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The Family History of Angela Ruth Weidert

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**The Family History of
Angela Ruth Weidert**

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Angela Ruth Weidert authored this family history as part of the course requirements for HIST 550/700 Your Family in History offered online in Spring 2018 and was submitted to the Pittsburgh State University Digital Commons. Please contact the author directly with any questions or comments: mrsweidert@gmail.com

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List of Direct Line Family Members

Generation One

A1. Angela Ruth Myers (1985-)
A2. Seth Lee Weidert (1988-)

Generation Two

A1a. Cozette Lalanía Myers (1969-)
A1b. Robert Darryl Sims (1966-)

Generation Three

A1a1. Thelma Inez McWhirt (1925-2000)
A1a2. Roy Arthur Myers (1916-2000)

A1b1. Rosalee Fraker (1945-)
A1b2. unknown

Generation Four

A1a1a. Phoebe Ruth Smith (1896-1962)
A1a1b. Joseph Earl McWhirt (1895-1986)

A1a2a. Mary Montreal Kinsch (1898-1958)
A1a2b. Clarence William Myers (1889-1966)

A1b1a. Druscilla Katherine Peifer (1910-2000)
A1b1b. Searel R. Fraker (1897-1973)

A1b2a. unknown
A1b2b. unknown

Generation Five

A1a1a1. Amy Crapson (1860-1952)

A1a1a2. James Thomas Smith (1856-1924)

A1a1b1. Amanda May Wallraff (1867-1966)

A1a1b2. Frank McWhirt (1863-1913)

A1a2a1. Mary Isabelle Altman (1870-1936)

A1a2a2. Henry Robert Kinsch (1870-1931)

A1a2b1. Bertha Liniger (1869-1967)

A1a2b2. Hamlen Bentley Myers (1861-1935)

A1b1a1. Matilda Post (1882-1927)

A1b1a2. Nicholas Peifer (1870-1955)

A1b1b1. Hattie Ann Holt (1866-1933)

A1b1b2. William Daly Fraker (1862-1930)

A1b2a1. unknown

A1b2a2. unknown

A1b2b1. unknown

A1b2b2. unknown

GENERATION ONE

Angela Ruth Weidert was born **Angela Ruth Myers (1985-)** at 9:40 in the morning on a hot July day in 1985 at the Labette County Medical Center in Parsons, Kansas. She was born to **Cozette Lalanía Myers (1969-)** and **Robert Darryl Sims (1966-)**. Angela was given the middle name “Ruth” after her mother’s sister, **Mary Ruth Myers (1953-)**, and her maternal great-grandmother, **Phoebe Ruth Smith (1896-1962)**. Because her parents were unmarried teenagers at the time of Angela’s birth, Cozette and Robert decided that Angela would have a more stable upbringing if she were adopted and raised by Cozette’s mother and father. A few months after Angela was born, Cozette and Robert relinquished their parental rights to Angela and the formal adoption process began. In 1985, Angela was legally adopted by **Roy Arthur Myers (1916-2000)** and **Thelma Inez McWhirt (1925-2000)**. Angela would remember her childhood with her grandparents as an exceedingly happy time in her life. She referred to Roy and Thelma as “Grandpa” and “Grandma”, respectively. She always knew who her mother was and saw her almost every day because Cozette came to visit so often. Angela didn’t know her father as a young child because he moved out of state immediately after the adoption was finalized and his relationship with Cozette ended. Angela wouldn’t meet her father again until she was six years old when her parents rekindled their relationship¹.

From birth until she was six months old, Angela suffered from colic, much to the dismay of her grandparents². Colic is uncontrollable crying in an otherwise healthy baby. When Angela was older, Thelma and Roy would tell her how many sleepless nights they spent walking around the

¹ Personal knowledge of the author, Angela Ruth Weidert.

² Interview with Thelma Inez Myers (Feb 1998), original document in possession of the author, Angela Ruth Weidert.

house carrying her because she cried so much. As a child, Angela was very close with her grandfather, Roy. He was her favorite person in the world. Before Angela was old enough for school, she and Roy were inseparable. On Saturday mornings, Roy would take Angela with him to Daylight Donuts and let her eat donuts and chocolate milk while he drank coffee and chatted with his friends. He always took her with him when he would run errands and when he needed to go to the auto part store that was right down the street from their house, they would ride their bicycles down there together. In the evenings, Angela would sit in Roy's rocking chair with him and he would rock her while she watched cartoons before bed.

When Angela was three years old, she was enrolled in Wesley's Little Learners preschool at Wesley United Methodist Church in Parsons, Kansas. It was the same church that she and her family attended every Sunday. Angela was raised as a Methodist, which is a denomination of Protestantism. Unfortunately, Angela was diagnosed with mononucleosis and pneumonia a few days before she was due to start preschool and the illness was so severe that she had to be hospitalized for two weeks. Thelma didn't want her to go into preschool a month behind the rest of her classmates, so she decided to keep Angela home that year and re-enroll her into the same preschool the following year. Shortly after Angela's fourth birthday, she started her first and only year of preschool. Initially, the separation during the day from her grandparents was hard on Angela. On her first day of preschool she cried when she was dropped off at her classroom.

In 1990, when Angela was five years old she started kindergarten at Guthridge Elementary in Parsons, Kansas. Angela loved attending Guthridge, made a lot of friends, and always made the honor roll. Her best friend during elementary school, Kendra, she met in third grade when Kendra's family moved to Parsons. Angela and Kendra became very close and Kendra attended many sleepovers at Angela's house. One summer, Kendra's family let her stay at Angela's house for an entire month. Kendra's family eventually moved away the summer after fifth grade, which was hard on Angela because she missed her best friend terribly.

During her elementary school years, Angela learned about the Suzuki Strings program when she watched some of her classmates play stringed instruments for the rest of the school during a school music program. Angela enjoyed it so much that she begged her grandparents to let her play the violin. Violins were expensive instruments and Thelma didn't think that Angela was serious about wanting to play violin long term, so she said no. When Angela started fifth grade, Thelma finally gave in to her granddaughter's constant badgering and bought Angela her first violin. When Thelma signed her up for her school's Suzuki Strings program, Angela was ecstatic. She loved her violin lessons and recitals and willingly practiced on her own every night after school. Three months into her lessons, Angela was asked by her Suzuki Strings teacher, Miss Myers, to play a violin solo of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" during the school Christmas program. When Angela was introduced to the audience before her solo, Miss Myers told them that she had never before had a student who excelled so quickly on the violin, which made Angela's grandparents in the audience extremely proud. The summer after fifth grade, Angela was rehearsing for a Suzuki Strings recital at the Parsons Municipal Auditorium when a photographer from the Parsons Sun approached her and asked if he could take a picture of her playing her violin to appear in the newspaper. That picture is still hanging on display at the Parsons Municipal Auditorium.

Summer was Angela's favorite time of year as a child. She loved being home from school every day and playing around the house. One of Angela's favorite childhood memories is of she and her grandfather, Roy. It happened at the end of the summer when she was nine or ten. At Angela's house, there was a large lot behind the barn where her grandparents normally planted a garden. That summer, however, they had spent most of their time in their RV at the lake instead of gardening, so the lot was very overgrown with tall grass. One day, Roy got his mower out of the barn and intended to mow the lot. Angela had a better idea. She asked Roy if he would mow her a maze into the overgrown weeds, which were tall enough that they were above her head. Roy agreed and spent over an hour mowing an elaborate maze into the overgrown lot. When the maze was

finished, Angela was allowed to invite one some of her friends and a cousin over to play with her in the maze. Roy left the maze for Angela to play in for a couple of days before mowing the lot entirely.

After Angela graduated from fifth grade, she was enrolled to attend Parsons Middle School, where she would complete grades six through eight. Angela did not enjoy her first year of middle school. Sixth graders had two main teachers: one for math and science before lunch and another for English and literature during the afternoon. One of Angela's teachers was very coarse and intimidated her to the point that it caused Angela a great deal of anxiety. Her anxiety surrounding her teacher led to failing grades and made Angela not want to attend school. When she finally confided in her grandmother how she felt, Thelma talked to the principal and they decided to transfer Angela to a different sixth grade math and science teacher to see if that helped her. In the end, that would be the solution to the problem. Angela's grades came back up and her anxiety toward school went down.

By the summer after Angela's seventh grade year, Thelma's and Roy's health was starting to decline. They were getting older and Thelma was finding it hard to keep up with raising a child who was now a preteen. It was suggested that Angela move in with her mother and father because they were younger and would have more energy to keep up with all the activities that come with having a teenager. Reluctantly, Angela agreed to move out of her grandparent's house and move in with Cozette and Robert. It was a very difficult transition for Angela. She loved her grandparents very much and was very happy with them, so it was hard to suddenly be living elsewhere, even if it was with her biological parents. Fortunately, her new home was only two houses down the street from where Roy and Thelma lived, so Angela was still able to walk down to her childhood home and visit her grandparents whenever she liked.

Angela entered her first year at Parsons Senior High School when she was fourteen years old in August of 1999. Her freshman year of high school was an enjoyable experience. She liked all of her teachers and she had orchestra for her first class every morning. She was also enrolled in

debate and forensics, so she spent most of her weekends out of town at debate or forensics tournaments. Angela also played in the pit orchestra for Parsons High School's production of *The King and I* that year. During the spring of 2000, all the music classes at Parsons High took a trip to San Antonio, Texas, for the Heritage Music Festival and it would be Angela's first trip out of state without her parents. As with any great adventure, it wouldn't be complete without a bit of drama. Angela and two of her friends got lost in downtown San Antonio for several hours during that trip. After exploring the Alamo, the Riverwalk, and the Mexican Market, they mistakenly took the wrong trolley when they headed back to the hotel. When they realized they were on the wrong trolley, they got off at the next stop and had to sit and wait on the corner for over an hour hoping the correct trolley would make a stop there and pick them up. While they waited, they sat nervously between a prostitute and a homeless man in a box as it started to get dark. In the end, the right trolley did pick them up and they made it back to the hotel with minutes to spare before curfew. Angela didn't tell her parents this story until she was thirty.

Angela's ninth grade year came to a close and what started out as a happy, fun-filled summer quickly turned into what Angela would remember as one of the lowest points in her life. Angela's beloved grandmother, Thelma, passed away that summer on July 12th after a short illness. Little over a month later, Roy passed away on August 20th. The deaths of both of her grandparents in such a short amount of time sent Angela into a period of depression. During her sophomore year of high school, her grades suffered because of it. Eventually, the worst of the grieving process was over and she was able to tackle her junior year of high school in better spirits, though she still missed her grandparents very much and thought of them often.

In the spring of 2002, Angela took two big trips. The first was with her family to Florida. Her father, Robert, had professional training in Orlando and decided to take the family along with him. It was Angela's first time on an airplane. They stayed for four days and visited Universal Studios, Islands of Adventure, and the City Walk. When Angela and her family returned from their Florida

vacation, she left within a few days to attend the Winter Park Music Festival in Winter Park, Colorado with the rest of the music students in her school. At the end of the festival, Angela's orchestra class was awarded the Best in Class, first place trophy. However, the achievement was overshadowed by the death of one of her classmates on the trip. Taran Sack, a sophomore cello player in Angela's orchestra class, accidentally went on an expert level slope while she was snowboarding and lost control. She hit the side of a brick warming building somewhere down the mountain and was knocked unconscious. She never got to go home. Still unconscious in a hospital in Colorado, Taran died a few weeks later. Angela and the rest of her schoolmates and teachers were deeply affected by Taran's death.

Angela's senior year of high school was a very enjoyable year. She looked forward to graduation and was excited about starting community college the following autumn. Angela graduated from high school on May 13, 2003³. That night after the ceremony, her father, Robert, gave her a leather briefcase as a graduation gift. Angela was disappointed with the gift, but she thanked her father and tried to look pleased so that she wouldn't hurt his feelings. Robert told her to have a look at the inside of the briefcase, so she opened it. To her surprise, the briefcase held \$500 in one-dollar bills.

In the autumn after Angela graduated from high school, she started her first semester at Labette Community College, majoring in Pre-Med; Angela thought she wanted to be a doctor. She also got her very first job at Walmart in Parsons as a cashier, earning \$5.65 per hour. It was Angela's first taste of independence and she loved it. She did well in her classes and loved her job. She also made a lot of new friends. However, after a year of working 40 hours a week on top of 12 hours of classes each semester, and attending parties with her friends, Angela was starting to feel exhausted. She had moved out of her parents' house and moved into a rental house with a friend

³ Parsons High School commencement program, May 13, 2003. Original document in possession of the author, Angela Ruth Weidert.

from work and she was struggling to pay all of her bills on her salary from Walmart and keep up with her classwork. Eventually, Angela dropped out of college and just focused on working to pay bills. She eventually moved back into her parents' home when her roommate decided to move, because Angela couldn't afford to pay the rent and utilities alone.

In the fall of 2005, Angela decided to find work in the medical field and decided to change her major to nursing. Shortly after, she got a job at Elmhaven West, a nursing home in Parsons, as a full-time housekeeper. In the meantime, she applied at Labette County Medical Center, also in Parsons, to be a nurse assistant. She called once a week for two months until she was granted an interview. The interviewer told her that she normally wouldn't hire someone who wasn't a Certified Nurse Assistant for that position, but she wanted to give her a chance since she called so often and was clearly very determined to work there. In January 2006, Angela started as a nurse assistant on the surgical floor. Soon after, Labette County Medical Center was renamed "Labette Health" during Angela's time there. She had worked there for two years, when she finally had to come to terms with the fact that she didn't have the stomach for the medical field. She couldn't handle working with blood and body fluids, and certainly couldn't handle post-mortem care. There were many instances where Angela nearly vomited or fainted during her time working at the hospital. In April 2008, Angela resigned from Labette Health and turned her attention to the field of business. Retail, more specifically.

Angela's time as an employee for Walmart when she was younger had been such an enjoyable experience that she decided to call up her previous manager, Shari Lake, and see if she had an open position that Angela could apply for. Shari was very kind and happy that Angela wanted to come back to work at Walmart. Shari told her to fill out an online application and that she had a position at the customer service desk for her if she wanted it. Angela immediately accepted and within a week of leaving the hospital's employ, she was working at Walmart again. She rose

through the ranks quickly at Walmart and by August of 2009, she was working as an Overnight Support Manager.

One night at work in September of 2009, Angela met her future husband, **Seth Lee Weidert (1988-)**, for the first time. They were introduced by Angela's friend from high school, Audrey, who was dating Seth's roommate, Dustin Henderson, at the time. For their first date, Seth took Angela to The Kitchen Pass restaurant in Parsons and then for a stroll around the city park afterward. They had fun learning about each other and decided that they wanted to see each other again. In April of 2010, after six months of dating, Seth and Angela got engaged and decided to rent a house together in Parsons. Shortly after they moved in together, Angela found out she was pregnant. They welcomed a baby boy that year.

Shortly after the birth of their son, Seth and Angela decided that they needed to buy a house. Their rental house was not quite big enough for their growing family and they felt that buying a house would be a good investment. A few days after they started looking for houses, the house right next door to their rental house was listed for sale. They loved the house, even though it was a fixer upper, and they loved their current neighborhood even more. Plus, it would be easy to move right next door. They closed on their new house in July 2011.

Seth and Angela got married on August 13, 2011 at Wesley United Methodist Church in Parsons in the presence of friends and family. The following morning, Seth and Angela left for their honeymoon. They took a 7-day Carnival Cruise to Montego Bay, Jamaica; Cozumel, Mexico; and the Cayman Islands.

After Angela's maternity leave ended the year before, she decided to go back to work part-time rather than full-time. She had accepted a part-time position in the human resources department as a training coordinator and worked Monday and Thursday during the day, leaving her free to spend the rest of her time with her son. Because Seth worked evenings, they didn't need daycare for their son. Angela loved having the ability to be home with her son most of the time. In

2013, Seth accepted a job with the Parsons Police Department as a public safety officer and left for police academy for three months. To avoid the need for daycare and to fulfill her dream of getting her college degree, Angela decided to leave her part time job and return to college. Angela enrolled once more at Labette Community College in the fall of 2013, this time majoring in business administration. She had finally found her passion. Angela loved everything about her business classes and thrived as a student.

At the beginning of 2015, Angela gave birth to her and Seth's second child; this time, a daughter. That summer, Angela finished her coursework for her associate's degree in business administration from LCC. She then enrolled in Pittsburg State University for the fall semester as a transfer student, majoring in workforce development with an emphasis on human resources. She and Seth put all their spare time and money into completely remodeling the house that they purchased in 2011. By the time they were finished with it in the spring of 2018, it looked like a totally different house. Now, Angela is finishing up her final semester at Pittsburg State University and will graduate in May 2018.

GENERATION TWO

A1a. Cozette Lalanía Myers (1969-)

A1b. Robert Darryl Sims (1966-)

Cozette Lalanía Myers was born in April 1969 to Roy and Thelma Myers at Muskogee General Hospital in Muskogee, Oklahoma. For the first two years of Cozette's life, she lived in Checotah, Oklahoma, at 606 East Spaulding. Cozette was the youngest of six children, but she was a late-in-life child and all but one of her older siblings had already left home by the time Cozette came along. Her sister, **Mary Ruth Myers (1953-)**, was fifteen when Cozette was born and left home to get married when Cozette was a year old. When Cozette was two, her family relocated to Ponca City, Oklahoma, for a short time, eventually moving to Coweta, Oklahoma, when Cozette was five. Coweta is a suburb of Tulsa. It was during their brief time in Coweta that Cozette attended kindergarten in Broken Arrow, because Coweta didn't have a school at that time⁴. Broken Arrow is about thirteen miles from Coweta. After Cozette finished kindergarten in the spring of 1975, Roy and Thelma moved the family back to Checotah, where Cozette attended Longfellow Elementary. The family would reside in Checotah until 1981. Originally spelled "Checote", like the surname of the man it was named after, Samuel Checote, Checotah is a small town in McIntosh County, Oklahoma. It is located at the intersection of I-40 and U.S. Route 69. In 1872, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (also known as MKT or Katy Railroad) established a railhead that would become the site of present-day Checotah. As of 2010, its population was just over 3,000. It is home to various antique malls and a Civil War battle site⁵.

⁴ Cozette Myers, phone conversation with the author, March 2018.

⁵ Wikipedia contributors, "Checotah, Oklahoma," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Checotah,_Oklahoma&oldid=820087551 (accessed March 14, 2018).

As a child, Cozette was very close to her father, Roy. When Cozette was a baby, she had trouble falling asleep at bedtime. At the time, Roy was working nights. Every evening before work, he would get on his riding lawn mower and, holding Cozette on his lap, would drive around the property with her until she fell asleep. Cozette also recounts a memory of her father building her a playhouse from the ground up with materials he purchased at the lumber yard⁶.

In 1981, Roy and Thelma decided to move their family one last time. This time, to Parsons, Kansas. Cozette was twelve years old. They chose Parsons because both Roy and Thelma had lived there as children and they had many family ties there. They purchased a house at 1018 South 21st street and Cozette started attending Parsons Middle School for her eighth-grade year. She remembers that when she started school in Kansas, she was teased for her southern drawl and her Oklahoman colloquialisms. Despite the gentle teasing she received, Cozette made friends quickly and joined the school band. She played the clarinet. Cozette started her freshman year at Parsons High School in the fall of 1982.

On May 22, 1984, when Cozette was fifteen and a sophomore, her band class was playing for the Parsons High School graduation ceremony. Cozette had planned to ride to the event with her friend from band, Misty Sims. When Misty picked Cozette up that afternoon, she was being driven by her older brother, **Robert Darry Sims (1966-)** who was graduating from Parsons High School that evening. Cozette was surprised to meet Robert. She didn't even know that her friend, Misty, had a brother and had assumed that Misty's stepfather would be driving them to the graduation. Robert asked Cozette out on a date later that night and two days later, they started dating. Within six months Cozette was pregnant. They welcomed their daughter, Angela Ruth Myers, in July of 1985 when Cozette was sixteen and Robert was nineteen. Angela was adopted by Roy and Thelma several months after her birth. Around that time, Cozette and Robert ended their relationship.

⁶ Cozette Myers, phone conversation with the author, March 2018.

After the birth of her daughter, Cozette struggled as a teen mother. She dropped out of high school her junior year against her parents' wishes and took the General Educational Development test from Labette Community College, where she earned a high school equivalency diploma in May 1987. Cozette gave birth to **Christopher Allen Padgett (1987-)** in April of 1987, followed by the birth of another son, **Matthew Anthony Earl Padgett (1989-)** in January 1989. In 1991, Cozette went back to Labette Community College and earned her Certified Nursing Assistant license and began working as a CNA. After six years apart, Cozette rekindled her relationship with Robert Sims in 1992 and the following year in January, she gave birth to **Cody Searle Sims (1993-)**.

One of the hardest times in Cozette's life started in June of 2000. Both of Cozette's parents passed away that summer and their home, which was mortgaged to the hilt, had to go back to the bank. It was hard for Cozette to watch someone else move into her parents' house, since she lived two houses away and had to look at it every day. In April of 2001, Angela got a chihuahua-pug mix puppy from Robert's mother, **Rose-A-Lee Fraker (1945-)**. They named him Chico. Cozette was a stay-at-home mother, so while her children were at school, she took care of Chico during the day. She quickly developed a bond with the dog and began to refer to him as "her favorite child". Angela gave him to Cozette when she realized how much Cozette loved him.

In 2005, Cozette took a job as a CNA at Elmhaven West nursing home in Parsons. She was promoted to Social Service Designee in 2008, then took a job in Elmhaven's medical records department in 2010. In January 2010, Cozette was accepted to the nursing program at Labette Community College. Cozette took her NCLEX-LPN examinations on January 4th, 2011 and took a position as an LPN at Elmhaven West shortly after. A year later on January 4th, 2012, Cozette took her NCLEX-RN examinations, allowing her to accept the position of Assistant Director of Nursing at Elmhaven West. After a year of working as Assistant Director of Nursing, Elmhaven offered Cozette the Director of Nursing position and she accepted. She worked at Elmhaven until 2015. She resigned so she could take a position as Director of Nursing at Golden Living Center in Neodesha,

KS. In the spring of 2018, Cozette interviewed for the position of Director of Nursing at the El Dorado Correctional Facility in Oswego, Kansas, and was offered the job. She still holds this position. She and Robert live alone in Parsons with their dog, Chico, who is seventeen years old.

Robert Darryl Sims (1966-) was born in May 1966 to **Rose-A-Lee Fraker (1945-)** at Sedan City Hospital in Sedan, KS. The first year of his life, he lived in Parsons, KS, with his mother. When Robert was about a year old, Rose-A-Lee took him to Joliet, Illinois and left him there to live with her mother, **Druscilla Katherine Peifer (1910-2000)**, while she returned to Parsons. In 1967, Robert's mother went back to Joliet to give birth to Robert's sister, **Misty Jo Sims (1967-)** and left shortly afterward, leaving both children behind with their grandmother. When Robert was almost five, his mother decided that she wanted her children to come live with her in Parsons. Druscilla and her husband, **James Brown (1915-2006)**, brought four-year-old Robert and his three-year-old little sister to Lake Parsons to hand them back over to Rose-A-Lee. Neither of the children knew that they were headed back to live with their mother. Robert remembers watching Rose-A-Lee playing with Misty at the lake and when he turned around, his grandmother and step-grandfather were gone. His grandmother later told him that she thought it would be the easiest way to leave them⁷. That evening, Robert and Misty moved in with their mother at her house in Parsons. Later, when Robert was about ten, Druscilla would move to Parsons and Robert would develop a very close relationship with his grandmother.

When Robert was five, he started kindergarten at Garfield Elementary School in Parsons. He attended Garfield from kindergarten to sixth grade. He then attended Parsons Middle School from grades seven through nine and Parsons High School from tenth grade to twelfth grade. When Robert was seventeen, during his senior year of high school, he moved out of his mother's house

⁷ Robert Sims, phone conversation with the author, March 2018.

because they couldn't get along with each other. She allowed him to reside at a friend's house under the condition that he continue to go to high school and graduate.

During his senior year, Robert had an interest in joining the United States Air Force. It was a dream of his to become a pilot. Since he had enough credits his senior year to graduate early, Robert started the process of enlisting in the Air Force while he was still seventeen, planning to join in April of 1984. However, during his physical examination at MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station), the military doctors discovered that he was partially blind in his left eye; a condition he was born with. Unfortunately, that diagnosis meant that he couldn't be considered for a pilot's position. Robert decided that if he couldn't enlist and be a pilot, he wouldn't enlist at all. To this day, Robert regrets not enlisting. He says that if he could go back in time, he would enlist and take a job as an Air Force mechanic⁸.

Robert graduated from Parsons High School on May 22, 1984. That same night, he met Cozette Myers and began a relationship with her shortly afterward. The week after Robert finished high school, he got a job at the Parsons Country Club, located on Country Club Lane in Parsons. He began as a dishwasher before being promoted to assistant chef. Also in 1984, Robert received some very surprising news: he found out that he had a brother he never knew about. Robert and Misty overheard his grandmother and mother talking about it. Rose-A-Lee had given birth to another son while Robert and Misty were living in Joliet with their grandmother. She had given him up for adoption immediately after his birth. His name is **Jeff Anderson (unk-)** and he was adopted and raised by a family in Chanute, KS. He would reach out to Robert and the rest of his biological family in 1992.

In July 1985, Cozette gave birth to she and Robert's first child, Angela Ruth Myers. That year Cozette and Robert agreed to sign away their parental rights to Angela and allowed Cozette's parents to adopt her. When his relationship with Cozette ended that year, Robert realized that he

⁸ Robert Sims, in discussion with the author, March 2018.

made a mistake in giving up his daughter. He hired a lawyer and tried to reverse the adoption and gain custody of Angela. As a nineteen-year-old single male, he lost the custody battle and Angela's grandparents were allowed to keep her. The pain of the loss of his daughter was so great that Robert couldn't stay in Parsons any longer.

When Robert was 19 years old, he moved to Oronogo, Missouri with virtually nothing to his name. He lived under a bridge and bathed in the creek for a month while working both at Walmart in Joplin, Missouri and at a cabinet factory in Webb City, Missouri. When he had saved enough money, he was able to rent a small apartment in Joplin. For six months, Robert saved any extra money that he earned and started making investments in the stock market. Within six months, his investments had paid off and he had over \$100,000 in his bank account. One of his most profitable investments was in Trojan brand condoms. Robert made the choice to invest in Trojan because it was the 1980s and the media had just begun putting the spotlight on AIDS and stressing the importance of safe sex. This story connects to Claude Fischer's theme of **security** in his book, *Made in America*, because it illustrates the level of material comfort that can be achieved by the average American⁹. At twenty-one, Robert went from having nothing to being very well off within one year.

Robert enjoyed his time working for Walmart in Joplin as a sales clerk. Within two years of working at Joplin Walmart, he put in for a transfer to a brand-new Walmart store in Fort Smith, Arkansas. While working in Fort Smith, he was given the opportunity to enter the management training program to become an assistant manager. During his time as an assistant manager at Fort Smith Walmart, Robert met Sam Walton, the founder of Walmart Stores Inc., while Sam was visiting his store. Robert remembers Sam coming in to the store and wanting to have lunch in the breakroom with the hourly associates, without management. Sam gave Robert a twenty-dollar bill from his wallet and asked him to go buy him some tuna, crackers, and pink grapefruit juice for Sam to eat while he chatted with his associates. A short time later during his career with Walmart,

⁹ Claude S. Fischer, *Made in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 8.

Robert was asked by his store manager to accompany him and a few others to a cookout at Sam Walton's house in Bentonville, Arkansas. It was an informal gathering of about 100 Walmart employees to visit and exchange ideas with each other and Sam himself. Robert remembers Sam very fondly and says that he was a very genuine, kind person¹⁰.

Robert's career with Walmart came to an end in 1991. His grandmother, Druscilla, was very sick and in the hospital back home in Parsons. She was sick enough that the doctors weren't sure if she would live through it. Robert told his store manager the situation and asked for a few days off so he could visit his grandmother. His manager told him that he couldn't go because time off had to be requested and approved at least three weeks in advance. He wouldn't budge on that. Robert decided that he couldn't chance never seeing his grandmother again if she were to pass away, so he went to see her. Three days later, he went back to work in Fort Smith and found that his manager had terminated him for his absence, even though Robert had never missed a day of work before. It's interesting to note that it was November 1991 when Robert lost his job at Walmart for taking an unapproved leave of absence. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which requires employers to provide employees with job-protected and unpaid leave for qualified medical or family reasons, wouldn't become law until February 1993¹¹. Back in Parsons, Druscilla recovered from her illness. Robert was at a crossroads. He decided to move back to Parsons, Kansas where his family was.

Upon his arrival in Parsons, Robert got a job at the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant and started a relationship again with Cozette Myers. He also got to meet Angela, who was six years old by that time. Within a few months of rekindling their romance, Cozette found out she was pregnant with **Cody Searle Sims (1993-)**. During Cozette's pregnancy, Robert took a part-time job as a corrections officer at the Labette County Jail in Oswego, Kansas for \$6.47 per hour, which was a decent wage considering minimum wage was \$3.25 per hour at that time. That began Robert's

¹⁰ Robert Sims, in discussion with the author, March 2018.

¹¹ "The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993," United States Department of Labor. Accessed March 22, 2018. <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/statutes/fmla.htm>

career in law enforcement. In 1993, Robert was able to go full-time as a jailer, eventually transitioning to Deputy Canine Handler in 1994 for the Labette County Sheriff's Office. He graduated from Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center in Hutchinson, Kansas in 1995. After five years of working as a deputy canine unit, Robert was forced to give up canine handling because he developed an allergy to dogs. He worked as an ordinary deputy road officer for a year when he was promoted to Corporal in 2000. In 2001, he was promoted to Detective.

In March 2001, Robert was scheduled to attend a training in Orlando, Florida for night vision equipment. He decided to take his family along with him since the training fell during spring break. They visited Universal Studios, Islands of Adventure, and Daytona Beach during their stay in Orlando.

In 2005, Robert was given the position of Undersheriff to the 33rd Sheriff of Labette County, William Blundell, whom Robert had worked for throughout his career at the sheriff's office. When William retired in the summer of 2011, Robert was nominated by the Republican Central Committee to fill William's position for his unexpired term. The nomination was approved by Kansas Governor Sam Brownback and Robert became appointed Sheriff of Labette County in August 2011¹². In January 2012, Robert filed for election, seeking his first full four-year term as Labette County Sheriff. Robert won his first election with 65% of the votes on August 7, 2012 and officially began his term as the 34th Sheriff of Labette County in January 2013¹³. Robert retired from Labette County Sheriff's Office in December 2016. Robert is currently living in Parsons, KS and enjoying the freedom of retirement.

¹² Local News: "Sheriff files for election," *Parsons Sun* (Parsons, KS), Jan. 7-8, 2012.

¹³ Local News: "Sims wins election," *Parsons Sun* (Parsons, KS), Aug. 8, 2012. Retrieved from http://www.parsonssun.com/news/article_374303a7-d1b7-5d24-985a-701a374510fc.html

GENERATION THREE

A1a1. Thelma Inez McWhirt (1925-2000)

A1a2. Roy Arthur Myers (1916-2000)

A1b1. Rose-A-Lee Fraker (1945-)

A1b2. Unknown

Thelma Inez McWhirt (1925-2000) was Angela's maternal grandmother and, since she adopted Angela shortly after she was born, Angela was very close to her. Angela remembers several stories Thelma used to tell about her childhood. Thelma was born just four years before the start of the Great Depression of 1929. At the time of the depression, she was one of seven children and the family struggled to keep all of the children fed and clothed. When Thelma would speak to Angela of her childhood, she always focused on how poor her family was and how little they had. She never spoke happily of her childhood. According to Thelma, she only owned two dresses (one for winter and one for summer), a light jacket, and one pair of shoes. Her family couldn't afford meat, so they ate beans and potatoes every night. They didn't have a car, so she and her siblings had to walk a mile and a half to school and back every day in all types of weather, wearing scant clothing. Sometimes, she spoke of a friend of hers from school whose parents were doing well, despite the failing economy. Her friend had many pretty dresses and her family had a car, so her friend got to ride in a car to school every day. Thelma said that she spent the night with that friend once and was envious of all of the things that her friend possessed; things that Thelma had never owned because her family was so poor. Most often, Thelma spoke about a house that she used to walk past every day on her way to school. It was a large, beautiful two-story home with a balcony. She said that she admired that house every day and dreamed that someday she would live there. She married Roy Myers in 1940 and eventually moved away from her childhood hometown of Parsons, Kansas. After 42 years of marriage, Roy and Thelma moved back to Parsons in 1982 and

Roy was able to buy Thelma's dream home for her. They lived there until they died in 2000. In later life, Thelma was an avid consumer. She owned four rental houses and was constantly buying new vehicles. She relied on credit to purchase many things she didn't need and acquired a rather large amount of debt. When asked why she purchased so much, she replied that she had nothing as a child and she said she liked the feeling of having a lot of possessions. This story connects to Claude Fischer's theme of **goods** in his book, *Made in America*, because of Thelma's lifelong desire for the collection of goods¹⁴.

Thelma was born in 1925 in Cherryvale, Kansas to **Joseph Earl McWhirt (1895-1986)** and **Phoebe Ruth Smith (1896-1962)**. Thelma was one of ten children born to her parents. She had four older siblings and five younger siblings. As a very small child, Thelma lived with her family first in Cherryvale, Kansas, where she was born, and then in Mound Valley, Kansas¹⁵. At some point between 1930 and 1935, her family moved to Parsons, which is about 20 miles northeast of Mound Valley. In Parsons, her father and mother rented a house located at 2130 Glenwood Avenue¹⁶. Thelma attended McKinley School in Parsons through sixth grade. McKinley School was closed in 1983, but the original building is located on South 25th street. It has since been converted to a church. Thelma attended West Junior High School, which was located at 26th and Main Street for seventh and eighth grades. The building was deemed unsafe in 1954 and demolished some time later¹⁷. Thelma didn't attend school past eighth grade.

¹⁴ Claude S. Fischer, *Made in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 8.

¹⁵ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7Q8-5XT> : accessed 22 March 2018), Thelma I Mcwirt in household of Joseph E Mcwirt, Pleasant Valley, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 13, sheet 2B, line 65, family 49, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

¹⁶ "United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VRK6-BNR> : accessed 22 March 2018), Joseph E Mcwent, Ward 3, Parsons, Parsons City, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50-29B, sheet 11A, line 10, family 230, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1239.

¹⁷ "USD 503 School History," Parsons District Schools, accessed March 23, 2018. www.vikingnet.net/district_information/u_s_d_503_school_history.

Growing up, Thelma's family lived in poverty. Her father was a farmhand with a wife and several children to support. Thelma recalled that when she was a child, her mother had to buy their winter coats and shoes from the Salvation Army. One winter, the only type of shoe the Salvation Army had in Thelma's size was a pair of high-heeled, high-button shoes with pointed toes. Thelma didn't want to wear them, but it was either that or go barefoot. When she wore them to school, the other children laughed at her. Thelma was so angry and embarrassed that she pinched the kids that made fun of her. In addition to having little material wealth, Thelma's family's living conditions left much to be desired. They lived in a very small house without indoor plumbing. She recalled having to build a fire every morning to cook breakfast and go down to the creek to fetch water for cooking and cleaning. They washed clothes using a washboard and an old #3 washtub (which held about 17 gallons of water) and then hung them out on the clothesline to dry. Their towels and rags were made from empty flour and feed sacks. There was no toilet in the house; instead, they used an outhouse. To bathe, they would fill the washtub that they used for washing clothes with water they warmed on a wood cooking stove. They didn't own luxuries like curtains, so Thelma's mother, Phoebe, would cover the windows with quilts during bath time. Phoebe used the same tub of water to bathe all the children and would change the water for herself and their father¹⁸.

When Thelma was fourteen, she married **Roy Arthur Myers (1916-2000)** on March 16, 1940 at a little country church in Parsons, KS. Thelma met Roy at church. Roy was twenty-three and he was a laborer working odd jobs when they got married. Within a few weeks of their marriage, they moved from Thelma's parents' house to a rental house located at 2522 Felix in Parsons¹⁹. Their first child, **Clarence Earl Myers (1940-2003)**, was born November 18, 1940, only

¹⁸ Thelma Inez Myers, interview by Angela R. Weidert, February 1998, original document in possession of the author.

¹⁹ "United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VRKX-48B> : accessed 23 March 2018), Roy Myers, Ward 4, Parsons, Parsons City, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50-30, sheet 61A, line 16, family 320, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1239.

eight months after Roy and Thelma were married. This suggests that Thelma may have already been pregnant when she and Roy married. Over the years, Thelma would give birth to five more children: **Arthur Leroy “Joe” Myers (1942-2017)**, **Shelia Ann Myers (1945-)**, **Orgel Lynn Myers (1952-)**, **Mary Ruth Myers (1953-)**, and **Cozette Lalanina Myers (1969-)**.

Thelma and Roy lived in several different places after their marriage. Their first three children were born in Parsons, which would put them in Parsons from the time they got married in 1940 to the time their third child, Shelia, was born in 1945. Orgel Lynn and Mary Ruth were both born in Great Bend, Kansas, in 1952 and 1953, respectively, so it’s clear that they lived there for a time. At some point between May 1954 and September 1957, Roy and Thelma moved their family to Oklahoma. The exact dates of their residencies from 1945 to 1969 are unknown at this time. In 1969, Roy and Thelma were living in Checotah, OK. In 1971, they moved to Ponca City for about two years and then to Coweta, OK, around 1973. In 1974, they moved back to Checotah and stayed there until 1981, when they moved back to Parsons, KS with Cozette.

Thelma was a heavy smoker for most of her life, which caused her to develop emphysema in her mid-sixties. She finally quit smoking after that diagnosis. At some point, Thelma was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes due to being very overweight. She had struggled with her weight all her adult life. In 2000, Thelma became an insulin dependent diabetic. It wasn’t long after this diagnosis that her health started failing rapidly. Her doctor found a large mass on her lung and sent her home with six months to live. She passed away July 12, 2000, only six days after coming home from the hospital. She was 75 years old. At the time of her passing, she was surrounded by her husband, Roy, her two youngest daughters, and her granddaughter, Angela. Thelma is buried in East Bethany Cemetery in Neosho County, Kansas.

Roy Arthur Myers (1916-2000) was Angela’s maternal grandfather. He was born in 1916 to **Clarence William Myers (1889-1966)** and **Mary Montreal Kinsch (1898-1958)** in Pittsburg,

Kansas²⁰. He was their second child out of eleven children. Shortly after Roy's birth, the family moved from Pittsburg to Parsons, Kansas. According to Clarence's World War I draft registration card, Roy was living in Parsons, Kansas, on June 5th, 1917 with his parents and older brother, **Allan James Myers (1915-1983)**, who went by "Pete"²¹. He was only eight months old at that time. Sometime between June 1917 and January 1920, Roy's family moved to Liberty Township, Kansas, a very small rural community about nine miles Southeast of Parsons²². By 1930, Roy's family had relocated again, this time to Walton Township, Kansas, which is another small farming community five miles Southwest of Parsons²³. By 1935, the family had moved back to Parsons. His father, Clarence, was a laborer and it's possible that the family moved so much because Clarence chased jobs around Southeast Kansas. Roy made the comment once that it was easy to move house when he was a kid because they didn't have a lot of belongings, so there was never much to move.

Roy rarely talked about his childhood to Angela. It wasn't a subject that came up very often. She regrets that she didn't ask him more about his early life. However, there was a day that Angela was playing outside by herself when she was six or seven years old. Angela was screaming, just for fun. Roy heard her screams and ran outside to find her, a look of terror on his face. When he saw that she was alright, his fear quickly turned to anger. It was one of the few times Angela had ever seen her beloved grandfather angry and possibly the first time in her life that she had seen him

²⁰ Delayed Birth Certificate for Roy Arthur Myers, 28 September 1916, File No. 115-61-07117, Kansas State Board of Health. Certified copy in possession of the author.

²¹ "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/K666-2H6> : 13 March 2018), Clarence William Myers, 1917-1918; citing Labette County, Kansas, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,643,586.

²² "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MF6V-L21> : accessed 29 March 2018), Roy Myers in household of C W Myers, Liberty, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing ED 140, sheet 4A, line 18, family 77, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 536; FHL microfilm 1,820,536.

²³ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7QD-H68> : accessed 29 March 2018), Roy A Myres in household of Clarence W Myres, Walton, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 33, sheet 7A, line 49, family 155, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

angry with her. He told her very firmly to stop screaming and never to do that again unless she was in very serious trouble and needed help. The stern tone of his voice hurt Angela's feelings and made her cry. Roy explained to her that his little brother, **Leon Albert Myers (1926-1934)**, used to scream all the time while he played outside. His family was used to Leon screaming, so they never thought anything of it. One day, Leon somehow caught himself on fire and started screaming. No one went to check on him at first, assuming he was just playing again. When his mother looked out the window and saw Leon engulfed in flame, she ran out with a quilt and wrapped it around him to put out the fire. Sadly, it was too late for Leon. He passed away that day from third degree burns. He was only eight years old.

When Roy was a child, he attended school in Parsons. The highest grade he completed was sixth grade. Angela asked him once why he stopped going to school and he replied that his family couldn't afford for him to continue his education. They needed him to work with his father and help support his family. In Figure 2.2, "High School Graduation Rates for All and by Gender, Region, and Racial Ancestry, by Year Person Turned Twenty-One", Fischer and Hout show us that the high school graduation rates have dramatically increased over the past century. According to the chart, in the 1920s and 1930s only 30% of Americans finished high school, compared to almost 90% in 2000. That rate was even lower in Southern and Midwest states. This increase in high school graduation was due to a number of factors. First, communities started making efforts to build high schools and enforce attendance. Second, a changing economy convinced parents that their children's futures depended on getting a good education. Third, there began a widespread belief that education fostered good values and keeping children in school would "straighten up" troublesome youth who were running wild²⁴.

²⁴ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 13.

On March 16, 1940, Roy married Thelma Inez McWhirt in Parsons, KS. He was working as a laborer, doing odd jobs when he could find them. The couple stayed in Parsons for several years after they married. They welcomed their first three children there. The next stop on their journey was Great Bend, Kansas, where Roy worked as a welder and a mechanic. It's unclear when they moved there, but it had to have been between 1945 and 1952. During their time in Great Bend, Roy and Thelma welcomed two more children. Then, Roy moved his family to Checotah, Oklahoma. Again, the dates are uncertain here, but it was before 1957. Roy was working at Standard Industries, Inc. in Tulsa, Oklahoma in September 1957 as evidenced by a letter given to him by the company, awarding him a prize for winning the company's safety contest²⁵. The prize was a large set of silver cutlery, which was passed down to Angela. Roy worked at Standard Industries as a heavy equipment mechanic and welder. He also belonged to the International Union of Operating Engineers. Roy loved working on automobiles. Even during retirement, Roy had a constant stream of friends and family members who would bring their vehicles for him to work on. Angela remembers her grandfather's hands always being stained by oil and grease from working on cars.

In 1970, Roy lost his right eye in a welding accident. A tiny shard of steel flew into his eye and the doctors had to remove his entire eye because of it. They fitted him for a glass eye, which he wore for the rest of his life. Angela remembers Roy popping his glass eye out into his hand in front of some of Angela's friends to scare them. Roy loved practical jokes. In addition to his other hobbies, Roy was a member of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons²⁶. No records have been found that tell when he first became a member, but Angela has some of Roy's membership cards that date from as early as 1978 through 1994. He served lodge #86 in Checotah, OK and lodge #0117 in Parsons, KS.

²⁵ Letter written to Roy Myers by William Zynen, Purchasing Agent for Standard Industries, Inc., September 14, 1957. Document in possession of the author.

²⁶ Roy Myers, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons membership cards (8), 1978-1994. Documents in possession of the author.

In 1981, Roy retired from Standard Industries, Inc. and Roy and Thelma moved back to Parsons, KS with their sixth and youngest child, Cozette, who was born during their time in Checotah. They moved back to Parsons to be closer to family. He bought a large two-story house with a balcony located at 1018 South 21st street. It was a house that Thelma had admired from the time she was a child. The house came with a two-story red barn and an empty lot that they would use as a vegetable garden. In 1985, Roy and Thelma adopted their granddaughter, Angela. Cozette had given birth to a daughter when she was sixteen and allowed her parents to adopt the child and raise her as their own.

During retirement, Roy occupied his time with tinkering in his garage and barn, working on cars, visiting friends and family, and playing with his granddaughter, Angela. Roy had always favored his little girls and his granddaughter was no exception. Every Saturday morning, Roy would take Angela with him to Daylight Donuts, where he would sit and drink coffee with two of his brothers and eat donuts. Roy let Angela eat as many donuts as she wanted and drink chocolate milk. In the evenings, he liked to watch television and fall asleep in his chair.

Roy was in exceptionally good health throughout his life. In his seventies, Roy developed a very mild case of dementia. Physically, however, he was very healthy. In July of 2000, when Thelma was diagnosed with an incurable ailment, Roy had a major stroke upon hearing the news. He completely lost the will to live after Thelma died. Two of Roy's daughters, Mary Ruth and Cozette, and their children moved in with Roy and Thelma to care for them in their last days. Thelma passed away July 12, 2000. Roy lived little more than a month after Thelma was gone. He passed away August 20, 2000 surrounded by Mary Ruth, Cozette, and Angela. Roy is buried in East Bethany Cemetery in Neosho County, Kansas, next to Thelma.

Rose-A-Lee Fraker (1945-) is Angela's paternal grandmother. She was born in or near Parsons, KS, in 1945 to **Druscilla Katherine Peifer (1910-2000)** and **Searel R Fraker (1897-**

1973). As a young child, Rose-A-Lee attended an old one-room country schoolhouse in South Mound, KS, from kindergarten through eighth grade. She attended Erie High School for grades nine through twelve and graduated. Shortly after high school graduation, Rose-A-Lee went to Springfield, Missouri to attend an IBM trade school for punch key technology. Upon completion of the class, she was supposed to be given job placement at a company in St. Paul, Minnesota. When she arrived in St. Paul, the company where she was supposed to start work informed her that they were no longer accepting workers from trade schools; they were training their own employees for the job she had been trained to do. Instead of going home to Parsons, Rose-A-Lee stayed in Minnesota and got a job at a bottling company. She rented a small apartment and lived there for six months before moving back home²⁷.

In Parsons, Rose-A-Lee got pregnant and gave birth to Robert Darryl Sims in 1966 when she was twenty-one. Rose-A-Lee wasn't married to Robert's father, so she left town to give birth at a hospital in Sedan, KS. Rose-A-Lee made up the surname "Sims" to give to her child and created a fictitious person named "Robert Sims" that she listed as Robert's father on his birth certificate. A year later, she gave birth to Misty Jo Sims in Joliet, Illinois, in 1967. Approximately two years later, Rose-A-Lee gave birth in Chanute, Kansas to another son whom she gave up for adoption immediately after his birth²⁸.

Rose-A-Lee has been married twice. Her first husband was Harry Wiatrak. They were married for several years during the 1970s. They eventually divorced around 1980. Rose-A-Lee would later marry a man named Brad Singletary. That marriage only lasted a little over a year before the couple divorced. Rose-A-Lee has dated different people off and on since her divorces, but she has never remarried and has lived alone ever since²⁹.

²⁷ Rose-A-Lee Fraker, interview by Robert D. Sims, March 25, 2018. Interview notes in possession of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

²⁸ Personal knowledge of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

²⁹ Rose-A-Lee Fraker, interview by Robert D. Sims, March 28, 2018. Interview notes in possession of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

Unlike the women that came before her, Rose-A-Lee has lived alone for almost half of her life. She lived alone for a time before she had children. Then, when her children were grown and moved out of her house, Rose-A-Lee was alone once again. She has lived by herself for the last thirty years, never considering remarrying or moving in with one of her children. She enjoys her independence and her ability to sustain her solitary existence. For a woman, this type of lifestyle would have been very hard, if not impossible, to achieve a century earlier.

In Figure 4.10 “Americans Who Live Alone, by Age and Gender,” Fischer and Hout show that over the years Americans, particularly elderly women, increasingly lived alone. The rates for living completely alone rose substantially from 1900 to 2000. Looking at the chart, there is a sharp increase in solo living among young people from 1960 to 1970. According to the text, this is due to the increase in the postponement of marriage at that time coupled with the increase in material wealth, which made moving out of parents’ homes a reasonable option. However, the most dramatic change in solitary living over the years is among elderly women. There are several reasons for this. First, since birth rates plunged during the last two generations, the elderly have fewer children that might house them. Second, the shift from farming to industrial work means that the majority of people are no longer working at home alongside their children. Third, the institution of pensions, the formation of Social Security, and Medicare means that the elderly have the resources to be able to live alone. Finally, Americans value independence, so many of them aren’t willing to move their parents in with them³⁰.

Rose-A-Lee is a very private person and doesn’t like to talk about her past. The information in this narrative was all she was willing to disclose about her life for others to read.

³⁰ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 84.

GENERATION FOUR

A1a1a. Phoebe Ruth Smith (1896-1962)

A1a1b. Joseph Earl McWhirt (1895-1986)

A1a2a. Mary Montreal Kinsch (1898-1958)

A1a2b. Clarence William Myers (1889-1966)

A1b1a. Druscilla Katherine Peifer (1910-2000)

A1b1b. Searel R Fraker (1897-1973)

A1b2a. unknown

A1b2b. unknown

Phoebe Ruth Smith (1896-1962) was Angela's maternal great-grandmother. She was born in 1896 to **James Thomas Smith (1856-1924)** and **Amy Crapson (1860-1952)**. Phoebe went by her middle name, Ruth. She was one of twelve children. Ruth lived in Southeast Kansas during her childhood. She lived in Neosho County for at least the first fourteen years of her life. In a 1900 census, she is recorded living in Grant Township with her parents when she was four years old³¹. By 1910, her family had relocated to Shiloh Township³².

There is a story about Ruth that has trickled down through the family. Angela grew up hearing the story from Ruth's daughter, Thelma. When Ruth was a teenager, she wanted to go to a dance with a Catholic girl friend from school. Her father James was a Baptist minister who forbade his children from going to dances based on his religious beliefs, nor did he like the idea of Ruth hanging around with anyone who did not share James's Baptist faith. She wanted so badly to go to

³¹ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MMYC-JBR> : accessed 2 April 2018), Phoebe R Smith in household of James T Smith, Grant Township, Neosho, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 153, sheet 3B, family 69, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,493.

³² "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2Z9-HJL> : accessed 2 April 2018), Ruth Smith in household of James Smith, Shiloh, Neosho, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 206, sheet 3B, family 70, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 451; FHL microfilm 1,374,464.

the dance with her friend that she snuck out of the house and went against her father's wishes. James was very angry with Ruth for disobeying his rules and, more importantly, knowingly committing sin. He felt that her sinful actions reflected on him and made him look foolish and hypocritical in the eyes of his congregation. When he found out that she went to the dance with her Catholic friend he beat Ruth severely, which caused her a significant amount of head trauma. As a result, she would suffer seizures for the rest of her life. This story ties in with Fischer's theme of groups because it demonstrates the commitment to social groups. James valued his status within his church so much that he would not tolerate his children to make him look bad in the eyes of his religious community³³. This story cannot be proven and has become a family legend. While it may be true that Ruth's father beat her for disobeying him and their faith, Angela has found no record that proves James was ever a Baptist minister. In fact, in every census James is listed in, his occupation is "blacksmith". It is possible that in their small community that James served as a minister on Sunday, while working as a blacksmith during the week.

Between 1910 and 1915, Ruth married **Joseph Earl McWhirt (1895-1986)**. She is listed in the 1920 census in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, with her husband and their three-year-old daughter, **Mattie Irenah McWhirt (1916-unk)**³⁴. While they were living in Oklahoma, Ruth gave birth to another daughter on March 6, 1918. They named her **Alice Marie McWhirt (1918-1918)**³⁵. Sadly, Alice died on April 17, 1918, when she was one-month old. By 1930, Joseph and Ruth had moved

³³ Claude S. Fischer, *Made in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 8.

³⁴ "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MN1J-CZ3> : accessed 2 April 2018), Ruth Mcwhirt in household of J Earl Mcwhirt, Bartlesville Ward 3, Washington, Oklahoma, United States; citing ED 270, sheet 32B, line 98, family 773, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 1490; FHL microfilm 1,821,490.

³⁵ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 03 April 2018), memorial page for Alice M McWhirt (6 Mar 1918–17 Apr 1918), Find A Grave Memorial no. 27427319, citing Busby Cemetery, Copan, Washington County, Oklahoma, USA ; Maintained by Richard Moberly (contributor 47003541) .

back to Kansas and were living in Mound Valley³⁶. Ruth had given birth to four more children:

Harry A. McWhirt (1920-1990), Franklin Albert McWhirt (1923-1993), Thelma Inez McWhirt (1925-2000), and Herbert Carl McWhirt (1927-2010). In 1940, Ruth and Joseph are recorded on

the census living in Parsons, Kansas³⁷. Ruth had given birth to three more children by this time:

Ruby A. McWhirt (1930-2002), Edwin Elmer McWhirt (1933-2007), and Robert S. McWhirt (1935-1936). In 1936, Ruth had lost another child. Her one-year-old son, Robert, died of the flu

three days after Christmas³⁸. At the time that the 1940 census was conducted, Ruth was pregnant with her last child, a daughter named **Charlotte Josephine McWhirt (1940-1954)**. The family

called her "Josie". She was born August 24, 1940 in Parsons. Joseph and Ruth moved to Mound

Valley with Josie in the summer of 1953. All of their other children were grown and had left home.

On May 29th, 1954, Josie drowned in Pumpkin Creek in Mound Valley. She had been playing on a

bridge over the creek. She was hanging by her hands from a gas pipe that ran underneath the bridge

and fell into the water. A friend jumped in to try to save her and drowned as well. They were both

swept under by the current. Josie was only thirteen³⁹. Ruth gave birth to ten children in her lifetime.

Seven of her children lived to adulthood.

Angela hasn't been able to find information on Ruth's life after 1940. In an interview Angela did with Thelma, Ruth's daughter, in 1998, Thelma describes the events surrounding Ruth's death on April 26th, 1962. Ruth had suffered from seizures since she was a teenager due to a head injury.

³⁶ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7Q8-5XL> : accessed 2 April 2018), Joseph E Mcwirt, Pleasant Valley, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 13, sheet 2B, line 60, family 49, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

³⁷ "United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VRK6-BNR> : accessed 2 April 2018), Joseph E Mcwent, Ward 3, Parsons, Parsons City, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50-29B, sheet 11A, line 10, family 230, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1239.

³⁸ Personal knowledge of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

³⁹ Angela R. Weidert, personal knowledge.

One day, she was cooking dinner and she collapsed onto the stove, catching her clothes on fire. She regained consciousness soon after and ran out onto the front porch, screaming. Her husband put out the fire by wrapping her in a sheet before driving her to the hospital. At the hospital, the doctors determined that 80% of her body was burnt. She died less than twenty-four hours after she was taken to the hospital. Thelma was with her when she passed away peacefully in the hospital⁴⁰. She was 66 years old. Ruth is buried in Spring Hill Cemetery in Parsons, Kansas.

By all accounts, Ruth had a hard life. She lost three children during her lifetime and from what Angela was told by Thelma, Ruth did not have a happy married life. In the pictures that Angela has seen of Ruth in her later years, she has a very haunted look about her. Her face is gaunt and her eyes seem full of sadness. She isn't smiling in any of the pictures Angela has seen.

Joseph Earl McWhirt (1895-1986) was Angela's maternal great-grandfather. According to his World War I draft registration card, he was born in Webb City, Missouri in 1895⁴¹. His parents were **Frank McWhirt (1863-1913)** and **Amanda May Wallraff (1867-1966)**. Joseph went by his middle name, Earl. In 1900, when Earl was five years old, he lived in Webb City, Missouri with his mother and father and two older brothers, Lawson and Charles. His father was a teamster and his mother kept house⁴². In 1910, the family is recorded living on a farm Earl's father owned in Osage, Kansas, a small town in Labette County. Earl's widowed grandfather, **William Henry Wallraff**

⁴⁰ Thelma Inez McWhirt Myers, interviewed by Angela R Weidert, February 1998. Document in possession of the author.

⁴¹ "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/KZD5-WGZ> : 13 March 2018), Joseph Earl Mcwhirt, 1917-1918; citing Washington County, Oklahoma, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,852,243.

⁴² "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M3Z4-GF6> : accessed 3 April 2018), Earl Mcwhirt in household of Frank Mcwhirt, Joplin Township Webb city Ward 2, 5, Jasper, Missouri, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50, sheet 16A, family 335, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,866.

(1842-1924) was living with them⁴³. Earl was fourteen at the time and while the census doesn't list an occupation for him, his two older brothers were employed by their father, working on their home farm. It is almost certain that at fourteen, Earl was working alongside his father and brothers on the farm.

Between 1910 and 1915, Earl married **Phoebe Ruth Smith (1896-1962)**. With her he would have ten children. Their second born, Alice Marie, was named after Earl's younger sister, Alice Marie, who died when she was five years old⁴⁴. Sadly, her namesake would also die during childhood, living only one month after birth.

At the beginning of his married life, Earl was working as a farmhand for a person named W. L. Reed in Washington County, Oklahoma⁴⁵. In 1920, Earl was still living in Washington County in Bartlesville. He was working in the building industry as a brick hod carrier⁴⁶. A brick hod is a three-sided box with a long handle for carrying over the shoulder. It is used for carrying bricks (usually twelve at a time) and mortar from the brick pile to the area where the bricklayers are working⁴⁷.

By 1930, Earl had moved his family to Mound Valley, Kansas where he was working as a common laborer⁴⁸. He had a wife and five living children to support. Earl moved his family to

⁴³ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2CN-RQL> : accessed 2 April 2018), Earl Mcwhirt in household of Frank Mcwhirt, Osage, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 141, sheet 17A, family 283, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 443; FHL microfilm 1,374,456.

⁴⁴ Personal knowledge of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

⁴⁵ "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/KZD5-WGZ> : 13 March 2018), Joseph Earl Mcwhirt, 1917-1918; citing Washington County, Oklahoma, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,852,243.

⁴⁶ "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MN1J-CZ3> : accessed 2 April 2018), Ruth Mcwhirt in household of J Earl Mcwhirt, Bartlesville Ward 3, Washington, Oklahoma, United States; citing ED 270, sheet 32B, line 98, family 773, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 1490; FHL microfilm 1,821,490.

⁴⁷ Wikipedia contributors, "Brick hod," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brick_hod (accessed April 3, 2018).

⁴⁸ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7Q8-5XL> : accessed 2 April 2018), Joseph E Mcwirt, Pleasant

Parsons, Kansas, sometime before 1935. In 1940, he was working as a laborer for a railroad⁴⁹.

Angela couldn't find any records containing information on where Earl lived after 1940. However, Angela was told the story of his daughter Josie's death and that she died in 1954 in Mound Valley, where they had just moved the year before. So, it's possible that they were in Mound Valley, Kansas in 1953.

Earl became a widower in 1962 when Ruth died. Angela was told that he remarried after Ruth's death. Earl passed away in Kansas on September 13, 1986⁵⁰. Earl is buried next to Ruth in Spring Hill Cemetery in Parsons, Kansas.

Mary Montreal Kinsch (1898-1958) was born in 1898 in Girard, Kansas⁵¹, to **Henry Robert Kinsch (1870-1931)** and **Mary Isabelle Altman (1870-1936)**. She went by the name "Mamie", a nickname her parents gave her as a child. She was one of eight children. In 1900, she lived in Cherry Township in Montgomery County, Kansas with her parents and three older siblings. She and her family lived in Cherryvale in 1910 at 512 Independence Avenue⁵². Her father was a

Valley, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 13, sheet 2B, line 60, family 49, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

⁴⁹"United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VRK6-BNR> : accessed 2 April 2018), Joseph E Mcwent, Ward 3, Parsons, Parsons City, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50-29B, sheet 11A, line 10, family 230, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1239.

⁵⁰"United States, GenealogyBank Obituaries, 1980-2014," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QV5W-C918> : accessed 4 April 2018), Joseph Earl Mcwhirt, Kansas, United States, 14 Sep 1986; from "Recent Newspaper Obituaries (1977 - Today)," database, GenealogyBank.com(<http://www.genealogybank.com> : 2014); citing , born-digital text.

⁵¹ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 03 April 2018), memorial page for Mary Montreal "Mamie" Myers (31 Mar 1898–1 Feb 1958), Find A Grave Memorial no. 14445043, citing West Bethany Cemetery, Neosho County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Mary (contributor 46536583) .

⁵² "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M2CY-6JC> : accessed 4 April 2018), Mamie Kinsch in household of Henry R Kinsch, Cherryvale Ward 4, Montgomery, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 160, sheet 20A, family 77, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 448; FHL microfilm 1,374,461.

laborer and her mother stayed at home with the children. In 1910, her parents had eight children, with seven of them still living at home.

Though their marriage records have not been discovered by Angela, a 1930 census⁵³ shows that Mamie married **Clarence William Myers (1889-1966)** when she was fifteen and he was twenty-three, putting their marriage date sometime between March and October of 1913. Clarence was a laborer like Mamie's father, taking jobs where he could get them. They would spend their entire lives in Southeast Kansas and have eleven children together; eight boys and three girls. They lost one child, Leon, in 1934 when he was eight years old when he burned to death after playing with fire. The rest of their children lived into adulthood. According to the last available census in 1940, Mamie and Clarence were living in Neosho Township, Kansas⁵⁴.

Angela asked her mother, Cozette, if she knew how her grandmother, Mamie, died. Cozette said that she was told that she had a massive heart attack while she was watching television. Mamie died on February 1, 1958⁵⁵. She is buried in West Bethany Cemetery in Neosho County, Kansas, next to her husband, Clarence, and their son, Leon.

Clarence William Myers (1889-1966) was born in 1889 in Arkansas City, Kansas⁵⁶. His parents were **Hamlen Bentley Myers (1861-1935)** and **Bertha Liniger (1869-1967)**. His father

⁵³"United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X7QD-SPH> : accessed 4 April 2018), Clarence W Myres, Walton, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 33, sheet 7A, line 46, family 155, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

⁵⁴"United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VRK6-8RD> : accessed 2 April 2018), Clarence W Myers, Neosho Township, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50-17, sheet 3A, line 7, family 47, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1239.

⁵⁵ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 04 April 2018), memorial page for Mary Montreal "Mamie" Myers (31 Mar 1898–1 Feb 1958), Find A Grave Memorial no. 14445043, citing West Bethany Cemetery, Neosho County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Mary (contributor 46536583) .

⁵⁶"United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/K666-2H6> : 13 March 2018), Clarence William Myers, 1917-1918;

was a farmer. The earliest record of Clarence that Angela was able to find was an 1895 census that shows him in the house of his father in Richland Township, Labette County, Kansas when he was five years old⁵⁷. In 1900, his family was in Elm Grove Township, Kansas, a small community between Edna and Bartlett. It is unknown whether Clarence ever attended public school. Angela was unable to find any record of Clarence or his family in any of the available censuses between 1900 and 1920.

Clarence married Mary Montreal Kinsch in 1913. They lived in Pittsburg, Kansas, in the early days of their marriage, as their second child, Roy, was born there. They had eleven children together. In 1920, the family was living in Liberty Township, Kansas⁵⁸. Clarence was working as a farmhand at that time; no doubt he learned farming from his father, Hamlen. It seems that Liberty was a farming community, as most of the male residents listed their occupation as "farming".

When Clarence moved his family to Walton, Kansas, in 1930⁵⁹, he began working as a laborer for the railroad. He didn't specify which railroad he worked for on the census, but since the Katy Railroad was closest to his location, it's likely the one he worked for. By 1940, Clarence, Mary, and seven of their children were living in Neosho Township, still in Southeast Kansas. He had left the railroad and gone back to farming for a living.

citing Labette County, Kansas, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,643,586.

⁵⁷ "Kansas State Census, 1895", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QL8J-DBSZ> : 12 November 2017), Ben Myers, 1895.

⁵⁸ "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MF6V-L2T> : accessed 4 April 2018), C W Myers, Liberty, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing ED 140, sheet 4A, line 15, family 77, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 536; FHL microfilm 1,820,536.

⁵⁹ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7QD-SPH> : accessed 4 April 2018), Clarence W Myres, Walton, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 33, sheet 7A, line 46, family 155, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

Clarence became a widower in 1958 when Mamie died of a heart attack. Angela hasn't found many records on Clarence after 1940 to show where he was living or when he retired. Clarence died in April 1966 in Parsons, KS when he was 77 years old⁶⁰. He died of leukemia⁶¹.

Drucilla Katherine Peifer (1910-2000) was Angela's paternal great-grandmother. She was born in 1910 in Darwin, Minnesota, to **Nicholas L. Peifer (1870-1955)** and **Othilla "Tillie" Post (1882-1927)**⁶². Drucilla grew up on a farm in Litchfield, Minnesota. Her family were farmers and her grandparents had immigrated from Germany to Litchfield for the farmland. Litchfield was platted in 1869 when the railroad was extended to that point. According to the latest census, the population is approximately 6700. The city was named for Darwin Litchfield, who was a major stockholder of the Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad. It is home to a number of historic sites, including the Litchfield Opera House and Ness Church⁶³.

On February 16, 1927, when Drucilla was sixteen, her mother passed away. Angela hasn't been able to discover the cause of Tillie's death, but she was only 44 years old when she died and Angela has been told that her death was unexpected. Drucilla took her mother's death very hard. Angela's father, Robert, remembers Drucilla talking about her mother and how terrible it was when she died.

Drucilla graduated from the District 15 school located in Darwin, Minnesota. It was located about four miles north of her home in Litchfield⁶⁴. Shortly before 1933, Drucilla married her first

⁶⁰ "United States Social Security Death Index," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/JBMB-SZL> : 19 May 2014), Clarence Myers, Apr 1966; citing U.S. Social Security Administration, Death Master File, database (Alexandria, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, ongoing).

⁶¹ Personal knowledge of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

⁶² Birth Certificate for Drucilla K. Peifer, 3 July 1910, Meeker County District Court, Minnesota. Certified copy in possession of the author.

⁶³ Wikipedia contributors, "Litchfield, Minnesota," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Litchfield,_Minnesota (accessed April 4, 2018).

⁶⁴ Newspaper clipping with article, Unknown Source. 1923. Document in possession of the author.

husband, **Leo Miller (1912-unk)**. They had a daughter named Jean. Leo was a farmer and they are recorded on a 1940 census living on their own farm in Litchfield with their daughter⁶⁵. Their marriage ended shortly after that census was taken. In 1942, Drucilla married a man who had been working with the horses on her father's farm named **Searel R. Fraker (1897-1973)**. They moved to Lawton, Oklahoma, where he was stationed with the military and got married there on November 4, 1942⁶⁶. Drucilla's daughter, Jean, wished to stay with her father in Litchfield rather than go with her mother. Angela was told by Robert that Drucilla never saw Jean again.

Searel's military term expired and they ended up in Parsons, Kansas. It is unclear why. They got a VA loan and purchased some farm land on Pratt Road and put a trailer home on it⁶⁷. There they welcomed three children together. **Dick J. Fraker (1943-unk)**, **Rose-A-Lee Fraker (1945-)**, and **Monte Gene Fraker (1947-2010)**. Religion was a big part of Drucilla's life. Her parents were devout Catholics and they passed their beliefs and practices down to their children. They attended Mass, went to confession, didn't eat meat on Friday, etc. Drucilla was a Catholic all her life. She tried to pass her faith down to her children, but she was unsuccessful. By the time they were adults, none of her children practiced any religion at all. In Figure 8.3, "Religious Preference, by Year and Type of Data", Fischer and Hout show us that the percentage of Americans practicing Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish religion steadily declined from 1940 to 2000, while the rates of those who don't identify with any religion have steadily increased. Fischer and Hout state that the tendency of Americans to

⁶⁵ "United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/KSV9-DNY> : accessed 4 April 2018), Leo Miller, Litchfield Township, Meeker, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 47-19, sheet 5A, line 7, family 79, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1938.

⁶⁶ "Oklahoma, County Marriages, 1890-1995", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VXL2-7XM> : 3 November 2017), Searel R Frakes and Drucilla K Peifer, 1942.

⁶⁷ Robert Sims, in discussion with the author, April 4, 2018.

prefer no religion is not because of a lack of belief, it's more their disdain for organized religion and religious services⁶⁸.

At some point before 1966, Drucilla and Searel moved to Joliet, Illinois. They weren't there very long before they divorced. Drucilla quickly started dating a man named **James J. Brown (1915-2006)**. They married sometime during the 1970s and moved back to Parsons, Kansas. They lived on the property that Drucilla owned on Pratt Road, where her children were born. Drucilla lived there with James for the rest of her life. In April 2000, Drucilla passed away of natural causes when she was ninety years old. There is no grave site for her because she was cremated⁶⁹.

Searel R. Fraker (1897-1973) was born in 1898 in Palo Alto, Iowa, to a farmer named **William Daly Fraker (1862-1930)** and his wife, **Harriet "Hattie" Ann Holt (1866-1933)**⁷⁰. Searel's first and last names have been spelled incorrectly so many times that it was difficult for Angela to find records on him. Searel's original birth record filed with the state of Iowa⁷¹ records that he was born in 1898, which is supported by the information in the census records Angela found on Searel during his childhood. However, Searel's delayed birth certificate issued in the 1926 shows that he was born in 1897. Angela believes that Searel and his family lost track of his exact year of birth when he was a child. As an adult, Searel provided 1897 as his birth year for official documents.

⁶⁸ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference; How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 194.

⁶⁹ Personal knowledge of the author, Angela R. Weidert.

⁷⁰ "Iowa, Delayed Birth Records, 1850-1939," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/Q24D-1YQR> : accessed 6 April 2018), Searel R Fraker, 28 Nov 1897, Palo Alto Township, Jasper, Iowa, United States; citing reference ID 69656, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines; FamilySearch digital folder 101693737.

⁷¹ "Iowa, County Births, 1880-1935," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/XVJR-M1M> : 10 March 2018), Ceril Fraker, 28 Nov 1898; citing Palo Alto Township, Jasper, Iowa, United States; county district courts, Iowa; FHL microfilm 1,954,518.

In 1900, Searel and his family still lived in Palo Alto, where he was born⁷². He was 2 years old. The funny thing is that he is listed on this census as a female. In 1905, Searel was seven years old. His family had moved to Newton Township in Jasper County, Iowa⁷³, which is about 10 miles north of Palo Alto. By 1910, the family had moved to Minnesota and were living in Verona Township⁷⁴.

In September 1918, Searel registered for the draft. At the time, he was living at 113 West Butral in St. Paul, Minnesota⁷⁵. He was working as a stenographer. The company he worked for is listed on his draft registration card, but the first word is hard to read and a Google search didn't yield any matches. Angela knows from speaking to her father, Robert, that Searel fought in World War I. The family claims he enlisted voluntarily and that he wasn't drafted. On the 1920 United States Census, Searel was stationed at Fort Clark, Texas⁷⁶. He was a cavalryman in the army. Angela hasn't been able to find any record of Searel between 1920 and 1940.

⁷² "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M929-QTP> : accessed 6 April 2018), William Fraker, Palo Alto Township, Jasper, Iowa, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 32, sheet 1B, family 19, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,439.

⁷³ "Iowa State Census, 1905," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QVM5-CYBT> : 16 March 2018), Serel Fraker, Jasper, Iowa, United States; citing card #195, State Historical Department, Des Moines; FHL microfilm 1,430,461.

⁷⁴ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2LY-M6S> : accessed 6 April 2018), William D Fraker, Verona, Faribault, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 87, sheet 5B, family 96, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 696; FHL microfilm 1,374,709.

⁷⁵ "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/K87B-324> : 13 March 2018), Searel R Fraker, 1917-1918; citing St. Paul City no 8, Minnesota, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 1,682,638.

⁷⁶ "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MCS8-93D> : accessed 6 April 2018), Searel P Fraker, Fort Clark, Kinney, Texas, United States; citing ED 118, sheet 9A, line 16, family 16, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 1826; FHL microfilm 1,821,826.

By 1940, Searel was living in Litchfield, Minnesota, as a farm laborer⁷⁷. According to Robert, Searel was working training horses for Drucilla Peifer's father, Nicholas, before he and Drucilla were married. Searel married Drucilla on November 4, 1942 in Lawton, Oklahoma, where he was stationed in the army. He was 44 years old. He didn't voluntarily go back to military service; Searel was drafted for World War II. He tried to get out of going to war again, arguing that he had already served in World War I. His attempt to avoid serving in another war failed. Luckily, he returned from World War II in-tact. For the remainder of his life, Searel wanted nothing more than a quiet farm life and a family. He and Drucilla had three children together between 1943 and 1947. At some point in the 1960s, Searel and Drucilla moved to Joliet, Illinois. Soon after that move, the couple divorced. It is not clear what caused the separation⁷⁸. Searel moved back to Southeast Kansas sometime after his divorce. He was living in Erie, Kansas when he passed away on November 14, 1973⁷⁹.

⁷⁷ "United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KSV9-DJR> : accessed 7 April 2018), Searel R Fraker, Litchfield Township, Meeker, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 47-19, sheet 5A, line 35, family 85, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1938.

⁷⁸ Robert Sims, in discussion with the author, April 2018.

⁷⁹ "United States Social Security Death Index," database, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JL2X-DQS> : 19 May 2014), Searel Fraker, Nov 1973; citing U.S. Social Security Administration, Death Master File, database (Alexandria, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, ongoing).

GENERATION FIVE

A1a1a1. Amy Crapson (1860-1952)

A1a1a2. James Thomas Smith (1856-1924)

A1a1b1. Amanda May Wallraff (1867-1966)

A1a1b2. Frank McWhirt (1863-1913)

A1a2a1. Mary Isabelle Altman (1870-1936)

A1a2a2. Henry Robert Kinsch (1870-1931)

A1a2b1. Bertha Liniger (1869-1967)

A1a2b2. Hamlen Bentley Myers (1861-1935)

A1b1a1. Othilla Post (1882-1927)

A1b1a2. Nicholas Peifer (1870-1955)

A1b1b1. Harriet Ann Holt (1866-1933)

A1b1b2. William Daly Fraker (1862-1930)

A1b2a1. unknown

A1b2a2. unknown

A1b2b1. unknown

A1b2b2. unknown

Amy Crapson (1860-1952) was born on April 22, 1860 to a farmer named **Lorenzo Dow Crapson (1833-1908)** and **Martha Elizabeth Minton (1837-1924)**. Amy was born in Schuyler County, Missouri. As a baby, she lived with her parents in Saltriver Township, Missouri⁸⁰. Her family moved to Kansas around 1870. On an 1880 census, Amy was 20 years old and still living at home. At the time the census was conducted, her father was bedridden with a spinal fever that he eventually recovered from⁸¹. That same year, on Christmas day, Amy married a blacksmith named

⁸⁰ "United States Census, 1860", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MH87-SQC> : 14 December 2017), Lorenzo D Crapson, 1860.

⁸¹ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MF58-615> : 29 August 2017), Amy Crapson in household of L D Crapson, Rutland, Montgomery, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district ED 159, sheet 325B, NARA

James Thomas Smith (1856-1924) in Grass, Kansas. The ceremony was held at her parent's house⁸². By 1900, James and Amy were living in Grant Township in Neosho County, Kansas and had twelve children, though only nine of them were still living⁸³.

By 1920, Amy and James had moved to Erie, Kansas. They only had one child still living with them. Their son, Paul, who was a teacher. Angela was unable to find any census records for Amy after 1920. Amy died October 1, 1952, when she was 72 years old. She is buried at East Hill Cemetery in Erie, Kansas⁸⁴.

James Thomas Smith (1856-1924) was born in November 1856 in Illinois. He married Amy Crapson on December 25, 1880 and with her had twelve children. He worked as a blacksmith for most of his life according to the censuses that Angela has found⁸⁵. The family believe that he was also a Baptist minister, though Angela has not been able to find any proof of that. Angela has also not been able to determine with certainty who James's parents were because James Thomas Smith is such a common name and there were many Smith families in Illinois at this time period with sons named James who were born around 1856. James lived in Southeast Kansas for the first forty years

microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0390; FHL microfilm 1,254,390.

⁸² Kansas County Marriages, 1855-1911, database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/Q293-D6K9> : 11 February 2018), James T Smith and Amy Crapson, 21 Dec 1880; citing Marriage, Montgomery, Kansas, United States, district clerk, court clerk, county clerk and register offices from various counties; FHL microfilm 1,404,520.

⁸³ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MMYC-JBV> : accessed 6 April 2018), Amy Smith in household of James T Smith, Grant Township, Neosho, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 153, sheet 3A, family 69, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,493.

⁸⁴ "Find A Grave Index," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QVKD-MLWD> : 11 July 2016), Amy Crapson Smith, 1952; Burial, Erie, Neosho, Kansas, United States of America, East Hill Cemetery; citing record ID 40752450, Find a Grave, <http://www.findagrave.com>.

⁸⁵ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2Z9-HJJ> : accessed 6 April 2018), James Smith, Shiloh, Neosho, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 206, sheet 3B, family 70, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 451; FHL microfilm 1,374,464.

of his marriage. Angela was unable to find census records for James after 1920. He died on July 5, 1924 and is buried at East Hill Cemetery in Erie, Kansas, next to Amy⁸⁶.

Amanda May Wallraff (1867-1966) was born in Missouri to a farmer who immigrated from Prussia, **William Henry Wallraff (1842-1923)**, and **Margaret Ann Crawford (1842-1874)**⁸⁷, who was born in Kentucky. In 1880, Amanda was 12 years old and living in Osage, Kansas, with her father, stepmother, and siblings. That's the earliest record of her that Angela was able to find. Amanda's mother had died in 1874 when Amanda was six years old. Her father remarried the following year to a woman named Mary Hutchins, who already had several children of her own⁸⁸. Amanda must have been close to her stepmother, since she raised Amanda from the time she was seven.

On June 26, 1889, Amanda married **Frank McWhirt (1863-1913)** in Dennis, Kansas⁸⁹. Amanda and Frank lived in Kansas in the early years of their marriage and welcomed two sons there. Between 1893 and 1895, the couple moved to Webb City, Missouri, where Frank was working as a teamster and Amanda gave birth to Angela's great-grandfather, Earl, in 1895⁹⁰. Amanda gave birth

⁸⁶ "Find A Grave Index," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QVKD-ML4W> : 13 December 2015), James Thomas Smith, 1924; Burial, Erie, Neosho, Kansas, United States of America, East Hill Cemetery; citing record ID 40752471, Find a Grave, <http://www.findagrave.com>.

⁸⁷ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 07 April 2018), memorial page for Amanda Wallraff McWhirt (Sep 1867–1966), Find A Grave Memorial no. 76006791, citing Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Dennis, Labette County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Forever Searching † (contributor 47578585) .

⁸⁸ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MF5Q-7SD> : 7 September 2017), Amanda Wallraff in household of Wm Wallraff, Osage, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district ED 117, sheet 386B, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0385; FHL microfilm 1,254,385.

⁸⁹ Kansas County Marriages, 1855-1911, database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/Q29Q-QPZ9> : 25 September 2017), Frank McWhirt and Amanda Wallraff Or Wallroff, 20 Jun 1889; citing Marriage, Labette, Kansas, United States, district clerk, court clerk, county clerk and register offices from various counties; FHL microfilm 1,433,308.

⁹⁰ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M3Z4-GFZ> : accessed 6 April 2018), Amanda Mcwhirt in household of Frank Mcwhirt, Joplin Township Webb city Ward 2, 5, Jasper, Missouri, United States; citing enumeration

to her first daughter, Alice Marie sometime after 1896. Sadly, Alice passed away when she was very young. By 1910, Amanda and James had moved back to Osage, Kansas, where Amanda's elderly father lived. William was 71 and widowed for the second time. He is recorded living with them in 1910⁹¹. It seems to Angela as though William was too old to take care of the farm at this point, so Frank and Amanda moved in with him and Frank took over the farming. They had four sons at that time, two of which were listed as working on the family farm.

Angela was unable to find any census records for Amanda after 1910. Amanda became a widow when Frank passed away in 1913. Amanda died in 1966, living to be almost 100 years old⁹². She is buried in Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Dennis, Kansas, next to her husband, Frank.

Frank McWhirt (1863-1913) was born in Illinois in 1863. His parents were **Joseph B. McWhirt (1840-1908)** and **Anna E. Valentine (1844-1925)**. The earliest record of Frank that Angela could find was an 1880 census. He was recorded living with his parents and six siblings in Sheridan Township, Kansas, when he was 17. His father was a farmer and Frank helped his father on the farm⁹³.

In 1889, Frank married Amanda Wallraff. With her, he would have six children. He moved his family to Missouri between 1893 and 1895, where he was working as a teamster. Sometime

district (ED) 50, sheet 16A, family 335, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,866.

⁹¹ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2CN-RQV> : accessed 6 April 2018), Amanda Mcwhirt in household of Frank Mcwhirt, Osage, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 141, sheet 17A, family 283, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 443; FHL microfilm 1,374,456.

⁹² Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 07 April 2018), memorial page for Amanda Wallraff McWhirt (Sep 1867–1966), Find A Grave Memorial no. 76006791, citing Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Dennis, Labette County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Forever Searching † (contributor 47578585) .

⁹³ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MFPR-S1P> : 29 August 2017), Frank Mcwhirt in household of Joseph Mcwhirt, Sheridan, Crawford, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district ED 59, sheet 120D, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0378; FHL microfilm 1,254,378.

between 1905 and 1910, Frank moved his family to Osage, Kansas, where Amanda grew up. He began working as a farmer and employer⁹⁴. Amanda's father was recorded living with them and their children in 1910. Unfortunately, Angela has yet to find further record of Frank and Amanda after 1910. This is likely due to the fact that the name "McWhirt" was so often misspelled. Frank died in 1913 and is buried at Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Dennis, Kansas⁹⁵.

Mary Isabelle Altman (1870-1936) was born November 19, 1870 to farmer **Isaac Norman Altman (1844-1881)** and **Sarah Bailey (1847-1934)**. She was born in Hamilton, Missouri, and went by the nickname "Matee". On October 1, 1890, she married **Henry Robert Kinsch (1868-1931)** in Oswego, Kansas⁹⁶. They would have eight children together, including Angela's great-grandmother, Mary Montreal Kinsch. In 1900, Matee and Henry were living in the Cherryvale, Kansas, area in Cherry Township with their children. Matee had given birth to four children in the first ten years of her marriage⁹⁷. By 1910, Matee had given birth to four more children and she and Henry were living at 512 Independence Avenue in Cherryvale⁹⁸. Angela was unable to find any record of Matee in 1920.

⁹⁴ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2CN-RQJ> : accessed 7 April 2018), Frank Mcwhirt, Osage, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 141, sheet 17A, family 283, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 443; FHL microfilm 1,374,456.

⁹⁵ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 07 April 2018), memorial page for Frank McWhirt (Dec 1863–30 Nov 1913), Find A Grave Memorial no. 76006700, citing Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Dennis, Labette County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Forever Searching † (contributor 47578585) .

⁹⁶ "Kansas Marriages, 1840-1935," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FW22-M5Y> : 10 February 2018), H. R. Kintch and Mary B. Altman, 01 Oct 1890; citing Oswego, Labette Co., Kansas, reference F1433395 Pg16; FHL microfilm 1,433,395.

⁹⁷ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MMY4-31B> : accessed 8 April 2018), Mary E Kinsch in household of Henry ? Kinsch, Cherry Township (excl. Cherryvale city), Montgomery, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 130, sheet 9A, family 165, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,491.

⁹⁸ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2CY-6JW> : accessed 8 April 2018), Mary Kinsch in household of Henry R Kinsch, Cherryvale Ward 4, Montgomery, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED

In 1930, Matee and Henry were living in Walton Township, Kansas, where they owned a home worth \$500. All of their children had left home by then and Matee was working outside the home. She listed "hauling" as her occupation on the 1930 census⁹⁹. They must have had a truck they used to haul things for money. In 1936, Matee became a widow in when Henry passed away. She died five years later in 1936 at the age of 66. She is buried at West Bethany Cemetery in Neosho County, Kansas.

Henry Robert Kinsch (1868-1931) was born in 1868 in either Wisconsin or Kansas to **John Kinsch (unk-unk)**. The only record Angela was able to find that gave any clues to Henry's parentage was his marriage license. Henry lists "John Kintch" as his father¹⁰⁰. Angela has not yet discovered with certainty who his mother was, though she has a promising lead. After extensive searching on familysearch.org, she still hasn't been able to locate any census records that include Henry when he was a child. The earliest record of him that Angela was able to find is his marriage license in 1890. He married Mary "Matee" Isabelle Altman on October 1, 1890 and they had eight children together. Between 1900 and 1910 they were living in Cherryvale, Kansas, with their children. Henry worked as a day laborer/zinc smelter¹⁰¹. By 1930, he and Matee were living in

160, sheet 20A, family 77, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 448; FHL microfilm 1,374,461.

⁹⁹ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7Q8-YK9> : accessed 8 April 2018), Henry R Kinsch, Walton, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 33, sheet 6A, line 19, family 124, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

¹⁰⁰ "Kansas Marriages, 1840-1935," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FWLS-1GN> : 10 February 2018), H.R. Kintch and Mary B. Altman, 01 Oct 1890; citing Oswego, Labette, Kansas, reference p 16; FHL microfilm 1,433,395.

¹⁰¹ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2CY-6J7> : accessed 8 April 2018), Henry R Kinsch, Cherryvale Ward 4, Montgomery, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 160, sheet 20A, family 77, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 448; FHL microfilm 1,374,461.

Walton, Kansas. They were at the end of their lives and both were working odd jobs and hauling¹⁰².

Henry died on December 29, 1931 in Parsons, Kansas. He is buried in West Bethany Cemetery in Neosho County, Kansas, next to Matee¹⁰³.

Bertha Liniger (1869-1967) was born in Illinois on February 26, 1869 to farmer **Adam Liniger (1826-unk)** and **Mary Ana Liniger (1827-1899)**. Her parents were both born in Switzerland and immigrated to the United States in 1859 after they were married¹⁰⁴. Adam and Bertha settled in Orange Township, Illinois, when they got to America. In 1870, Bertha was living in Orange Township with her parents and four older siblings¹⁰⁵. Orange Township is a very small town in Knox County, Illinois next to Horseshoe Lake and is located in the western part of the state. It has an area of 36 square miles and as of the 2010 census, the population was about 550¹⁰⁶. By 1880, Bertha's mother and father had relocated their family to Liberty, Kansas¹⁰⁷.

Bertha married Hamlen Bently Myers in 1886. Angela was unable to find marriage records for Bertha. However, on a 1900 census where she was living in Elm Grove, Kansas, with her husband

¹⁰² "United States Census, 1930," FamilySearch.

¹⁰³ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 08 April 2018), memorial page for Henry Robert Kinsch (12 Jun 1870–29 Dec 1931), Find A Grave Memorial no. 14431944, citing West Bethany Cemetery, Neosho County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Mary (contributor 46536583) .

¹⁰⁴ "New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1891," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/27TS-B82> : 12 March 2018), A Marie Liniger, 1859; citing NARA microfilm publication M237 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm .

¹⁰⁵ "United States Census, 1870," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M64Y-SWX> : 12 April 2016), Betty Linegar in household of Adam Linegar, Illinois, United States; citing p. 5, family 26, NARA microfilm publication M593 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 545,740.

¹⁰⁶ Wikipedia contributors, "Orange Township, Illinois," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_Township,_Knox_County,_Illinois (accessed April 7, 2018).

¹⁰⁷ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MF5Q-9SS> : 7 September 2017), Bertha Lenegar in household of Adam Lenegar, Liberty, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district ED 111, sheet 324D, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0385; FHL microfilm 1,254,385.

and children, she listed that she had been married for 14 years¹⁰⁸. Before they moved to Elm Grove, they were living in Richland Township, which is about 13 miles East of Elm Grove¹⁰⁹. Angela knows that Bertha gave birth to Angela's great-grandfather Clarence William Myers in Arkansas City, Kansas in October 1889. In 1910, they were in Liberty, Kansas¹¹⁰.

The next available record Angela could find on Bertha was a 1940 census. Bertha was living in Parsons. She was 71 and widowed; Hamlen had died five years earlier. She was renting a house at 2221 Stevens and working from home as a seamstress¹¹¹. Bertha died March 15, 1967 at the age of 98¹¹². She is buried in Spring Hill Cemetery in Parsons, Kansas, next to her husband.

Hamlen Bently Myers (1861-1935) was born January 12, 1861 in Pennsylvania. Angela was unable to find the names of Hamlen's parents, though she did note that they were both born in Pennsylvania, according to information Hamlen gave on the 1900 census¹¹³. Angela was unable to find any record of Hamlen when he was a child. No doubt the records are out there, but Angela hasn't hit the right spelling variation yet. He had a very unusual first name and it is spelled

¹⁰⁸ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MMTT-FNH> : accessed 8 April 2018), Bertha Myers in household of Hamline B Myers, Elm Grove Township Edna city, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 108, sheet 6B, family 134, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,485.

¹⁰⁹ "Kansas State Census, 1895", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QL8J-DBSZ> : 12 November 2017), Ben Myers, 1895.

¹¹⁰ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M2CJ-8SS> : accessed 8 April 2018), Ben Myers, Liberty, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 134, sheet 7A, family 134, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 444; FHL microfilm 1,374,457.

¹¹¹ "United States Census, 1940," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/VRKX-CJ4> : accessed 8 April 2018), Bertha Myers, Ward 4, Parsons, Parsons City, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 50-30, sheet 19B, line 54, family 437, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, NARA digital publication T627. Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007, RG 29. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2012, roll 1239.

¹¹² "United States Social Security Death Index," database, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JT3V-XJ7> : 19 May 2014), Bertha Myers, 15 Mar 1967; citing U.S. Social Security Administration, Death Master File, database (Alexandria, Virginia: National Technical Information Service, ongoing).

¹¹³ "United States Census, 1900," FamilySearch.

differently every time she has seen it written. Sometimes, he went by “Ben”, short for his middle name, Bently. The earliest record of Hamlen that Angela found was an 1895 Kansas State Census¹¹⁴ living in Richland Township. Listed with him is his wife, Bertha, whom he married in 1886, and their children. Hamlen and Bertha had at least six children together. From what Angela could tell from the few records she was able to find, Hamlen worked as a farmer from the 1890s to the 1900s. One interesting thing that Angela found was that Hamlen appears on a 1930 census alone, renting a house in Walton, Kansas, and working as a teamster¹¹⁵. It suggests that he and Bertha were separated at the time this census was taken. Hamlen died September 16, 1935¹¹⁶. He is buried in Spring Hill Cemetery in Parsons, Kansas, next to Bertha.

Othilla “Tillie” Post (1882-1928) was born in September 1882 in Minnesota to **Nicholas Post (1857-1934)** and **Emma Kanzlar (1861-1954)**. Her father was a blacksmith and her mother was a German immigrant, who came to the United States in 1873 with her family. In 1900, Tillie was living with her parents and siblings in Litchfield, Minnesota¹¹⁷. That same year, she married a farmer named **Nicholas L. Peifer (1870-1955)** in Litchfield. He was twelve years older than she was. Together they had four children, including Angela’s paternal great-grandmother, Drucilla.

¹¹⁴ "Kansas State Census, 1895", database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QL8J-DBSZ> : 12 November 2017), Ben Myers, 1895.

¹¹⁵ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X7Q8-PNJ> : accessed 9 April 2018), Ben Myres, Walton, Labette, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 33, sheet 1A, line 41, family 10, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 707; FHL microfilm 2,340,442.

¹¹⁶ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 08 April 2018), memorial page for H. Bently Myers (12 Jan 1861–16 Sep 1935), Find A Grave Memorial no. 160513123, citing Spring Hill Cemetery, Parsons, Labette County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Mary Russell (contributor 48310397) .

¹¹⁷ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M93M-DC8> : accessed 9 April 2018), Tillie Post in household of Nicholas Post, Litchfield Township Litchfield village Ward 1-3, Meeker, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 115, sheet 9A, family 175, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,775.

Tillie lived in Litchfield until her untimely death on February 16, 1927¹¹⁸. Angela has not been able to discover Tillie's cause of death. She is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Litchfield, Minnesota¹¹⁹.

Nicholas L. Peifer (1870-1955) was born in Minnesota on December 25, 1870. His parents were **John Peifer (1830-1925)** and **Mary Stiren (1835-1898)**. Both of his parents were German immigrant farmers. His father was from Luxembourg and his mother was from Prussia¹²⁰. Angela hasn't been able to discover for certain what Nicholas's father did for a living, but it is highly likely that he was a farmer. Nicholas was raised in Darwin, Minnesota with his parents and siblings¹²¹. When he was grown, he moved to Litchfield, Minnesota and bought some farmland. He lived and farmed in Litchfield for the rest of his life. He married Tillie Post in 1900 and had four children with her¹²². He became a widower in 1927 when Tillie died. Nicholas died on September 8, 1955. He is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Litchfield¹²³.

Harriet "Hattie" Ann Holt (1866-1933) was born in England in 1866 to **John Holt (1817-unk)** and **Francis Hutchinson (1836-unk)**. Hattie immigrated to the United States when she was

¹¹⁸ "Minnesota Deaths and Burials, 1835-1990," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FDQV-1HV> : 10 March 2018), Tillie Peifer, 16 Feb 1927; citing Litchfield, Meeker, Minnesota, reference 7860; FHL microfilm 2,223,131.

¹¹⁹ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 9 April 2018), memorial page for Tillie Piefer (1882–1927), Find A Grave Memorial no. 57460702, citing Calvary Cemetery, Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota, USA ; Maintained by T Burt (contributor 47009168) .

¹²⁰ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MZ9X-GGL> : 12 August 2017), Nicholas Peifer in household of John Peifer, Darwin, Meeker, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district ED 56, sheet 295A, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0626; FHL microfilm 1,254,626.

¹²¹ "United States Census, 1880," FamilySearch.

¹²² "United States Census, 1920," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MWB8-M8M> : accessed 9 April 2018), Nicholes S Peifer, Darwin, Meeker, Minnesota, United States; citing ED 117, sheet 6B, line 98, family 82, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 845; FHL microfilm 1,820,845.

¹²³ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 9 April 2018), memorial page for Nickolas Piefer (1870–1955), Find A Grave Memorial no. 57460697, citing Calvary Cemetery, Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota, USA ; Maintained by T Burt (contributor 47009168) .

less than a year old and was raised in Richland Township, Iowa, by her maternal grandmother, **Harriet Hutchinson (1815-unk)** and her step-grandfather **Simon Gardner (1817-unk)**. Angela has not been able to find any record of Hattie's parents in the United States. Hattie did have an older brother, **Robert Holt (1858-unk)** who immigrated with her and who was also raised by Harriet and Simon. Angela is unsure whether Hattie's parents died in England and Hattie and Robert were sent to America to live with their grandparents or if John and Francis brought their children to America and perished during the journey or shortly after. There is an eight-year age gap between Robert and Hattie, so it's possible that their parents had other children. Angela intends to keep digging until she solves the mystery of what happened to Hattie's parents.

The earliest record Angela could find on Hattie was an 1870 United States Census¹²⁴. She and her older brother, Robert, were living in the house of Simon Gardner in Richland Township, Iowa. He was an English immigrant and a farmer. Their grandmother, Harriet, married him in 1857 in Iowa¹²⁵. She, herself, immigrated to the United States from England before 1857.

On January 20, 1892, Hattie married **William Daly Fraker (1862-1930)** in Iowa when she was twenty-seven. William was a farmer. When they were first wed, they lived with William's parents, George and Rachel Fraker. What's interesting is that Hattie was able to read, but she didn't know how to write¹²⁶. Together, they had six sons, including Angela's paternal great-grandfather, Searel.

¹²⁴ "United States Census, 1870," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MDVC-4QJ> : 12 April 2016), Simon Gardener, Iowa, United States; citing p. 19, family 155, NARA microfilm publication M593 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 545,897.

¹²⁵ "Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934," database, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XJKP-F4R> : 10 February 2018), Simon Gardner and Harriet Hutchinson, 10 Jun 1857, Jasper County, Iowa, USA; citing reference pg 32, county courthouses, Iowa; FHL microfilm 1,034,509

¹²⁶ "Iowa State Census, 1895," database with images, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VT36-ZQJ> : 12 March 2018), Harriett Fraker in household of George W Fraker, Jasper, Iowa, United States; citing p. 238, 1895, State Historical Society, Des Moines; FHL microfilm 1,020,366.

Hattie gave birth to all her sons in Iowa¹²⁷. Between 1905 and 1910, Hattie and William moved their family to Minnesota¹²⁸. They ended up in Darwin, Minnesota, in 1930, living next door to their son, Leland and his family¹²⁹. Hattie died on April 12, 1933 at the age of 67¹³⁰. Angela has been unable to find a grave site for Hattie.

William Daly Fraker (1862-1930) was born in Tennessee in 1862 to **George W. Fraker (1825-1901)** and **Rachel Milburn (1823-1898)**. Angela found an 1880 census that listed William living in his father's house in Greene, Tennessee, when he was 17 years old. He was working as a farmhand on his father's farm. He had three brothers living at home as well and working the farm¹³¹. At some point, William's whole family moved to Palo Alto, Iowa. In an 1895 Iowa State Census, William is recorded living with his parents along with his wife and two children. The census tells us that William, George, and Hattie could read but not write. William's mother, Rachel, could neither read nor write¹³².

¹²⁷ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M929-QTP> : accessed 9 April 2018), William Fraker, Palo Alto Township, Jasper, Iowa, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 32, sheet 1B, family 19, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,439.

¹²⁸ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/M2LY-M6S> : accessed 9 April 2018), William D Fraker, Verona, Faribault, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 87, sheet 5B, family 96, NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1982), roll 696; FHL microfilm 1,374,709.

¹²⁹ "United States Census, 1930," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X38Z-GKK> : accessed 9 April 2018), William D Fraker, Darwin, Meeker, Minnesota, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) ED 7, sheet 5A, line 19, family 82, NARA microfilm publication T626 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002), roll 1106; FHL microfilm 2,340,841.

¹³⁰ "Minnesota Deaths and Burials, 1835-1990," database, FamilySearch(<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FD8L-NQG> : 10 March 2018), Hattie Ann Fraker, 12 Apr 1933; citing Meeker County, Minnesota, United States, reference 8049; FHL microfilm 2,242,332.

¹³¹ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MD7C-F11> : 15 July 2017), William Fraker in household of George Fraker, District 14, Greene, Tennessee, United States; citing enumeration district ED 54, sheet 197B, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 1258; FHL microfilm 1,255,258.

¹³² "Iowa State Census, 1895," FamilySearch.

William wed Harriet "Hattie" Ann Holt on January 20, 1892 in Jasper County, Iowa¹³³. It was his first marriage and he was thirty years old. William worked as a farmer. He and Hattie had six sons together in Iowa before they moved to Minnesota and bought a farm there. William lived the rest of his life as a farmer in Darwin, Minnesota. He died on December 31, 1930 in Litchfield, Minnesota¹³⁴. He was 68 years old. Angela has been unable to locate a grave site for William.

¹³³ "Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/XJK8-JJT> : 26 September 2017), William D. Fraker and Hattie A. Holt, 20 Jan 1892, Jasper, Iowa, United States; citing reference p 171, county courthouses, Iowa; FHL microfilm 1,034,510.

¹³⁴ "Minnesota Deaths and Burials, 1835-1990," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FDQB-HYH> : 10 March 2018), William Daley Fraker, 31 Dec 1930; citing Litchfield, Mcleod, Minnesota, reference 8307; FHL microfilm 2,242,290.