change of front made toward the approaching force, to the rear behind a fence running at right angles to the one from which we moved. Colonel Dye having sent forward and ascertained that the cavalry were from General Blunt’s command, the Twentytenth at once charged front and resumed its former position behind the fence fronting toward the orchard.

We had scarcely taken this position when an aide from General Blunt reported to me that the forces which had come up the valley, and were taking position in the field on our right, was the command of General Blunt. I at once directed him to Colonel Dye, who was about 200 yards to the rear and left of me, who immediately sent word to General Herron of the arrival of reinforcements under General Blunt. This took place at about three and a half o’clock, as nearly as I can fix the time. Before this time the Nineteenth Iowa and Twentieth Wisconsin had charged up the hill on the extreme left, and had been driven back; after which the Twenty-sixth Indiana and Thirty-seventh Illinois had been ordered up in nearly the same place, and with a like result, so that when General Blunt arrived no infantry was engaged on our left.

General Blunt at once sent forward a part of the First Indiana Regiment as skirmishers. Colonel Dye reported to General Blunt and ordered me to make a charge with the Twentytenth up the hill and on the left of, and operating with the forces of General
Blunt. I moved the regiment rapidly forward in line of battle across the field, obliquing to the left; crossed the orchard fence, drove the enemy throughout the orchard, and advanced beyond the upper orchard fence and through the woods a short distance...fearing that the troops on our left wing had ascended the hill and advanced to our front, I saw directly in front of us a mass of troops moving down upon us. At almost the same instant they fired a volley under which the left wing recoiled nearly to the orchard fence, where they promptly rallied at my command and renewed the firing with great rapidity and, I think effect. I received orders to retire behind the fence at the foot of the hill, and hold it, which movement was promptly executed by the regiment in good order, climbing the fence under a galling fire, lying down behind it, and continuing the firing between the fence rails.

The moment we crossed the fence the orchard was shelled by the batteries of General Blunt's forces on the right in the field, and by that under command of Captain Murphy in position at the point from which we entered the action, from the combined effects of which, and our own firing, the enemy were driven back. As soon as the enemy was driven from the orchard I was ordered to retire in good order from the fence and form in the middle of the field. As we commenced to retire, Major Thompson having been wounded and the left wing, not receiving the order to halt, promptly retired near the fence from which we had advanced, I rode down, and at the command they returned and formed at the place designated.

Soon after daylight it was discovered that the enemy had fled during the night, thus acknowledging defeat. The Union troops were so worn and exhausted from forced marches and the hard fighting of the previous day that they were in no condition to pursue the enemy.

Lieutenant Colonel Leake in closing his report speaks in the highest terms of praise of the conduct of the Twentieth Iowa during the battle. He makes special mention of Major Thompson, who was wounded late in the action and, though suffering great pain, did not leave the field until the regiment retired. He also mentions the gallant conduct of acting Adjutant, Lieutenant J.C. McClelland and Sergeant Major George A. Gray. Of the gallant brigade commander he says, "It will not, I trust, be improper for me to remark of my superior officer, Colonel William Dye, commanding the Second Brigade, that by the entire self possession, the calm bravery, and the military ability he displayed on the field, he won the entire confidence of the regiment. Its affection he had gained before."

The loss of the regiment in the battle of Prairie Grove was 1 officer and 7 enlisted men killed; 5 officers and 34 enlisted men wounded.

The brigade commander Colonel Dye warmly commended Lieutenant Colonel Leake for the excellent manner in which he handled his regiment during the battle, and also made special mention of Adjutant Lake of the Twentieth Iowa, who acted as Assistant Adjutant General upon his staff, and carried his orders to different points on the field under the fire of the enemy. While the subsequent record of the regiment is altogether an honorable one and deserves full description, the limitations prescribed for this historical sketch will not permit of the occupancy of much great space in describing its future movements than has been devoted to its operations up to and including the battle just described. The compiler believes, however, that the events embraced in this
period of the history of the regiment constitute a record not excelled for bravery and fortitude, and that it would have entitled the officers and men of the Twentieth Iowa to the lasting gratitude of the state and nation had the record ended with Prairie Grove.

The day after the battle the dead were buried with military honors. The wounded had received such care and attention as could be given in field hospitals, and they were subsequently removed to Fayetteville, where better facilities for their care were provided. The Regiment remained in camp at Prairie Grove, enjoying a much needed rest, until the morning of December 27, 1862, when it again took up the line of march for Van Buren on the Arkansas River.

The march was over the Boston Mountains, the cavalry leading the advance, and skirmishing with the enemy, but upon the approach of the Union troops, the enemy retreated across the Arkansas, and the town of Van Buren, a large quantity of supplies and several steamboats were captured. The boats and such portion of the supplies as could not be removed were destroyed, and the troops returned to their camp at Prairie Grove.

On January 2, 1863, the regiment again took up the line of march, with its brigade and division. General Schofield had again assumed command of the Army of the Frontier. In the campaign which ensued, and which extended through the winter and into the spring, there was much hard marching, and the troops were exposed to alternate storms of snow and rain, marching over muddy and sometimes almost impassable roads, but everywhere the movements of the army as a whole, and in detachments, were directed against the rebel forces with the one purpose in view, that of driving the invaders from the state and placing the loyal citizens of Missouri in position to defend themselves from further invasion, and enabling the troops composing the Army of the Frontier to be withdrawn for the purpose of cooperating in the great expedition against Vicksburg.

General Schofield’s plans were successfully carried out, the rebel troops in his front being mostly withdrawn during the winter for the purpose of reinforcing their army in Mississippi, then preparing to resist the advance of the Union Army under General Grant.

Toward the latter part of March, the regiment with its brigade and division was being gradually withdrawn from the Missouri frontier and moved towards the point where these troops had entered upon their first campaign. At length, on the 23rd of April 1863, the division marched into Rolla. The Twentieth Iowa had now been in active service about seven months. It had been engaged in many skirmishes and one hard fought battle. Its losses in killed and wounded, and from disease, had been heavy. April 24th the regiment was transported by rail to St. Louis. The following extracts from Colonel Dye’s history of the regiment (heretofore alluded to in this sketch) describe its principal movements for a considerable portion of its subsequent service, beginning with its arrival in St. Louis:

Here we remained guarding the arsenal, and doing other important duties until May 15th. During a part of this time, First Lieutenant C.L. Drake, with Company A, and
apart of Company F, embarked for Cape Girardeau, Missouri, where he arrived in time to participate in the successful defense of that place against the assaults of the enemy. Companies D and G, Captains Torrey and Altmann, were also detached to quell mutinies at Benton Barracks. On the 1st of May the regiment arrived by rail at Pilot Knob, and remained there until June 3rd. On the 5th, by hot marching, arrived at St. Genevieve, and embarked with what remained of the regiment...a part of the infantry and artillery of the Second and Third Divisions, having now been organized into a division (detached from the Army of the Frontier) of two brigades, the Twentieth Iowa being a part of the First Brigade, proceeded on the 6th to reinforce the investing army at Vicksburg. We arrived at Chickasaw Bluff, on the Yazoo River, on the 11th. Returned and landed at Young's Point, crossed the peninsula to a point below Vicksburg, and took position on the 14th, on the extreme left of the investing forces, the First Brigade on the left, and the Twentieth Iowa, the Second Regiment from the right, where they remained until July 4th, the day of the surrender, participating in all the exposures and fatigues of that successful siege, being on duty in detachments almost continuously, either in the trenches or rifle pits; the troop's not thus on duty standing to arms every day and night. Men were on duty as long as five successive days and nights, without other sleep than was stolen or involuntarily obtained under the guns of the enemy, while another relief was on duty. The regiment was very fortunate in losing during the siege by wounds only six enlisted men, three of whom died from their wounds.

At 9 a.m. on the 4th, part of the division, the Twentieth Iowa leading, marched into the works of Vicksburg, planting the first Union flag which floated over the extreme fort on the right of the enemy's works. As bad as the water used by our men was, the sickness was not so severe before the surrender, as when, by a relaxation of the system from the stimulant of excitement, intermittent and congestive fevers at once prostrated about one-third of the regiment. [Could this have included William Henry Reece?]

We remained in the works, collecting the surrendered material, until the 11th, when the division embarked with orders to reinforce the investing force of Port Hudson. When aboard, and about leaving, intelligence arrived of its surrender. The destination of the division was then changed to Yazoo City, where it arrived on the 13th, and by cooperation with the gunboats, (the De Kalo of which was destroyed by torpedoes,) captured the place, with a half dozen pieces of artillery, and a number of prisoners, after an ineffectual resistance of half an hour.

On the 16th, we left to open communication with General Sherman, at Canton, Mississippi. This accomplished we arrived on the 19th, on our return, at Yazoo City, and re-embarked. By the 22nd, we were again in camp within the works of Vicksburg, the regiment having lost by sickness about 280 men. [Did this include William Henry Reece?] Leaving the serious cases of sickness at Vicksburg, we embarked on the 24th of July, and arrived at Port Hudson on the 26th. During the siege of Vicksburg, the division had been attached to the Thirteenth Army Corps; it now became, and yet is, the Second Division of this corps. The troops remained on the boats until the 31st, when they were put into camp just in rear of Port Hudson...we remained here until the 16th of August. During our stay, although about two-thirds of the men continued to report for duty, probably three-fourths of the regiment were under medical treatment.
On the 17th, arrived at Carrollton, Louisiana, losing, during our stay here, many of the men, from the protracted diseases of the summer. The regiment embarked here, without tents or knapsacks, and bivouacked, September 7th, near Morganza, below the mouth of Red River. On the 8th, we marched to the Atchafalaya, driving the enemy to the opposite bank, a part of the division having a skirmish. We were absent but two days on this duty, yet the men suffered greatly from the heat (many being sun struck) and the want of good water.

We remained at or near Morganza, almost constantly bivouacked, until October 10th. The knapsacks of the regiment did not arrive until about September 28th. Lieutenant Colonel Leake and two men (the former slightly wounded) were unfortunately captured, at Sterling farm, September 29th, while on duty, detached from the regiment. (Lieutenant Colonel Leake was in command of the Nineteenth Iowa and Twenty-six Indiana at the time he was wounded and captured.) While at Morganza the men suffered alternately with heat and cold rains, being without shelter or change of clothing.

On the 11th of October encamped at Carrollton, Louisiana, where the regiment remained until October 23rd, health much improved. October 24th the division steamed out with sealed orders, and was overhauled by a severe gale, which was weathered by most of the vessels of the fleet.

November 1st arrived in sight of Brazos de Santiago, (coast of Texas) and landed on the 4th, after making, with the Twentieth Wisconsin, an unsuccessful effort to land through the surf, at the mouth of the Rio Grande, in which seven out of ten surf boats, loaded with men, were either swamped or upset, losing miraculously, however, only four men by drowning. A portion of the division, including Company G. (provost guard of the division) proceeded to Brownsville, and a detachment of the regiment (with there exceptions) on the 6th crossed the Lagoon Del Madre, to Point Isabel, where it remained, suffering from great scarcity of water, and want of cooking utensils and baggage, until the 13th.

November 15th, the regiment re-embarked and landed, with a portion of the division, on the south end of Mustang Island, in the evening. At 9 a.m. on the 17th, it arrived at the north end of the island, (about 25 miles distant,) after a very fatiguing march, the men drawing by hand two pieces of artillery, carrying their knapsacks and sixty rounds of ammunition, this after about two weeks of confinement aboard ship. About one hundred of the enemy, with three pieces of heavy artillery, were at this end of the island, guarding the Arkansas inlet. The enemy surrendered as soon as our forces appeared.

The regiment remained on Mustang Island about seven months. Out of wrecked lumber, procured on and near the island, they erected barracks. The monotony of garrison duty was varied somewhat by expeditions of detachments from the regiment to the main land. Some prisoners and a couple of schooners were captured, but no organized body of the enemy was encountered on these expeditions. It was the most restful period in the history of the regiment.

On June 24, 1864, the regiment embarked at Mustang Island and was conveyed to Brazos Santiago, and from there it marched to Brownsville, Texas, where it remained, doing garrison duty until July 29th, when it started on its return to Brazos Santiago, and
from there returned by sea to New Orleans, arriving there and going into its old camp at Carrollton, August 6th.

Here it remained but a short time when it was conveyed by steamer to Fort Gaines, Alabama, which, however, had surrendered before the arrival of the regiment. It disembarked at Mobile Point, and participated in the siege of Fort Morgan, which surrendered August 23, 1864. During all these movements Colonel Dye was detached from the regiment and in command of a brigade, Lieutenant Colonel Leake was still a prisoner of war, Major Thompson had resigned, and the regiment had alternately been under the command of Captains M.L. Thompson and Edward Coulter.

On September 7th the regiment proceeded by steamer to New Orleans and thence up the river to Morganza, Louisiana. During the voyage an accident occurred to the machinery of the vessel, and five men of the Twentieth Iowa were badly scalded by escaping steam; three of them jumped overboard and were drowned.

At Morganza Lieutenant Colonel Leake rejoined the regiment, having regained his liberty by an exchange of prisoners. He received a glad welcome from the officers and men, who had become greatly attached to him and had complete confidence in his courage and ability. With full appreciation of this feeling towards him, he again assumed the command of the regiment.

On the 12th of October orders were received to embark the command and move up the Mississippi to the mouth of White River, thence to Devalls Bluff, and disembark. There, and at Brownsville, the regiment was encamped until January 1865.

During this period of its service the Twentieth Iowa was part of the time engaged in scouting in the surrounding country, but was most of the time performing garrison duty and erecting fortifications. Many of its men were on the sick list, the prevailing disease being scurvy. A quantity of sanitary stores were sent to the regiment from Iowa, and were used with excellent effect, and when the regiment left Arkansas, on the 8th of January, the health of the men had greatly improved.

Its next place of encampment was near Kennerville, Louisiana, where it remained until February 16th, on which date it embarked for Pensacola Bay, Florida, and, after a voyage without incident, went into camp at Florida Point, remaining there until the commencement of the Mobile campaign, in which it was an active participant. On the march to Mobile which was very toilsome, the regiment attracted the attention of the division commander to such a marked extent as to cause him to make special mention of its conduct in a General Order thanking all the troops under his command. The order is here quoted as follows:

General Orders number 8.
Headquarters Second Division Thirteenth Army Corps in the field March 28, 1865.

I the General commanding appreciated the ready and generous efforts of the troops in promoting this difficult march. These labors assure future success, and every patriot will feel grateful to the soldiers who have endured them. The General particularly thanks Lieutenant Colonel J.B. Leake, commanding the Twentieth Iowa Volunteers, for the valuable and rapid service of his regiment this morning, showing by
the amount done, how much can be accomplished by officers giving their personal interest and attention to their duty.

By order of Brigadier General C.C. Andrews, George Monroe, Assistant Adjutant General.

The regiment participated in the siege of Fort Blakely, performing all the duties assigned to it, but fortunately sustained only the single casualty of one man wounded. On April 14th, the regiment was conveyed across the bay to the city of Mobile, where it was engaged in the performance of provost guard duty until July 8, 1865, on which date it was mustered out of the service of the United States. The regiment was then conveyed to Clinton, Iowa, where it was disbanded July 27, 1865.

The record of the Twentieth Iowa is an honorable one, while the regiment was engaged in but one hard fought battle in the open field, it was no fault of its gallant officers and men that it did not participate in more of the great battles of the war. They went where they were ordered to go, and performed every duty required of them. They endured as much suffering upon the march, in bivouac, in camp and siege, as any regiment which the state of Iowa sent into the field. They are therefore entitled to the gratitude of every patriotic citizen of the state and nation for the service they have rendered to both. Their names and the record of their service, contained in these pages, will be handed down to their posterity; and to those who can trace their lineage to the brave and faithful men of the Twentieth Iowa may justly claim as proud a heritage as was ever bestowed upon the descendants of those who fought and suffered and died in a righteous cause.

Summary of Casualties

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<table>
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<tr>
<td>Total enrollment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Killed and drowned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wounded</td>
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<td>Died of wounds</td>
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<td>Discharged of disease, wounds or other causes</td>
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<td>Buried in national cemeteries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captured</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferred</td>
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Contributed by: Randy Allen

The Battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, otherwise known as Fayetteville, which the 20th Iowa Regiment fought in on December 7, 1862, resulted in a Union victory. Estimated casualties at the Battle of Prairie Grove numbered 2,568 (U.S. 1,251; C.S. 1,317).
The Battle of Vicksburg, Mississippi, which the 20th Iowa Regiment fought in during June and July 1863, resulted in a Union victory. The principle commanders at Vicksburg were Major General Ulysses S. Grant, commanding Union forces, and Lt. General John C. Pemberton, commanding Confederate forces. The Union victories at the Battles of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, which occurred simultaneously, are considered turning points in the Civil War that eventually led to Union victory. The Vicksburg victory gave the Union control of the Mississippi River, effectively splitting the Confederacy in half, and provided a much needed supply route. Casualties sustained at the battle for Vicksburg numbered approximately 19,233 (U.S. 10,142; C.S. 9,091). The victory at Vicksburg was the culmination of one of the most brilliant military campaigns of the war, and ultimately led to Ulysses S. Grant being appointed as General-in-Chief of the Union armies.

For the following detailed regimental history, from a soldier’s perspective, of the 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry, we are indebted to L.L. Wilson, of Center Point, Iowa. The work from which it is taken is a copy of a pamphlet written by Lieut. J. Wilkins Moore, who relied upon a diary, kept by Wm. L. Culbertson, of Company G. L.L. Wilson served in the regiment alongside William Henry Reece. Wilson served in Company B, whereas William Henry served in Company F. The statements herein contained may, therefore, be relied upon as accurate. This history came from the Civil War record of Linn County, Iowa, pgs.428-429, found within the History of Linn County, Iowa 1878.
3 P.M., the Metropolitan, with her load of patriot soldiers, shoved off from the shore and started down the river. Cheer on cheer rent the air from those on shore and those on board, and announced the departure of the regiment. Handkerchiefs were waved, as long as there remained any hope of their being seen. On arriving at Montrose, the men were transferred to barges and flatboats, and passed down to Keokuk and over the rapids at that point. On the 6th, they were transferred to the steamer Northerner, and at daylight of the 7th, started down the river, arriving at St. Louis in the evening. The regiment disembarked on the 8th, and marched to Benton Barracks, where they were comfortably quartered. There they remained until the 14th, drilling twice a day, when the regiment were ordered on board the cars, at the Pacific Railroad depot. Arriving at Rolla in the evening, they disembarked, and went into camp on the 16th. The regiment then started on the first and hardest march of its existence, making sixteen miles, and encamping on the banks of the “Little Piney,” where the Nineteenth Iowa, Twentieth Wisconsin and Ninety-fourth Illinois were already in camp.

From the 16th of September to the 3rd of October, the regiment made 172 miles, not marching continually. October 5th, the advance guard attacked the rebels’ rear guard. The regiment was drawn up in line of battle, but did not participate in the engagement, as the “reb’s” took to their heels. The regiment took up the line of march again on the 9th, and on the 17th, went into camp on the battle field of “Pea Ridge,” having made forty-four miles, and remained in camp four days. The regiment left many of its men in the hospital, at Cassville. On the 21st, the men were again on the move, and kept up light marches during the rest of the month, when they went into camp in Osage Springs, having marched back twenty-one miles from Fayetteville, Arkansas November 2nd, the regiment took up the march again, and kept it up until the 20th, going into camp at “Camp Lyon,” in Missouri. The weather was very bad, and the boys suffered greatly. On December 3rd, the regiment started under marching orders, and kept it up until the 7th, when it went into the engagement at Prairie Grove. Having made eighty-five miles, the regiment crossed Illinois Creek, and took up a position behind Murphy’s Battery, in a small ravine. General Herron had encountered the enemy, and a battle was in progress. During the afternoon, the regiment advanced upon the enemy’s line; and the members of the Twentieth remember the occurrences of that day better than they would be recorded here. General Hindman had been defeated, and fled precipitately, leaving his dead and wounded upon the field.

The regiment remained in camp until the 26th, when it was ordered out on a six days scout, and returned to camp, at Prairie Grove, on the 31st, having marched ninety miles. Captured the town of Van Buren, on the Arkansas River, together with five steamboats, and a large amount of commissary stores. The boys destroyed the steamboats and stores, and returned to camp. January 1, 1863, the regiment had orders to march, but did not leave camp until the 2nd, when they started out on the 5th. Went into “Camp Rosecrans,” on the War Eagle, where they lay until the 9th. The 20th then marched fourteen miles to Huntsville, where they remained until the 18th, and then started out in the mud and rain. On the 19th, they went into “Camp Stuck-in-the-mud,” and “stuck” there until the 22nd, when they resumed the march and went into “Camp Lost-in-the-woods.” Short marches were kept up until the 31st, when they went into quarters in Camp Schufield, where they remained.
until the 13th of February, drilling and cleaning up drill grounds. [William Henry Reece was promoted to Fifth Corporal on February 6, 1863.] On the 14th, the camp was moved four miles to a better position, and was called “Camp Bliss.” March 1st, the regiment broke camp and marched five days, having marched seventy-five miles. Remained in camp until the 14th, when the regiment moved under marching orders until the 16th, when they went into “Camp on Elk River,” and remained there until April 3rd, when the march was again taken up until the 7th. During this tramp the boys made fifty-five miles. Remained in camp until the 22nd. During the soldiers’ stay in this place, which they called “Camp Totten,” they were reviewed by General Herron, and the Scott County boys received a beautiful silk flag. On the 24th, the men went to Rolla, and on the 24th to St. Louis, where they remained doing guard duty until the 30th. On May 4th, broke camp and marched to “Camp Gamble,” once famous as “Camp Johnson,” the scene of General Lyon’s first military exploit. Remained in camp until the 15th, when they started on the cars for “Pilot Knob,” where they remained doing drill duty until the 3rd of June, when they started, at 3 P.M., under marching orders, and halted at 8 P.M., having made fifteen miles. Arrived at St. Genevieve on the 5th, and marched aboard the transports awaiting them. The 20th went on board the J.D. Perry; started down the river on the 7th; passed many objects of interest. Arrived at the mouth of the Yazoo River, in plain view of the besieged city of Vicksburg. At this place the men were ordered to Haines’ bluff; and upon their arrival there, were ordered back to Young’s Point, where they landed. On the 12th, marched across Young’s point; and on the 13th, crossed the river and camped. On the 14th, the force was moved up, and took their position in the line of investing forces. The division was located on the extreme left of the Union troops, and the right of the rebel line. From the 15th to the 30th, the regiment took an active part in the siege, rapidly rushing forward their works, laboring night and day. Large numbers became sick, and the regiment was very much reduced. The fatigues and exposures of the siege proved too much for some of the men.

The day after the regiment took up their position they advanced the rifle pits 300 yards, and continued to advance, until the capitulation. The regiment planted, during this time, eighteen pieces of field artillery in front of their division, besides the siege guns. On the 30th, the regiment had four siege guns planted in front of their brigade, and were mounting more every day. Up to this time, only four or five men had been wounded in the regiment. July 1st and 2nd, the regiment pushed forward their works.

At 10 A.M., on the morning of the 3rd, a white flag was displayed along the entire line of the enemy’s works. Hostilities were at once suspended; and while Generals Grant and Pemberton were arranging the terms of surrender, the boys were all busy holding consultation with the rebels between the two lines of works. On the morning of the 4th, at 10 A.M., the Twentieth had the honor of leading their division into the rebel works, and of being the first on the left to plant their flag on the battlements of Vicksburg. On the 10th, the regiment received marching orders, and on the 11th embarked on transports, and arrived at Yazoo City on the 13th. The rebels fled on the approach of the men, leaving in the hands of the Federal forces five large siege guns and plenty of ammunition.

The regiment did scouting duty until the 21st, when they embarked on the transports and went down to Vicksburg. On the 24th, the regiment went aboard the Iatan, and on the 26th disembarked at Port Hudson—went into camp and remained until the 15th.
of August. The regiment became very much reduced by sickness, and several of the men died from fever, contracted at Vicksburg.

[This account of the Twentieth Regimental history continues to the conclusion of the war in April 1865. I have omitted the rest of this history because William Henry Reece did not live to see the end of the war.]

William Henry Reece served for about a year. He was promoted to Fourth Corporal on August 14, 1863; he died that same day at the age of 18 at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, Missouri. William died after having contracted an unknown disease. William died almost a year to the day after he enlisted into the ranks of the 20th Iowa Volunteer Infantry.

Fourth Corporal, William Henry Reece, is buried in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, St. Louis, Missouri. The records of Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery list our William H. Reece as having been buried on the same day that he died; that being August 14, 1863. His grave, as recorded in Reece family records, is located in section 31, grave 45, Co. F, 20th Iowa Infantry. The records of Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery list William's grave as plot 31-0-2552.

It is my understanding that more soldiers died during the Civil War by disease than by the wounds they sustained in battle. William Henry Reece is just one such soldier that succumbed to disease. William was one of the estimated 620,000 Americans that died as a result of the Civil War. This number does not just include the soldiers that died, it includes civilians as well, men, women and children. 620,000 is an astonishing number when one considers the fact that more Americans died in the Civil War than in all the nation's wars combined.

I have spent some time trying to figure out how William ended up dying at Jefferson Barracks. Jefferson Barracks was a field hospital during the Civil War. Soldiers were often brought to Jefferson Barracks from the field by steamboats traveling the Mississippi River. By March 1862, due to the increase in illnesses and casualties, the military aspect of Jefferson Barracks took a secondary role in order to provide additional hospital space for the Army Medical Department. Although a Post Hospital had previously existed, the General Hospital opened in April 1862. By the summer of 1862, it was enlarged to accommodate 2,500 patients. Steamboats, outfitted as floating hospitals supplemented bed space, as well as providing transportation to and from the battlefields. There were times during the Civil War that Jefferson Barracks was treating more sick and wounded soldiers than any other hospital in the nation and many of these soldiers never left Jefferson Barracks and were ultimately buried there.

William Henry Reece may have been one of the soldiers that we read about in the previous histories of the 20th Iowa Volunteer Regiment that contracted a sickness at Vicksburg and subsequently died from fever. William evidently contracted a disease in the field, whether or not it was while he was at Vicksburg is hard to say. Due to the fact that daily musters were not recorded at every battle, I am not even sure that William fought at the Battle of Vicksburg with his regiment. I assume that he did. I assume that William was with his regiment everywhere it went from the time the regiment was
formed up until and during the Battle of Vicksburg. Irregardless of when and where
William became sick in the field, he more than likely arrived at Jefferson Barracks via the
Mississippi River. In reviewing the Civil War record of William’s regiment, several
soldiers of his regiment, including some of his company, are listed as having died at St.
Louis; I assume at Jefferson Barracks. These soldiers, like William, would have been
brought to Jefferson Barracks from the field for treatment; they never left.

Jefferson Barracks had a post cemetery for many decades prior to the Civil War,
but due to the large amount of casualties in the western theater, it became a National
Cemetery in 1863 under the authority of an Act of Congress passed on July 17, 1862. In
the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery are the graves of approximately 12,000 Union
veterans, 1,140 Confederates, and over 3,300 unknowns from the Civil War. There are
soldiers from virtually every state involved in the war from North and South, Union and
Confederate. At rest here are generals and privates; there are black soldiers, white
soldiers, unknown soldiers, and even women and children, all victims of the war. There
are soldiers from the battles of Shiloh, Fort Donelson, Fort Henry, Pea Ridge and many
others, as well as numerous Medal of Honor recipients buried here.

Today, Jefferson Barracks is a county park located a few miles south of the city of
St. Louis, Missouri. The Jefferson Barracks Military Complex is today the oldest
operational military installation west of the Mississippi River. Jefferson Barracks
features a military post that was used during the Civil War, and many of the buildings
still remain. The original barracks still stand and serve as a working reserve base.
Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery comprises more than 300 acres and still remains as
one of the four primary components of the Jefferson Barracks Historic Complex.

With the death of William Henry Reece, his father lost his last remaining family
member from his first marriage with Juliana Lane. David Reece’s granddaughter, Mrs.
Huldah (Reece) Kincade, wrote that she overheard her grandparents, David and Anna
Reece, reminiscing about the old days quite often; according to Kincade, those reminiscences
many times centered on William Henry. Given the time period and circumstances of
William Henry’s death, I would not at all be surprised if David and Anna had no
knowledge of the experiences and hardships that William endured in defense of the
reasons he went to war. I am certain that William Henry’s family had no specific
knowledge of the exact circumstances that led to his death. Even today, not all of the
circumstances that ultimately led to William’s death are known. But, we probably have
more of an understanding today about William’s service and the circumstances that
ultimately led to his death than his family had knowledge of at the time.

I would be very surprised if William’s father and stepmother at any point during
their lives made the trip to St. Louis, Missouri to see their son’s grave. They may not
have had the means necessary by which to make the trip. I do not know of anybody
within the family, past or present, that has made the trip to see William’s final place of
rest. I intend to make the trip someday.
Abraham Ward Reece
2nd child of David and Kittorah Ann (Conner) Reece

Abraham Ward Reece is my great-great grandfather. He was born on October 7, 1853 near Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa. He was more than likely born on his parent’s Hickory Grove Farm. Abraham was likely named after his uncle, Abraham J. Ward. Our subject often went by Abram.

Abram is the second child of David and Kittorah Reece. Abram was born two years after his parent’s homesteaded on prairie land three and-a-half miles east of Troy Mills, Iowa. This ground later became known as the Hickory Grove Farm, operated by Abram’s father, David Reece, in section 12 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. I speculate that Abram may have been born in a log cabin that was built by his parents on their farm shortly after they arrived in Spring Grove. I come to this conclusion because we know that the first Spring Grove election was held in his parent’s log home on April 3, 1854, which was six months after Abram’s birth. Abram spent his childhood years growing up on his parent’s farm. He appears to have spent the first few years of his life growing up in his parent’s log home. The log home was subsequently replaced with a brick home.

At the time of Abram’s birth, his parents and siblings were residing up their family farm. With Abram’s addition to the family, he became a brother to his siblings: William and Hannah. Abram’s parents were farmers; he and his siblings certainly helped out on the family farm throughout their childhoods by performing farm chores. Abram
and his siblings surely would have been an indispensable part of the operation of the Hickory Grove Farm, especially when they reached an age where they could handle horse drawn implements.

Between the years of 1855 and 1869, Abram became a brother to seven siblings; namely: James, born in 1855; Floyd, born in 1858; Rebecca, born in 1860; William and Mary, born in 1864; Curtis, born in 1866; and Anna, born in 1869. All of these siblings were likely born upon the Hickory Grove Farm in Abram’s presence. Abram would have spent his youth growing up with his siblings on the family farm. His sibling, James, died at four years of age on September 4, 1859 when Abram was five. James likely died upon the family farm. He is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. During Abram’s youth, he witnessed the untimely passing of other family members, in addition to James, that died at an early age.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that Abram was then 6 years old and living with his parents on their farm. This census recorded that in addition to Abram, his father’s household on July 9, 1860 included: his father David, age 36, mother Kittorah A., age 30; brother William H., age 15; sister Hannah A., age 8; brother Norval F., age 2; and sister Rebecca A., age 3 months. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa with the exception of William H., Abram’s half-brother, who was born in Ohio. Like Abram, his siblings were all probably born on the Hickory Grove Farm.

Abram, along with his siblings, would have acquired their education from the local country schools located near their family farm. They surely would have walked to school together on a daily basis from their home upon the Hickory Grove Farm. One of the country schools that Abram likely attended was one that once sat about a mile southeast of the Hickory Grove Farm. The site where this old schoolhouse once sat can now be found at the present address of 5766 Seven Hills Road, Coggon, Iowa. The old schoolhouse that once was located at this address was evidently built on land that Abram’s father, David, donated for its construction. David is reported to have been a teacher at this school; so, it is conceivable that Abram and or his siblings may have attended this school while their father taught school there.

Abram was seven years old when the U.S. Civil War started on April 12, 1861. In less than two and-a-half years, the war would claim a member of Abram’s immediate family.

Abram was eight years old when his mother, Kittorah, died on February 26, 1862 at the age of 35. Abram undoubtedly attended his mother’s funeral and subsequent burial at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Eight months after his mother’s death, Abram’s oldest brother, William, left the family home to serve in the Civil War after enlisting in the Union army. At the age of eight, Abram more than likely said goodbye to William before he left the family farm to serve in the war; as it turned out, it would be the last time that Abram would see his brother.

A little over a year after his mother’s death, Abram was nine when his father remarried to Anna (Conner) Klingaman on June 8, 1863 in Vinton, Iowa. Whether or not Abram attended their wedding is unknown. Anna was a cousin to Abram’s mother. With David and Anna’s marriage, Anna subsequent brought her children from her previous
marriage into Abram’s childhood home upon the Hickory Grove Farm. Anna’s children subsequently became step-siblings to Abram. One would think that Abram would have found the living conditions within his father’s house as being rather crowded with his step-siblings moving into the home. Abram and his siblings were likely living together in their father’s home at the time Anna and her children moved in.

Two months after the marriage of Abram’s father to Anna Klingaman, Abram would have been nine years old when his brother William died on August 14, 1863 while serving in the Union army during the Civil War.

Abram became a half-brother when his father and stepmother started a family of their own with the birth of twins: William Clinton Reece and Marye Margaret Reece on September 23, 1864. Abram was 11 when his half-brother, William Clinton, died at the age of 10 months on July 24, 1865. Abram was 12 when the remaining twin, Marye Margaret, died at the age of 18 months on April 17, 1866. William and Marye were buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery; Abram was more than likely in attendance. Abram later became a half-brother to two more siblings when his father and stepmother became the parents of: Curtis, born in 1866, and Anna, born in 1869. We know that Curtis was born upon the family farm, and we can be pretty sure that Anna was as well. Abram was probably living upon the family farm when Curtis and Anna were born.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that Abram was then 15 years old and living with his father and stepmother on their farm. This census recorded that Abram’s father was a farmer and his stepmother was ‘keeping house’ at the time of this census. As recorded by the 1870 census, in addition to Abram, his father’s household on July 6, 1870 consisted of: his father David, age 46; stepmother Anna, age 41; sister Hannah, age 18; stepsister Maria, age 13; brother Floyd, age 12; stepsister Gertrude, age 10; sister Annette, age 10; half-brother Curtis, age 3; and half-sister Annie, age 8 months and 12 days. This census recorded that there was also a 2 year old boy in the household at that time; his name is unreadable in the census record. His initials appear to be C.W.L. I do not know who this could have been. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa with the exception of Maria born in Ohio. Maria and Gertrude are from Anna Reece’s previous marriage to Stephan Klingaman.

Abram was 18 years old when his sister Hannah died on February 14, 1872 at the age of 20 years, 4 months and 19 days. She is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Abram more than likely attended Hannah’s funeral and burial.

A marriage license was issued in Linn County, Iowa on January 1, 1875 to Abram Ward Reece and a Mary Hemphill. This evidently is our Abram Reece. This license was issued upon the authority of one J. Wickham. This apparently was Simeon J. Wickham, Justice of the Peace of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, who would have been a family friend of, and neighbor to, Abram’s father. Linn County, Iowa marriage records state that this marriage was not solemnized or performed. The reason why Abram and Mary did not go through with their marriage is yet unknown.

The year 1876 marked the centennial celebration of the birth of the United States. Abram was 22 years old and was very likely a farmer in the Troy Mills area during the observance of the nation’s 100th birthday on July 4, 1876. The July 4th celebration of 1876 occurred shortly after a stunning defeat of the American army took place on the Montana frontier on June 25, 1876. This event is now called: The Battle of the Little...
Bighorn. In 1876, the American frontier was rapidly shrinking. When Abram’s father settled on his Hickory Grove Farm in 1851, Iowa was on the verge of the American frontier; within just 25 years, changes had and were taking place that would transform Iowa from its frontier landscape forever.

At the age of 22, Abram Reece married 17 year old Angelina Betzer on August 21, 1876 in Buchanan County, Iowa. Angelina was born on November 18, 1858 near Troy Mills, Iowa. The marriage record of Angeline’s second marriage, in 1898, lists that she was born in Linn County, Iowa. Angeline is the daughter of John Ray Betzer and Caroline Chaney. Abram and Angeline are my great-great grandparents.

Abram and Angeline’s marriage took place a year and-a-half after the marriage license was issued to Abram and Mary Hemphill on January 1, 1875. As has been mentioned previously, I do not know why Abram and Mary did not go through with their planned wedding. Given the fact that Abram did marry relatively soon after his marriage license to Mary Hemphill was issued, I speculate that Abram may have had second thoughts about marrying Mary and decided instead to pursue Angeline Betzer. Or, it is certainly possible, that Mary may have died after the issuance of the marriage license between her and Abram; thus, explaining why their marriage never took place. We likely will never know why their marriage did not take place.

Angelina Betzer’s father, John Ray Betzer, was born on April 25, 1816 in Ross County, Ohio to Peter Betzer and Barbara Rachel Ray. While yet a child, John removed to Fairfield County, Ohio and settled near what was known as Betzer’s Church, some six miles from Canal Winchester, Ohio. Here he grew to manhood. John Betzer married Caroline Chaney on December 5, 1840 in Canal Winchester, Fairfield County, Ohio. Caroline Chaney was born on November 16, 1822 in Canal Winchester, Fairfield County, Ohio to John Chaney Sr. and Mary Ann Lafeur. John and Mary are buried in Canal Winchester, Ohio. John Betzer’s parents, Peter and Barbara, are also buried in Canal Winchester, Ohio.

It would have been in or near Canal Winchester, Ohio where John and Caroline Betzer’s children, namely: Eliza, Mary, William, and George were born. John and Caroline came to Linn County, Iowa in 1855; settling near Troy Mills. According to John Betzer’s obituary, he moved his family to Iowa in the year 1855. Near Troy Mills, John and Caroline had three more children; Angeline being one of them. It is at Troy Mills where John Betzer died on September 21, 1895. Caroline died on August 27, 1898 at Troy Mills. Her funeral service was held at the Spring Grove Church east of Troy Mills. John and Caroline were married for nearly 55 years; they are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.
A young Angelina (Betzer) Reece
This is a photo of Angeline and Abram Reece. This is probably their wedding photo. This is the only known photo of Abram in existence.
Historian Isaac Holman wrote that a John Betzer, who I assume to be Angeline’s father, located on the north side of the Wapsipinicon River in section 2 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa in 1853. By 1894, Betzer owned 40 acres within the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of section 2 within Spring Grove Township. Betzer homesteaded in Spring Grove two years after Abram’s father came here in 1851. Betzer’s farm was located approximately one mile to the northwest from the farm of David Reece, Abram’s father. Abram Reece and Angeline Betzer lived in the same area during their childhoods; both having grown up on the farms of their respective parents. This would explain how Abram and Angeline met and subsequently married.

As recorded by the 1860 U.S. Census, Angeline Betzer was living within her father’s household in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa on July 9, 1860. John R. Betzer’s household at that time consisted of: himself, age 44, a farmer; his wife Caroline, age 38; daughter Eliza J., age 19; daughter Mary A., age 17; son Irving, age 11; son George, age 9; son Peter, age 5; and daughters: Angeline and Adaline, ages 1. The 1860 census recorded that all members of the Betzer household were born in Ohio with the exception of Peter, Angeline and Adaline, born in Iowa. This census suggests that Angeline and Adaline must have been twin sisters. In a conversation that I had with a Nellie May (Peyton) Ayers of Marion, Iowa, a granddaughter of Abram and Angeline Reece, Ayers confirmed that Angeline had a twin sister named Adaline.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that John R. Betzer’s post office was then Spring Grove, Iowa. Thus, we know that John and his family were residing near the community of Spring Grove at the time of this census. It is my understanding that the community of Spring Grove was located east of Troy Mills near the present day Spring Grove Church. This census listed John Betzer’s real estate and personal property as then being valued at $600 and $510 respectively.

Sometime between July 9, 1860 and July 30, 1870, John Betzer and his family moved from Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa to Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. This would have been a relatively short move in total distance.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 30, 1870, that John Betzer’s household of Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa then consisted of: himself, age 54; wife Caroline, age 48; daughter Mary, age 28; son George, age 18; son Peter, age 15; and daughters: Angeline and Adaline, ages 11. This census lists John’s occupation as then being a farmer. It also listed Caroline’s occupation as ‘keeping house’ and Mary’s as a day laborer.

As recorded by the 1880 U.S. Census, John and Caroline Betzer were still living in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa on June 25, 1880. John’s household on June 25, 1880, as recorded by this census, included: himself, age 60; wife Caroline, age 55; daughter Mary Ann, age 36; and son-in-law Loraine Sweeney, age 38. This census tells us that John was then a farmer and that Caroline was ‘keeping house’ at the time.

John and Caroline Betzer are the parents of:

1. Eliza Jane (Betzer) Peyton, born November 26, 1841; died October 27, 1917.
2. Mary Ann Betzer, born on October 15, 1843; died December 18, 1914.
3. William Irving Betzer Sr., born on July 12, 1850; died January 5, 1871.
4. George Lefeur Betzer, born May 7, 1851; died August 14, 1920.
5. Peter Betzer, born August 12, 1856; died July 3, 1937.
6. Adaline Betzer, born November 18, 1858; died after 1870.
7. Angelina (Betzer) Reece/Reece, born on November 18, 1858; died April 7, 1948.

Adaline, Angeline’s twin, died sometime after July 30, 1870. She is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. There are no dates on her tombstone. In addition to Adaline, her siblings: Mary, William and Angeline are also buried in Lower Spring Grove.

Abram Reece appears to have left his parent’s home sometime between 1870 and 1876. Abram probably left home at approximately 22 years of age, about the time when he married Angeline in 1876. Abram was living within his father’s household during the 1870 U.S. Census. By taking into account census records and when Abram and Angeline married, it would appear that Abram left his father’s home at about 22 years of age.

Abram was 23 when he and Angeline, age 18, started a family with the birth of their first child, Lillie Mae, on July 25, 1877. Abram and Angeline were apparently residing and farming near Troy Mills when Lillie was born. I come to this conclusion because Lillie was born near Troy Mills in Linn County, Iowa. At the time of Lillie’s birth, her parents appear to have been residing within section 2 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa.

The 1878 Linn County, Iowa directory found within the History of Linn County, Iowa 1878, lists an A.W. (Abram Ward) Reece, as then being a farmer in section 2 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This directory lists Abram with a P.O. Box of Troy Mills, Iowa. As indicated by this directory, Abram and his family were living a short distance to the west of his childhood home in 1878. They would have resided near his father and stepmother at that time. This 1878 directory lists Abram’s father, David, as then the owner of 148 acres, valued at $4,500, within section 12 of Spring Grove Township. David would have been farming his Hickory Grove Farm in 1878. The 1878 directory also tells us that Abram was then a neighbor to his uncle, Henry Reece, who also lived within section 2 of Spring Grove Township.

It would have been shortly after the 1878 Linn County, Iowa directory recorded that Abram Reece was then living in Spring Grove Township, that Abram, Angeline, and their daughter Lillie, moved from the Troy Mills area to near Riverton, Franklin County, Nebraska. They would have made this move to Riverton by wagon. Apparently, Abram and Angeline moved to Nebraska to homestead; just as his father had done by moving to Iowa from Ohio nearly 30 years before. Abram and Angeline would have begun farming upon moving to the Riverton area.

At their new home near Riverton, a second child, Effie Annette Reece, was born to Abram, age 26, and Angeline, age 21, on June 3, 1880. One story has it that Abram Reece and his family lived in a sod home in Nebraska. This story was told to me by descendant Nellie Ayers; again, she would be a granddaughter of Abram and Angeline Reece. Nellie told me that her mother, Effie Annette (Reece) Peyton, told her that when she and her parents lived in Nebraska that they lived in a sod home. Effie stated to her daughter Nellie that snakes would fall from the sod roof and into the house. Nellie recalled that her mother had a real hatred of snakes later on in life. Effie would have
been only a baby when she and her parents lived near Riverton, Nebraska. This snake story was likely handed down to Effie by her mother later in life.

It is entirely possible that Abram and Angeline Reece moved to the Riverton, Nebraska area to homestead with Angeline’s sister Eliza and her husband John Milton Peyton. John and Eliza Peyton reportedly had 8 children. Their first four children are reported to have been born near Troy Mills and Walker in Linn County, Iowa. Their fifth child, William Irving Peyton, was born about 1877 near either Walker, Iowa or Riverton, Nebraska. William died in Riverton when he was about two years of age from whooping cough. John and Eliza’s sixth child, Jessie Peyton, was born near Riverton, Franklin County, Nebraska on August 9, 1881. John and Eliza’s seventh child, Caroline Jane Peyton, was born at Walker, Iowa on June 7, 1883.

By taking into account when and where John and Eliza Peyton’s children were born, it definitely appears that John and Eliza may have accompanied Abram and Angeline Reece in homesteading in the Riverton area. The families of John Peyton and Abram Reece appear to have moved to the Riverton area at about the same time. Both families lived in the Riverton area at approximately the same time. Near Riverton, the Peytons and Reeces would likely have been neighbors to one another. Both families eventually left the Riverton area after living there a short time and returned to the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa. They appear to have returned to the Troy Mills area at about the same time. Abram Reece and his family returned in September 1880; whereas, the John Peyton family appears to have returned to Walker, Iowa sometime prior to June 1883, which is when their daughter Caroline was born. According to one source, John and Eliza’s sixth child, Jessie Peyton, was 3 years old when she and her parents moved back to Walker, Iowa from Riverton, Nebraska.

In addition to the families of Abram Reece and John Peyton, I know of at least two other families from the Troy Mills area that also moved to the Riverton, Nebraska area to homestead; these being the Joseph Austin and Reuben Walton families. This Reuben Walton would be: Reuben James Walton, formerly of Coggon, Iowa. He is the son of Josiah Hammond Walton and Maria Cunningham. Reuben Walton apparently grew up on his parent’s farm just north of the farm owned and operated by Abram Reece’s parents; this being the Hickory Grove Farm. Reuben Walton married Abram Reece’s half-sister, Maria Klingaman, in Troy Mills in 1873. According to Maria (Klingaman) Walton’s obituary, in 1882, Maria and her family moved to Nebraska to homestead at Walnut Grove. Reuben’s obituary states that he immigrated to Nebraska; locating near Walnut in 1879; later homesteading near Winnetoon. Unlike Abram Reece, Reuben Walton and his family stayed in Nebraska.

Abram and Angeline moved from the Riverton, Nebraska area and returned to the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa in the autumn of 1880. They evidently decided to return to Troy Mills after coming to the realization that they did not like the Riverton area and that they could not make a living there from the land. From the obituary of Effie Annette (Reece) Peyton, Abram and Angeline’s daughter, we know that Abram, Angeline, Lillie Mae, and Effie Annette Reece moved back to the Troy Mills vicinity sometime in September 1880, when Effie was 3 months old. Abram and his family traveled across the Nebraska and Iowa prairies in a wagon to return to Troy Mills. When they made this journey Abram would have been 26 years of age, Angeline was 21, daughter Lillie was 3,
and daughter Effie was just 3 months old. It must have been quite an experience for Abram and Angeline to have crossed such a long distance in a wagon with two young girls ages 3 years and 3 months.

We know that Abram and his family lived in the area of Riverton, Nebraska for no more than two years; those years encompass 1878 to 1880. I base this two year time frame on two facts. First, the fact that Abram is found in the 1878 directory of Linn County, Iowa, which recorded that he was then living within Spring Grove Township. Second, the fact that the obituary of Effie Annette (Reece) Peyton’s reads that she was born in Riverton and moved to the Troy Mills area in September 1880.

Nellie May (Peyton) Ayers told me that her mother, Effie Annette (Reece) Peyton, came back to Troy Mills with her parents, Abram and Angeline. Ayers stated that Effie and her family came back in a covered wagon pulled by oxen, and that they settled between Troy Mills and Coggon. Based upon what Ayers told me, Abram and Angeline, upon returning to the Troy Mills area, evidently moved back to Spring Grove Township. Upon returning from Nebraska in 1880, Abram and his family may have possibly moved back into section 2 of Spring Grove Township, which is where they resided at in 1878 as recorded by the directory of Linn County, Iowa of that year. I would imagine that Abram must have returned to farming within Spring Grove Township after he and his family returned from Nebraska. Upon their return from Nebraska, Abram, Angeline, and their two daughters, Lillie and Effie, more than likely lived in close proximity to the farm owned by his father in section 12 of Spring Grove Township.

I asked Ayers to recount some stories to me regarding Abram and Angeline’s residency near Riverton, Nebraska. Ayers recounted some stories that she had heard from her mother Effie; stories in which Effie heard from her mother Angeline. Ayers stated, “My mother said that there were miles apart from your neighbor, it was very scarcely populated there; and the wind blew all the time; she said there were storms and snakes. She had heard that from her mother, evidently, because she was only 3 months old when she left Nebraska. How glad they were to get in Iowa. They had a sod house and the snakes would come down through the roof. Grandma Reece (Angeline) hated snakes; if she’d see one she’d get the hoe and try to kill it right away. She just hated them. I know the Indians were pretty thick at that time. They’d come to the door and ask for food. They (Abram and Angeline) would give them food so, you know, that they’d go on and not bother them.”

Approximately two years after Abram and his family returned to Troy Mills from Riverton, Nebraska, Abram became a father again at the age of 29, when Angeline, age 23, gave birth to their third child, *William ‘Willie’ Milton Reece, on October 12, 1882. Willie was more than likely born in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. He appears to have been born near Troy Mills.

Five years after Abram and Angeline returned to Iowa, they were making a living as farmers in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. The Iowa census of 1885 recorded that Abram’s household then included: himself, age 31, wife Angeline, age 26; daughter Lilly M., age 7; daughter Effy, age 4; and son *William M., age 2. Since Abram and Angeline’s fourth child, Maud, is not found in this 1885 census record, this census data must have been recorded while Angeline was pregnant with Maud. I do not know where Abram’s household resided at, or where he farmed, at the time of this 1885 census.
census; it undoubtedly had to be somewhere in close proximity to Troy Mills. It is possible, and very likely, that Abram and Angeline were farmers living between Troy Mills and Coggon, Iowa in 1885.

Abram was 31 when Angeline, age 26, gave birth to their fourth child, Maud Reece, in Linn County, Iowa near Troy Mills on June 28, 1885. According to one source, The History of Buchanan County, Iowa 1990, Maud was born in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. I believe that Maud was probably born in Spring Grove Township because that is where her parents appear to have been residing at the time of her birth. Maud was Abram and Angeline’s last child; probably not by choice, but by fate.

Abram did not get an opportunity to see any of his kids grow up, because he died on December 27, 1886 at the age of 33 following a heart attack. I would imagine that Abram’s funeral service was likely held at the Spring Grove Church, which was and still is located a short distance east from Abram's childhood home: the Hickory Grove Farm. Abram was survived by his wife Angeline, age 28; daughter Lillie, age 9; daughter Effie, age 6; son *William, age 4; and daughter Maud, age 1. Abram died at approximately the same age as did his mother, who died at the age of 35. Abram is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. The records of this cemetery list that Abram’s burial plot was owned by his half-brother Curtis. I assume that Curtis purchased this plot for Abram’s burial.

*William Milton Reece, age 4. This photo was taken around the time of his father’s death.
Nellie Ayers told me that Angeline went to work milking cows for farmers after Abram’s death. Angeline remained single for 12 years following his death. How she raised her four children during that time and where is unknown. Angeline and her children undoubtedly continued to live in the vicinity of Troy Mills after Abram’s death and up until her second marriage. Angeline remarried to Abram’s first cousin, Ether Hiatt Reece, on December 25, 1898. Hiatt is a son of Henry and Lucretia Reece.

I would imagine that it must have been difficult for Angeline to have raised her four children, alone, after Abram’s death. I believe that it is very likely that during the 12 year period of time between Abram’s death and her marriage to Hiatt Reece, that Angeline and her children may have been taken in by family on either the Reece or Betzer side residing in the Troy Mills area. It is entirely possible that Angeline and her children may have moved into the home of her father and mother-in-law, David and Anna Reece, after Abram’s death. Since the 1890 U.S. Census does not exist, due to a fire which destroyed that census record, we can not determine where Angeline and her children resided at in 1890.

The children of Abram and Angeline Reece are:

1. **Lillie Mae (Reece) Steele**, born July 25, 1877.
Floyd Norval Reece
4th child of David and Kittorah Ann (Conner) Reece

Floyd Norval Reece was born on April 5, 1858 in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. He was likely born at his parent’s farmhouse upon their Hickory Grove Farm. At the time of his birth, Floyd became a brother to four siblings: William, Hannah, Abram and James. Floyd’s youth would have been spent with his siblings on their family farm and in the surrounding area of Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa.

Floyd was a little over a year old when his brother James died at the age of four on September 4, 1859. Besides James, several other siblings of Floyd’s met untimely deaths from various causes. The majority of these siblings were laid to rest in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. One would assume that Floyd was present for their burials.

At the age of two, Floyd became a brother to Rebecca Annette Reece when she was born on May 20, 1860. She was likely born in the same house upon their parent’s Hickory Grove Farm as was Floyd.

Two months after Rebecca’s birth, the 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that Floyd was then two years old and living within his father’s household in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Floyd would have been living with his parents on their Hickory Grove Farm at the time of this census. The household of David Reece, Floyd’s father, on July 9, 1860 consisted of: David, age 36, a farmer; wife Kittorah A., age 30; son William H., age 15; daughter Hannah A., age 8; son *Abram W., age 6; son Norval F., age 2; and daughter Rebecca A., age 3 months.

Floyd did not get an opportunity to know his mother because she died on February 26, 1862 when he was three years old. It is not known who took care of Floyd
in a motherly way immediately after his mother’s death. A female relative more than likely took the role of being Floyd’s mother after his mother’s untimely death. In a little over a year after his mother’s death, the widow Anna (Conner) Klingaman became Floyd’s stepmother when she married Floyd’s father in June 1863. Floyd would have been five years old when Anna became his stepmother.

Upon Anna Klingaman’s marriage to David Reece, she and her children from a previous marriage moved into Floyd’s childhood home upon the Hickory Grove Farm. Floyd and his siblings would have shared their home and their things with their new found step-siblings.

Floyd’s 18 year old brother William died in August 1863 while serving in the Union army during the Civil War. Floyd was five years old when this oldest brother died. William probably said his goodbyes to Floyd before leaving their family farm to serve his country. Floyd may or may not have remembered that day because he would have only been four years old at the time. Floyd probably had very few memories of William throughout his life.

Floyd was six years old when his father and stepmother, David and Anna, started a family of their own with the birth of their twin son and daughter: William and Mary in September 1864. Both twins died within a year and-a-half of their births and were buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

In September 1866, Floyd would have been eight years old. He was likely present on his families’ farm when his half-brother Curtis was born to David and Anna on September 19, 1866. We know that Curtis was born at the Hickory Grove Farm; thus, he had to have been born in the farmhouse there as his siblings that came before likely had.

Floyd was 11 when his stepsister Anna Irene was born on November 6, 1869. Anna too was likely born at the family home upon the Hickory Grove Farm as was her brother Curtis.

Floyd’s education would have been acquired through his attendance of the country schools located near his parent’s Hickory Grove Farm. Floyd and his siblings likely attended school together; and they very likely walked to school together from their parent’s home.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that Floyd was then 12 years old and living with his father and stepmother on their farm. This census recorded that Floyd’s father was a farmer and that his stepmother was ‘keeping house’ at the time of this census. As indicated by the 1870 U.S. Census record, the household that Floyd was a part of on July 6, 1870 consisted of: his father David, age 46; mother Anna, age 41; sister Hannah, age 18; brother *Abram, age 15; stepsister Maria, age 13; stepsister Gertrude, age 10; sister Annette, age 10; half-brother Curtis, age 3; and half-sister Annie, 8 months and 12 days old.

Floyd’s 20 year old sister Hannah died on February 14, 1872 when he was 13 years old. He was likely living upon the family farm when Hannah died; she more than likely died on the farm in Floyd’s presence.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that on June 26, 1880, that Floyd was then 22 years old and residing with his parents on their farm. The household that Floyd was a part of at the time of this census consisted of: his father David, age 56; mother Annie, age 52; half-brother Curtis, age 3; and half-sister Rena, age 10. According to this census
record, their occupations at the time of this census were listed as: David a farmer; Annie a housekeeper; Floyd at home, in school; Rena at school; and Curtis at home. By the time of this census, Floyd was probably a large part of the labor behind the operation of the Hickory Grove Farm.

Floyd likely would have left his parent’s home to start out on his own shortly after the 1880 U.S. Census was taken. He certainly would have been on his own sometime between 1880 and 1886.

Floyd married Alamina Lulu Freeman, the daughter of John and May (Sutton) Freeman, on February 23, 1886 at the Spring Grove Parsonage east of Troy Mills, Iowa. Their marriage was performed by Rev. H.H. Stall, minister. Lulu was born in Iowa in March 1864. It is my understanding that the Spring Grove Parsonage, where Floyd and Lulu were married, stood at the site of the current home at 2554 Coggon Road, which is located just east of Spring Grove Church east of Troy Mills. It is my understanding that the old parsonage once sat at this address.

One would imagine that both Floyd and Lulu’s families, including their parents, would have attended their marriage at the Spring Grove Parsonage. The parsonage was located just east of the associated church; the church itself at the time of Floyd and Lulu’s marriage was only four years old. Both the church and associated parsonage were located a short distance east of the Hickory Grove Farm, within walking distance of Floyd’s childhood home.

Linn County, Iowa marriage records list that a marriage license was issued to Floyd N. Reece and Lulu Freeman on February 22, 1886. Their marriage license recorded that affidavit was made by John A. Freeman; this would be Lulu’s father. Their marriage license recorded that: the groom, Floyd, at the time of his marriage was a resident of Spring Grove; that he was a farmer; that his age at next birthday was 28; and that he was born at Spring Grove. Their marriage license recorded that: the bride, Lulu, was born in Spring Grove; that her age at next birthday was 22; and that her parents were John Freeman and Mary Sutton. Floyd and Lulu’s marriage license recorded that they were married at the Spring Grove Parsonage on February 23, 1886. As recorded in their marriage license, witnesses to their marriage were a Sadie Fay and Rena Reece. Rena is Floyd’s half-sister. Sadie is a daughter to Floyd’s half-sister, Clarissa (Klingaman), and her husband Horace Fay.

In the History of Linn County, Iowa 1911, a John Freeman, whom I believe to be Lulu’s father, is listed as a settler of Linn County, Iowa; having came here in 1852. This history of Linn County listed John Freeman as a resident of Paris, Linn County, Iowa in 1911. The small town of Paris is located a short distance southeast of Troy Mills along the Wapsipinicon River.

At the age of 6, Lulu was then living within her father’s household during the U.S. Census of 1870. This census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that the John Freeman household then lived in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. John’s household at that time consisted of: himself, age 33, a farmer; Mary, age 34; Isabell, age 13; Effie, age 11; James, age 8; Lulu, age 6; Henry, age 4; Leroy, age 13; James (last name unreadable), age 21; and David Sutton, age 77. This census record does not tell us how all of these individuals are related to the head of the household, John Freeman. But, we know that Mary would be his wife, and the children, at least some of them, are
undoubtedly John and Mary's. James (unreadable) is listed in this census record as a farm hand on John Freeman's farm. I imagine that David Sutton would have been John's father-in-law. John Freeman's household at the time of this census resided in close proximity to David Reece, the father of Floyd Reece.

The Linn County, Iowa directory of 1878 listed a J. Freeman as then being a farmer in section 1 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This would have been Lulu's father; his farm was located north of the farm owned by David Reece, Floyd's father. Lulu would have been living upon her father's farm in 1878.

At the age of 16, Lulu was then residing within her father's household during the U.S. Census of 1880. This census recorded that on June 26, 1880, that Lulu's father, John Freeman, was a neighbor to Floyd Reece's father, David. Evidently, John Freeman's household at the time of this census resided across the road from David Reece and his Hickory Grove Farm. The Freeman farm at the time of this census was on at least a portion of the land that once made up the farm owned by David Reece's sister, Nancy, and her husband Abraham J. Ward. The Freeman's appear to have been living on at least a portion of the former Ward farm as early as 1868.

As recorded by the 1880 U.S. Census record, John Freeman's household on June 26, 1880 consisted of: himself, age 49, a farmer, born in North Carolina; wife Mary, age 44, born in Ohio; son James, age 18; daughter Lulu, age 16; son Henry, age 14, son Reasou (check spelling), age 9; and daughter Phebe E., age 5. This census recorded that all of John Freeman's children were born in Iowa.

Federal census records help demonstrate the fact that Floyd Reece and Lulu Freeman grew up in close proximity to one another and were neighbors during their childhoods on the farms of their respective parents, which would explain how they met and subsequently married.

I assume that Lulu Freeman would have continued to reside within her father's household up until her marriage to Floyd Reece on February 23, 1886. I presume that upon their marriage, that Floyd and Lulu made a living by farming in the vicinity of their parent's respective farms east of Troy Mills.

The 1894 map of Spring Grove Township contained within section 2 of this book indicates that Lulu's father, John Freeman, owned a farm in section 1 of the township in 1894. This farm was located across the road from Floyd's father's farm in section 12. This 1894 map, in conjunction with other sources, tells us that John Freeman and his family lived near the David Reece family for a number of years. The Reece and Freeman families certainly would have known one another quite well prior to and after the marriage of Floyd Reece to Lulu Freeman.

John Freeman, Lulu's father, died on November 2, 1894. He is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. His funeral service was likely held at the Spring Grove Church located near his farm. According to Lower Spring Grove Cemetery records, John and Mary Freeman had the following children: Anna, Isador, Effie, James, Rezin, Henry, Lulu and Phoebe. John, Mary and their son Rezin are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. According to Daphane Hoover, Lulu had two half-sisters and the rest were full.

Within in a few short months of Floyd's marriage to Lulu Freeman, his brother Abram died at the age of 33 on December 27, 1886 from a heart attack. Floyd, Abram
and their respective families were likely living near one another in the Troy Mills area at the time of Abram’s death. Floyd and Abram were both likely making a living for themselves and their respective families through farming when Abram died.

Floyd and Lulu’s first child appears to have been their daughter Blanch, who is reported to have been born in April 1887. Their second child appears to have been born three years later; her name is Nettie, who reportedly was born in July 1890. Nettie was likely named after her aunt, Floyd’s sister, Rebecca (Nettie) Reece/Ball.

The known children of Floyd and Lulu Reece are:

1. Blanch M. Reece, born April 1887.
2. Nettie E. Reece, born July 1890; died December 1913.

On June 7, 1900, Floyd and Lulu Reece were living in a home they owned, free of any mortgage, on Third Street in Coggon, Jackson Township, Linn County, Iowa. The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that the household of Floyd Reece on June 7, 1900 consisted of: himself, age 42, born in April 1858; wife Lulu A., age 36, born in March 1864; daughter Blanch M., age 13, born in April 1887; and daughter Nettie E., age 9, born in July 1890. This census lists Floyd and Lulu as having been married for 14 years at the time of this census. This census recorded that all four members of the Reece family were born in Iowa. This census recorded that Lulu was the mother of 2 children, with 2 living at the time of this census. This census recorded Floyd’s occupation as then being some type of laborer. For the life of me, I can not read the census enumerator’s notes to determine what type of laborer he was. Floyd and Lulu’s daughters are both listed in this census as having recently attended school. They no doubt attended school in Coggon.

The town of Coggon, Iowa is located a short distance east of the Hickory Grove Farm where Floyd grew up. When he lived in Coggon with his family, Floyd would have been living in close proximity to his parents and other relatives who were living in the area at that time.

I believe that it was very likely the case that Floyd was a farm laborer at the time of the 1900 U.S. Census. He certainly had a farming background from growing up on his parent’s farm; he likely carried on in that occupation prior to and after marrying Lulu Freeman. Floyd was likely working as a farm laborer on a farm near Coggon while he and his family resided in Coggon.

A 1901 biographical history of David Reece, Floyd’s father, found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901, lists Floyd and his wife Lulu as living near Coggon, Iowa in 1901. I do not know whether or not Floyd and Lulu were still living on Third Street in Coggon by 1901. They certainly were living in the vicinity of Coggon that year as this biographical history tells us. Floyd and Lulu certainly spent the majority of their lives residing in the Troy Mills/Coggon area.

At some point between 1901 and 1910, Floyd and Lulu moved from Coggon, Iowa to Canada. According to a 1910 biographical record of Floyd’s father, Floyd was living in Canada that year. What persuaded Floyd and Lulu to leave the Troy Mills area, which was the only place that either had probably ever called home, to move to Canada, is unknown. Floyd and Lulu would have moved to Canada with their children.
In June 1913, Floyd and Lulu would have been 55 and 49 years old respectively. On Saturday, June 8, 1913, Floyd and Lulu attended a party held in recognition of his father and stepmother's 50th wedding anniversary. This party was largely attended by family and friends of his parents at Floyd's childhood home: the Hickory Grove Farm. Floyd and Lulu were living in Independence, Alberta, Canada at the time they made the trip to Troy Mills, Iowa to attend this gathering. I assume that Floyd and Lulu's children accompanied them to Troy Mills to attend this event.

This photo of Floyd and Lulu Reece was taken in June 1913 while attending the 50th wedding anniversary party held for Floyd's father and stepmother at their Hickory Grove Farm, Troy Mills, Iowa.
On January 1, 1914, Floyd, who at that time was living with his wife in Independence, Alberta, Canada, wrote a letter to his brother Curtis and his wife Eva, who were then living upon the Hickory Grove Farm in Linn County, Iowa. Floyd mailed this letter to Curtis in an envelope that was trimmed in black, which was a standard practice at that time to indicate that a letter contained news of a loved one’s death. I was given a copy of this letter, which has a post mark of January 2, 1914, from Renee (Reece) Murray of Cedar, Minnesota. Floyd Reece is a great-uncle to Renee. The following is Floyd’s letter to Curt and Eva as he wrote it; it is in regards to the death of his daughter and granddaughter; both of whom are named Nettie.

Well, Curt and Eva

I will try and write a few lines to tell you of our sad loss three weeks ago last Saturday. Nettie went to Edmonton where she could be at the hospital and have a good doctor and left her little girl Nettie with us. She was one year old last Saturday and was talking some. She was a smart and very cute little one. On the night of the 18th of December she took very sick in the night. We done everything we could for her but she kept getting worse and died on Sunday morning the 21st at half past three. Nettie’s man went to Edmonton on the 23rd to go be with Nettie Christmas and has not come back yet. He sent us word today that a baby boy was born on Tuesday evening of this week and Nettie died yesterday evening and they will bring her out home tomorrow. They did not let Nettie know of her little girl’s death. You may know it is a very sad Christmas and New Year’s for us.

How is mother getting along? Hope she is better. How is father this winter?

With love to all
From Floyd and Lulu

Lulu and I will try to get away from here next spring but don’t know just where we will go yet.

Based on the above letter, I assume that Floyd and Lulu’s daughter and granddaughter, both of whom are named Nettie, are buried in or near Independence, Alberta, Canada. I do not know where Nettie and her husband lived at when she died. Wherever their place of residence was at the time of her death, Nettie and her daughter are likely buried nearby. It may be possible that Nettie and her family were living near her parents, Floyd and Lulu, when Nettie died; this is why I assume that Nettie and her daughter are buried in the vicinity of Independence, Alberta, Canada.

Currently, I can not find a town named Independence in the Canadian province of Alberta. Perhaps, the name of this town has changed since Floyd and his family resided there and it is now named something else. Floyd and Lulu had to have been living relatively close to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada at the time their daughter and granddaughter died.
Within two weeks of writing the previous letter to Curt and Eva, Floyd’s father, David, and Floyd’s stepmother, Anna, died within 24 hours of one another. David died on January 14, 1914. Anna died the following day. To lose his parents, daughter and granddaughter within one month must have been a devastating experience for Floyd Reece. It is unknown whether or not Floyd and Lulu made the trip to Troy Mills from their home in Alberta, Canada to attend his parent’s funeral. I imagine that they probably did.

Floyd and Lulu were reportedly living in the province of Saskatchewan, Canada at the time of her death. If this is correct, then Floyd and Lulu would have moved from the province of Alberta to the province of Saskatchewan at some point after January 2, 1914. Lulu’s date and place of death is unknown; she must be buried in Saskatchewan or Alberta, Canada. Floyd is buried in Minnesota according to information supplied by Daphane Hoover. If this is correct, Floyd evidently left Canada and moved to Minnesota at some point after Lulu’s death. According to genealogist Renee (Reece) Murray, Lulu died during childbirth in Canada. If Lulu did in fact die from complications related to childbirth, she must have given birth to her and Floyd’s third child when she died. I do not know of any more children born to Floyd and Lulu beyond their two daughters mentioned to this point.

As one can see in this biography to this point, there are a lot of unanswered questions pertaining to what happened to Floyd and Lulu toward the end of their lives. More research into Canadian and U.S. records needs to be conducted to finish this biography of Floyd Reece.
Rebecca Annette (Reece) Ball
5th child of David and Kittorah Ann (Conner) Reece

Rebecca 'Nettie' Annette (Reece) Ball

Rebecca Annette Reece was born on May 20, 1860 in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. She was probably born on her parent's Hickory Grove Farm. Rebecca was very likely named after her paternal grandmother: Rebecca (Hiatt) Reece. The family and friends of our subject often times called her by her nickname: Nettie.

At the time of Nettie's birth, she became a sister to her siblings: William, Hannah, Abram and Floyd. Nettie’s parents and siblings would have been living together at their farmhouse on their Hickory Grove Farm at the time of Nettie’s birth.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that on July 9, 1860, that Nettie was then an infant residing within her father’s household in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Nettie would have been living with her parents and siblings on their Hickory Grove Farm at the time of this census. Her father was then farming his homestead. On July 9, 1860, the household of David Reece, Nettie’s father, consisted of: David, age 36; wife Kittorah A., age 30; son William H., age 15; daughter Hannah A., age 8; son *Abram W., age 6; son Norval F., age 2; and daughter Rebecca A. (Nettie), age 3 months.

Nettie would have been just shy of her second birthday when her mother died in February 1862. Nettie was three years old when her father remarried in June 1863 to Anna Klingaman; she was a cousin to Nettie’s mother. Upon Anna’s marriage to Nettie’s father, Anna and her children from her previous marriage moved into Nettie’s childhood home upon the Hickory Grove Farm.

Nettie would have been three years old when her brother William Henry died serving in the Civil War in August 1863. He had left the family farm in 1862 to fight in
the war after being mustered into an infantry unit comprised of young men from his area. Nettie and the rest of her family were surely in attendance the day they all said their final goodbyes to William prior to his departure. Nettie very likely never recalled the day William left; nor did she probably ever have any memories of William later in life since she never really had an opportunity to get to know him.

Nettie would have spent her childhood years between 1860 and 1870 growing up on her parent’s farm with her siblings. During that time Nettie’s early education would have been acquired through her attendance of country schools located near the Hickory Grove Farm.

Nettie’s father and stepmother started a family of their own with the birth of a twin son and daughter: William Clinton and Marye Margaret, who were born on September 23, 1864. Nettie would have been four years old at the time of their births. In less than two years time, both twins died. Nettie was six when her half-brother Curtis was born upon the family farm in September 1866. She was nine when her half-sister Anna was born in November 1869. Nettie was probably present at her parent’s farmhouse upon their family farm when each of her siblings were born.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that Annetta (Nettie) was then 10 years old and residing with her father and stepmother on their farm. This census recorded that Nettie’s father was then a farmer and her stepmother was ‘keeping house’. In addition to Nettie, her father’s household on July 6, 1870 consisted of: her father David, age 46; mother Anna, age 41; sister Hannah, age 18; brother Abram, age 15; stepsister Maria, age 13; brother Floyd, age 12; stepsister Gertrude, age 10; half-brother Curtis, age 3; and half-sister Annie, 8 months and 12 days old.

Nettie would have spent her remaining childhood years between 1870 and 1880 growing up with her siblings on their family farm and in the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa. During this time Nettie’s sister Hannah died at the age of 20 on February 14, 1872. The remainder of Nettie’s schooling would have been acquired during the years between 1870 and 1880.

We know that Nettie was not residing within her father’s household during the 1880 U.S. Census, because this census recorded that she was then living within the household of a Henry M. Hatch of Jackson Township, Linn County, Iowa. Jackson Township is the township immediately east of Spring Grove Township and encompasses the town of Coggon. Henry Hatch was a farmer and his wife was ‘keeping house’ at the time of this census. Henry’s household on June 1, 1880 consisted of: himself, age 38; his wife Sarah, age 28; daughter Olive, age 4; daughter Angie, age 3; son Leonard, age 1; and Nettie Reece, age 20. This census record lists Nettie Reece as being single and a servant involved in housekeeping within the Hatch home at the time. Obviously, at some point prior to June 1, 1880, Nettie had left her father’s household and moved into the household of Henry Hatch. She probably went to work as a housekeeper within the Hatch home to make ends meet. Nettie probably moved out of her parent’s home to set out on her own shortly prior to this census.

Nettie eventually married a William Wallace Ball. According to census records, it appears that they married in 1884. The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that William and Nettie married in 1884. William was born in 1862. William and Nettie appear to have
taken up residency near the town of Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa shortly after their marriage.

William and Nettie’s first child, Norah, was born in 1885. Their second child, Perry, was born in 1887. Their third child, David, was born in 1890. Their fourth child, Glenn, was born in 1894. It is reported that Perry, David and Glenn were all born in Buchanan County, Iowa; presumably near Quasqueton. Their sister Norah was more than likely born near Quasqueton as well. It is entirely possible that all four of the Ball children were born on the farm that their parents owned on the north side of Quasqueton.

Nettie would have been 26 years old when her brother Abram died of a heart attack on December 27, 1886. She and her family appear to have been living near Quasqueton when Abram died. Nettie and her family certainly would have attended Abram’s burial at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Glenn Ball, William and Nettie’s youngest child, who was born on July 14, 1894, died on the 24th day of July or September 1895 at the age of one year. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Quasqueton, Iowa. Will, Nettie and their surviving children would have been living in or near Quasqueton when Glenn died.

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that on June 6, 1900, that William and Nettie Ball were then living on a farm in Liberty Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. Their farm would have been located near the town of Quasqueton, which is in Liberty Township. This census recorded that William was then a farmer and owned his farm free of any mortgage. This census recorded that on June 6, 1900, that the household of William Ball then consisted of: himself, age 38, born in Iowa in February 1862; wife Mary [sic], age 40, born in Iowa in May 1860; daughter Nora, age 14, born in Iowa in November 1885; son Perry, age 13, born in Iowa in April 1887; and son David, age 10, born in Iowa in April 1890. This census record lists William’s wife’s name as Mary, which has to be incorrect; her name should have appeared in this census record as Rebecca or Nettie. This census enumerator obviously recorded the wrong name. This census also recorded that Nettie was the mother of 4 children, with 3 living at the time. Nettie’s child that was deceased at the time of this census would have been her son Glenn, who reportedly died in 1895. At the time of this census, William and Nettie were living in close proximity to a farm owned by Henry and Flora Ball. It appears that Henry may be a brother to William Ball. William and Nettie’s children: Norah, Perry and David, are listed in this census record as attending school at the time.

In a conversation that I had with a Mrs. Edna Ball, a long time resident of Quasqueton, Iowa, she informed me that Nettie was blind for a good long time. Edna told me that William and Nettie lived on a farm on the north side of Quasqueton, east of present Highway 282. Edna stated to me that she believed that William and Nettie lived their entire married lives on their Quasky farm. According to Edna, the children of William and Rebecca Ball are: Perry, Norah and David. If I remember correctly, Edna stated to me that Norah never married.

A 1901 biographical history of David Reece, Nettie’s father, found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901, lists William and Nettie Ball as residents of Buchanan County, Iowa in 1901. More than likely, William and Nettie were still living on their farm near Quasqueton at that time.
William and Nettie’s son, Perry Allen Ball, born on April 6, 1887, died of typhoid and heart problems at the age of 14 on April 9, 1909. He is buried in the Greenwood Cemetery in Quasqueton, Iowa. Will, Nettie and their surviving children would have been residing at their farm near Quasqueton when Perry died. It appears that Will and Nettie’s children: Norah and David, were still living with them at the time of Perry’s death.

According to a 1910 Linn County, Iowa biographical history of Nettie’s father, William and Nettie were residents of Quasqueton in 1910. Will and Nettie certainly would have been living on their farm near Quasqueton in 1910.

The 1910 U.S. Census recorded that on April 22, 1910, that William and Nettie Ball were then farmers residing in Liberty Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. They appear to have been residing at the time of this census on the same farm they owned and resided at in 1900, just north of Quasqueton, Iowa.

As recorded by the 1910 U.S. Census, William Ball’s household on April 22, 1910 consisted of: himself, age 48; wife Rebecca A., age 49; daughter Nora H., age 24, single; and son David L., age 20, single. This census recorded that Nettie was the mother of 4 children, with 2 living at the time. Nettie’s children that were deceased by the time of this census would have been her sons Glenn and Perry. This census lists Nora Ball’s occupation as a teacher in the district school. David L. Ball’s occupation is listed in this census record as a farm laborer on the home farm. It is very possible that Norah was teaching school in Quasqueton at the time of this census. At that time, her brother David was certainly helping their parents operate the family farm.

William and Nettie Ball would have been 51 and 53 years old respectively in 1913. On Saturday, June 8, 1913, Will and Nettie attended a party held in recognition of her father and stepmother’s 50th wedding anniversary. This party was largely attended by family and friends of her parents at Nettie’s childhood home: the Hickory Grove Farm. Will and Nettie appear to have been living on their farm near Quasqueton at the time of this gathering. Will and Nettie’s children: Norah and David, may have still been living with them by June 1913. Will, Nettie, Norah and David, probably attended this party together.
This photo of Will and Nettie Ball was taken in June 1913 while attending the 50th wedding anniversary party held for her father and stepmother at their Hickory Grove Farm, Troy Mills, Iowa.
Nettie’s father, David, and her stepmother, Anna, died in January 1914 within just 24 hours of one another. David and Anna’s death transcripts list that Nettie was the informant of their deaths; meaning: that she was the one that provided their death information to the Linn County record. David and Anna’s death transcripts list Mrs. William Ball (Nettie) as a resident of Winthrop, Iowa. I believe that in actuality, at the time of her father and stepmother’s deaths, that Nettie and her husband Will were living on their farm near Quasqueton, Iowa. The town of Winthrop is located in Buchanan County a short distance north of Quasqueton.

At some point between April 22, 1910 and February 12, 1920, Will and Nettie temporarily left their Quasqueton farm and went to live with their daughter Norah in Wayland, Jefferson Township, Henry County, Iowa. For how long they resided in Wayland is unknown. Will and Nettie moved back to their Quasqueton farm by 1930.

The 1920 U.S. Census recorded that on February 12, 1920, that the household of William W. Ball then consisted of: himself, age 58; wife Rebecka A., age 59; and daughter Nora G., age 34, single. As recorded by this census, all three were then living together in a home they rented on Front Street in Wayland, Iowa. This census recorded that both Will and Nettie had no occupation at the time. Their daughter Norah’s occupation is listed in this census as a salaried teacher in the local high school. I believe that Will and Nettie may have been retired, or semi-retired, and living with Norah at the time of this census because she was single, and probably new to the town of Wayland, after moving there for a teaching position.

We know from the 1930 U.S. Census, that at some point, Will and Nettie left Wayland, Iowa after February 12, 1920 and returned to near Quasqueton, Iowa. The 1930 U.S. Census recorded that William and Nettie Ball were living on their farm in Liberty Township, Buchanan County, Iowa on April 12, 1930. William’s household at that time consisted of: himself, age 68, a farmer; and wife Rebecca N. (Nettie), age 69. There is also a 68 year old woman listed in this census as then residing within William’s household; her name is unreadable. She is listed in this census as a housekeeper in William’s home. This census recorded the value of William’s home at $1,200. Will and Nettie then possessed a radio set as recorded by this census. This census recorded that Will was 22 and Nettie was 23 when they married. This census recorded that Will could read and write; however, Nettie is listed in this census record as not being able to read nor write. This census lists Will as owning his farm at the time of the census, which I am sure is the same farm he owned and resided at during the U.S. Census of 1900.

By looking at Will and Nettie’s neighbors, as listed in the federal census records from 1900 to 1930, I am pretty certain that they owned the same farm just outside of Quasqueton for at least 30 years. It appears as though that Will and Nettie moved onto this farm shortly after their marriage; this is the likely place where their children were subsequently born.

From the 1930 U.S. Census we know that Will and Nettie were neighbors to their son David and his family in 1930. According to this census, on April 12, 1930, the David Ball household consisted of: himself, age 40, a farmer; wife Neva (formerly Slater), age 34; son Donald, age 15; and son Bernard, age 13. I do not understand all the census enumerator’s notes in this census record, but it appears that the households of William and David Ball may have been living on the same farm when the 1930 census was taken.
If that was the case, David was probably residing upon and running the family farm of his parent's at the time; and, he would likely have been helping to take care of his parents.

Nettie died at the age of 77 on February 20, 1938 in Quasqueton, Iowa. Will died in 1939, reportedly in Quasqueton. He would have been 77 years old when he died. It is likely that both Will and Nettie died at their farm near Quasqueton. They are buried in Lot 37, Ad 1, Greenwood-Quasqueton Cemetery, Buchanan County, Iowa. Will and Nettie's children: Norah, Perry, and Glenn, are also buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Quasqueton. Their son David is buried with his wife Neva in the Wilson Cemetery east of Independence, Buchanan County, Iowa.

William and Rebecca Ball are the parents of:

1. Norah E. Ball, born November 5, 1885; died September 12, 1943.
2. Perry Allen Ball, born April 6, 1887; died April 9, 1909.
3. David Lysander Ball, born April 8, 1890; died June 16, 1961.
4. Glenn Ball, born July 14, 1894; died the 24th day of July or September 1895.
Curtis David Reece
3rd child of David and Anna (Conner) Klingaman/Reece

Curtis David Reece was born on September 19, 1866 on his parent's family farm known as the Hickory Grove Farm in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. He was likely born there in his parent's farmhouse. One would assume that Curtis was likely named after his father, David, and after his half-brother, Charles Curtis Klingaman, who was born August 16, 1853 to Stephen and Anna Klingaman.

At the time of Curtis' birth, he became a half-brother to the following siblings: William, Hannah, Abram, Floyd and Rebecca Reece. In addition, he also became a half-brother to the children from his mother's previous marriage to Stephen Klingaman; some of whom would have been living in Curtis' childhood home when he was born. Curtis' parents and siblings would have been living together at their farmhouse on their Hickory Grove Farm at the time of Curtis' birth.

Curtis was three years old when his sister Anna 'Rena' was born in November 1869. She was probably born on the family farm as Curtis was. It is likely that many of Curt and Rena's siblings from their father's previous marriage were born on the family farm as well.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that Curtis was then 3 years old and living with his parents and siblings. At that time the family would have been residing upon their family farm. This census recorded that Curtis' father was then a farmer and that his mother was 'keeping house'. As recorded by this census, in addition
to Curtis, age 3, his father’s household on July 6, 1870 consisted of: his father David, age 46; mother Anna, age 41; half-sister Hannah, age 18; half-brother *Abram, age 15; stepsister Maria, age 13; half-brother Floyd, age 12; stepsister Gertrude, age 10; half-sister Annetta, age 10; and sister Annie, 8 months and 12 days old.

Curtis’ 20 year old half-sister, Hannah, died at the age of 20 on February 14, 1872 when Curtis was five. He, his parents and the rest of his siblings certainly would have attended Hannah’s burial at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that on June 26, 1880, that Curtis was then 13 years old and living with his parents and siblings on the family farm. As recorded by this census, in addition to Curtis, age 13, his father’s household on June 26, 1880 consisted of: his father David, age 56; mother Annie, age 52; half-brother Floyd, age 22; and his sister Rena, age 10. This census recorded their occupations at that time as: David a farmer; Annie a housekeeper; Floyd at home, in school; Rena at school; and Curtis at home. Curtis and his siblings were certainly helping their parents run the family farm at the time of this census.

Curtis’ education began in the district schools located near his parent’s farm east of Troy Mills, and was completed at Epworth Seminary, Epworth, Iowa. He was reared on the home farm, the period of his boyhood and youth passing uneventfully according to one source. Curtis spent his childhood growing up on his parent’s farm and in the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa.

Curtis was 20 years old when his 33 year old half-brother, Abraham Ward Reece, died of a heart attack on December 27, 1886. Curtis was likely living with his parents on their farm when Abram died. Abram would have been a farmer at the time of his death; he and his family appear to have been residing on a farm near Curtis when he died. Abram was laid to rest in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery; Curtis was surely in attendance. Cemetery records tell us that Abram was buried in a cemetery plot owned by Curtis. This may imply that Curtis was the one that purchased the plot where Abram is buried.

I assume that during the ten years from 1886 to 1896, that Curtis lived with his parents upon their Hickory Grove Farm, and that he played a leading role in the operation of the family farm.

At the age of 29, Curtis married 23 year old Miss Anna Evelina ‘Eva’ Renfer at Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa on September 3, 1896. A reverend by the name of James Scull performed their marriage. Witnesses to Curt and Eva’s marriage included Franklin C. Renfer (her brother) and Miss Lottie Hanna. I do not know what relation Lottie Hanna was to the bride and groom. Curt and Eva’s granddaughter, Renee (Reece) Murray, informed me that Curt and Eva were married at the parsonage at Troy Mills. I assume that Murray’s reference to the parsonage would be a reference to the parsonage that was associated with the Spring Grove Church, which would have been located approximately three miles east of Troy Mills and very near Curtis’ childhood home.

Curt and Eva’s marriage license recorded that affidavit was made by Frank C. Renfer; he would be Eva’s brother. Their marriage license recorded that the groom, Curtis, was then a farmer and resident of Spring Grove, Iowa; that this was his first marriage; and that he was born in Linn County, Iowa. Their license also recorded that the
bride, Evelina, was a resident of Linn County, Iowa; that this was her first marriage; and that she was born in Center Point, Iowa.

Eva was born on August 9, 1873 in Center Point, Linn County, Iowa. She is the daughter of Jacob David Renfer and Martha Hulda (Andrews) Davenport; he being a native of Switzerland and she of Ohio.

According to Hulda (Reece) Kincade (Curt and Eva's oldest child), her grandmother, Martha Hulda (Andrews) Davenport, was born on April 30, 1836. Martha married Andrew Davenport on April 9, 1855. They appear to have married in Washington County, Ohio. Andrew and Martha had the following three sons: Charles, Sherman and George. Andrew died on December 4, 1865. After Andrew's death, Martha remarried to Jacob David Renfer on July 4, 1872. Jacob was born at Berne, Switzerland on February 20, 1849. In 1867, Jacob immigrated to America. Jacob and Martha had two children: Anna Evalina, born August 9, 1873, and Franklin Clifford, born August 29, 1875. Martha died on February 2, 1896 and Jacob died on September 7, 1919. Jacob and Martha Renfer are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Eva Renfer was from the same area where Curtis Reece was raised and grew up. A directory of Linn County, Iowa found within the History of Linn County, Iowa 1878 lists a Jacob Renfer, presumably Eva's father, as a laborer residing within Washington Township, Center Point, Iowa in 1878. Eva would have been 5 years old in 1878 and we can assume that she was then living with her parents in or near Center Point. The 1894 map of Spring Grove Township located in section two of this book, lists an M.H. Renfer as the property owner of the southeast quarter of section 11 in 1894. This has to be Martha Hulda Renfer, Eva's mother. In 1894, Martha's property in section 11 would have been located about a half mile south of what at that time was the C.D. Reece Farm, otherwise known as the Hickory Grove Farm. Eva would have been 21 years old in 1894 and she probably resided with her parents at that time near the Hickory Grove Farm.
This is a photo of Curt and Eva Reece. This appears to be a wedding photo.

Eva and her parents evidently lived in close proximity to Curtis D. Reece and his parents, and their family farm, for at least two years, and probably longer, prior to Curt and Eva’s marriage. While residing in or near Center Point, Eva would have been living in close proximity to Curtis. Given the close proximity to where Curtis and Eva resided at prior to their marriage, would thus explain how they met and subsequently married.

Shortly after their marriage in 1896, Curt and Eva made their home upon his childhood home; this being the Hickory Grove Farm. How soon they actually began their married lives together upon the farm is unknown. We do know that by 1900, which was almost four years after their marriage, that Curt, Eva and their children were residing upon the family farm with his parents. Curt would certainly have been making a living at that time in conjunction with his father by farming the family farm. During the four years between 1896 and 1900, Curt and Eva became the parents of two daughters; namely: Huldah in 1897 and Anna in 1899. Huldah and Anna were born on the Hickory Grove Farm.
The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that on June 19, 1900, that Curtis and his family were then living upon the Hickory Grove Farm. Curtis would have had charge of the family farm by the time of this census. This census recorded that Curtis owned the Hickory Grove Farm through a mortgage. I believe that at the time of this census, that Curtis and his family were living in the north brick side of his parent’s home, while his parents lived in the adjoining south side addition.

As recorded by the 1900 U.S. Census, the Curtis Reece household on June 19, 1900 was comprised of: himself, age 33, a farmer, born in September 1866; wife Evelyn A., age 26, born in August 1873; daughter Huldah I., age 3, born in May 1897; and daughter Anna P., age 1, born in March 1899. This census also recorded that Curtis and his family were then living with his father, David, age 76, and his mother, Anna, age 71. This census recorded that all members of Curtis’ family were born in Iowa; and that Evelyn’s father was a native of Switzerland, while her mother was a native of Ohio. This census recorded that Evelyn was a mother of 2 children, with both living at the time of this census.

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that Curtis and his extended family were then living next to two farms; one of which was owned and farmed by his half-brother, Charles Curtis Klingaman; the other was owned and farmed by his half-sister, Clarissa (Klingaman) Fay, and her husband Horace. At the time of this census, both Charles and Clarissa appear to have been living on their respective farms on the north side of the road which separated Curtis’ Hickory Grove Farm from theirs. This road essentially would have followed the same route that Coggon Road follows today.

Curtis played the baritone as a member of the Troy Mills band. He was a member of the band along with his cousin, Perry Reece, who played clarinet. Perry was a grandson of Curtis’ uncle, Henry. According to one source, the Troy Mills band was organized in April 1908 with 18 members. Curt was apparently one of the original 18 band members. The band, with Mr. Thomas Ware as director, enjoyed a long period of active service to Troy Mills and the surrounding territory. The band played for many celebrations, fairs, etc., during the period of its existence and ranked high among the bands in this section of Iowa.

Curtis continued to operate the Hickory Grove Farm for his father from 1901 to 1910. During that time, Curt and Eva’s family grew with the edition of Celia in 1901 and Charles in 1905.

As recorded by the 1910 U.S. Census, Curtis and Evelyn were residing on the Hickory Grove Farm with his parents on May 2, 1910. Curtis was making a living at the time of this census by farming the old home place. According to the 1910 census, by that time Curtis owned the farm, free of any mortgage. The 1910 U.S. Census recorded that on May 2, 1910, that the household of Curtis D. Reece then consisted of: himself, age 43; wife Evalyn, age 36; daughter Huldah, age 12; daughter Anna, age 11; daughter Fern, age 8; son Charles, age 4; father David, age 86; and mother Anna, age 80. This census recorded that Evelyn was the mother of 4 children, with all of them being listed in this census. At the time of this census Curtis and Evelyn had been married for 13 years.

Curt and Eva were living in close proximity to her parents and to her brother at the time of the 1910 U.S. Census. Curt and Eva were then neighbors to her parents, Jacob and Caroline Renfer, who were farmers. Caroline was actually Eva’s stepmother.
Eva’s mother, Martha, died on February 2, 1896. Martha’s husband Jacob, according to the 1910 census, remarried to a Caroline Candler in 1896. As recorded by the 1910 census, Curt and Eva were neighbors to Jacob and Caroline and their family on May 2, 1910. At that same time, Curt and Eva were neighbors to her brother and his wife, Frank C. and Anna Renfer, who were farmers. Eva’s parents, including her stepmother, as well as her brother Frank and his wife, are all buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Curtis was a trustee of Spring Grove Township in 1910. By 1910, Curtis was managing the homestead for his 87 year old father. According to one source, Curtis’ progressive and enterprising methods resulted in abundant crops each year.

On Saturday, June 8, 1913, Curt and Eva attended a party held in recognition of his parent’s 50th wedding anniversary. This party was largely attended by family and friends of his parents at Curt’s childhood home: the Hickory Grove Farm. Curt, Eva and their children appear to have been living upon the Hickory Grove Farm with his parents at the time of this gathering.

This photo of Curt and Eva Reece was taken in June 1913 while attending his parent’s 50th wedding anniversary party held upon the Hickory Grove Farm.
When Curtis’ parents, David and Anna, died in January 1914, Curtis inherited their farm in section 12 of Spring Grove Township known as the Hickory Grove Farm. Renee (Reece) Murray, a granddaughter of Curt and Eva’s, told me that she thought that Curt was given the family farm because he took care of his parents in their old age. After the death of Curt’s parents, Curt and Eva did not reside on the old home farm for very long as is demonstrated by the fact that they sold it and moved off to the town of Coggon in 1915. Coggon is located a short distance east of the Hickory Grove Farm and the town of Troy Mills.

When Curtis and his family sold the family farm and moved to the town of Coggon in 1915, it ended a 64 year Reece ownership of the land that comprised the Hickory Grove Farm. This farm was originally homestead by Curtis’ father in the summer of 1851.

The following newspaper article appeared in an unknown paper of Linn County, Iowa in 1915.

### Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece Surprised

Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece, who expect to move to Coggon about March 1st, were surprised by about 55 of their friends and neighbors at their home in Spring Grove Township Friday night. [Their home being the Hickory Grove Farm.]

The self-invited guests brought oysters which were served and the jolly crowd made merry socially until the wee small hours.

Mr. and Mrs. Reece were presented with a nice rug by those present, the presentation speech being made by “Uncle” Ben Norris, who, during his remarks, paid Mr. and Mrs. Reece a few compliments, showing the esteem in which they are held by their neighbors and friends.

According to Renee (Reece) Murray, Curt and Eva’s first child, Huldah, was born on the Hickory Grove Farm on May 25, 1897. Huldah’s siblings: Ferne, Anna and Charles were also born on the farm according to Murray. Charles, the last of Curt and Eva’s children to be born on the Hickory Grove Farm, was born on June 17, 1905. According to Murray, Curt and Eva moved into the town of Coggon in 1915. Murray stated to me that Curtis must have sold the old family farm and then moved to Coggon. According to Murray, it was while Curt and Eva lived in Coggon that their last child, George David Reece, was born there on June 26, 1915. George was probably named after his grandfather, David Reece. George David Reece is the father of Renee (Reece) Murray. Curt, Eva and their children would have only lived in Coggon for a few months, because Murray stated to me that they moved to Wadena, Minnesota in October 1915. According to Murray, Curtis and his family came to Wadena by train. I do not know what persuaded Curt and Eva to move their family to Wadena from the only place either one of them probably knew as home; this being the Troy Mills area.

The following letter was written on January 8, 1992, by Mrs. Walter A. Olson of Spokane, Washington. Olson addressed this letter to Dean and Daphane Hoover of
Walker, Iowa who kindly gave it to me. Mrs. Olson is the former Celia Ferne Reece, Curt and Eva’s daughter.

Dear Folks,

I am wondering if you were related to Will and Bess Reece and family. They lived in the same neighborhood as my family. We lived on my grandfather’s (David Reece’s) farm about halfway between Coggon and Troy Mills. My father Curtis was born there as well as all of us kids except George. He was born in Coggon where we lived for a few months before going to Minnesota. After grandpa and grandma (David and Anna Reece) died (just a day apart) there was trouble settling up the estate and some hard feelings between my father and his sisters for years. I was 12 years old then, but remember those times quite clearly.

I married Walter Olson in 1923 in Wadena (MN). We had 8 children, 5 girls and 3 boys. We lived in Minnesota until May 1951 when we moved to Spokane. I am still living in the same house. We brought the four youngest children out here with us as they were still in school. Three older ones came out later to live here.

In 1987, I went back to Minnesota and then down to Iowa. I went to our old home (the Hickory Grove Farm) and also attended services in the church (Spring Grove) just down the road a ways.

From 1915 to 2020, it appears that Curt, Eva and their children resided upon a farm south of Wadena in Wadena County, Minnesota. According to the 1920 U.S. Census, Curt and Eva were living in Wadena Township, Wadena County, Minnesota on January 24, 1920. This must have been the same farm south of Wadena that Curt and his family moved onto upon moving to the area in 1915. Curtis’ household on January 24, 1920 consisted of: himself, age 53; wife Anna E., age 46; daughter Fern C., age 18; son Charles F., age 14; and son George D., age 4. Curt and Eva were farmers at the time of this census. They were living on a farm that they owned through a mortgage. As recorded by this census, all of the members of Curtis’ household were born in Iowa.

According to Renee (Reece) Murray, Curt and Eva moved to the ‘home farm’ in 1920, which is where their son Charles was eventually killed in a tragic act of nature. This move to the ‘home farm’ must have occurred at some point during 1920 after the census of that year. The ‘home farm’ would be a reference to a farm located in Leaf River Township, Wadena County, Minnesota that Curt and his family moved to after their residency of approximately 5 years at their farm in Wadena Township.

Census records demonstrate that by 1930, Curt and Eva had moved from Wadena Township to Leaf River Township within Wadena County, Minnesota. The 1930 U.S. Census recorded that on April 4, 1930, that Curt and Eva were then living on a farm that they owned in Leaf River Township, Wadena County, Minnesota. As recorded by this census, Curtis’ household on April 4, 1930 consisted of: himself, age 63, a farmer; wife Evelyn A, age 56; son Charles, age 24, a farm laborer; son George, age 14; son-in-law Harry Siers, age 31, a farm laborer; daughter Anna, age 31; grandson Donald, age 8;
granddaughter Fern, age 6; grandson Willis, age 4 years and 7 months; grandson Harry Jr., age 2 years and 9 months; and granddaughter Pearl, age 8 months. The Harry Siers listed in this census is the husband of Curt and Eva’s daughter Anna. It is Harry and Anna’s children which are listed as grandchildren of Curtis Reece in this census record. Evidently, Harry Siers and Curtis’ son Charles were helping out in the family farm operation of Curt and Eva’s at the time of the 1930 census. This census recorded that Curtis’ son, George, along with Curt’s grandchildren, Donald and Fern, were of school age and had recently attended school.

The 1930 U.S. Census also recorded that Curt and Eva were then neighbors to Walter and Fern Olsen; they being Curt and Eva’s son-in-law and daughter. At the time of this census, Walter and Fern Olsen were farmers living on a farm that they rented near Curt and Eva. Walter Olsen’s household on April 4, 1930 consisted of: himself, age 29; wife Fern, age 28; son Arlrey (checking spelling), age 3; and son Byron, age 1 year and 10 months.

A tragedy occurred at Curt and Eva’s Leaf River Township farm, north of Wadena, when their son Charles was killed by lightning on July 10, 1935. Charles was killed that day by a lightning strike which hit the barn he happened to be in at the time. Renee (Reece) Murray, Charles’ niece, told me that her grandfather, Curt Reece, ran to save his son only to find him dead. Murray told me that Curt pulled Charles out of the barn before the barn burst into flames; thus preventing his body from being burnt with the barn. The following are newspaper articles regarding Charles’ death that appeared in local Wadena papers.

**CHARLES REECE KILLED BY LIGHTNING**

Lightning Wreaks Havoc on C.D. Reece Farm in Leaf River Township
Four Horses Killed—Buildings Burned to Ground

Charles, 30 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece of Leaf River Township, was instantly killed shortly before 1 o’clock Wednesday noon when lightning struck the barn killing four horses in addition to snuffing out the life of Charles Reece and setting fire to the structure which destroyed the barn and granary adjoining. Death apparently was instantaneous for both man and beast and the rapidity with which fire enveloped the barn precluded any possibility of saving it, for within an hour it was a mass of smoldering embers, mute evidence of the tragedy which had befallen a hardworking family which seems to have suffered more than its share of ill fortune in the past few years.

The storm arose with comparative suddenness about the noon hour and was watched with considerable anxiety in this city. It appeared to spend most of its force north of Wadena and the Reece property was apparently in the path of the storm. Within five minutes after the lightning bolt struck, the barn was completely filled with smoke and neighbors arrived in the nick of time to assist the frantic father in removing the body of his son before the flames could claim it. The horses, four of them, fell and were cremated in their stalls, fifteen loads of hay were also among the property lost and the barn itself appears to have been a 24X36 structure which was newly built last fall to replace one blown down last summer in the storm which swept over this territory. A granary
standing nearby was also a total loss and but for the fact that the cattle were in the pasture at the time, the loss would have been worse.

Preliminary investigation develops the fact that both the livestock and the building were covered by insurance but, as is usual in such cases, the pecuniary loss will be somewhat heavier than that of the horses and the buildings by reason of the fact that considerable miscellaneous personal property is usually housed in buildings of that sort.

At the time of going to press the stunning loss sustained by the Reece family precluded any possibility of definite arrangements for the funeral or plans for the future with relation to the replacement of the buildings destroyed.

The Reece family is one of the highly respected families of Leaf River Township which seems to have had more than its share of ill fortune in years past. A combination of minor events appears to have made their lot more difficult than usual and the cheerfulness and fortitude with which they have faced adversity has won for them the warm friendship and admiration of all those who came to know them. Willing friends and neighbors have done what they could to assist them in this hour of loss and bereavement.

Lightning Kills Youthful Farmer North of Wadena
Charles F. Reece Dies Instantly; Barn and Horses Burned

Charles F. Reece, 30, son of Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece of Leaf River, died by a tragic stroke of fate, when he was struck by lightning Wednesday afternoon.

During the brief thunderstorm just after noon Wednesday the young man had left the house remarking to his father that it was too wet to cultivate that afternoon. Presumably he went out to unharness the horses. A few moments later Mr. Reece happened to look from the house window. He saw a ball of fire travel the length of the metal ridgepole of the barn and then disappear.

He started immediately for the barn, thinking his son was there. He had just reached the shed near the house when he saw smoke rolling from the barn. Upon entering the barn he saw four horses limp in death and behind them his son, dead. By this time the barn was ablaze. With the help of a neighbor across the road they carried the young man’s body clear of the blaze.

The barn, a new one built last fall to replace the one blown down in the windstorm last August burned completely to the ground as did the granary standing near it. The buildings were covered by insurance, “but you could have it all if I could only have my boy back,” cried the grief-stricken father.

Charles F. Reece was born in Lynn County, Iowa June 26, 1904 [sic]. With his parents he came to Wadena County in 1915. For four years the family lived on a farm south of Wadena. In 1920 Mr. Reece sold his farm there and moved to the Leaf River farm where he now resides.

Charles attended the Wadena schools, going to high school here for two years, a member of the class of 1923. Then he dropped his schooling and went to work on the
farm where he has since been his father’s mainstay. He was the oldest of two sons. He was a sound, industrious young man, cheerful and well liked by his acquaintances.

He is survived by his parents and three older sisters, Mrs. Francis Kincade, Mrs. Fern Olson, living at home, and Mrs. Harry Sires of Oylen, and by a younger brother, George living at home.

Definite funeral arrangements have not been made but the date for the funeral will probably be Saturday, awaiting the arrival of relatives from Iowa. Funeral services will be held from the neighborhood church just north of the Reece home with Rev. Elnar Larson officiating.

Lightning Victim Buried Saturday

Funeral services for the late Charles Reece, Jr. were held at the Leaf River church Saturday afternoon at 3 o’clock and interment was made in the Leaf River cemetery located on what is popularly known as the Murray farm. Rev. Elnar Larson conducted the service which was attended by a host of friends whom the limited capacity of the church could not accommodate.

The tragic death of Charles Reece occurred Wednesday of last week when lightning struck the barn, killing Mr. Reece and four horses instantly. C.D. Reece, the father, was seated near the window and noticed the large ball of fire which seemed to roll slowly along the length of the barn ridge and then disappear. Before he could reach the barn a large column of smoke poured out of the east entrance and as he entered he noticed immediately that all four horses were down and an instant later found the son lying on the floor behind the horses.

Mrs. Reece happened to be at Oylen, visiting at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harry Siers, when the accident happened, and a younger son was employed on the Mrs. August Ladwig farm south of this city. Neighbors responded quickly but the damage was done and beyond aiding the grief stricken father help proved unavailing.

Stoically, and almost cheerfully, the aged parents return to the task of repairing the loss. The barn burned was a new one last fall built to replace one blown down during the previous summer. It was 32X46 and contained considerable personal property which was uninsured. $100 was carried on the four horses and about $1500 on the barn. The granary was also a total loss and but partially insured.

Unconfirmed reports are to the effect that nearly six hundred cars were counted at the funeral Saturday afternoon.

Charles Reece was a young man of exemplary character on whom rested the responsibility of carrying on the farm work and his untimely passing has taxed the will power and courage of his parents to carry on.

Mr. and Mrs. Reece have asked the Tab to acknowledge their profound thanks to the hosts of friends who have assisted and volunteered to assist in re-establishing the work which must be carried on on the farm.
Neighbors Move to Aid Tragedy Stricken Family

The Pioneer Journal

Pursued with misfortune enough to discourage the most stout-hearted, the C.D. Reece family, living in Leaf River Township about six miles north of Wadena, may take heart again, encouraged by the friendliness and compassion of their neighbors.

The Reece family has faced the ordinary run of luck which most farmers have endured during the past few years of depression and drought. That, in itself, was bad enough. Last August when the windstorm swept through this vicinity it left the Reece barn a total wreck.

Then a fine new barn was erected to take the place of the destroyed structure. With plentiful rains and fine growing weather the crop prospect this year looked good and it looked as though misfortune had run its course.

The peaceful interlude, however, was just a lull preceding grim tragedy. For the past 10 years Mr. Reece, who is getting along in years, has leaned more and more heavily upon his oldest son, Charles. Lately the practical management of the farm had been largely the son’s responsibility.

During a rainstorm last week the son went out to the barn to unharness the horses, the rain making further work in the field that day out of the question. A moment later the barn was struck by lightning, killing the youth and four head of horses.

Fire from the lightning consumed the new barn, the flames also lapping up a granary nearby in which was stored all the feed and grain on the farm. With his boy gone, his new barn gone up in smoke, his horses killed and his store of grain and feed consumed, Mr. Reece faced a gloomy outlook.

He did not despair, however. He has a younger son, George, to help him on the farm and some way they would get along.

It was at this point that a group of neighbors decided that they would take a hand to help along. None of them have much money but all felt deep sympathy and desire to help. One of their number, Charley Mietzel, suggested a subscription be taken up to raise funds to help the family get re-established. The suggestion was whole-heartedly approved and Mr. Mietzel came to the Pioneer Journal to enlist its aid. A plan was worked out whereby the Pioneer Journal will receive contributions to the fund, acknowledging those to the fund. Contributions of any size, however small, will be gratefully accepted. Mr. Mietzel started the fund off with a dollar contribution. The Pioneer Journal has contributed another dollar. Any of the Pioneer Journal readers who wish to help in this cause may bring in or mail their contributions to the Pioneer Journal.
Curt and Eva would have been residing on their farm in Leaf River Township near Wadena when the following article appeared in a local paper in 1940.

**Minute Book 80 Years Old**  
Wadena Farmer Owns Record Used in 1860

C.D. Reece of Leaf River community has a book in his possession which is more than 80 years old. It is the minute book of the Anamosia Methodist circuit of Spring Grove, Iowa.

David Reece, father of C.D. Reece, was secretary of the organization which came into existence in 1860. The first entry records the meeting of August 11, 1860. The last entry was made January 25, 1873. Detailed financial reports show that records were kept diligently in earlier days.

Mr. Reece plans to send the book to his nephew near Spring Grove who will exhibit it at a celebration honoring the founders of the church this summer.

Curtis’ half-sister, Gertrude (Klingaman) Long, died on November 19, 1941. Gertrude’s obituary reads that she was survived by her half-brother Curtis who was then living in Verndale, Minnesota. Verndale is located about seven miles southeast of Wadena, Minnesota. I do not know why Verndale is listed in Gertrude’s obituary as the place of Curtis’ residence at the time of her death. I assume that this is just a typo and that Curt and Eva still owned and resided upon their farm in Leaf River Township near Wadena in November 1941.

September 3, 1944 marked Curt and Eva’s 48th wedding anniversary. At the time of their anniversary, they would have been living at their farm in Leaf River Township, Wadena County, Minnesota. A local newspaper ran the following article.

**Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece Note Forty-Eighth Anniversary**

The forty-eighth wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece of District Eleven was observed at their home on Sunday with a dinner and supper. All of their children were present.

Guests were Mr. and Mrs. Harry Siers and family and Mr. and Mrs. Ben Gunderson of Oylen, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Olson of Henning, the Francis Kincade family of Wadena, Mr. and Mrs. C.M. Larsen of England Prairie and the George Reece family.
This is a photo of Curt and Eva when they resided near Wadena, Minnesota. This is their 50th wedding anniversary photo from 1946.
September 3, 1946 marked Curt and Eva's 50th wedding anniversary. At that time they were residents of Leaf River Township, Wadena County, Minnesota. A local newspaper ran the following article.

**Leaf River Couple Observed Golden Wedding Anniversary**

*Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece renewed their wedding vows in a pretty ceremony at their home in Leaf River Township on Sunday, September first, in commemoration of their 50th wedding anniversary. Rev. Leon Eastman of Oylen officiated. The Reeces were married on September 3, 1896 in Troy Mills, Iowa and have been residents of the Leaf River community for many years.*

*Guests present to join in their festivities were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Staton and daughter, Elva; Mr. and Mrs. Chris Meggers of Walker; Mrs. Earl Neindorf of Chicago, Ill., and Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Kirk of Coggon, Iowa. Mr. and Mrs. Chris Larson, Mr. and Mrs. Ragel, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Derby, Mrs. Andreen Gibbs and Ben Wold all of England Prairie; Mr. and Mrs. Francis Kincade of Lyman; Mr. and Mrs. Harry Siers and children of Oylen; the Walter Olson family of Henning and Mr. and Mrs. George Reece of Leaf River.*

Curt celebrated his 82nd birthday on September 19, 1948. A local newspaper ran the following article.

**C.D. Reece Enjoys 82nd Birthday**

*District 11: C.D. Reece was honored Sunday when his children and their families gathered to help him celebrate his 82nd birthday, which occurred on that day. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Walter Olsen and family of Henning, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Kincade, Lorna and Verlyn, of Eagle Bend, Mrs. H.V. Siers and four youngest children and Mr. and Mrs. Ben Gunderson of Oylen, the George Reece family and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Peterson and son of New York Mills.*

September 3, 1950 marked Curt and Eva’s 54th wedding anniversary. Curt and Eva would have been living upon their farm in Leaf River Township at the time of their 54th anniversary. A local newspaper ran the following article.

**Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece Honored On Anniversary**

*District 11: Mr. and Mrs. C.D. Reece were honored guests Sunday, September 3, when their children and families gathered at the George Reece home to help them celebrate their 54th wedding anniversary. Mrs. Clarion Potter presented them with a large cake for the occasion.*
Guests included Mr. and Mrs. Francis Kincade of Eagle Bend, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Olson and family of Henning, Mrs. Anna Siers and Donald, Dale, Evelyn and Ruth of Staples, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wilson and Darrel and Mr. and Mrs. Ben Gunderson of Verndale, Mr. and Mrs. Milton Miland and Byron and Velma Olson of Elbow Lake.

Eva died on May 14, 1951 in Wadena, Minnesota. According to Renee (Reece) Murray, her grandfather Curtis lived with Renee and her parents after Eva died. Murray’s parents are George David Reece and Noreen Attleson. Murray wrote: I guess as Curt took care of his parents, my dad took care of his parents. I was very young when they died but remember going for walks with grandpa. I had to sit next to him at the table. He was just very special to me. He had a stroke at the table next to me. On his death certificate it says he died of choking, but later the doctors realized it was a stroke. Grandpa had a mustache all his married life and on the morning of Curt and Eva’s 50th wedding anniversary party he shaved it off. Grandma was so angry with him. I wasn’t born then but remember hearing stories about it. Curt called his mustache a cookie duster or sometimes a soup strainer. He was a beautiful artist. My mom has some of his drawings. He went to seminary at Epworth, Iowa and became a teacher. I don’t know if he stopped teaching to care for his parents. I’ll have to ask mom if she remembers the story. Curt had a dry sense of humor.

Murray informed me that her parents (George and Noreen Reece) eventually bought the family farm from Curt and Eva after Curt and Eva’s son Charles was killed on the farm by lightning. Again, George David Reece was Curt and Eva’s youngest child. Murray also informed me that her grandparents, Curt and Eva, lived with her parents for a time.

Curt and Eva’s daughter, Anna Pearl (Reece) Siers, who was born on March 10, 1899, died on April 29, 1952. The following article regarding Anna’s death ran in a local Wadena paper.

**Last Rites For Mrs. Anna Siers Held Saturday**

Sons Serve as Bearers, Interment Made In Leaf River Cemetery

Anna Pearl Reece, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis D. Reece, was born March 10, 1899 at Coggon, Iowa. She passed away at the home of her daughter in Lyons Township April 29 at the age of 53 years, one month and 19 days.

The family moved to the Wadena community when she was 16. She was united in marriage to Harry V. Siers on June 30, 1920. To this union eleven children were born, namely, Donald of Mountain Iron, Mrs. Ben Gunderson (Fern) of Verndale, Willis, Harry, Mrs. Charles Wilson (Pearl), Mrs. John Odden (Norma), Ross, Ruth, Evelyn, and Dale, all of Staples and Wayne of Wadena. There are three grandchildren.

Also surviving are her father, Curtis D. Reece of Wadena, two sisters, Mrs. Francis Kincade (Huldah) of Eagle Bend, Mrs. Walter Olson (Ferne) of Spokane, Washington, and a brother, George Reece of Wadena. Her mother and brother, Charles, preceded her in death.
Funeral services were held May 3, at 2 o'clock from the Leaf River Christian church, the Rev. Ralph Jones officiating. Interment was in the Leaf River cemetery. Her three oldest sons and three sons-in-law served as bearers. They are Don, Willis and Harry Siers, Ben N. Gunderson, Charles A. Wilson and John B. Odden.
In the middle of this photo we have Curtis David Reece. To his left is his wife Eva. To his right is his half-sister, Gertrude (Klingaman) Long. On the back of this photo someone wrote: To Aunt Rena...Curt, Eva and Gettie Long. Rena is Curtis’ sister.
Curtis David Reece died of a stroke he suffered on his son's farm north of Wadena at the age of 86 years, 2 months and 11 days, on November 30, 1952. Curt died on his farm northeast of Wadena, Minnesota in Leaf River Township, which by the time of his death was owned by his son George. As written by Renee Murray, Curt suffered a stroke while at the family dinner table while being seated next to Renee, who was a child at the time.

The following article appeared in a local Wadena paper.

**C.D. Reece Dies at Home of Son, George**

*Served School and Township of Leaf River 32 years*

Funeral services were held last Thursday afternoon, December 4, from the Leaf River Christian church for Curtis David Reece, 86. Mr. Reece died suddenly on Sunday following a stroke. The Rev. Leon Eastman, former pastor of the church, now of Waubay, S. D., officiated at the last rites. Mrs. Lyle Dilley sang, "Asleep in Jesus", "Beyond the Sunset" and "Under His Wings". Mrs. Otto Matz was at the organ. Burial was in the Leaf River cemetery, with Donald Siers of Steele, N. D., Willis Siers of Staples, Byron Olson of Minneapolis, Leland Olson of Henning, Orval Kincade of Eagle Bend and Verlyn Kincade of Long Prairie serving as bearers.

Mr. Reece was born September 19, 1866, in Linn County, Iowa, the son of David and Anna Reece, Iowa pioneers. His father was the first Justice of the Peace of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. He spent his boyhood and early married life on the farm his father homesteaded in northern Linn County. He attended school at Epworth Seminary, Epworth, Iowa and taught several terms in Linn County rural schools. He was united in marriage with Anna Evalina Renfer on September 3, 1896, at Troy Mills, Iowa. After the death of his parents, he and his family came to Minnesota and had lived in the Leaf River community 32 years. Mr. and Mrs. Reece celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary in 1950. He served on the school board of District 11 for several years and was also assessor of Leaf River Township for many years.

Surviving are two daughters and a son, Mrs. Francis Kincade (Huldah) of Eagle Bend, Mrs. Walter Olson (Ferne) of Spokane, Washington, and George of rural Wadena, with whom the father lived. There are 31 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. A sister, Mrs. Rena Herman lives at Independence, Iowa.

In ending this biography of Curtis David Reece, I will end on the following letter written on May 11, 2004 by his granddaughter, Renee (Reece) Murray.

**Grandpa Curt had a stroke at the dinner table. They took him in to the living room and laid him on the couch. I remember patting his hand as he was there. The doctor was called out from Wadena. I always wanted to sit next to him at the table and we would go for walks out on the farm where I grew up. My mom and dad bought the farm from grandpa and grandma (Curt and Eva). I was very young when he died but still remember him. He smoked a pipe. I don't know if he did just before passing, but cherry blend tobacco burning still reminds me of him. I guess he was confused towards last but...**
somehow I don’t remember that at all. Grandma died before grandpa and he was just lost without her. Grandpa had a big white mustache and called it his soup strainer, or his cookie duster. My father had a laugh a lot like grandpa. Not loud but more breathy? They had wonderful laughs. The day of grandpa and grandma’s 50th wedding anniversary he shaved off his mustache. Grandma was so mad at him. He had had a mustache all the time that she knew him. She said to him, “Oh Curt!” Grandpa wore a suit with a vest at times. I’ll have to look at old pictures to see about that. I could just see that in my head. I don’t know if he did it often but I remember that. I remember grandma as being fluffy. She was a good hugger. A year or so after she died (I suppose after grandpa died too) my mom and I were going through things at their house and I picked up her purse. My mom said that I should put it down and I told her that grandma always had lemon drops for me in her purse. And sure enough there was. Mom thought that I was too young to remember that. Grandma died of colon cancer. By the time that she finally went to the doctor they opened her and just closed her back up as it had spread all through her. My father died of colon cancer. Dad’s sister Anna died of colon cancer. After all these years I still miss them.

Curt and Eva and family got to Wadena, Minnesota in October 1915 on Aunt Fern’s birthday (October 7, 1901). I think that my father (George) was born during the short time that they lived in Coggon, Iowa. Curt and Eva lived behind the Cozy Movie Theater in Wadena when they moved there in October 1915. There is no house there now but was until I moved from Wadena. I can’t remember what year it was torn down. I think that they came by train when they moved from Iowa. I know that I was told how they happened to come to Wadena but can’t remember now. I think that they rode with the animals in the boxcar. I have to keep making notes of things to look up; then I wonder about ten other things that I want to find out about. I guess that is just part of family history. They lived on a farm south of Wadena too for a while then moved to the farm seven miles northeast of Wadena. My sister Karen and her husband Lavern Erkenbrack live there now. Mom sold it to them the year after my father died and mom moved into town. My dad died in 1977 and she moved into Wadena in 1978. Three generations of Reeces lived on that farmstead and all three generations lost a son. Grandpa Curt and Grandma Eva lost their son Charles when lightning struck the barn as he was turning out the work horses. Mom and dad lost Harlan to a car accident and my sister and brother-in-law lost a son to a car accident.

My husband’s grandfather did own quite a bit of land at one time, and did own land out where the Leaf River Cemetery is now.

Curt and Eva are buried in Leaf River Cemetery, Wadena, Minnesota; as is their daughter Anna.

Curtis and Evelina Reece are the parents of:

2. **Anna Pearl (Reece) Siers**, born March 10, 1899; died April 29, 1952.
Anna Irene (Reece) Hermann
4th child of David and Anna (Conner) Klingaman/Reece

Anna Irene Reece was born on November 6, 1869 in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa, probably on her parent’s farm. She was the last child born to David and Anna Reece. Many sources referred to our subject as Annie or Rena.

When Rena was born, her parents and siblings were residing upon their family farm known as the Hickory Grove Farm. Upon her birth, Rena entered a home which would have been occupied by her parents, her brother Curtis, and their half-brothers and sisters from their parent’s previous marriages.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that on July 6, 1870, that Annie (Rena) was then 8 months and 12 days old and residing with her parents on their farm in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This census recorded that Rena’s father was then a farmer and that her mother was ‘keeping house.’ As recorded by the 1870 census, in addition to Rena, her father’s household on July 6, 1870 consisted of: her father David, age 46; mother Anna, age 41; half-sister Hannah, age 18; half-brother *Abram, age 15; stepsister Maria, age 13; half-brother Floyd, age 12; stepsister Gertrude, age 10; half-sister Annetta, age 10; and brother Curtis, age 3.

Rena was two years old when her 20 year old half-sister Hannah died on February 14, 1872. Rena and her siblings would have been living upon their family farm when Hannah died. Hannah likely died in the presence of her parents, siblings and loved ones upon the family farm.

The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that on June 26, 1880, that Rena was then 10 years old and living with her parents on their farm. As recorded by the 1880 census, in
addition to Rena, her father’s household on June 26, 1880 consisted of: her father David, age 56; mother Annie, age 52; half-brother Floyd, age 22; and brother Curtis, age 13. This census recorded their occupations at the time of this census as: David a farmer; Annie a housekeeper; Floyd at home in school; Rena at school; and Curtis at home.

It would appear that Rena spent her childhood years growing up with her siblings on their parent’s Hickory Grove Farm. I assume that Rena probably lived with her parents up until she married in 1893. It would have been through the country schools located near her parent’s farm that Rena would have acquired her education. She likely attended school with her siblings, including her younger brother Curtis, and other relatives.

Rena was 17 when her 33 year old half-brother Abram died of a heart attack on December 27, 1886. Rena was probably still living with her parents upon the family farm when Abram died. Rena and her brother Curtis were probably the only remaining children of their parents living at home when Abram died. Abram and his family appear to have been farming and residing near Rena at the time of his death.

At the age of 23, Rena married 23 year old William Henry Hermann on March 16, 1893 at Marion, Linn County, Iowa. William is the son of Phillip Hermann and Anna Cathairna Launspach. William was born on March 28, 1869 in Dubuque County, Iowa.

Will and Rena’s first child, Carl Emery Hermann, was born on March 17, 1895. He reportedly was born in Coggon, Linn County, Iowa. Will and Rena would have been living in Coggon or in the vicinity of, probably within Linn County, when Carl was born. It would appear that at some point after Carl’s birth, that Will and Rena moved the family a short distance to Buchanan County, Iowa.

Will and Rena’s second child, Claude Irvin Hermann, was born on October 16, 1897. Claude is reported to have been born in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. Newton Township is located in the southeastern part of Buchanan County. The township is bordered on the south by Linn County, and on the east by Delaware County. Newton Township is bordered by Cono Township on the west, and by Middlefield Township on the north. Newton Township is located a short distance from where Rena grew up on her parent’s Hickory Grove Farm in northern Linn County. At the time of Claude’s birth, Will and Rena were evidently residing within Newton Township. They were likely farmers when Claude was born, and he was likely born on their farm.

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that William and Anna Hermann were farmers and resided on a farm in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa on June 11, 1900. This may be the same farm where their son Claude was likely born in 1897. This census recorded Will and Rena’s last name as Harmon. This is incorrect; it is actually Hermann. This census enumerator made a mistake spelling their last name. According to this census record, Will and Rena owned the farm they were then residing on in Newton Township. Their farm was likely located within section 28 of Newton Township.

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that on June 11, 1900, that the household of William Harmon [sic] was then comprised of: himself, age 31; his wife Annie E., age 30, born in November 1869; son Carl, age 5, born in March 1895; son Claud E., age 2, born in September 1897; and Clara Long, age 17, a servant. I do not know what relationship Clara Long had with Will and Rena Hermann. She was evidently a hired hand in the Hermann household. This census recorded that all of the members of William’s family
were born in Iowa. Will and Rena had been married for 7 years at the time of this census. Rena is recorded in this census as being the mother of 2 children; both are listed in this census record. At the time of this census, the Hermanns were living in close proximity to Rena’s niece, Lillie Steele. Lillie is a daughter of Rena’s half-brother, Abraham Reece. Lillie and her husband Howard were farmers in the area at the time of this census.

At the time of the 1900 U.S. Census, Rena would have been pregnant with her third child. Shortly after this census, Rena gave birth to Norval Curtis Hermann on July 27, 1900. It is reported that Norval was born in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa.

A 1901 biographical history of Rena’s father, David Reece, found within the Linn County, Iowa Biographical Record 1901, lists William and Anna Hermann as then being farmers in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. Will and Rena would have been living on a farm north of Troy Mills in 1901, probably within section 28 of Newton Township. This is evidently the same farm they resided upon at the time of the 1900 federal census. Will and Rena appear to have resided at this farm from at least 1900 to 1910. Her father’s 1910 Linn County, Iowa biographical record lists Will and Rena as then being farmers living north of Troy Mills.

Will and Rena’s fourth child, Nellie Verna Hermann, was born on July 23, 1902 in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. The family of William Hermann would have been living in Newton Township, probably on their farm in section 28, when Nellie was born.

Will and Rena’s fifth and last child, Elma Pearl Hermann, was born April 29, 1908, reportedly in Newton Township. I think that it is very likely that Elma, along with her siblings, were probably all born on their parent’s farm in section 28 of Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. One source lists Elma’s birth as having occurred in Linn County, Iowa, which is not surprising given how close her parents would have lived to the county lines of Linn and Buchanan.

As recorded by the 1910 U.S. Census, on April 16, 1910, Will and Rena were then farmers living on a farm that they owned through a mortgage in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. It appears that this is the same farm that they were living upon ten years earlier at the time of the 1900 U.S. Census.

The 1910 U.S. Census recorded that on April 16, 1910, that the household of Will H. Hermann then consisted of: himself, age 41; his wife Annie R., age 40; son Carl E., age 15; son Claude I., age 12; son Norvile C., age 9; daughter Nellie V., age 7; and daughter Elma P., age 1½. This census lists all of the members of the Hermann family as having been born in Iowa. This census is hard to read, but it appears to list Will’s mother and father as being natives of Germany. Will and Rena had been married for 17 years at the time of this census. This census recorded that Rena was the mother of 5 children; all 5 are listed in this census record.

At the time of the 1910 U.S. Census, Will and Rena Hermann were neighbors to her nieces: Maud Sauer and Lillie Steele. Maud and Lillie are the daughters of Rena’s half-brother, Abraham Reece. The Hermanns were also neighbors to several Sauer households at the time of this census.

On Saturday, June 8, 1913, Will and Rena attended a party held in recognition of her parent’s 50th wedding anniversary. This party was largely attended by family and
friends of her parents at their home upon the Hickory Grove Farm. Will and Rena would have been 44 and 43 years old respectively in June 1913. They likely attended her parent’s anniversary party with their children. In 1913, William Hermann and his family would have been living upon their farm in section 28 of Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. Will and Rena resided on their farm for many years in relative close proximity to her parents and their Hickory Grove Farm where she grew up.

This photo of Will and Rena Hermann was taken in June 1913 while attending the 50th wedding anniversary party held for Rena’s parents at their Hickory Grove Farm, Troy Mills, Iowa.
The following biographical history of William H. Hermann appeared in *The History of Buchanan County, Iowa* in 1914.

**WILLIAM H. HERMANN**

William H. Hermann, the owner of a farm of one hundred and sixty acres on section 28, Newton Township [Buchanan County], was born in Dubuque County, Iowa, in March 1869. His parents were Phillip and Anna (Launspach) Hermann, both of whom were natives of Germany, the former born in Hesse-Darmstadt on the 15th of June, 1829. Phillip Hermann emigrated to the United States in an early day, locating in Pennsylvania, and in that state worked in the coal mines for some time. He afterward removed to Dubuque County, Iowa, where he purchased and improved a tract of land which he cultivated. He then came to Buchanan County and bought and developed property in Newton Township, where he carried on agricultural pursuits for many years. After disposing of that place he made his way to Louisiana but at the end of two years' residence in that state returned to Iowa, taking up his abode in Iowa City, Johnson County, where he spent the remainder of his life. His demise occurred on the 16th of April, 1902, while his wife was called to her final rest in the year 1889.

William H. Hermann was reared and educated in Dubuque and Buchanan counties and completed his studies at Vinton, in Benton County, Iowa. He remained under the parental roof until twenty-three years of age and then started out as an agriculturist on his own account, cultivating rented land for five years. On the expiration of that period he purchased one hundred and twenty acres of land on section 28, Newton Township, improved the place and subsequently bought a forty-acre tract adjoining, so that his farm now embraces one hundred and sixty acres. He raises both grain and stock, making a specialty of high grade Durham cattle, and in both branches of his business has met with gratifying success. He is a stockholder in the Farmers Elevator Company of Walker, Iowa, and the Farmers Land Company of Waterloo, this state.

In March, 1893, Mr. Hermann was united in marriage to Miss Anna Reece, a daughter of David and Anna (Connor) Reece, who were natives of Ohio and New Jersey respectively. In 1851 the father took up his abode in Linn County, Iowa, where he secured a tract of government land which he cultivated throughout the remainder of his life. He passed away in January, 1914, and his wife died the following day, so that the remains of both were interred in the same grave. Mr. and Mrs. Hermann have five children, as follows: Carl E., who is nineteen years of age; Claude I., a youth of seventeen; Norval C., who is fourteen years old; and Nellie V. and Elma P., who are twelve and six years of age respectively.

Mr. Hermann gives his political allegiance to the republican party and now holds the office of trustee, having served in that capacity for four years. Fraternally he is identified with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the Modern Brotherhood of America at Troy Mills, Iowa, while his religious faith is indicated by his membership in the Methodist church. He is a man of high purpose and honorable principles, and during the long period of his residence in Buchanan County has won a large circle of warm friends who hold him in high esteem and regard.
Will and Rena were still residing within Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa at the time of the 1920 U.S. Census. As recorded by this census, at that time they were living on a farm that they owned free of any mortgage; it appears that this is the same farm upon which they resided at during the 1900 and 1910 federal censuses. Their farm appears to have been located within section 28 of Newton Township at the time of this census.

The 1920 U.S. Census recorded that on February 11, 1920, that the household of William H. Herman [sic] then consisted of: himself, age 50; his wife Anna, age 49; son Norval C., age 19; daughter Nellie, age 17; and daughter Elma, age 11. At the time of this census, Norval, Nellie, and Elma had all recently attended school. They undoubtedly were attending the country schools near their parent’s farm in section 28 of Newton Township. This census recorded that all members of the Hermann household were born in Iowa; that William’s father was born in Pennsylvania; and that his mother was born in Germany. According to this census, William was then working as a farmer on his own account.

In 1930, Will and Rena appear to have been living upon the same farm that they resided at during the federal censuses of 1900, 1910 and 1920. The 1930 U.S. Census recorded that on April 15, 1930, that Will and Rena were then living on a farm that they owned in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. This census recorded that William was then a farmer by occupation. It also recorded that his home included a radio set, which was the major form of communication at that time.

As recorded by the 1930 U.S. Census, William Hermann’s household on April 15, 1930 consisted of: himself, age 61; his wife Anna, age 61; son Claude, age 32; and daughter-in-law Naomi, age 21. Naomi would be the wife of son Claude. Claude and Naomi married shortly prior to this census. Claude is listed in this census as a farm laborer; so, he evidently must have been helping his parents on the family farm at the time of this census. This census recorded that Will and Rena were both 26 years old when they married.

From the 1930 census record we know that Will and Rena were then living near George and Hannah Oldridge. They are the parents of Hattie Oldridge, my great-grandmother. Hattie was the wife of Rena’s nephew, William Milton Reece, my great-grandfather. Knowing that Will and Rena lived near the Oldridges in 1930, we know that Will and Rena lived a short distance north of Troy Mills at that time. The site of the old George and Hannah Oldridge farm can now be found 1.5 miles north of the main intersection in Troy Mills at 3327 Troy Mills Road. Will and Rena would have been living near this address in 1930. In addition, as recorded by the 1930 census, Will and Rena then also lived near her half-sister, Gertrude (Klingaman) Long, and her husband Alonzo.

Unquestionably, Will and Rena resided upon a farm that they owned in section 28 of Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa for approximately 40 years. The federal censuses for the years of 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930 demonstrate that Will and Rena lived upon the same farm during these censuses. Other pieces of documentation corroborate my belief that they lived on their farm in section 28 for approximately 40 years. This documentation indicates that Will and Rena moved onto their farm in section 28 as early as 1897, which was four years after their marriage.
Rena’s half-sister, Gertrude (Klingaman) Long, died on November 19, 1941. Gertrude’s obituary reads that Rena was a resident of Winthrop at the time of Gertrude’s death. Will and Rena retired from farming in 1938 and moved off of their long time home which was the farm that they owned in section 28 of Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. They subsequently retired in Winthrop, Buchanan County, Iowa.

William Hermann died at the age of 73 on April 6, 1942 in Buchanan County, Iowa. Will and Rena were residing in Winthrop, Iowa at the time of his death. The following newspaper article regarding William’s death appeared on Thursday, April 9, 1942 in a Buchanan County paper.

**Death Record of Past Week**

William H. Hermann, 73, Winthrop, prominent Buchanan County farmer, died at the People’s hospital [Independence] Monday afternoon at 5 o’clock, having been at the hospital for 10 days for treatment for a heart ailment. He had been ill for two weeks previous to going to the hospital.

Mr. Hermann was born at Sherrill’s Mound in Dubuque County, March 28, 1869, son of Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Hermann. He came to Buchanan County with his parents when he was 9 years old, and except for three years spent in Linn County, he had lived in this county ever since he came here.

He was married to Miss Arena [sic] Reece March 16, 1893, she surviving. They lived on their farm in Newton Township for over 40 years and until they moved to Winthrop four years ago. He held various local and township offices in Newton Township, and was a director of the Coggon Creamery Co. for 15 years. He was a charter member of Troy Mills lodge, I.O.O.F., [Independent Order of Odd Fellows] and was an active member of that lodge for 40 years. He was a member of the Congregational church.

Besides his wife he is survived by three sons, Carl, Independence; Claude, Walker; Norval, West Union; a daughter, Elma Turner, Casey; one brother, Charles, Waterloo; and 12 grandchildren. One daughter is deceased.

His funeral services were held at the People’s funeral home on Wednesday afternoon at 2:00, and were conducted by Rev. B.O. Bashore, pastor of the Baptist church. Odd Fellow rites were conducted by the Troy Mills lodge. Burial was in the Wilson Cemetery, 2 miles east of Independence.

Rena’s brother Curtis died in Minnesota on November 30, 1952. Curtis’ obituary lists Rena as a surviving sister living at Independence, Buchanan County, Iowa at the time of his death. At some point after her husband’s death, Rena left Winthrop and moved to Independence to make her home.

Anna 'Rena’ Hermann died at the age of 92 on August 14, 1962. Rena and her husband Will are buried in Wilson Cemetery east of Independence, Iowa. Their son Claude and their daughter Nellie, along with their respective spouses, are also buried in Wilson Cemetery.
The following newspaper article regarding Rena’s death appeared in a Buchanan County, Iowa paper. This article appears to have been published in Independence and likely ran in the Independence Bulletin Journal.

Mrs. Hermann Services Set

Funeral services for Mrs. Rena Hermann, 92, will be at 2 p.m. Friday, August 17 at the Haw Funeral home in Independence. The Rev. Elmon Ward, pastor of the First Unite Presbyterian church, will officiate. Burial will be in Wilson Cemetery.

Mrs. Hermann died Tuesday, August 14 at the hospital in Baldwin Wisconsin. She had been visiting a daughter at Hammond, Wisconsin.

She was born November 6, 1869 in Linn County, the daughter of David and Anna Conner Reece. She married William H. Hermann on March 16, 1893.

The couple farmed in the Winthrop area until 1938 when they retired and moved to Winthrop. Mr. Hermann died April 6, 1942 and after his death Mrs. Hermann moved to Independence to make her home. She was a former member of the Rebekah lodge.

Survivors include one daughter, Mrs. Herbert (Elma) Turner, Hammond, Wisconsin; three sons, Carl, Independence; Claude, Walker and Norval, Waterloo; 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

She was also preceded in death by one daughter, Nellie, one brother and several half brothers and sisters.

Pallbearers will be Vic Hakanson, Dan Ellis, Glenn Kirkendall, Frank Speers, John Lorenz, Sr., and James Rommann.

As indicated in the above article, Rena died at a hospital in Baldwin, Wisconsin after visiting her daughter in Hammond, Wisconsin. At the time of her death, Rena would have been visiting her daughter Elma and her husband Herbert Turner who resided in Hammond, Wisconsin. It appears from the above article that Rena may have been living with the Turners for a period of time up until her death; possibly for a period of at least two years. Rena’s daughter-in-law, Naomi (Harman) Hermann, the wife of Rena’s son Claude, died on July 22, 1960. According to Naomi’s obituary, Rena was one of the members of the family that attended Naomi’s funeral from a distance. Rena is listed in Naomi’s obituary as a resident of Hammond, Wisconsin. If Naomi’s obituary reference to Rena as being a resident of Hammond is correct, then Rena was probably living there with Herbert and Elma Turner at the time of Naomi’s death.

A newspaper article dated November 6, 1959 from the Independence Bulletin Journal reads: Mrs. Rena Herman, who is staying with her daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Turner at Hammond, Wisconsin, will observe her 90th birthday Friday, November 6. From this article we can assume that Rena was living with the Turners from at least 1959 up until her death three years later in 1962. The Turners were evidently taking care of Rena in her old age for a period of at least three years prior to her death.
William and Anna Hermann are the parents of:

1. **Carl Emery Hermann**, born March 17, 1895; died April 8, 1964.
Ether Hiatt Reece
1st child of Henry and Lucretia (Nash) Reece

Ether Hiatt Reece was born on April 20, 1853 in Allen County, Ohio. There is some discrepancy regarding our subject’s first name. Ether evidently is his birth name. The family bible which once belonged to Henry and Lucretia Reece, which I found in the possession of their great-grandson, Bernard Reece of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, lists our subject’s name as Ether. His funeral record also lists his name as Ether. Ether went by Ethan, and more often than not, by his middle name Hiatt. Hiatt was more than likely named after his uncle, Benjamin Hiatt Reece.

Hiatt would have been a baby when he accompanied his parents in their move by wagon from Ohio to Iowa in 1853. Upon coming to Iowa, he and his parents settled on 80 acres near Troy Mills in Section 2, Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. Hiatt spent his following childhood years growing up on his parent’s farm in section 2. His parent’s lived on this farm from 1853 to 1908.

Hiatt gained a sibling when his sister Rebecca was born on August 19, 1855. He would have been two years old when Rebecca was born. She was likely born on the farm that her parents homestead upon coming to Spring Grove in 1853. Hiatt was likely present for Rebecca’s birth, which probably occurred in his parent’s farmhouse. I would assume that all of Henry and Lucretia Reece’s children were born on their farm in section 2.
At the age of three, Hiatt was living within his parent’s home during the 1856 census of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. According to this census, Hiatt then resided with his father Henry, age 27; mother Lucretia, age 24; Newton, age 10; and Alice Reece, age 6. Newton and Alice Reece would be first cousins to Hiatt. Newton would be Hiatt’s cousin: Newton S. Reece, the son of his uncle, Alfred Reece. Alice would be Hiatt’s cousin: Alice Jane Reece, the daughter of his uncle, Benjamin Reece. Hiatt lived with Newton and Alice for at least four years. I can not explain why Hiatt’s sister Rebecca is not listed in this census as then residing within her father’s household. Rebecca would have then been an infant and she should have been residing with her parents at the time of this census.

At the age of five, Hiatt became a brother to a third sibling, Arthur Lewis Reece, who was born on November 2, 1858.

The 1860 U.S. Census recorded that Hiatt, at the age of 7, was living with his parents at their farm on July 9, 1860. Hiatt’s home at that time included: his father Henry, age 30; mother Lucretia, age 37; sister Rebecca, age 5; brother Lewis A., age 3; Newton S., age 15; and Alice J., age 11. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa with the exception of Hiatt, Newton S. and Alice J., all born in Ohio. This census is incorrect on Hiatt’s mother’s age; she would have then been 28 not 37 as recorded in this census.

Hiatt was 11 years old when his sister, Mary Linnabell Reece, was born on November 16, 1864. Their sibling, William Weston Reece, was born approximately four years later on July 28, 1868. He was the last child born to Henry and Lucretia Reece.

The 1870 U.S. Census recorded that Hiatt, at the age of 17, was living within his parent’s home at their farm on July 6, 1870. The household that Hiatt resided within on July 6, 1870 included: his father Henry, age 40, a farmer; mother Lucretia, age 38, ‘keeping house’; sister Rebecca, age 14; brother Arthur, age 12; sister Mary, age 5; and brother William, age 1. According to this census, all of these children were born in Iowa, with the exception of Ethan (Hiatt) born in Ohio.

Hiatt would have been living upon his parent’s farm in section 2 of Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa during the federal censuses of 1860 and 1870. It is during that period of time that Hiatt would have acquired the majority of his education through his attendance of country schools near his parent’s farm. Hiatt surely would have been working as a farm laborer upon his parent’s farm at the time of the 1870 census. He probably began helping out on the family farm when he became old enough to do so.

Hiatt would have been 22 years old when his sister, Rebecca Jane (Reece) Peyton, died at the age of 20 on November 27, 1875. Hiatt certainly would have attended her burial at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery with his surviving siblings. He may have been living with his parent’s on their family farm when Rebecca died. Rebecca and her husband William were likely farming and residing near Troy Mills when she died.
At the age of 23, Hiatt Reece married 18 year old Rachel Catherine Walton. Some sources report that they married on June 2, 1876 in Carbon, Adams County, Iowa. Their marriage license reads that they were married on June 3, 1876. Rachel was born on May 25, 1858 near Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa. She was likely named after her mother. Rachel is the oldest child of Nelson Walton and Susannah Rachel Leatherman.

I assume that immediately after Hiatt and Rachel’s wedding, that they made their home near Troy Mills, probably near his parent’s farm. Hiatt probably would have been making a living through farming shortly after his marriage. I think it is highly likely that upon their marriage, that Hiatt and Rachel commenced farming near his parents and their farm.
This is a photo of Hiatt and Rachel (Walton) Reece. This has to be their wedding photo. This is a tin-type photograph.

Nelson Walton, the father of Rachel Catherine (Walton) Reece, was born on December 10, 1836 in Lima, Allen County, Ohio to John B. Walton and Mary 'Polly' Fleming, who had at least 10 children. John B. Walton would have been a brother to Mary 'Polly' (Walton) Church/Rennells/Reece; she being the same woman that married my great-great-great-great grandfather, William David Reece, on September 13, 1837.
Nelson Walton married Susannah Rachel Leatherman, the daughter of Daniel Leatherman and Rachel Swain, on July 2, 1857 in Linn County, Iowa. Susannah was born on February 16, 1842 in Allen County, Ohio. Nelson died on May 12, 1898 in Adams County, Iowa. He is reported to be buried in the town of Nodaway in Adams County. Susannah died on June 21, 1903 in Adams County, Iowa. She is probably buried in Nodaway Cemetery.

Nelson Walton’s father, John B. Walton, was born on September 8, 1799 in Dunham, Quebec, Canada or Vermont, U.S.A. He is the son of Perez (Pierce) and Hannah Walton. Genealogist Jeanne Church Abrams reports that John married Mary ‘Polly’ Fleming in Madison County, Ohio in 1821 and that Mary was born in 1803 in Kentucky. Mary died on April 9, 1866 in Troy Mills, Iowa. John later married Louisa Grubb; she was born in 1799. John B. Walton died May 10, 1869 in Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa. John B. and Mary Walton are buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.

Daniel Leatherman, the maternal grandfather of Rachel Catherine (Walton) Reece, was born about 1794 in West Bethleham Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania to Michael Leatherman (b: 1761) and Catherine Palmer (b: 1765). Daniel married Rachel Swain, daughter of Joshua Swain and Susanna ‘Susan’ Turner, on November 24, 1836 in Allen County, Ohio. Rachel Swain was born on November 12, 1819 in Jefferson, Allen County, Ohio. Daniel and Rachel Leatherman came to Linn County, Iowa in 1852 and settled along the Wapsipinicon River south of Troy Mills. Daniel died in 1854 in Linn County, Iowa and Rachel died on April 26, 1892 in Brooks, Adams County, Iowa.

The Iowa census of 1854 recorded that a Rachel Letherman was then living within Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. She must have been the wife of the previously mentioned Daniel Leatherman. This census recorded that Rachel Leatherman was then the head of a household with 2 males, 3 females, 0 voters and 0 militia members, for a total of 5 individuals residing within Rachel’s household at the time of this census. This census would have occurred shortly after her husband Daniel’s death. This census recorded that at that time Rachel was living within close proximity to a Joshua and Isreal B. Swain. This Joshua Swain must be Rachel’s father, and Isreal is possibly her brother.

The above genealogical background into Rachel Catherine (Walton) Reece’s parentage gives the reader a good sense of how her ancestry intertwines with that of the Reeces, and demonstrates their common migration from Ohio to Iowa; in particular, from Allen County, Ohio to Linn County, Iowa. Another example of the interconnectivity between the Reece and Walton families is the following: Rachel’s father, Nelson Walton, had two brothers (John and William) that were husbands to Hiatt Reece’s aunt, Elizabeth (Reece) Church/Walton/Walton.

Nelson and Susannah Walton are the parents of:

1. **Rachel Catherine (Walton) Reece/Ganzans**, born May 25, 1858; died August 14, 1929.
4. William Henry Walton, born September 12, 1863; died November 22, 1940.
5. Lydia Ellen (Walton) Bailey, born December 19, 1865; died December 15, 1953.
8. Ulyssis Grant Walton, born March 18, 1872; died February 2, 1958.
10. Hiatt Elmer Walton, born November 16, 1876; died unknown.

It is reported that Rachel Catherine’s sister, Rosa Elmina, was born in Linn County, Iowa, and that her brother, Ulyssis Grant, was born in Adams County, Iowa. Rachel’s parents seem to have moved from Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa to Adams County, Iowa between 1870 and 1872. Adams County is in southwestern Iowa. By the time that Rachel Catherine Walton married Hiatt Reece, her parents were living in Adams County, Iowa. The fact that Rachel’s parents were living in Adams County by 1872 would explain how it came to be that Hiatt Reece and Rachel Walton married in Carbon, Adams County, Iowa.

As recorded by the 1860 U.S. Census, the Nelson Walton household was living in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa on July 9, 1860. His household at that time consisted of: himself, age 25, born in Ohio; wife Susannah, age 20, born in Ohio; daughter Catherine, age 2, born in Iowa; and daughter Jane, age 1, born in Iowa. At the time this census was taken, the Nelson Walton household was living in close proximity to his parents, John B. and Polly Walton, who immigrated to Iowa from Allen County, Ohio between 1850 and 1860. John B. Walton was a brother-in-law to Hiatt Reece’s grandfather, William David Reece (1791-1850).

The Nelson Walton family resided near the community of Spring Grove, Iowa at the time of the 1860 census. We know this because the 1860 census recorded his household’s post office as being Spring Grove. It is my understanding that this community was located east of Troy Mills near the present day Spring Grove Church.

At the age of 12, Rachel Walton was living with her parents in Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa on July 7, 1870. The Nelson Walton household at that time consisted of: Nelson, a farmer; wife Susan, ‘keeping house’; daughter Rachel, age 12; daughter Letitia, age 10; daughter Lucretia, age 7; son William, age 6; daughter Lydia, age 5; daughter Ida, age 2; and daughter Rosa, age 1. All of these children were listed in this census as being born in Iowa. Living right next door to the Nelson family at the time of this census was a Pierce Walton. Pierce would have to be Nelson’s brother, who by all accounts was his adopted brother.

Both the 1860 and 1870 U.S. Census records demonstrate that Rachel Catherine Walton grew up in close proximity to the farm owned by Hiatt’s father, Henry Reece. Rachel Walton and Hiatt Reece would have been neighbors to one another during their childhoods; each would have grown up on the farms of their respective parents; thus
explaining how they met and subsequently married. Hiatt and Rachel undoubtedly knew one another for many years prior to their marriage.

Hiatt and Rachel Reece lived in the vicinity of Troy Mills, Iowa upon their marriage. They started a family with the birth of their first child, Mary Jane, on June 2, 1877. Mary’s birth happened to nearly coincide with Hiatt and Rachel’s one year wedding anniversary. Hiatt and Rachel’s second child, Myrtie Amelia, was born on February 7, 1879; her birth reportedly occurred near Troy Mills.

On January 25, 1880, Hiatt and Rachel’s two year old daughter, Mary Jane, fell backward into a pail of scalding water as her mother was preparing to mop the floor. According to one source, Mary was so badly scalded that she lived only 24 hours. Mary died the next day, January 26, 1880. Mary Jane is buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Her grave stone reads: MARY JANE, daughter of E.H. and Rachel Reece, died January 26, 1880, aged 2 years, 7 months, and 24 days. Mary Jane shares a stone with her aunt, Mary Linnabell Reece, the daughter of Henry and Lucretia Reece.

This monument in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery marks the graves of Mary Jane Reece and her aunt, Mary Linnabell Reece. This is a view of the south side of this monument inscribed with Mary Jane’s name. The west side of this monument is inscribed with the name of Mary Linnabell Reece. This photo was taken on February 25, 2006.
Hiatt and Rachel would likely have been farming for a living when their daughter Mary Jane died. We do know that Mary Jane’s tragic death occurred while her parents were residing in the vicinity of Troy Mills. I assume that Mary Jane’s death occurred in the home that Hiatt and Rachel were living in at the time, which was probably east of Troy Mills. It was evidently while Rachel was housekeeping in her home that Mary Jane fell into the bucket of scalding mop water as Rachel was mopping the floor.

After Mary Jane’s accidental death, Hiatt and Rachel divorced. It is thought by some descendants of Hiatt and Rachel’s that he blamed her for the death of Mary Jane and this ultimately led to their divorce.

Shortly after Mary Jane’s death, Rachel took her daughter Myrtie and both of them moved into the home of Henry and Lucretia Reece; they being Rachel’s father and mother-in-law. The 1880 U.S. Census recorded that the Henry Reece household on June 25, 1880 included: Henry, age 50; wife Lucretia, age 48; son Arthur, age 22; daughter Mary B., age 15; son Willie, age 11; daughter-in-law Rachel, age 22; and granddaughter Myrta, age 1. Their occupations were listed in this census as: Henry a farmer, Lucretia a housekeeper, Arthur a farmer, Mary at home, Willie in school, and Rachel a housekeeper. At the time of this census, Rachel was evidently helping Henry and Lucretia in taking care of their home and she might have been involved with helping them on their farm three miles east of Troy Mills.

I do not know where Hiatt resided at when his wife and daughter were living with his parents during the 1880 U.S. Census. At the present, and after searching the 1880 U.S. Census record, I have yet to determine where Hiatt was residing at during this census. He surely would have been living somewhere near Troy Mills in 1880. Hiatt may have been living within another household during this census; or, he may have been living in the house where his daughter Mary Jane died.

As one can see by the above 1880 U.S. Census record of the Henry Reece household, Hiatt and Rachel were not living together on June 25, 1880. This implies that Hiatt and Rachel broke up within a five month period of time after their little girl’s death, which would support the belief by many that they separated and eventually divorced due to Mary Jane’s death. At some point after the 1880 census, Rachel moved out of her father and mother-in-law’s house and took her daughter Myrtie with her. They eventually moved to Nebraska where Rachel remarried.

No contact had been made with Myrtie’s descendants until Daphane Hoover of Walker, Iowa heard a rumor about a family and wrote to an Elaine Batenhorst in Kearney, Nebraska. Elaine is a great-granddaughter of Hiatt and Rachel Reece. Elaine’s grandmother is Myrtie Amelia (Reece) Tuffs. In a letter to Hoover, Mrs. Batenhorst wrote that Rachel Catherine (Walton) Reece remarried to a Eugene Ganzans at Papillion, Nebraska. According to Batenhorst, Rachel and Eugene moved to Kearney around 1890. In Batenhorst’s letter, she indicates that Eugene and Rachel Ganzans are the parents of:

1. **Eugenia Ganzans**, born January 25, 1883; died December 7, 1962
3. **Willie Ganzans**, born and died between 1884 and 1899.
4. **May Ganzans**, born and died between 1884 and 1899.
This is a photo of Rachel and her second husband Eugene Ganzans. The back of this photo reads: Jennie Ganzans, Rachel (Walton) Reece/Ganzans, Myrtie Reece, Eugene Ganzans and Jessie Ganzans. I assume that Jennie Ganzans is Rachel and Eugene’s daughter Eugenia. Myrtie Reece is the daughter of Rachel and Hiatt Reece. Jessie Ganzans would be the daughter of Rachel and Eugene Ganzans. This photo would have been taken before the birth of Rachel and Eugene’s son, Raymond.
In a letter addressed to me, written in 2003 by Elaine Batenhorst, she wrote: I believe that Rachel must have lived in the Corning, Iowa area and that is where she met Eugene Ganzans. I have never taken the time to explore this. Rachel married Eugene before 1882 in Papillion, Nebraska, according to Eugene’s obituary. His obituary states that he met Miss Rachel Walton in Iowa and married her in Papillion, Nebraska. Eugene died March 12, 1912 in Kearney, Nebraska. His obituary states that he married Rachel 35 years prior to his death. Both Eugene and Rachel are buried in the Kearney Cemetery. He worked for the city. It is believed that he came to Kearney around 1888 with the Frank family from Corning, Iowa [an industrializer that developed a lot in the Kearney area—the Franks had done similar things in Corning.]

The back of this photo reads: Raymond Ganzans, Rachel (Walton) Reece/Ganzans. Raymond is Rachel’s son from her marriage to Eugene Ganzans.
Batenhorst wrote that Rachel died in 1929 in Hitchcock, South Dakota at her brother’s home. In reference to Rachel’s death, Batenhorst wrote: *she had gone to help him and over did it*. Rachel died on August 14, 1929 at the age of 71 in Hitchcock, Beadle County, South Dakota.

The following is the obituary of Rachel (Walton) Reece/Ganzans.

**Mrs. Rachel Ganzans Buried at Kearney, Nebraska.**

Burial services for Mrs. Rachel Ganzans, sister of Henry, Grant and H.E. Walton, took place at Kearney, Nebraska. Mrs. Ganzans died here at the Perry Dickson home on Wednesday evening. The body was sent to Kearney where interment was made. Grant Walton accompanied the body to that place. Short funeral services were held Friday morning here and were conducted by Rev. Lloyd Snyder, pastor of the Presbyterian Church.

**Obituary**

Mrs. Rachel Ganzans was born at Troy Mills, Iowa, Linn County, May 25, 1858, and departed this life August 14, 1929 at Hitchcock, South Dakota while on a visit among relatives.

In September 1875, [sic] she was married to H. Reese at Carbon, Iowa. Two children were born to this union: Mary, who died when about two years old and Mrs. Frank Tuffs, who resides at Wood River, Nebraska. She was also the mother of four children by a second marriage. They are: Mrs. Allie Cash of Seattle, Washington, Mrs. J.B. Miller of Corvallis, Montana, and Raymond Ganzans, an attorney at law in Seattle, Washington.

Since the death of her husband, Eugene Ganzans, March 20, 1912, she has made her home mostly with her children. There are fourteen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She leaves the following brothers, John, Sherman, and Lafayette of Iowa and Henry, and Grant Walton of Hitchcock, South Dakota and Hiatt Walton of Hilland, South Dakota. There are four sisters living, Mrs. Lettie Hardesty and Mrs. Rosy Cecil of Iowa, Mrs. Ida Kunzmann and Mrs. Ellen Bailey of Nebraska, and one departed sister, Mrs. Lucretia Harlow.

Mrs. Ganzans was a faithful wife and companion, a devoted and loving mother, and a true and helpful friend, but her kind and willing hands are now so still. Many years ago she was baptized and united with the Evangelical Church and as life slowly and peacefully ebbed away she left with us the blessed assurance that God would take care of her.

Hiatt and Rachel’s daughter, Myrtie Amelia Reece, married a Francis Adelbert Tuffs on October 3, 1898 in Minden, Nebraska. Myrtie and Adelbert eloped according to Batenhorst. According to one source, the Tuffs resided in Wood River, Nebraska.
Francis and Mrytie Tuffs on their wedding day, October 3, 1898.
Batenhorst wrote the following in her 2003 letter to me:

My mother (Alethia) stated that grandma (Myrtie) traveled to Red Oak (IA) to visit her father (Hiatt) at least once. She commented that grandma came back very angry (never stated why).

Myrtie married Francis Adelbert Tuffs. They lived many places besides Wood River, Nebraska. My mother was born in 1910 in Albion, Nebraska, her brother Floyd was born in Dillon, Montana in 1917. Vera 1899, Oscar, 1901 and Frankie 1902 were born in Kearney. They (Adelbert and Myrtie) were also living back here (Kearney) when my mother and father were married in 1930 as the house still stands that they had pictures taken in front of. Grandma (Myrtie) is buried here in Kearney. There is only one cemetery here in town. Floyd is buried in California, Oscar and Frankie in Oregon, and Vera in Grand Island, Nebraska. My mother, Alethia, is buried in Gibbon, Nebraska.

Francis Adelbert Tuffs, son of Joseph Oscar and Mary E. Harrison Porter Tuffs, was born on August 3, 1874 at Gold, Boone County, Iowa. He eloped on October 3, 1898 at Minden, Nebraska with Myrtie Amelia Reece. He died March 22, 1940 in Lincoln, Nebraska and is buried at Kearney, Nebraska. Myrtie died at the age of 83 on April 29, 1962 at Grand Island, Nebraska. She is buried in the Kearney Cemetery, Kearney, Nebraska. Myrtie had just had eye surgery and as they unwrapped her eyes they called her daughter Alethia to come because she could see. She died before Alethia could get there.

In the above letter, Batenhorst gives us an idea of where Francis and Myrtie lived based upon the places of their children’s births as listed in her letter.

According to Batenhorst, Francis and Myrtie Tuffs are the parents of:

2. Oscar Eugene Tuffs, born January 6, 1901; died September 2, 1983.
5. Floyd Earl Tuffs, born January 17, 1917.
This is a photo of the Frank Tuffs family. The back of this photo reads: Frank, Oscar, Vera, Frank and Myrtie (Reece) Tuffs.
This is another photo of the Tuffs family which was obviously taken after the previous family photo. From left to right are: Oscar, Frankie, Vera, Myrtie, Floyd, F.A. Tuffs and Alethia (a.k.a. Babe). This photo was provided by Elaine Batenhorst. Again, Myrtie is Batenhorst’s grandmother and Alethia is Batenhorst’s mother.
I do not know where Hiatt was living at when he and Rachel divorced. I have not found any documentation of their divorce; so, I do not know when their divorce actually occurred. Hiatt certainly would have continued to live near Troy Mills after his wife and daughter left the area by eventually moving to Nebraska.

Hiatt was 29 years old when his sister Mary died at the age of 17 on September 11, 1882. Hiatt was likely farming and residing in the Troy Mills area when Mary died. She appears to have died at her parent’s farmhouse. It is very possible that Hiatt may have been living with Mary on their parent’s farm when she died. If so, he likely would have been helping his parents farm their ground in exchange for living with them. If Hiatt was living within his parent’s home when Mary died, he was likely present during her final days up until she passed away.

I do not exactly know what Hiatt was doing for a living, or where he lived at, during the period from approximately 1880 to 1896. I can not answer these specific questions because I have not found any documentation pertaining to Hiatt from that time period. During that period, he certainly would have been living in the vicinity of Troy Mills; and he was likely making a living through farming, possibly in conjunction with his parents.

Eighteen years after the tragic loss of his daughter and the break up of his marriage, Hiatt Reece remarried at the age of 45 to 40 year old Angeline Reece on December 25, 1898. Their marriage occurred in Troy Mills, Linn County, Iowa. Angeline was the widow of Hiatt’s first cousin, Abraham Ward Reece, my great-great grandfather. Hiatt and Angeline married twelve years after Abram’s death which occurred in 1886. Upon Hiatt and Angeline’s marriage, he became a stepfather to Angeline and Abram’s children; namely: Lillie Mae, age 21, Effie Annette, age 18, William Milton, age 16, and Maud Reece, age 13. William Milton Reece is my great-grandfather. Hiatt and Angeline had no children of their own.

Hiatt and Angeline’s marriage record, as found in the Register of Marriages, Vol. 6, Linn County, Iowa 1885-1902, recorded the following pertaining to the bride and groom:

1. A marriage license between E.H. Reece and Angeline Reece was issued on December 22, 1898. Affidavit was made by W.W. Cook.


This is a photo of Ether Hiatt Reece, age 45 and Angeline (Betzer) Reece, age 40. Married on December 25, 1898. This must be their wedding photo.

U.S. Census records demonstrate that Angeline (Betzer) Reece/Reece and Rachel Catherine (Walton) Reece/Ganzans grew up near one another during their childhoods. In fact, the 1860 U.S. Census record tells us that Angeline and Rachel’s parents were neighbors to one another at the time of that census. There is no doubt that each woman knew one another over the course of their lifetimes. I believe that my research clearly shows that Abram and Hiatt Reece, and Angeline Betzer and Rachel Walton, knew one another throughout the course of their lifetimes from childhood to adulthood.

It appears that Hiatt and Angeline took up residency in Linn County near Troy Mills within Spring Grove Township immediately after their marriage. They surely would have commenced farming for a living upon their marriage.

At the time of the 1900 U.S. Census, which was less than two years after Hiatt and Angeline married, they were residing upon a farm that they were renting in Spring
Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa. This farm was located about three miles east of Troy Mills and was near the old Henry and Lucretia Reece homestead.

The 1900 U.S. Census recorded that on June 18, 1900, that Hiatt’s household then consisted of: himself, age 47, born April 1853 in Ohio; wife Evangeline, age 42, born November 1857 in Iowa; and daughter Maud Reece, age 14, born June 1885 in Iowa. This census recorded that Angeline was then the mother of 4 children, with all 4 living at the time of this census. Only one of Angeline’s four children (Maud) was living with her at the time of this census. Angeline’s son, *Willie, was living on a farm next door to her and Hiatt at the time of this census. Her daughters, Lillie and Effie, were married by the time of this census and were recorded by this census as then living under the households of their respective husbands. This census recorded that Hiatt and Angeline had been married for a period of one year at the time of this census.

At the time of the 1900 U.S. Census, Hiatt and Angeline were living next door to the old Henry Reece homestead, which would have been the home of Hiatt’s parents and his childhood home. Upon Henry’s farm at the time of this census lived Henry and Lucretia Reece and their son, William Weston Reece, and his family. This census recorded that among the members of the William W. Reece household at the time of this census included one William M. Reece, age 17. This would be William Milton Reece, my great-grandfather, Hiatt and Angeline’s son. William M. Reece is listed in the 1900 census record as then being a farm laborer on the farm of William Weston Reece.

Based upon federal census records, at some point between June 18, 1900 and April 19, 1910, Hiatt and Angeline moved from Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa to Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa, which was a relatively short move.

Hiatt and Angeline were farmers and resided within Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa on April 19, 1910. At that time, Hiatt and Angeline were living upon a farm that they were renting.

The 1910 U.S. Census recorded that on April 19, 1910, that the household of Hiatt E. Reece then consisted of: himself, age 56; and his wife Angeline, age 51. As recorded by this census, Hiatt and Angeline had been married for 11 years by the time of this census. Hiatt is recorded in this census as then being a farmer working on his own account. This census recorded that Angeline was then the mother of 4 children, with all 4 living at the time. At the time of this census, Hiatt and Angeline were living within close proximity to three of their four children; namely: Lillie, William and Maud; all were then residents of Newton Township.

Hiatt was 57 years old when his brother, Arthur, died at the age 52 on February 14, 1911. Hiatt and Angeline certainly would have attended Arthur’s funeral and subsequent burial at Troy Mills Cemetery. Hiatt and Angeline appear to have been living north of Troy Mills when Arthur died.

At some point between April 19, 1910 and August 18, 1915, Hiatt and Angeline moved to Linn County, Iowa from Buchanan County, Iowa. According to Hiatt’s last will and testament dated August 18, 1915, he and Angeline were then residing somewhere within Linn County, Iowa, which I am sure was a short distance from where they previously had resided within Buchanan County. I believe that they were likely living near Troy Mills and possibly within Spring Grove Township, when Hiatt’s will was written on August 18, 1915.
Federal census records tell us that at some point between April 19, 1910 and January 24, 1920, that Hiatt and Angeline moved from Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa to the town of Aurora, which is in Buffalo Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. We can narrow the point in time when Hiatt and Angeline moved to Aurora by taking into account his last will and testament, which suggests that Hiatt and Angeline moved to Aurora between August 18, 1915 and January 24, 1920. Again, Hiatt’s will suggests that he and Angeline moved to Aurora from Linn County; presumably from the Troy Mills area.

As recorded by the 1920 U.S. Census, on January 24, 1920, Hiatt and Angeline were then residing in a home that they owned, free of any mortgage, in Aurora, Buchanan County, Iowa. This census recorded that on January 24, 1920, that the household of Ethen H. Reece then consisted of: himself, age 66; and his wife Angeline, age 61. At the time of this census, both Hiatt and Angeline appear to have been retired because this census lists no occupation for either one of them.

The earliest documentation to specifically describe either Hiatt or Angeline as owners of land within the town of Aurora, Iowa is a warranty deed dated February 26, 1912. Through this deed a Laura B. Tennis and husband conveyed lots 5, 6, 7 and 8 in block 1 in Warren’s Third Addition to the town of Aurora to E.H. (Hiatt) Reece on February 26, 1912. According to descendant Nellie May (Peyton) Ayers, Hiatt and Angeline lived for quite a while in Aurora. Ayers is Hiatt and Angeline’s granddaughter.

Hiatt and Angeline lived for an undetermined amount of time with their daughter and son-in-law, Effie and Pete Peyton, at their farm residence near Newtonville in Buchanan County, Iowa. It appears that Hiatt and Angeline owned a home in Aurora during the time period that they resided with the Peytons. Hiatt and Angeline appear to have owned land, or had a residence in Aurora, from at least 1912 up until 1934. It is possible that due to their age, that Hiatt and Angeline left their home in Aurora to live with Pete and Effie Peyton. Pete and Effie probably helped take care of Hiatt and Angeline for a time during their later years.

It appears that Hiatt and Angeline intermittently left their home in Aurora to periodically live with one of their children. One would assume that during Hiatt and Angeline’s later years that they would have needed assistance in daily living; that being the case, they were probably cared for by their children at their homes on a rotating basis.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa resident Bernard Reece told me that he remembered visiting with Hiatt and Angeline when he was a kid. Bernard is a descendant of one of Hiatt’s brothers. Bernard stated to me that he believed that Hiatt and Angeline lived 3-5 miles north of Troy Mills at the time of his childhood visits with them. Bernard believed that he was approximately six years old at the time; thus, his visits with Hiatt and Angeline would have taken place around 1922. Bernard told me that he remembered how Hiatt had no teeth; and as a consequence, his chin would reach his nose.

Bernard Reece’s sister, Wilma (Reece) Gilchrist of Center Point, Iowa, told me that she remembered Hiatt and Angeline living right next door to Peter and Effie Peyton. Gilchrist stated to me that she recalled Hiatt and Angeline living next door to Pete and Effie who were then living 5 miles north of Troy Mills in the late 1920’s. Gilchrist stated that Hiatt and Angeline were retired at that time and that Pete and Effie were farmers.
Gilchrist clarified by stating to me that she thought that the Peyton farm was then to the northeast of Troy Mills.

The recollections of Wilma Gilchrist fit what I was told by Nellie Ayers, who informed me that when she was growing up and living with her parents (Pete and Effie Peyton) on their farm, that her grandparents, Hiatt and Angeline, lived next door in another house on her parent’s property for a little while. Ayers stated to me that her parents lived on a farm near the little community of Newtonville, which was a small community located in Newton Township, Buchanan County, Iowa. Newtonville was located at the present intersection of 310th St. and Vincent Ave, which is east of Troy Mills Blvd and northeast of Troy Mills. Like so many small communities of the era, Newtonville long ago disappeared and is today only a memory. According to Nellie Ayers, she thought that Hiatt and Angeline came down from their residence in Aurora to live in the house located beside her parent’s farm home. According to Ayers, the house that Hiatt and Angeline lived in was one in which her parents used as a summer kitchen, which she thought consisted of two rooms. Ayers explained that back in those days they did a lot of canning, put up a lot of fruit and vegetables, and to keep the main house cool, they would cook in this other little house, that being the summer kitchen in which Hiatt and Angeline lived in. Pete and Effie’s farm was located a short distance south of the intersection of 310th Street and Vincent Avenue. The Peyton farm was located at the present address of 3139 Vincent Avenue, Walker, Iowa. For how long Hiatt and Angeline resided at this address with Pete and Effie Peyton on their farm is unknown.

In a conversation that I had with a Mrs. Bernace Ruth (Steele) Stolt, who is a granddaughter of Hiatt and Angeline Reece, Stolt stated to me that she recalled Angeline coming up to her mother Lillie’s home in Independence to spend a week or so at a time. Lillie is Hiatt and Angeline’s daughter: Lillie Mae (Reece) Steele. Stolt stated that she remembered taking the Rock Island Railway from Independence to Aurora with her mother, Lillie, and visiting with Angeline and Hiatt at there home in that town. Stolt stated that she remembered Angeline and Hiatt living together by themselves; otherwise, Angeline was always with one of her children; namely: Effie, Lillie or Maud. According to Stolt, Angeline made her home with her three daughters after Hiatt died. Stolt did not recall Angeline ever living alone by herself in a house. Stolt remembered Angeline coming to live within her mother’s (Lillie’s) home for a week or two, in Stolt’s words: “She [Angeline] kind of shifted around with the girls.”

At some point between January 24, 1920 and January 20, 1933, Hiatt and Angeline appear to have moved from Aurora to the town of Quasqueton in Buchanan County, Iowa. According to an obituary of Hiatt’s, he died at the age of 79 years and 9 months, at 8:20 a.m., January 20, 1933 at his home in Quasqueton. Hiatt and Angeline evidently owned land and a home within Aurora at the time they were living in Quasqueton where he died.

Hiatt’s funeral record also lists his death as occurring in Quasqueton. Wilma Gilchrist told me that she believed that Hiatt and Angeline were living in the Quasqueton home of Charlie and Maud Sauer when Hiatt died. Maud is Hiatt and Angeline’s daughter. Both Wilma Gilchrist and Bernace Ruth Stolt told me that they remembered Hiatt having a disease of the face called erysipelas.
A newspaper article written in a Buchanan County paper regarding Hiatt’s death reads: *E.H. Reece, passed away after a few days illness of erysipelas of the face. Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon in the Union Protestant Church in Quasqueton. The Rev. Will Long of Quasqueton officiated, assisted by Rev. Conrad of the Hoover Church.* Hiatt’s funeral record also lists his cause of death as erysipelas of the face. Hiatt was buried in Lower Spring Grove Cemetery on January 22, 1933.

Erysipelas of the face is a type of skin infection. In the past, the face was the most commonly involved area of the body. An erysipelas skin lesion typically has a raised border that is sharply demarcated from normal skin. The underlying skin is painful, intensely red, hardened, swollen, and warm. Blisters may develop over the skin lesion. Fever and shaking chills are common. Facial erysipelas lesions classically involve the cheeks and the bridge of the nose. This infection may produce symptoms that affect the entire body. In some patients, the infection may travel to the blood and additional sites may be involved such as heart valves, joints, and bones.

Hiatt’s funeral record states that his occupation was that of a farmer. I believe that Hiatt had been retired from farming for a number of years prior to his death. No doubt, he must have been a farmer his entire life until he retired. It appears very likely that Hiatt and Angeline may have been living with their son-in-law and daughter, Charles and Maud Sauer, in their Quasqueton home when Hiatt died.

An obituary of our Ethan Hiatt Reece reads as follows:

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Ethan Hiatt Reece was born in Allen County, Ohio, April 20, 1853 and passed away at 8:20 a.m. January 20, 1933, aged 70 years and 9 months. He was the eldest son of Henry and Lucretia Reece. Two sisters and one brother preceded him in death.

He was united in marriage December 25, 1898 to Angeline Reece.

He leaves to mourn his departure his wife; one brother, William Reece of Cedar Rapids; several nieces and cousins; four step children, Mrs. Howard A. Steele of Independence, Iowa, Mrs. P.L. Peyton of Walker, Iowa, William Reece of Winthrop, Iowa, and Mrs. Charles Sauer of Quasqueton, Iowa, and many other relatives and friends.

He was a faithful companion, a father of the fatherless and was a friend to all the little children.

Ministers in charge of services were Rev. Long of Quasqueton and Rev. Conrad of Hoover.

Friends and relatives from a distance were, Mr. and Mrs. W.J. Betzer, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Schenman of Anamosa, Mrs. G.L. Betzer of Central City, W.W. Reece and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Perry Reece, Mrs. and Mrs. Dale Reece, Mr. and Mrs. Erney Neitert and Lowell Steele of Cedar Rapids, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Reece of Machicsville, Mr. and Mrs. Will Cook, George Cook, Mr. and Mrs. George Oldridge of Troy Mills, Harland Reece of Coggon, Mr. and Mrs. George Yarrington and children of Waterloo, Mr. and Mrs. H.A. Steele, Mr. and Mrs. Edd Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Delbert Black, Mrs. John Walton and Mrs. N. Yockey all of Independence.
Hiatt’s will was proved and admitted to probate and recorded in the District Court of Buchanan County, Iowa in Independence on February 22, 1933. Hiatt’s last will and testament was dated August 18, 1915. His will was filed, opened and read, Saturday, February 18, 1933 at the District Court, Buchanan County, Iowa.

The following is the last will and testament of our Ethan Hiatt Reece.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ETHAN HIATT REECE

I, Ethan Hiatt Reece of the county of Linn, State of Iowa, being of lawful age and in full possession of all my mental faculties, and realizing the uncertainties of life, and desiring to leave my temporal affairs so that they may be most easily settled, and in a way and manner that I think best, do hereby make and publish this my Last Will And Testament, hereby revoking any and all former wills by me made.

First: I first desire and direct that all just debts and legal obligations against my estate be paid and satisfied in full.

Second: I then devise give and bequeath to my beloved wife, Angeline Reece, all the property that I may die seized of be the same either real, personal or mixed for her support and maintenance. Also hereby grant to and give my beloved wife the power and authority to sell and convey any and all real estate I may die seized of at such time as she may think best.

Third: After the death of my beloved wife, Angeline Reece, then I desire and direct, that all the residue of my estate that she may die seized of I give and bequeath to my daughter Mrs. Myrtie Amelia Tuffs, and to my four step children i.e. Mrs. Lillie Steele, Mrs. Effie Peyton, Mrs. Maud Sauers, and W.M. Reece in equal shares, share and share alike.


In witness thereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Walker, Linn County, Iowa this Eighteen day of August, A. D. 1915.

Ethan Hiatt Reece

We, P.L. Peyton and Thomas H. Wiley and each for himself says that he saw the above named Ethan Hiatt Reece sign the foregoing instrument, which he informed us was his last will and testament, and that he requested us to sign same as witnesses, which we did in his presence and in the presence of each other, that said Ethan Hiatt Reece was in full possession of all his faculties and fully realized the full force and effect of said instrument and his signature thereto.

Witness our hands at Walker, Linn County, Iowa this Eighteenth day of August, A. D. 1915.

P.L. Peyton, P.O. Coggon, Iowa

A claim against estate was made by the State of Iowa, Buchanan County, E.M. Wilcox, County Treasurer vs. the estate of E.H. Reece, deceased, in account with 1932 taxes, Quasqueton, Iowa, totaling fifty-two cents. We know from this claim for taxes that Hiatt was probably living in Quasqueton the year before he died. Angeline would have undoubtedly been living in Quasqueton with Hiatt in 1932. It would seem to me, based upon this claim against estate for taxes, that Hiatt and Angeline owned the home they resided at in Quasqueton in 1932-33. Hiatt was reported as having died at his Quasqueton home according to one of his obituaries. It is not known how long he and Angeline resided at Quasqueton.

For the amount of one dollar and other consideration, Angeline Reece transferred lots 5, 6, 7 and 8 in block 1 in Warren’s Third Addition to the town of Aurora, Buchanan County, Iowa, to her son, *William ‘Willie’ M. Reece, through a warranty deed dated May 25, 1933. She evidently transferred ownership of these lots to Willie while still retaining a home in Aurora.

We can assume that Angeline was living with Hiatt when he died in Quasqueton. After his death, she moved back to Aurora. Angeline was living in Aurora about a year after Hiatt’s death. The following letter was written to Angeline by the Clerk of District Court of Buchanan County, Iowa. The letter reads as follows:

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**January 11, 1934**

_Mrs. Angelin Reece,

Aurora, Iowa._

RE: Estate of Ethan Hiatt Reece, deceased.

_Dear Madam:_

_Last February 13th your attorney, Mr. A.N. Todd of this city [Independence] filed the will in this estate. Notice of proof was published in the paper one week and said will was proved up on February 22nd by P.L. Peyton of Coggon, Iowa [her son-in-law].

Mr. Todd stated to the court that this estate was so small nothing further was to be done; however, the court demanded that the costs be paid and told Mr. Todd to collect $6.25 and pay into this office. Mr. Todd died last week and I am writing you at this time to find out if you had paid Mr. Todd $6.25 or were you intending to send same to this office direct? This court has looked into this matter and finds that you transferred lots 5, 6, 7 and 8 in block 1 in Warren’s 3rd addition to the town of Aurora and this was done on or about May 25th, about three months after the filing of this will.

We do not wish to make you any trouble in this matter further then to collect the costs which I ask you to pay at once._

_Yours truly, Arlee G.W. Blank_

_Clerk District Court_
At some point after Hiatt’s death, Angeline moved from Aurora to the town of Brandon within Buchanan County, Iowa, which is where she was living by 1944. The obituary of Angeline’s daughter, Maud (Reece) Sauer, reads that Angeline was a Brandon, Iowa resident at the time of Maud’s death in May 1944. Angeline must have been living with her son-in-law and daughter, Charles and Maud Sauer, in their Brandon home when Maud died. Nellie Ayers, Angeline’s granddaughter, informed me that at one time, Angeline did live with her daughter Maud in Brandon. Maud and Charlie Sauer were no doubt helping to take care of Angeline in her old age at the time of Maud’s death. Angeline appears to have moved in with her daughter, Effie (Reece) Peyton, at her home in Troy Mills at some point after Maud’s death.

We know that Angeline was living in Troy Mills at the age of 86 when her grandson, Edwin Reece, passed away on May 3, 1945. Edwin was the youngest child of Angeline’s son, *William Milton Reece. Edwin’s obituary tells us that Angeline was living in Troy Mills when he died. Angeline would have been living with her daughter Effie in Troy Mills at the time of Edwin’s death.

Angeline died at the age of 89 years, 4 months and 19 days at 11:45 p.m., April 7, 1948. Her cause of death, as listed in her funeral record, was vascular heart disease. Angeline’s funeral record lists her residence and place of death as Troy Mills. Nellie Ayers told me that Angeline died in Troy Mills at the home of her daughter, Effie (Reece) Peyton. Ayers informed me that Angeline lived with Effie at her home in Troy Mills for quite some time up until Angeline’s death. Angeline’s funeral service was conducted at 2 p.m., Friday, April 9, 1948 by Rev. Scott and Rev. Anderson at the Troy Mills Methodist Church. Her burial took place at Lower Spring Grove Cemetery. Angeline is buried next to her first husband, Abram. Hiatt’s grave is located a few feet away. Lower Spring Grove Cemetery contains the graves of Angeline’s parents; it is also reported that her siblings: Adaline, Mary and William, are buried there as well.
This monument marks the graves of Abram and Angeline Reece. Lower Spring Grove Cemetery.
The monument on the lower left marks the grave of E.H. (Ether Hiatt) Reece. The monument to the right of Hiatt's marks the graves of Abram and Angeline Reece. Lower Spring Grove Cemetery, November 11, 2003.
Looking south from Lower Spring Grove Cemetery on November 11, 2003. From the foreground to background in the middle of this photo are the monuments marking the graves of: Hiatt Reece, Abraham and Angeline Reece, David and Anna Reece, Marye Reece, William Reece, Hannah Reece and Kittorah Reece. I have listed these monuments in chronological order.
This is a view of the same monuments seen in the previous photo, just from a different angle. Behind these monuments are the graves of Henry Reece and his descendants.
Information for Future Researchers

We know that my great-great-great grandfather, David Reece, lived in the Allen County, Ohio area from 1833 to 1851. My research demonstrates that the Reeces lived in the Allen and Auglaize County, Ohio area. I found several Reeces in Allen and Auglaize County records that I could not connect with my line; therefore, future researchers may want to go back and research them at a future point in time. For example, a David Reece was a justice of the peace of Allen County, Ohio at the same time that our David Reece married Juliana Lane in March 1844. I do not think that they are the same person. A David Reece married a Priscilla Nichols in Allen County in December 1833. There were definitely at least two David Reece's during the same time period living within Allen County.

While conducting research at the Family History Library to write the biographies within this edition of The Reece Family History, I have researched the records there pertaining to Linn County, Iowa, Allen County, Ohio, Auglaize County, Ohio, Highland County, Ohio, and Grayson County, Virginia.
Section 2: Maps

Note:
The maps contained in this section do not necessarily correlate to the exact time period when my ancestors resided in each area, because I could not always find maps dating from the same time period.
Spring Grove Township, Linn County, Iowa 1859
Conclusion

One of the earliest memories that I have of tracing my ancestry, dates back to a particular conversation that I had with my paternal grandparents at their home in Quasqueton, Iowa. I was a teenager at the time and I believe our conversation took place sometime in the late 1980’s. During that conversation, my grandfather told me that he really did not know much about our Reece ancestry. About the only thing he was able to share with me then was that he thought we had come from Ohio. How right he was. With that small bit of information from my grandfather, I essentially began tracing my paternal ancestry. From humble beginnings such as the one I just described, I have written the work that you just read. It has been a lot of work putting this together, but I have enjoyed every minute of it.

Brett Reece
P.O. Box 322
Toledo, Iowa 52342
Phone: (641) 484-4249

The End