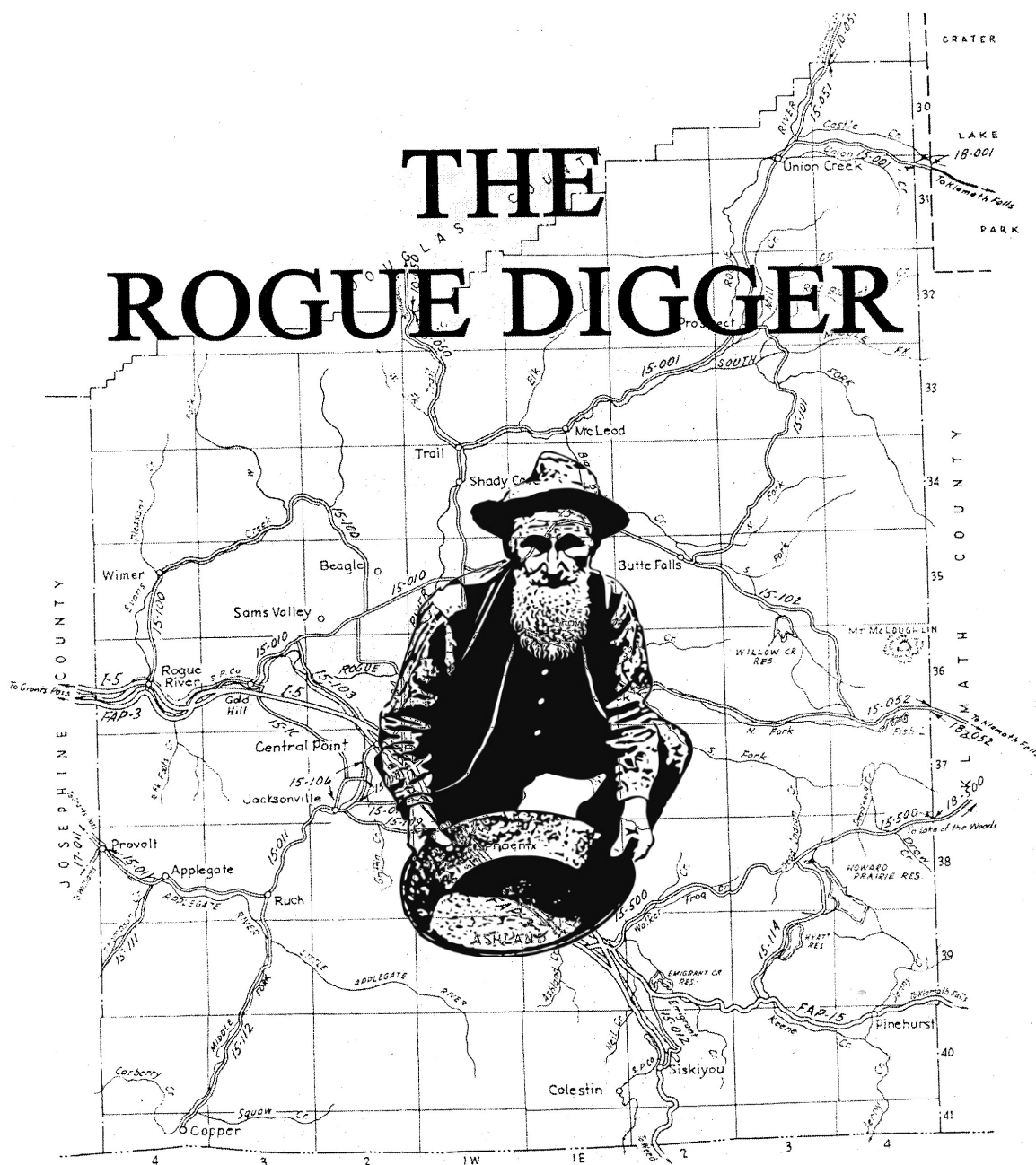


THE ROGUE DIGGER



ROGUE VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

3405 South Pacific Highway
Medford, Oregon
97501

The Rogue Digger is a quarterly publication of the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society (www.rvgsociety.org), a non-profit organization located in Medford, Oregon, which operates the Jackson County Genealogy Library (www.rvgslibrary.org). To submit an article, contact our editor caradavisjacobson@gmail.com and copy president@rvgslibrary.org. Cover images and design © RVGS, 2008.

Editor's Note:

In this edition of *The Rogue Digger*, The Rogue Valley Genealogical Society is pleased to present an article about Ashland philanthropist Elizabeth A. Smith and the Trinity Episcopal Church bell. In addition, we have a photographic essay by a member. It is based on the recent presentation on dating photographs given at RVGS by Kate Eakman, a senior researcher with Legacy Tree Genealogists.

We are currently seeking articles for publication. If you would like to submit an article for *The Rogue Digger*, please contact our editor at caradavisjacobson@gmail.com and copy president@rvgslibrary.org.



THE DONOR OF THE TRINITY BELL: WHO WAS SHE?

by Anne Billeter and Ann Magill

For a time this summer, no sound came from the century-old bell at Trinity Episcopal Church in Ashland to summon worshippers for services. That's because the bell was dismantled from its lofty perch, crated, and sent off to a specialty company in Indiana to be spruced up with a new housing that would enable it to ring for another hundred years.

(Click to watch a short clip of the Trinity Bell coming down for repair:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3S5QKp8QajE&feature=youtu.be>)¹

These actions, however, made the church members wonder about the history of this majestic bell and how it had come to be part of the church. In order to find out the answer, church member Ann Magill sent RVGS researcher Anne Billeter the inscription on the freshly dismantled bell, and this is what Anne reported:

Since the Trinity Bell was donated by Elizabeth A. Smith in 1900, I looked first for Elizabeth Smith in the 1900 census for Ashland. There were only two, and by good luck they both were recorded with their middle initials: one with an "A" and one with a "K." I double-checked other records for the Elizabeth K. Smith and verified that the "K" was not an error (a frequent occurrence in censuses and other records.) I believe the only way to prove that the Elizabeth A. Smith I identified and researched is the correct one, would be to search the 1900 *Ashland Tidings* (which is available on microfilm at the Ashland Library) in the hope of locating stories about the donation of the bell which might identify the donor more clearly. Here is information about the Elizabeth A. Smith who is in the 1900 Ashland census, and who appears to be the likely donor of the Trinity Bell.

Elizabeth Ann Erb was born 14 February 1842 "near the town of Bushnell," McDonough County, Illinois, the daughter of Elizabeth and George Henry Erb.² In 1850, Elizabeth and her six siblings lived

Elizabeth Ann Erb

in the Illinois, Marriage Index, 1851-1900

Name:	Elizabeth Ann Erb
Gender:	Female
Spouse Name:	Solomon J H Williams
Marriage Date:	14 Feb 1861
Marriage County:	McDonough
Comments:	This record can be found at the County Court Records located at Macomb, IL.

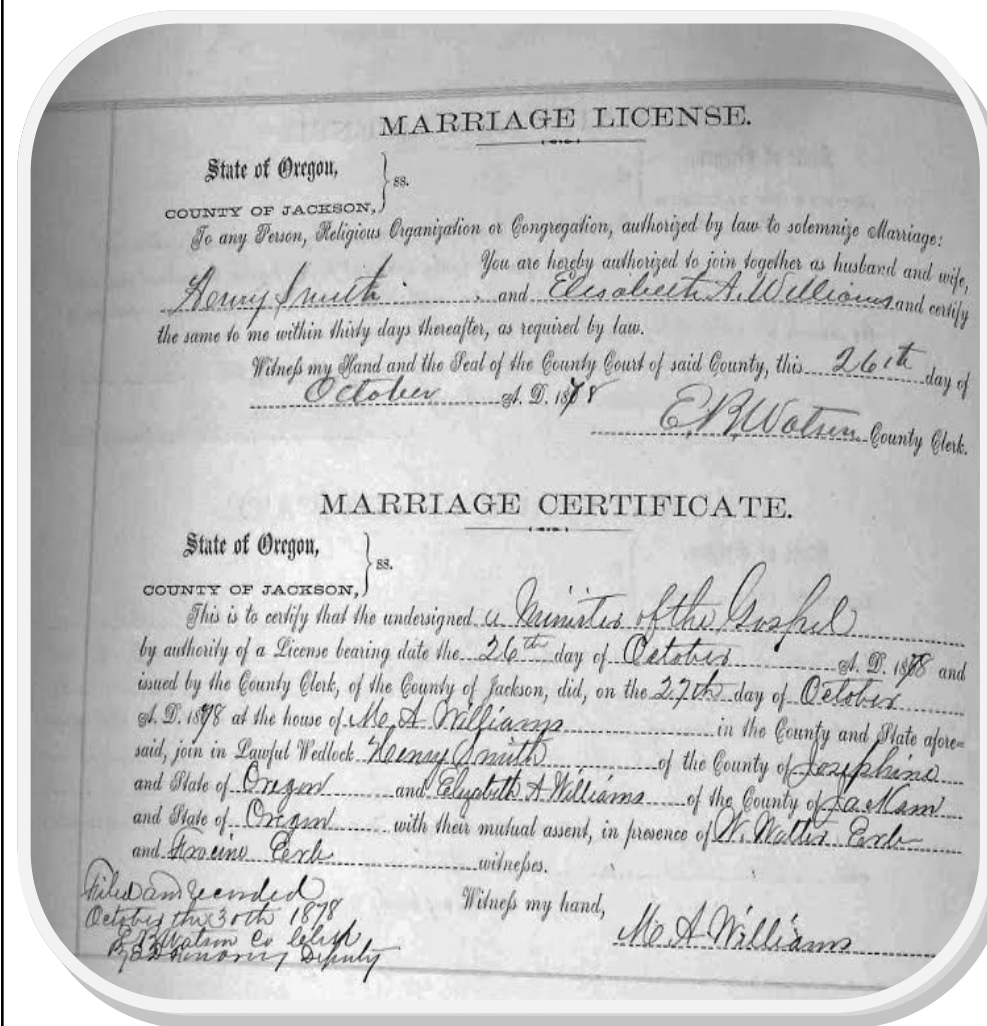
with their family in Marietta, Fulton County, Illinois. In 1860, they lived in Mound Township, McDonough County, Illinois. At that time, Elizabeth was then 18, attending school, and the oldest of five siblings living with their parents. On 14 February 1861, Elizabeth Ann Erb married Solomon J. H. Williams in McDonough County, Illinois.³

In 1864, Elizabeth, her husband, and her parents “crossed the plains in a covered wagon caravan” and “settled near Portland for a few years after reaching Oregon, later moving to Southern Oregon.” On 22 March 1869, her husband died

at the age of 30 and was buried in the Ashland Cemetery. In 1870, she is residing in Jackson County next door to her parents and two siblings. The nearest post office is Ashland. She is 28, and has in her household two children, Cora McCurdy, age 9, and Joseph McCurdy, age 7, both born in Illinois. The 1870 census did not record the relationship of people in a household, so we know nothing more about these children at this time.

On 29 March 1875, Elizabeth’s father, George Henry Erb, died and was buried in the Ashland Cemetery. On 27 October 1878, Elizabeth A. Williams and Henry Smith were married by, and at the house

of, M. A. Williams.⁴ (He was a local minister who lived in Phoenix and kept a detailed diary.⁵) Witnesses to the marriage were two of Elizabeth’s siblings: W. Walter Erb and Frocine Erb.



By 1880, Elizabeth and Henry Smith were residing in the Jump Off Joe and Galice Creek Precinct, Josephine County, Oregon. In their household were Caroline Smith, 24, Henry's daughter by Phebe, his first wife, who died in 1856, and Blanche Willey, 6, "adopted daughter," who was born in California. Henry and Elizabeth Smith lived in the Wolf Creek area "conducting an inn there at the time when the pioneer trail led through Wolf Creek when there was no railroad and improved road."⁶ [This became what is now known as the Wolf Creek Inn.] On 8 January 1891, Elizabeth's husband Henry Smith died, and was buried in the Wolf Creek Cemetery, probably next to his wife Phebe (the gravestone is too weathered to decipher.)⁷

On 14 June 1891, Elizabeth's mother, Elizabeth Rush Silvey Erb, died in Ashland at the home of her daughter, Mrs. I. W. [Frocine] Burriss on Pine Street. Elizabeth Rush Silvey Erb is buried in Ashland Cemetery with her husband.



Elizabeth Erb Williams Smith was involved in several land transactions between 1892 and 1899. (The index that I had access to ends with 1899.)

In 1900, Elizabeth is 58, a widow residing alone in West Ashland Precinct. She lists her occupation as "capitalist," and owns her house free of mortgage. She states that she has born no children. Her sister Frocine Burriss resides five houses away.

On 20 November 1907, her brother William Walter Erb died and was buried in the Ashland Cemetery.

In 1910, she is 68, a widow with her own income, living alone at 160 Church Street, and owns her home free.

In 1920, she is 77, a widow, residing alone at 252 E. Main Street, in a small hotel.

On 15 January 1929, she died at the Barber Convalescent Home on Granite Street. She is buried

in the Ashland Cemetery with a large gravestone, between her parents and her first husband.⁸

Interestingly, her obituary in the *Ashland Tidings* begins as follows: “‘Aunt Lib’ Smith, one of the most widely-known and best loved residents of southern Oregon....” She is referred to throughout the obituary as “Aunt Lib” and “Mrs. Smith.” The obituary also states that “She purchased and presented to the city the Pioneer Building—now used as a Y.M.C.A. headquarters.”

This philanthropy is perhaps another indication that this is the same Elizabeth A. Smith who donated the Trinity Bell. There is nothing about a bell in her obituary, but the inscription speaks for itself, and donating the church bell was clearly one of many gestures of generosity attributed to “Aunt Lib.” She leaves a fine legacy, and Trinity Episcopal Church in Ashland has been made the richer for it.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 *The Trinitarian*, June 2017 issue, Trinity Episcopal Church, Ashland OR, p. 18-19
- 2 Obituary, *Ashland Tidings*, Tuesday, 15 Jan 1929. [*Ashland Tidings Newspaper Abstracts*, v.36, p. 74-5.] [JCGl 979.527 N298 Ash v.36]
- 3 *Illinois Marriage Index, 1860-1920* [Ancestry.com, accessed 15 May 2017]
- 4 *Jackson County Marriage Book 2*, p. 336 [digital record accessed at JCGl 16 May 2017]
- 5 *Extractions from the Diary of Reverend Moses Allen Williams*, vol. 14, p.5 [JCGl 979.527 B352 Wil v.14]
- 6 *Op cit.*, *Ashland Tidings*
- 7 Findagrave.com [accessed 15 May 2017]
- 8 *Ibid.*



WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE, AND WHY DO I HAVE THEIR PHOTOS?

By Cara Davis-Jacobson

On May 16, 2017, Kate Eakman, a Senior Researcher at LegacyTree Genealogists (not to be confused with LegacyTree Genealogy software), spoke at RVGS's monthly general meeting. Ms. Eakman's topic was "Collars, Coiffures, and Corsets: Using Fashion to Date Your Photos." Her presentation primarily concerned dating photos by the changing trends in hair and fashion for women. (Men's hair and fashion changes were a bit tougher to discern, she told us, but she generously shared some additional tips in that regard and in regard to dating photos in general.)

I was very thankful for this presentation; not only did I learn a great deal about dating photos by considering women's fashion, I also was able to reacquaint myself with some family members who had remained a mystery to me for a long time.

Because I was interested in genealogy, my father's brother sent me a large packet of family photos during the last months of his terminal illness. These photos had belonged to his mother, my grandmother, a woman I never knew. He also sent me some redacted bits of letters, which have proven to be as puzzling as they were informative, due to their redacted state. Most of the photos were of people I did not know, and nothing was written on them that might help me determine who they might be. In the end, I was not sure whether I'd been given a gift or a curse. I decided to tuck them away until I could connect with more family members or do more research myself to try to determine who they were.

My father's relationship with his parents, and particularly his mother, was strained and complex; he and his mother had not spoken or corresponded since he attended his father's funeral in 1950. Dad was 31 years old that year. (He died in 2009 at the age of 92.) When I interviewed my father about his family the first time, in the 1970s, I immediately hit brick walls. These weren't the research brick walls I have since learned to live with—the kind where you dig and dig and dig to confirm what you know, or what you think you know, to no avail. These were walls thrown up by my own parents for their own reasons—they were "stonewalling" brick walls. These are the "It isn't important," "I don't want to talk about it," "We don't speak of that," and "What does it matter now, anyway?" walls. For me, they were the most frustrating walls of all, because someone knew the information but never intended to share it. If I was going to find out anything, it was going to be through my own research and effort. Good thing stubbornness seems to be a genetic trait in our family!

And so, attending Ms. Eakman's presentation reminded me that I had some photos awaiting analysis. After Ms. Eakman's presentation, I consulted with her privately and spent time looking through several books in our own Jackson County Genealogy Library. What follows are annotations from all of those sources regarding my mystery people. There are still several unresolved, but I hope the results I have achieved will inspire other society members to hang on to their mystery photos, to not give up hope,

and to persevere in their research, no matter the brick walls or stonewalling they may encounter on their journey.



Austin Davis

This photo turned out to be a lesson in not believing what you see on Ancestry.com. If you've been researching for very long, I'm sure that you, too, have dealt with this issue. Several people had posted this on their trees as a picture of my third-great-grandfather, Austin Davis, along with his first wife, Chloe, and their eldest daughter, Caroline. Austin was born in 1807 and died in 1893 at the age of 86; his wife Chloe was born in 1808 and died in 1859 at the age

of 51. Their eldest daughter, Caroline, was born in 1831 and died in 1895. The women's clothing and hair in this photo is much more typical of styles found at the turn of the century—the white lacy bodices, the height and softness of the hair. These are styles more common to the Gibson Girl era, which began in 1890 and ran into the early 1900s. The people in this photo are all too young to be who they are identified as. Indeed, Chloe would have died some forty years before these styles took hold.



Barbara Lucinda Tillinghast Davis

Some family members were convinced that this was a picture of my grandmother, Barbara Lucinda Tillinghast Davis. Such a picture would be the “holy grail” for me, because not only did I never meet her, but also I have never seen a picture of her. I had been told she was notoriously photo-averse. The photo is classic Gibson Girl style in both the dress details and in the highly elevated and soft presentation of the hair. There are no other identifying pieces of information on the photo—nothing re the photographer, studio, or studio location. The styles date this photo to the decades of 1890 and 1900. The subject of this photo appears to be between the ages of about 20 and 30. Born in 1889, my grandmother would have been between the ages of 1 and 21 during that time period. However, in her late teens and early 20s, she was unmarried, orphaned, and working as a maid in another person's home, as were her younger sisters, who eventually became private, personal nurses. The person in this picture is wearing very costly,

embellished clothing and beads. It is theoretically possible, but unlikely, that this is my grandmother.



Jefferson W. Davis

This dapper gent was a complete unknown to my living family, though there was a family legend that we were descended from five brothers, one of whom was Jefferson Davis of Confederate renown. (It was not hard to research that and find it to be untrue.) However, using the techniques Ms. Eakman taught in the class, and my own research, I was able to identify this fellow quite quickly. First of all, the studio name on the photo paper was a huge help. I did some research online re Clinedinst Studio (their impression is on the photo), and it turned out to be an internationally renowned Washington, DC, studio that photographed many federal employees and officials, events, and happenings in DC for many decades. I only had one Davis ancestor who ever lived in DC and worked for the federal government, and that was Jefferson W. Davis. He was born in 1840, died in 1916, and was a Civil War Union Army veteran who lost an arm and was taken prisoner in the Battle of the Wilderness. He worked for the

Veterans Department after the war, assisting people with veteran affairs and pensions. Per the books in our RVGS library, the upturned collar and eyeglasses and tie style were common around 1910, which fits perfectly with the age of my second great uncle at that time and the age of the man in the photo. In addition, you will note that there is an odd set of folds in the jacket on the left arm, the one he lost during the war. The preponderance of the evidence points to the fact that this is Jefferson W. Davis.



Charles D. Tillinghast

This was another utter “mystery photo” in my pile. Researching in the books at our library, I discovered that this type of upturned collar was common pre-1900. The large flat-knot tie starts showing up in photos in the 1870s. While this gave me a range of dates to use (ca. 1875-1895), it was the discovery of a faint imprint in red at the bottom of the photo (barely visible) that gave me the clue I needed. After using a magnifying glass and viewing various enlarged images, I made out “Emmett, Idaho.” Only two people in my tree had lived in Emmet, Idaho, and only one was male and fit this time frame.

While no major photography studio existed in Emmett at that time, I discovered in further online reading in *Pioneer Photographs of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary*, that an itinerant photographer named Mason Martin Hazeltine, who traveled the West, passed through Emmett, Idaho, in 1886.¹ My second-

great-grandfather on my father's maternal side apparently was one of his subjects. This portrait may have been made in honor of his position in the community: he was a well-known prosecuting attorney in Emmett. Genealogical records confirmed that he lived in Silver Bow, Montana, for a time, and then in Emmett, Idaho, where he died.



May Tillinghast Audley

Finally, here is a photo of Charles D. Tillinghast's daughter, May Tillinghast Audley. What I love about this picture is that, unlike the majority of the other photos in the packet my uncle sent, on the back it clearly says, "May Tillinghast Audley, taken June 19th, 1908, Emmett, Idaho."

What irks me, of course, is that they didn't say which woman was May!
—Sigh—

Such, I fear, is the lot of the photographic sleuth. And so the search continues, for there are still many photos waiting in my box of unknown family!

FOOTNOTE

- 1 Palmquist, Peter E. and Kailbourn, Thomas R.; *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840-1865*; Stanford University Press, 2002 [accessed via Google on 3 August 2017: https://books.google.com/books?id=Nne4L9h27RsC&pg=PA283&lpg=PA283&dq=martin+mason+hazeltine+itinerant+photographer&source=bl&ots=a2FYekyt40&sig=brzKat_yUcgb2wCrfookN7XsXr0&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiufbJvzbVAhVG92MKHb10DK0Q6AEILTAB#v=onepage&q=martin%20mason%20hazeltine%20itinerant%20photographer&f=false

REFERENCES AND SOURCES

1. The author's personal photograph collection.
2. Handout, "Collars, Coiffures, and Corsets: Using Fashion to Date Your Photos"; Kate Eakman, Senior Researcher, Legacy Tree Genealogists; 19 May 2017, General Meeting Presentation, Rogue Valley Genealogical Society, Medford, Oregon.
3. Judith Allison Walters; *A Guide to Dating Old Family Photographs*; self-published, 1993; [JCGl 771.4 G932 Wal]
4. *Dating Old Photographs: 1840-1929* and *More Dating Old Photographs: 1840-1929*; A Family Chronicle Publication, 2004; [JCGl 771.4 G932 Dat and JCGl 771.4 G932 Mor]
5. Karen Frisch-Ripley; *Unlocking the Secrets in Old Photographs*; Ancestry, 1991; [JCGl 771.4 Fri]