

The Royce Quarterly

A Publication of the Royce Family Association

Winter 2026 Volume 39 Number 1

Royce Family Association Website @ roycefamilyassociation.org.

Royce Family Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/1127883208081516)



Co-Editor's Note: The Winter 2026 newsletter includes articles about Oliver Rice, the founder of Riceville NY, the Royce Tavern of Lyme CT, and father and son Hollywood actors named Lionel and John Royce. The pinnacle is the deeply researched article about two men named Moses Royce/Royse of the Highlands of NY! It has got kidnapping, DNA and rebuttals to "facts" in over 2,000 trees on Ancestry.

Attention RFA Members

2026 Dues are due

Our 2026 dues (only $15) for the Royce Family Association are due. You can pay online at our website by clicking on become a member. If you paid or joined after October 1, 2025, then you are paid up for 2026. If you are uncertain whether you have paid, please feel free to email me at k8renmayo "at" gmail.com.

You can also go to our website to check your dues status by logging in, clicking on your name in the upper right corner and selecting "My Subscriptions" from the drop down menu. If you then click on the green button that says "Active" it should tell you the date that you last paid. (Although in my case it was incorrect?? Maybe I had more than one log in?)

Welcome New Members

Glad you are part of the RFA family! We invite you to write an article about your lineage, an interesting ancestor or how you became interested in genealogy. Email to: amcgreevy16@gmail.com

Judith Bute	Branford CT
Shelby Boor Lopez	Plano TX
Kerri Kaczynski	Vail AZ
John Pierce	Ionia MI
Regina Shank	Carthage MO
Jack Sheldon	Mesa AZ

Do you have a Royce/Rice family story to share? Did you go on a genealogical road trip over the summer or fall or are you planning a genealogical discovery trip this spring? Or have you discovered something from your research on a genealogical website? The RFA Quarterly would love to hear from you! Please submit your article or any questions to Anne McGreevy (amcgreevy16@gmail.com).

The Royce Family Association—New Features on the Website

Our association has over 80 members in 30 states, two Canadian provinces and one in Sweden. For privacy reasons, we do not share members' names, emails or addresses, but some of you might want to connect with other members. For example, how many of the membership descend from Robert and Mary's son Jonathan who moved to Norwich CT in about 1660? Do you have lineage questions that other members might answer? Our website's "Groups" in the members only section could be a way to share information with other members. To access it, go to roycefamilyassociation.org and click on My Account in the upper right corner, then click on My Groups. One group is for general discussion and the other concerns the "Royce Family in America" book. The book group could be a good place to post your lineage if you want to find others with a close line.

The Groups are searchable.

Here is where we live:

Arizona 2 members California 11 Colorado 4 Connecticut 4 Delaware 1 Florida 5 Georgia 1 Idaho 1 Illinois 1 Indiana 2 Kansas 2 Louisiana 1	Maryland 2 Massachusetts 2 Michigan 2 Minnesota 1 Missouri 1 Montana 3 New Hampshire 1 New Jersey 2 New Mexico 2 New York 6 North Carolina 1 Ohio 2	Oklahoma 1 Oregon 2 Rhode Island 1 Tennessee 3 Texas 4 Virginia 1 Washington 5 Alberta Canada 1 British Columbia Canada 1 Sweden 1

Royce Tavern in Lyme Connecticut

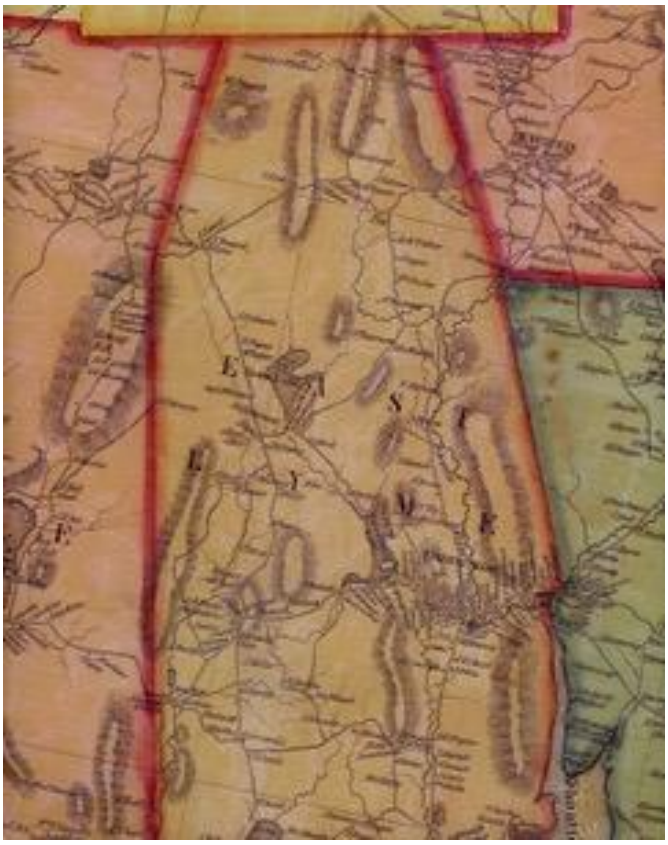
by Kate Renner



The Caulkins Tavern in Flanders near Lyme

Robert Royce, our ancestor, kept a tavern as was documented in New London town records. Were there other Royce descendants who were tavern keepers? After the Hartford television station aired a segment on the Nehemiah Royce house on September 9, 2025, I was contacted by a local history buff who told me about the Royce Tavern in Old Lyme Connecticut. He shared a 1935 article by Margaret Stacy from "The Day" a New London newspaper, that stated in a northwest corner of East Lyme, "up the rocky road to the westward, a short cut to Grassy Hill was the Royce Tavern. The deserted house place is lovely in spring in the midst of blossoming apple trees." The Royce Tavern had a chimney fire and burned down, possibly in the mid-19th century. It was located on a main thoroughfare between North Lyme, Niantic and Old Lyme and was in operation from 1808 or so. From the 1935 article: "Tradition says that the tavern was kept by David Royce, called King David for some unknown reason. The first Royce in Lyme was Nehemiah, probably of New London, a descendant of one of the early settlers of the town and great grandson of Robert. The name quite often was written Rice. Nehemiah married Abigail Gustin of Lyme (now Salem) March 14, 1739. All the Royce family seem to be buried in the Colt cemetery on Beaver Brook road, Lyme. There are no inscribed stones to Nehemiah and Abigail but there are many ancient field stone markers in the Royce plots so that they probably rest there." (Actually they died in New Hampshire). David # 584, Ruel # 236, Nehemiah # 88, Jonathan # 28, Jonathan # 7, Robert #1

David Royce was born in 1773 and died in Lyme in 1862. In the 1850 and 1860 census records, he was a farmer, not a tavern keeper. I can find no record of his being a tavern keeper other than what the local historian found. His wife Azubah has a unique headstone in the Coult Cemetery. It is white marble with the typical weeping willow tree and engraved with "died Oct. 31, 1828, Aet. 52." Below that are two small fishes facing each other, carved with eyes, mouths, fins and tails. Her stone has a photo on Findagrave.



Available on Familysearch, "East Lyme Hornbook: The A, B, C's of East Lyme History" by Olive Tubbs Chindali and Mary Ellen Wargo, printed for the East Lyme Sesquicentennial in 1989 provided this background: "Farmers from North Lyme drove cattle through what is now East Lyme to the New London markets. They often stopped at the Royce Tavern run by "King David" Royce. The tavern stood near Stewarts Corner and had a walled pound nearby for the overnight stay of livestock." And elsewhere in their pamphlet: "Royce Tavern — Stood on Grassy Hill (a high grassy plateau at the cross roads with North Lyme) near Stewart's Corner, owned by David Royce in 1772, who was called 'King David'." page/image 65 of 85 (David Royce was born in 1773.)

1854 East Lyme map. D. Royce and R. Royce lived near an intersection in the upper left corner.

The local historian added that a house at 365 Boston Post Road in East Lyme was built circa 1770 by the Beckwith family. It was used as a tavern at some point and run by the Royce family. The Royce family ran two taverns in the area back then, the Post Road house and one in the far northern part of Lyme, now East Lyme. One of the original Royce Tavern signs is at the State Historical Society. (Author could find no record of that.) This area was relatively well populated in the 18th century as there were the church (Scott´s farmstand site) and several homesteads including one for John Nonesuch and family, the Elder Lee (house across from the farmstand), a poor house farther down road toward the Old Lyme border and some others. From here there were homes of 18th century origins also along Route 1 to and through Flanders to Waterford. Some homes remain closer to the Waterford line at the site of the old Beckwith Shipyard at the head of the Niantic River. It was written back in the late 1700s.."from the top of the hill one could see the chimneys of a few houses in the valley"... it is thought that that was looking down toward Flanders and the Head of the River area.

Lyme is now East Lyme which consists of two villages, Flanders and Niantic. If you look at the 1854 map of the area, the center section is East Lyme. To the left of the capital E for East, near the red vertical line on the left, is Grassy Hill. The Royce Tavern was located to the north and east of Grassy Hill. On the map at the crossroads you might see the names D. Royce and R. Royce near L. Stewart and F. Howard.

The town of Flanders, originally the center of East Lyme, was named for its woolen mills, a nod to Flanders, Belgium. Flanders had several taverns which offered stopping places for travelers such as Sarah Kemble Knight (1666-1727), a business woman who kept a diary of

her journey from Boston to New York City in 1704. These included Caulkins or Calkins Tavern on what is now Boston Post Road, Royce's Tavern, and Taber Tavern near present-day I-95, run by Samuel Taber who died in 1813. The old Caulkins Tavern stood at the site of the current CVS and was a well-traveled stopping place in the 18th century. The tavern was said to have been built in 1660 at the four corners in Flanders and served as an inn for over two hundred years. It was also a gathering place for the local Sons of Liberty. In the History of New London County, Connecticut, by Duane Hamilton Hurd, published in 1882, Dr. Daniel Caulkins reminisced about the time George Washington and Marquis de Lafayette, Along with a contingent of troops, stopped by the tavern for lunch. The tavern was purchased by the Caulkins family in 1778.



Taber Tavern in Lyme

It Might Be in the Royce Genes

In searching for more information about the Royce Tavern in Lyme, there were several citations about other Royce Taverns, generally making the newspapers because of fighting and brawls.

~Royce's Tavern in North Bergen New Jersey on Bergenline Ave in 1981.
~Royce's Tavern in Cleveland in the 1940s had a Beerador, a 7 foot tall refrigerator shaped like a beer bottle. It had a lazy susan inside which displayed beers on rotating shelves. The bar was bought in 2002 and named the Thermadore because the owner could not see the word Beerador on the refrigerator as it was covered in stickers and decals. Now closed.
~Rolls Royce Tavern in Des Moines, Iowa in 1984. Mentioned in a newspaper for a bar fight.
~ Royce's Tavern in Paterson New Jersey was owned by Roger Royce in 1964.
~Rolls Royce Tavern in Edmonton Alberta Canada in 1979.
~Byron Royce applied for a tavern license in 1979 in Orland California.
~Joe Royce ran the Green Tavern in Glasgow Kentucky in 1940.
~Royse's Tavern in Portland Oregon saw a scuffle and attempted robbery in 1963.



Beers map of 1868 Lyme

~John A. Royse was a Tavern Protective Association attorney
in Indiana in 1935.
~Many references can be found for establishments named Rice or Rice's Tavern in the U.S.

And for your amusement, here is what Google AI said about the fate of the Royce Tavern in Lyme: "Royce Tavern in East Lyme, Connecticut, closed its doors in April 2023. The popular local establishment, located in the Niantic village, served its final meals on April 9, 2023, due to the owner's retirement." If that is true, David Royce had a long run.

Another Royce Branch

by Kate Renner

While researching various men named John Royce, I came upon a 1949 article in an aviation industry newsletter about a John Royce who was a WW II veteran and an actor. While his life was very interesting, his parents had an even more dramatic history.

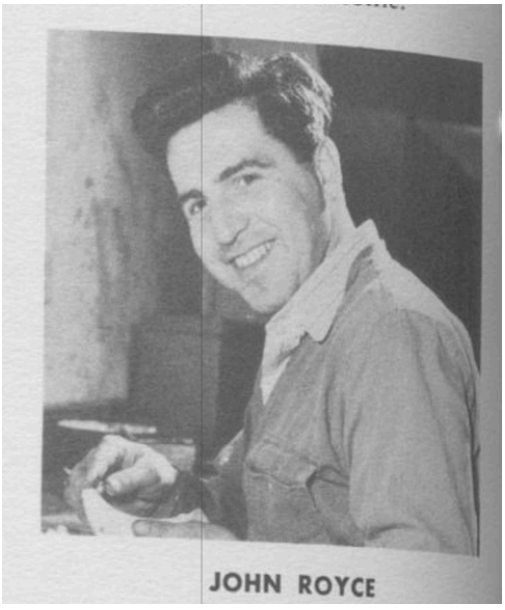
Link to AIReporter article:
https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/catalog/koha:4517976

John Royce, Actor, Vet, Foundry Worker
From the AiReporter on LDS books, Vol. 3 #3, April 1949

AiReporter published by the PR department for the employees of the AiResearch Manufacturing Company, LA a division of the Garrett Corporation

As told to Frank May
"John Royce, war veteran, linguist, movie actor and foundry worker, has completed six months in Frank Warga's Precision Casting Department, and figures on sticking around. The war is over, he has found no practical use for his knowledge of languages and the movies work, although interesting, is uncertain. On the other hand, Frank Warga's group expect to stay in steady production for a long while to come.

Because of John's ability to speak French and German fluently, he was placed in an Army Intelligence Group as soon as he joined the Army in 1943. After extensive training he was assigned to Combat Intelligence in Northern France. Shortly afterwards he ended up in General McAuliffe's command in Bastogne. Surrounded and cut off by German troops, it was General McAuliffe who issued the most terse reply to



John Royce

Another Royce Branch by Kate Renner (continued)

an enemy ultimatum that received publication during the war—-"Nuts."

After 12 days, the Fourth Armored Division, with the help of the Air Forces, blasted open the vital supply lines from the south. John didn't know it at the time, but Frank Warga, his foreman, was in Patton's Army which relieved the garrison.

John has nothing but praise for the Air Forces. At one time he captured a German who supplied him with a map of German artillery in position. After he informed the Air Forces, it took them less than an hour to destroy the positions.

John's interest in the motion picture industry dates back to childhood. His father, Lionel, Royce, had been in movies for many years, and had played in such recent pictures as Confessions of a Nazi Spy, My Favorite Blonde, Four Sons, and Gilda, before he died in 1946.

Because of natural talent and inclination, John began to work in pictures when he got out of the service. He had roles in Rogues' Regiment, Fighter Squadron, Sahara, Northern Pursuit, Claudia and Five Graves to Cairo, in addition to several which haven't been released as yet. In his spare time at the moment he is playing the part of a German soldier in American uniform in a production titled Battleground, which is based upon the Battle of the Bulge.

It is a hard decision to make. Neither job leaves much room for the other. There is always the possibility of wealth in the movie industry—always the possibility of stardom. Also there is the even greater possibility of wasted effort, and long periods of inactivity and frustration. In comparison, the future of AiResearch* (note AiResearch Corporation was founded in 1937 as Aircraft Tool and Supply Company and had nothing to do with artificial intelligence) *looks sound, safe, and secure but probably without the peaks of success possible in the motion picture industry.

It is a hard decision to make, but John gave himself six months to work it out, and he has decided to stay with AiResearch for a good, steady future."

John Henry Royce was born on 30 July 1920 in Vienna Austria, and died 4 April 1997 in Ventura California. His obituary was printed in the Ventura County Star on 9 April 1997 with a photo and captioned "son of famous Shakespearean actor Lionel Royce" who was born Leo Reiss. John's mother was Stephanie Adeline Magdziarz. John won a Golden Gloves boxing championship while in high school. The terrorism in the streets during the Anschluss and the takeover of Austria by the Nazis prompted his parents to send their children, John/Hans and Margaret/Margarete, to the United States on one of the last ships to leave Nazi Europe, the infamous St. Louis in 1938. While appearing in 14 movie roles (all uncredited per IMDB) John met his wife Mary Lou Worsham in Los Angeles and they married on 30 December 1944, shortly after he joined the U.S. Army. He served over

Another Royce Branch by Kate Renner (continued)

two years in Army Intelligence and saw combat in many areas. He obtained a college degree through the G.I. Bill at USC. After graduation, he had a 31-year teaching career primarily in Ventura County but also six years with the Department of Defense school in Munich Germany. He taught special needs children, adult literacy and square dancing. John was survived by wife, daughters Linden and Lauren Royce, grandchildren Melinda and Jonathan Woywod and great granddaughter Brianna Miana. His wife Mary Lou died in 1999.

John's sister Margarete (Reiss) Lodato 1917-1995 was made a naturalized citizen in 1944 at which time she worked as an apprentice film editor. She married and had one son, Peter Lodato 1946-2025. Peter was an influential artist in the West Coast Light and Space movement and was represented by the William Turner gallery in Malibu. Lodato was described as having "quiet brilliance and unwavering commitment to his craft that left a lasting impact on those who knew him."

John's father Lionel Royce was born Jewish as Leo Johann Reiss on 30 March 1891 in Dolina, Galicia, Austria-Hungary. Dolina was a vibrant Jewish center (a shtetl), with a large Jewish population before the Holocaust, as highlighted by genealogical sites like JewishGen. He acted in German movies until anti-semitism drove him to leave Europe. He worked with the Max Reinhardt Theater in NY and went to Hollywood in 1937. When he died of heart disease in the Subic Bay Naval Hospital in Manila, he was touring with a USO show "Rosalinda" with his wife. He became Vienna's reigning male star in 1934, but rising anti-semitism restricted his ability to pursue his profession. He had acted for years but received only small roles. He disappeared for a while and when he returned to Vienna, he had dyed his hair and beard blonde and pretended to be a Tyrolese peasant named Kaspar Brandhofer, leading to what was called one of the greatest theatrical hoaxes of the European stage. When he admitted his ruse, he became blacklisted in Austria, after which he emigrated to the United States in 1937.



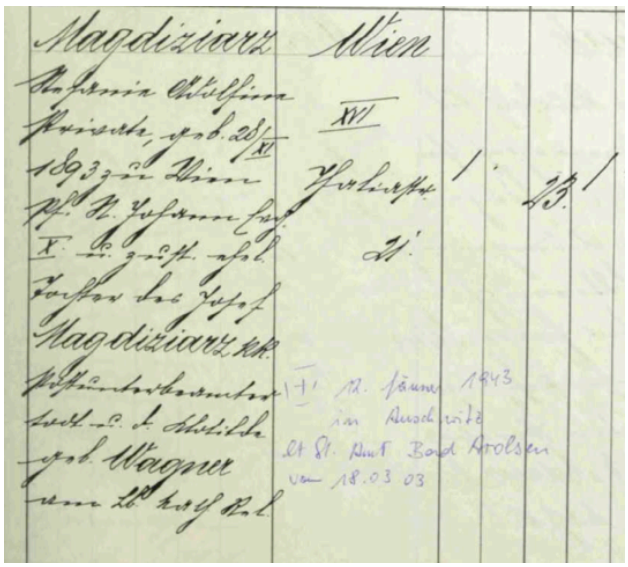
Lionel Royce/Reiss

Seeking out Max Reinhardt, Leo told the producer he had never been in a theater but wanted to act. He got an audition and played the mad scene from Macbeth. The producer was impressed and proclaimed him the find of the century, and his success on the stage led Louis B. Mayer to sign him. He frequently played Nazi villains. (Sources: The Oregonian, printed 4 April 1946, and the Hamilton Spectator on 3 April 1946 from AP wire services.)

Another Royce Branch by Kate Renner (continued)

He had an active film career in the United States, appearing in almost 40 films between 1938 and 1946, including "Marie Antoinette" with Norma Shearer and Tyrone Power, and in "Gilda" with Rita Hayworth (uncredited.) He was often cast as a Nazi, once even as a concentration camp commandant. (IMDB). As Leo Reiss, he appeared in several German films. In contrast to information in his obituaries, in a 1923 passenger list from Hamburg to Southampton, Lionel Reiss was age 29, claiming to be a US citizen, occupation Schauspieler (actor) but in his naturalization papers, he stated he came to the U.S. in 1937. Those papers also stated that he had an arrest record in Austria for using an assumed name but he explained that it was necessary for his employment.

Marriage Record for Stefanie Magdiziarz Daughter of Josef Magdiziarx and Klotilde Wagner to Leo Reiss, with notation that she died in Auschwitz in 1943.



Lionel had four wives, including Agnes Josephine Straub, a German silent film actress who died in 1941. Lionel's first wife was Stefanie Magdziarz (but named as Wagner on son John's California death certificate. Wagner was Stefanie's mother's maiden name.) Stefanie was born 28 November 1893 in Vienna and she died 12 January 1943 in the Auschwitz concentration camp. Her crime was to provide assistance to Jewish refugees fleeing Vienna. Here is a translation of her Gestapo arrest document:

On 24 Apr 1942 of German blood Stefanie Reiss nee Magdziars, born 28 Nov 1893 in Vienna living at Vienna 18, Krouzgasse 87, arrested with a Jew Max Israel Heinsheimer … Before taken into custody according to her statement she gave 5 Reichsmark to someone she did not know. The amount was not recovered. During the house search a large suitcase containing laundry and jewelry was discovered. Found items worth 30 RM (Reichmarks) belonging to Ludwig Israel Morway, a professor of chemical engineering who was already evacuated. Stefanie is the owner of a tobacco shop in Vienna. After the investigation is completed, a request will be made to place them in protective custody. The withdrawal of traffic rights has begun. On 27 Apr 1942 at 5 pm the transport of Jews to the East from the train station was processed. The transport contained 999 people.

Stefanie Magdziarz (also spelled Magdiziarz) was baptized Catholic and married to Leo Reiss on 16 March 1916 in a Catholic ceremony in Vienna. He converted to Catholicism before their marriage. Their children were baptized as Catholics and their baptismal

records included Stefanie's birthdate and place, as did her marriage record. Information obtained from the U.S. Holocaust Museum provided concentration camp records, in which a woman named Stefanie Reiss with the same birthdate was listed as divorced, an atheist and had been arrested by the Vienna Gestapo for her work with Jewish refugees. She was the owner of a tobacco shop. The Gestapo report concluded that after an investigation, she was to be taken into protective custody and charged. Three days after her arrest, on 27 April 1942 at 5 pm, the transport of Jews to the East from the Vienna train station was processed. That particular transport contained 999 people, including Stefanie. She survived 263 days after her arrest.

From a German Facebook genealogy group, I was given more information about Stefanie's family. Her mother Klotilde (Wagner) Magdziarz died shortly after her daughter's arrest and was buried in the Vienna Central Cemetery on 29 April 1942. Also buried there, or at least memorialized in a digital cemetery were Stefanie, her father Josef Magdziarz and Klotilde's parents Franziska Wagner and Martin Wagner (Simmeringer Hauptstraße 234, 1110, Group: 63, Row: 33.) The conclusion is that Stefanie's family knew she had perished at Auschwitz and some family, perhaps a sibling, survived to create a memorial. Klotilde had several siblings. In that cemetery, perhaps in all of Austria, if you did not pay for a plot or the time allowed passed, the physical grave and headstones were removed so someone else can be buried there. The expiration for their plot was 25 December 2019. The digital record does not expire. Although Stefanie's date of death was 12 Jan 1943, according to Auschwitz records, the digital memorial that the family created gave her date of burial as 15 April 1943 (information from https://www.friedhoefewien.at/verstorbenensuche-detail?fname=Stefanie+Reiss&id=04%3E776W56R&fdate=1943-04-15&c=046&hist=false&initialId=04%3E776VYOG)

The two men named on Stefanie's arrest report are documented in the Arolsen Archives based in Germany, an online database of over 17.5 million persons who were victims or survivors of Nazi persecution. Max Israel Heinsheimer, born 30 March 1888, was arrested in Vienna on 9 April 1942 and transported to the Izbica ghetto in Poland, which was a transfer point to concentration camps. His arrest report stated that he expressed opinions in a barber shop on the idea of attacking a neutral country, just because England might have done the same. He claimed the Führer wanted the war. There is no further record on this man. Ludwig Israel Morway, born 22 April 1882, a chemical engineer according to the arrest report. He was arrested in Vienna by the Gestapo in 1942 and transported to Riga, Latvia but has no further record. There was a different Ludwig Israel Morwai, born 29 Oct 1889, a Hungarian butcher with four children who was arrested in May 1944, transported to Auschwitz on 18 June 1944, and the final notation for him was 8 October 1944, Auschwitz.

Stefanie's parents had five children baptized in Vienna. The youngest, Roman, was born in 1901 and died in 1935. A sister born in 1895 and a brother in 1898 were baptized but those were the last records for them. Father Josef died in 1906 and mother Klotilde was listed in the Vienna directories in 1915, 1930, 1935 and 1940. Klotilde's occupation was "trafik." A Trafik is a shortened version of Tabaktrafik, a place that sells tobacco, magazines etc. and the person running the Trafik would be known as the Trafikanten/Trafikantinnen (male/female.) I cannot find Austrian death records online.

Another Royce Branch by Kate Renner (continued)

The United States Holocaust museum has Stefanie's death record and many other records online, including Stefanie's arrest report. There are over 17,000 names in the Gestapo report for Vienna alone. Persecution status categories in the records were if a person was Homosexual, Jehovah's Witness, Jew, Political and Ideological targets, Prisoners of War and Religious targets (other.) From Stefanie's report, document #3971943, she was arrested on 24 April 1942, described as German-blooded. As best as I can translate, she was arrested because she gave 5 Reichmarks to a Jewish man named Max Israel Heinsheimer, whom she did not know. Her house was searched and it contained a suitcase with clothing and jewelry worth 30,000 Reichmarks belonging to Ludwig Israel Morway, a professor. It was a crime for a Jewish person to possess assets worth more than 5,000 Reichmarks.

A different Stefanie Reiss (nee Czaczkes) was a Jewish woman who died on the "Lost Train" at Troebitz. Her birthplace in Nazi records was Lemberg which was the German name for Lviv in the Ukraine. Her last residence was in Germany before she emigrated or was transported to the Netherlands. She was listed as a prisoner first at Westerbork, then at Bergen-Belsen in 1944 and deported to Theresenstadt on 10 April 1945. During World War II, Camp Westerbork, Netherlands, was known as "the gateway to Hell." It was a transit camp to other concentration camps like Auschwitz and Sobibor. Days before the liberation of Bergen-Belsen, three trains were sent with 7,500 Jews aboard headed to Terezin/Theresienstadt. The first train was liberated by the Allies at Farsleben. The second train reached Terezin on 21 April, and the third, with 2,500 people aboard, 500 of them children, never reached its destination. After a journey of almost two weeks, the train was stopped near a destroyed bridge on the Elster River. On 23 April, the lost train was discovered and liberated by the Red Army on the outskirts of the German village of Tröbitz. Of the prisoners, 198 were deceased upon arrival. In the weeks after the liberation another 320 people died because of exhaustion and disease. The Red Army ordered that the survivors, almost 2,000 people, be accommodated in the houses of the villagers, about 700 people. The liberated Jews and the local population were more or less forced to live together. Even after the liberation, more than 300 Jews and 26 villagers died as a result of imprisonment or typhus. Almost all survivors had left Trobitz by late August 1945. Next to the church of Tröbitz is a holocaust memorial commemorating this train and its passengers. There is also a mass grave with 160 victims.

That this other Stefanie died on 23 Apr 1945 in Trobitz and was buried in a mass grave implies that she died en route on the train. Of the 2,500 prisoners on the train, about 600 persons died on the trip or soon after arrival from a variety of diseases, including typhus and the effects of malnutrition. The website jewishgen.org lists Stefanie (Czaszkes) Reiss as having perished on the Lost train at Troebitz on 23 April 1945.

Two individuals were named on the "Registration of Liberated Former Persecutees, 1945-1950" a list of Jews living in Berlin on Ancestry: Hans and Margarete Royce-Roozendaal (nee Cohn) in 1945. He was born on 11 March 1906 in Gleiwicz, Slaskie, eastern Poland and she was born in Berlin in 1909. The name Roozendaal is generally of Dutch origin but it may have been a variant of Rosenthal. The Arolsen Archives listed his name as Hans Royce-Roozendahl, born in Gleiwitz, now Gliwice Poland. He was labelled as a Jew living illegally in Berlin and he went into hiding from 1942-1945. After Berlin was liberated, he and his wife applied for assistance in relocating. He wrote that he wanted to join a cousin living in Tampa, Florida but instead he received a job offer from a newspaper

in Frankfurt. Hans Royce appeared in several phone directories as a journalist and chief editor from 1948 through 1979. He edited a book called “Germany at a Glance” written by Gerhard Dehne, a travel writer. He compiled “Germans Against Hitler July 1944” along with Erich Zimmerman. In addition he had editing credits for “Germany’s Underground” published in 1947 by Macmillan and company. By the 1950s, he used the name Hans Royce and was referred to in Earl Wilson’s nationally syndicated column as the editor of the Frankfurt Evening Post.

Oliver Rice, born in Willington CT, founder of Riceville New York

By Kate Matlock Renner

(Additional Information provided by Carol Johnston of the Mayfield Historical Society, caretakers of the Rice Homestead and museum located at 328 Riceville Road.)

Oliver Rice was born in Willington Connecticut on 15 Jul 1767, a son of David Royce 1726-1788 and Lydia Heath. (David, Moses, John, Jonathan, Robert Royce.) Oliver married Alice Parrish in 1792 in Mayfield, Fulton County New York, according to a family bible, and they raised seven children. He had outlived five of them when he died in Riceville on 4 January 1859. Possibly he was a soldier of the American Revolution but the service attributed to him was for men born in Vermont or Massachusetts. An obituary in the New York Daily Herald on 24 Jan 1859 stated that he was employed as an express rider in the Revolution, carrying urgent messages and commissions for General Washington. Findagrave noted that he was the first Master of the Constellation Masonic Lodge #103 F and AM which opened on 7 March 1804.



Oliver Rice Portrait at Mayfield Historical Society

From "Royce - Rice Ancestors and Descendants" a book compiled by Barbara Rice French of Jacksonville, Florida, in 1997: Oliver's father was David (Royce) Rice born 19 January 1729, in Mansfield, CT. Married Lydia ? in 1749. Died 8 March 1788. David’s Revolutionary War Service: He enlisted 6 June 1776 in Captain Theodore Woodbridge's Company of Col. Samuel Elmoro's Regiment. He was from Willington, CT. David and Lydia had eight children. Oliver was the 7th, born on 15 July 1767. The 8th was Ebenezer Rice born 5 August 1770-71. Ebenezer came with Oliver to Montgomery County NY (now Fulton County.)

Oliver Rice, born in Willington CT, founder of Riceville New York

By Kate Matlock Renner (continued)

According to the Rice family, Oliver was not an actual soldier but rather he served as a messenger boy. At the beginning of the war, Oliver was only 8 years old and 16 at the end. Family lore is that during the war Oliver delivered a message to General Washington and General Washington "patted him on the head." The family wrote that Oliver served as a messenger boy from about 1778 to the end of the war.

After the war, Oliver and Ebenezer left Connecticut in 1788. The boys stopped briefly in Palatine Bridge, NY, where (the family thinks) a relative lived. They then moved to the (Riceville) area. Ebenezer settled what was then "Stump City" which is now Gloversville and married the widow Martha Throop. Oliver initially bought 5 acres of land for $2.20 per acre along the Mayfield Creek. He leveled the ground and built a one room cabin 15' x 18'. Once he had land and a house, he married Alice Parrish of Windham, CT Christmas time 1792. Alice was born in 1772 in Windham CT and was 19 when she married. Alice died 3 May 1847 in Riceville. Oliver and Alice had seven children:

Harry Rice - 1793 - 1882
Chauncey Rice - 1796 -
Lory (or Laurie) Rice - 1799 - 1879
Harvey Parrish Rice - 1802 - 1832
George Oliver Rice - 1804 - 1838
Lucius Rice - 1807 - 1861
Orrin Rice - 1811 - 1839



The family who owned The Rice Homestead was from the Lucius Rice line.

Oliver kept adding to his land and eventually had 40 acres of land. In 1794 he set up a fulling mill on the Mayfield Creek. Fulling was a process to purify wool, even it out, and fluff it up so it would be warmer. Fullers also dyed the wool.

Riceville was an area settled about one and a half miles southeast of Mayfield village and it became a bustling pioneer community. Initially Riceville had taverns, stores, a grist-mill, a saw-mill, a distillery, a foundry, a schoolhouse and several homes. It was in this area that Oliver Rice started his fulling mill. The area is still called Riceville although the business places have all disappeared over the years. Riceville was on the main road leading from Mayfield to Gloversville before Route 30 was erected.

His home, the Rice Homestead, was lived in and cared for, until recently, by his descendants. Built in 1810, the Rice Homestead has received a New York State Department of Education official Historical Marker and is on both the National and State Historical Registries. It is now a museum maintained by the Mayfield Historical Society, open in the summer on Wednesdays and Saturdays, or by appointment. It contains historical treasures from the Rice family and the Mayfield area. Once a large working farm, the Rice homestead is a large two-story main house visible from old route 30 and was built circa 1810. Oliver built what is now the rear of the house in 1790 and was originally erected on a site west of the highway. It was moved across the road and added as a rear wing

attachment. The 1810 portion, however, displays many features of the Federal period when it was built with special attention to details of woodwork and trim.

From *History of Montgomery and Fulton counties, N.Y.: with illustrations and portraits of old pioneers and prominent residents* by Beers, F.W., & Co., New York, pub 1878, page 590: "Oliver Rice was the first to build a clothier's mill in this town. It was at Riceville, where he lived, located on the Mayfield creek and built in or about the year 1795. Mr. Rice conducted the business until about 1830 when it was given up by him and the property went to decay. No other mill of the kind has been built in the town." His son Lucius was a judge in the Court of Sessions for the county.

From *History of Fulton County: embracing early discoveries, the advance of civilization, the labors and triumphs of Sir William Johnson, the inception and development of the glove industry; with town and local records, also military achievements of Fulton county patriots* by Frothingham, Washington, b. 1822, D. Mason, Syracuse, N.Y., published 1892, page 408.

In Part II of this book, "Family Sketches" on page 112-114 is the following, a very different history and branch of the Royce/Rice family: "The Rice Family — The records show the family to have been of English descent, and the name was originally Aprice (*Ap Rhys? Rice is often thought to be a Welsh name but likely not our ancestor*).

It is unknown if the information below is what the Rice family actually thought or if the author of the family sketch believed this.

Oliver descends from Robert Royce who came from the Rutland/Lincolnshire area of England and was in CT before 1648 when he was recorded in Stratford CT. "On account of their Calvinistic and anti-Catholic views, they were driven from England to France and changed the name to Price, and finally to Rice. In France they found shelter among the Huguenots. At the close of the sixteenth century they came to America with the Huguenots, under Jean Ribault, and landed at Charlestown, S.C. in 1682. Three brothers of the family came north, one locating in Virginia, one in Connecticut, and one in Massachusetts (This explanation is drawn from the History of Fulton County book and seems far-fetched). Of the latter, Victor M. Rice, of Rochester, late State superintendent of instruction, and ex-Governor Alexander Rice, of Massachusetts, are descendants. Of the Virginia branch we are unable to find any record. Of the Connecticut branch, Oliver Rice was a descendant, born July 15, 1764 (sic.) He took part in the Revolution, and soon after the close of the war came with his brother, Ebenezer, and located in Fulton county, Ebenezer near Kingsboro, and Oliver at the place that bears his name, upon a piece of land granted to him, which has been in uninterrupted possession of the family since that time. In 1794 Mr. Rice built and operated the first and only woolen mill in the town, which continued in operation until 1832. He was instrumental in establishing the Masonic lodge in the town and was for many years its grand master."

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

By Anita Royse Montgomery and Kate Renner

Introduction

Moses of the Highlands (hereafter referred to as **1700 Moses**) is a phrase coined by recent Royse researchers to describe a man who lived in the Highlands region of New York State's Hudson River Valley. This was an area on the west side of the Hudson River west to the Delaware River running from New Jersey north to the Catskill Mountains and included Orange County. Evidence has placed his family in Orange County in 1764 although Moses likely roamed the whole area as an Indian trader. (1) He is a brick wall for Anita's ancestry as far as a paper trail goes. Much has been written and speculated about him, but no one has solved the mystery of who his parents were. Y-DNA indicates that he was a descendant of Robert Royce, but all that is known about him is drawn from a photocopied transcript of a statement that his son, Aaron 1734- 1818, hereafter referred to as **Aaron**, wrote for his granddaughter. One confounding fact from that statement is that it says Moses was born on 6 June 1700, which has led many to conclude that he was the Moses Roy**c**e of Mansfield, Connecticut (CT), who was born 6 June 1689 at Windham (2), (hereafter referred to as **1689 Moses**), son of John Royce (1663-1724) (hereinafter referred to as **1663 John**) and Sarah Perigo. However, the names and birthdates of the children of these two men do not match. Also, there are ample records, deeds, baptisms, plus his will in Connecticut that indicate that 1689 Moses remained in Connecticut. We decided to investigate further.

Aaron's Statement

Aaron's statement purportedly resided in Aaron's Bible which was handed down to his descendants. Here is the text of the statement, written in 1806 by 1700 Moses Royse's son, Aaron, for his granddaughter, Mary Royse Core. Mary, daughter of Moses, Jr. 1761-1829 (**1761 Moses**) was born 4 Jun 1789, married Joab Christian Core, and died in 1876 in West Virginia (WV).

"*1806 My father Moses Royse was borne (sic) June 6 1700 and Lived in the state of Newyork was married in 1725 had 2 Sons by the first wife John and Daniel. they bothe (sic) settled in Somerset County Penn.*

was again Married to my mother in 1732. I was borne (sic) in 1734 my sister in 1736.

My Father was a hebrew. My Father was an Indian Trader.

I was borne (sic) at a place or country called 'The Highlands of New York.' My father and mother was going a journey on horse back through the wilderness when my father heard something that Made him think the Indians were Near. He sent Mother through a by path

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

By Anita Royse Montgomery and Kate Renner (continued)

(sic) he thought more safe, but in a few minets (sic) he heard her scream. He took me by the arm and set me down in a thicket of brush and said 'Keep Still!' But I was so frightened, I hollowed (hollered), *and my father caught me up again and went in persuit* (sic) *of Mother. But we never saw or heard of her or My Sister again.*

My Sister was 6 years old, and I was Eight at this time. My father did ever thing in his power to find My Mother, but all in vain. We never heard from her again. We lived in the Hilands (sic) *of New York and followed Indian trading.*

I was maried (sic) *in 1759. Moses, the only child of this wife, was borne* (sic) *in 1761 in the Highlands of New York. His mother died when he was 1 year old. I was married again in Sep 1763. When Moses was 14 years old, we all moved to the state of Virginia. We came by water and landed at Allexandria* (sic). *Writen* (sic) *for Mary Royse By her grand Father Aaron Royse Sr 1806"*

First, let us examine the provenance of the statement, and then which facts can be verified.

Provenance of the Statement

The above was written on ten sheets of lined paper that appear to have come from a small notebook. JPEGS of those pages found in numerous Ancestry trees are numbered 1-10. There is an additional page 11 that can be found in the gallery for 1700 Moses Royse in the Ancestry tree of user R_Webb44 (Richard Webb). (3)

Richard Webb stated in a telephone conversation with Kate that he has the original document and posted it to his tree, including the 11th page: "I have the original, and the paper looks old, but it does have **faint blue lines**. It is dated 1806, handwritten at the top. It is all written in cursive with a pencil, with several spelling errors." When asked about the Bible of Aaron Royse, which reportedly burned in a house fire in 1981, Richard said "The only Bible that I have seen that lists birth dates back to John Royse (1795-1863) (**1795 John**), son of Moses Royse, Jr. (1761 Moses) (Aaron's son), is a McBride family Bible" which Richard borrowed to copy information. Richard is an Aaron Royse descendant through his son, 1761 Moses, his son 1795 John, and his daughter Rebecca Royse Conner (1834-1917). Rebecca Royse Conner's daughter married a McBride.

This made the authors suspect that Aaron's statement was a transcription rather than the original document because lined paper was not readily available until the mid-19th century when American William Orville Hickok invented a machine for mass production. Deed books and other legal documents from the early 1800s show that lined paper was not in use around 1806.

Page 11 was written in very similar handwriting to the rest of the statement and reads as follows: "*I find it written in another old Book that grandfather had 3 Brothers that went to*

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

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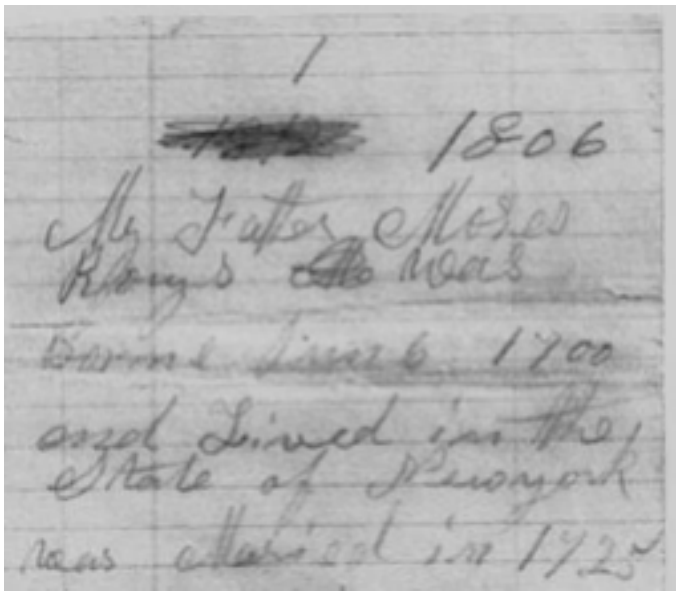
KY." This would not have originally been written by Aaron whose unknown grandfather would have been born about 1675 because Kentucky had very little exploration by whites prior to the mid-18th century. Therefore, the entire statement was probably transcribed by a descendant(s). That sentence implies to the authors that page 11 was written by either Rachel Royse Copeman 1836-1908 or her sister, Rebecca Royse Conner (Richard's ancestor). When the writer stated "grandfather had three brothers that went to KY", she (either Rachel or Rebecca) was referring to her grandfather, 1761 Moses Royse. He DID have three brothers who went to Kentucky (KY): Solomon, Hiram and William. Thus, the transcription could have been done by one of them, but which one?

Rachel Copeman, who inherited an old family home near Kingwood, WV, was known to have had Aaron's Bible in her possession at one time per her brother, I.H.C. Royse. (4) She also had access to other old records, such as her uncle's memorandum book containing transcriptions of Aaron's Bible and one belonging to his son, 1761 Moses. The memorandum book does mention three brothers who went to KY. (5) So Rachel could have added the comment on page 11. The handwritten transcription came down through Rebecca Conner's line to Richard Webb. Richard sent the authors a copy of the handwritten life story of Rebecca Royse Conner for comparison. The handwriting is similar but not an exact match to the photocopied transcription. Therefore, the authors first thought was that Rachel did the transcription of Aaron's statement and added the comment on page 11 as well.

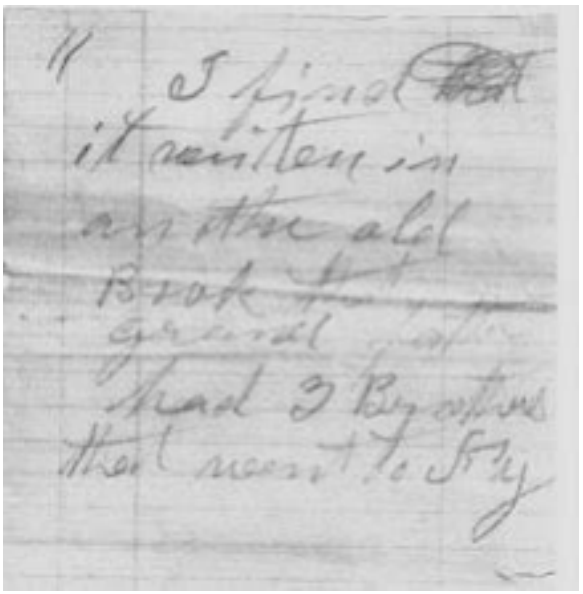
Rachel apparently gave the Bible to her brother, I.H.C. Royse, because he mentions having it in his possession. Also, it was handed down to his descendants. Edna Mae Sell Norton's manuscript "A Collection of Histories of the ancestors of Edna Mae Sell Norton and Jerry Joseph Norton for their decendants (sic)" on Family Search includes I.H.C. Royse's sketch of the Royse family in which he stated he had Aaron Royse's family Bible (page 4, image 319) (6). It is undated, but he died in 1909. The Bible of Aaron Royse was mentioned in a publication as being in the possession in 1946 of Minnie Royse Walker, I.H.C.'s eldest child. Minnie lived from 1870-1947. (7)

Samples of Rebecca Royse Conner's statement and the transcription of Aaron's (top)

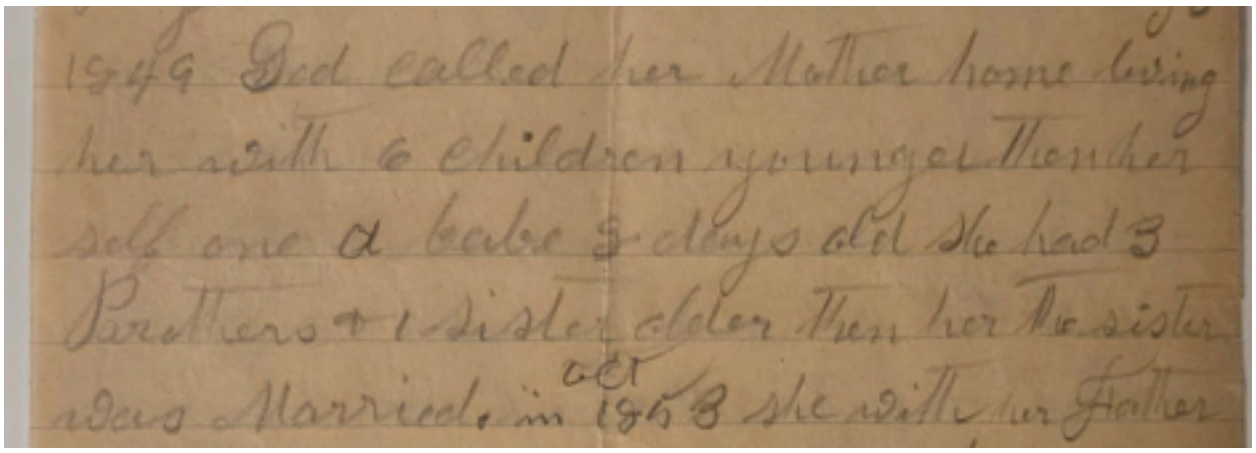

1

1806

My Father Moses Royse was Borne June 6 1700 and Lived in the State of Newyork was Married in 1725


11

I find it written in an other old Book that grand father had 3 Brothers that went to Fly


1849 God called her Mother home living her with 6 children younger Then her self one a babe 3 days old she had 3 Brothers & 1 sister older Then her the sister was Married in Oct 1853 she with her Father

After Minnie, the Bible (and statement presumably) went to her son, Ray Mattox Walker, who gave it to his son, Guy Walker II (1924-2013). Guy told Anita in a telephone conversation in 1997 that the 1806 statement (or a copy of it) was tucked into the Bible of Aaron Royse who died in 1818 in Kingwood, Preston County, WV. Anita also received an email from Guy explaining that he lost the Bible **and statement** in a house fire in 1981. Newspaper accounts and family members can verify the fire. Guy's daughter, Sandra Walker Holmes, had the Bible's history explained to her. (8) Apparently, there were no photos or photocopies made of the Bible's family records. However, a transcription of the records was printed in "Family Bible Records" in Terre Haute, Indiana published by the Vigo County Historical Society in 1952 and available on Internet Archive. (7) Link in Source List.

In addition, some handwritten copies of Aaron's statement were made and circulated through other lines of the family of 1761 Moses Royse. In Edna Mae Sell Norton's manuscript, she included several items which she said came to her through the

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

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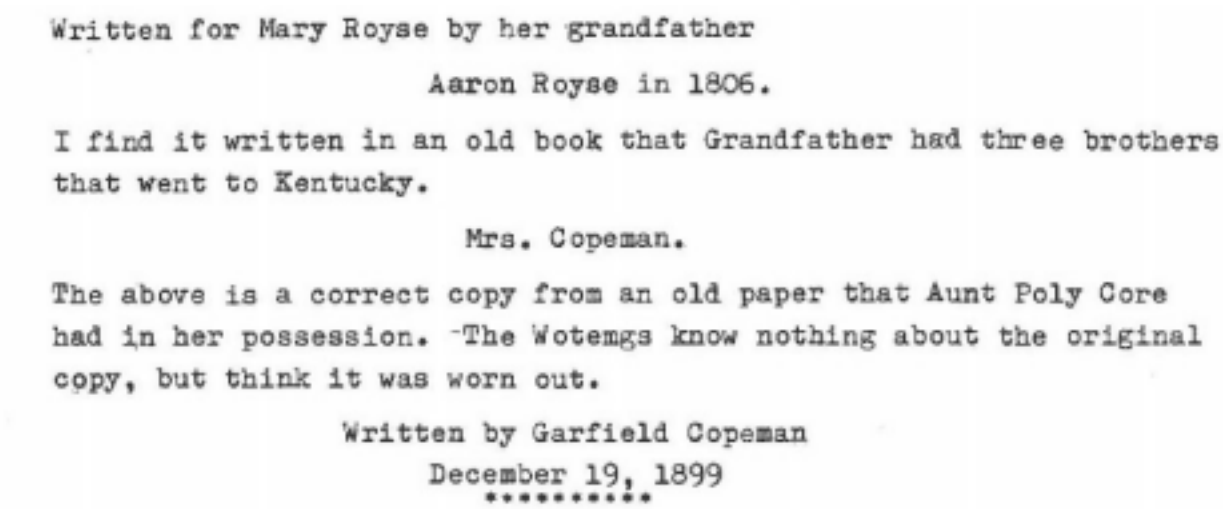
Copeman line. These included a typed transcription of Aaron's statement followed by "The above is a correct copy from an old paper that Aunt Poly Core had in her possession. The Wotemgs (sic) (Daniel Wotring married Rosanna Core whose mother Mary "Polly" Royse Core was the recipient of Aaron's 1806 statement) know nothing about the original copy, but think it was worn out." This statement, written by Garfield Coleman, December 19, 1899, could mean that Mary Core herself did the transcription of the first 10 pages when the original became too worn with Rachel (or Rebecca) adding the page 11 note.

James Garfield Copeman born in Kingwood, Preston, WV in 1881, was the great-great grandson of Aaron Royse. This typed version of the statement is likely not really an exact copy because it has apparently had grammatical errors corrected and punctuation added. The handwritten transcription sounds more like how a backwoodsman from 1806 would have written.

Excerpt from Edna Mae Sell Norton's manuscript



Written for Mary Royse by her grandfather

Aaron Royse in 1806.

I find it written in an old book that Grandfather had three brothers that went to Kentucky.

Mrs. Copeman.

The above is a correct copy from an old paper that Aunt Poly Core had in her possession. The Wotemgs know nothing about the original copy, but think it was worn out.

Written by Garfield Copeman

December 19, 1899

Norton included more history on the Royse family, most of which was written by I.H.C. Royse and is accurate except for dates of the arrival of Robert Royce in New England. To read about the Royse family Bible records, please see https://archive.org/details/familybiblerecor00clar/page/n201/mode/2up?q=royse.

The Facts in Aaron's Statement

How can we verify the information in Aaron's statement? One fact, the location in the Highlands of New York (NY), was shown in Aaron's son Solomon Royse's Revolutionary War pension application, a copy of which was found with his wife's pension application made after his death. Solomon declared in 1833 that he "*was born in Orange County State of New York on the 11th day of September 1763 agreeable to the information of his parents which he believes to be true he states that he has no record of his age, he states*

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

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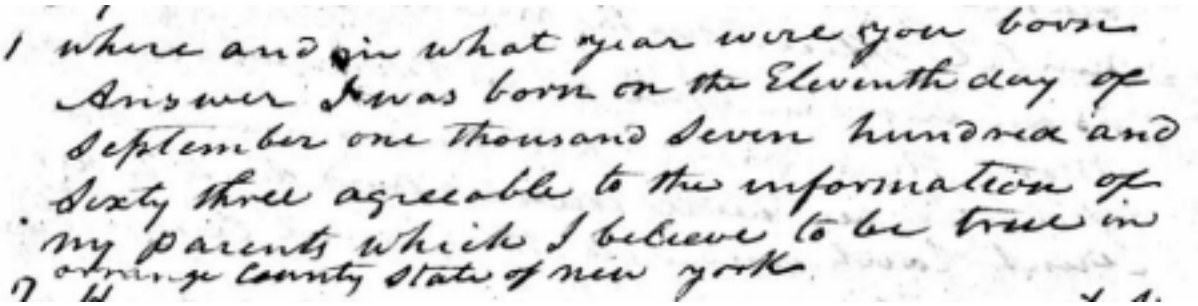
when he was a small child 6 or 7 years of age his father moved from New York State taking this declarant with him to Alexander (sic) Virginia where he remained but a short time when he moved to Washington County State of Maryland where he together with this declarant lived at the time I entered the service as before stated and where I resided the whole of the time I was in service and for sometime thereafter when I moved to the state of Virginia Hamshire (sic) *County where I remained until about the year 1792 when I moved to Kentucky Bourbon County and remained there until the year 1798 when I moved to and settled in the county of Adair Kentucky where I now live.*" (9)

Excerpt from Solomon Royse's Pension Papers


1 Where and in what year were you born
Answer I was born on the Eleventh day of
September one thousand seven hundred and
Sixty three agreeable to the information of
my parents which I believe to be true in
Orange County State of new york

Solomon's military service was as an Indian spy in Captain Hinch's company of the Maryland militia. This excerpt from his pension papers is important in several ways: it verifies that he was born in Orange County, NY, part of the Highlands, and substantiates the comment in Aaron's statement that the family moved to Alexandria, Virginia (VA). Solomon's age differs from Aaron's Bible record by one year. However, when he applied for his pension, he had been away from his parents and living in Kentucky for over 40 years.

So Aaron took his family and moved to Virginia around 1775 when 1761 Moses was 14 years old. Aaron chose to travel to Alexandria "by water" which would likely have been down the Hudson River, along the coast, in through the Chesapeake Bay, up the Potomac River to Alexandria. From there he made his way west to Hampshire County, VA (later West Virginia) where his supposed older half-brother, John (Anita's ancestor) (1720-c. 1803) (**1720 John**), had settled much earlier. In 1783 Aaron Royse of Hampshire County purchased 168 acres on the "Northern Branch of the Potowmack (sic)". (10) Both Aaron and 1720 John are listed in Hampshire County on the 1784 Virginia census. (11) Aaron and his sons, Solomon and Hiram, along with a Daniel Royse witnessed a deed there in 1785 (12). This Daniel was likely his nephew, son of his brother John. It is unlikely that this Daniel was Aaron's other half-brother because the authors have been unable to find any other land records for John's brother, Daniel, in Pennsylvania or Virginia. Records for the Daniel Royse in Virginia are all in Hampshire County, and began in 1785 when they are more likely to refer to 1720 John Royse's son, Daniel, who is then listed every year until 1805, following his death in 1804 (13).

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

By Anita Royse Montgomery and Kate Renner (continued)

Royse migration from NY to PA & VA/WV: Map provided by Renee Paulson. (14)



1720 John or his son, John Jr., did purchase land in 1769 in what later became Somerset County, Pennsylvania, as mentioned in Aaron's statement (15). This land was passed down through John, Jr.'s estate. On 28 June 1785 Aaron, Hiram and Solomon entered land warrant applications in **that same valley** (16) (17) although Aaron continued to reside in Hampshire County until moving to Preston County about 1796. From "A History of Preston County, West Virginia, Part I" by Oren F. Morton, published 1914 (18), "Moses… frequented the Catskills in Indian days, trading with the natives for furs. Aaron, a son of the latter, served in the Colonial wars and was at Braddock's defeat. About 1775 he came to Alexandria, and not later than 1796 he arrived in Preston."

Because Aaron and his brother, 1720 John, both spelled Royse with an "s", and because Aaron moved to the same location when there were no other Royses/Royces in the vicinity, the authors believe that the two men were half-brothers as Aaron said. A Y-DNA test on a male descendant of 1734 Aaron is underway to try to confirm the relationship. One word in the Aaron Royse statement has long puzzled researchers: Aaron stated "my father was a hebrew." Moses was a merchant which is one occupation that would have been open to Jews at that time. However, according to extensive research by Kate, there were very few Jews in the Highlands of New York area in the early 1700s. The immigrant Robert Royce was not Jewish. Staff at the Dorot Jewish Division of the New York Public Library referenced several scholarly sources that indicated conversions to Judaism in 18th and 19th century America were uncommon. (19) It seems very unlikely that an Indian trader in the wilds of New York would have

converted to Judaism. Until such time as DNA evidence can prove he was or was not Jewish, the authors' interpretation is that it meant he was an itinerant trader.

To summarize, the 1806 Aaron Royse statement contains two comments verified by other documentation: the family's location in the Highlands, Orange County, NY, and the migration to Virginia. The note in Edna Norton's paper from Garfield Copeman, a descendant of Aaron's, in 1899 confirms that Mary "Polly" Royse Core had such a statement in her possession but only a transcript survives. Also, there is circumstantial evidence that Aaron's half-brother, John, was the John Royse who was located in the vicinity of Somerset County, Pennsylvania by 1769. The Y-DNA test underway may be able to confirm the relationship.

One Moses or Two?

Ancestry.com, an unreliable source at best, has 2,865 trees for 1689 Moses, and many of those have his second wife as kidnapped by Indians with John Royse as a son who died in 1808 in Hampshire County VA. There are 150 trees for 1700 Moses, most naming him as a son of John 1663-1724 and Sarah Perigo Royce. There are 919 trees for Aaron, and they are split as to whether his father was 1700 Moses or 1689 Moses. Of course, none have any sources or records attached to their parentage claims. The tree builders are jumping to the conclusion that because Aaron's 1806 statement claimed that his father was born 6 June 1700, his father must have been the Moses Royce whose birth was recorded as 6 June 1689 in the Windham Vital Records.

In probability theory, the "birthday problem" asks for the probability that, in a set of n randomly chosen people, at least two will share the same birthday, ignoring the year (20). The counterintuitive fact is that only 23 people are needed for that probability to exceed 50%. When n = 70, the probability rises to 99.9%. That means it is far more likely there could have been two men named Moses born on the same birthday, but different years, than it would seem at first glance.

Timelines for the man/men named Moses Royse/Royce

Records or facts for 1700 Moses are only contained in the statement by his son, Aaron. Several town historians in the Highlands area gave the opinion that it was the area of Highland Falls, West Point, and Fort Montgomery, but there was no mention of the surname Royse in that area. As of 1702, there were sheriffs, county clerks and judges in the Highlands, but unfortunately very few records were kept or survived. It appears that 1700 Moses did not buy land, not surprising since Indian traders moved around from tribe to tribe. Records in Colonial New York State were very sporadic, and no land records for him have been found. We found one deed for land sold by an Aaron Rice, boatman, in Orange County, NY in 1771. (21) It is unknown when 1700 Moses died.

Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

By Anita Royse Montgomery and Kate Renner (continued)

Records for 1689 Moses are numerous. For example, Mansfield, CT land records showing 1689 Moses as either grantor or grantee totaled 16 spanning 1714 to 1747. (22) Altogether he had 37 land transactions in Mansfield, Willington and Stafford until his death July 30, 1768 in Stafford. (23) Extant probate records name only widow Hannah, not any children (24). It boggles the mind to think that he was doing all that and fathering six children in Connecticut while also traveling back and forth to New York to trade with the Indians.

The baptisms of 1689 Moses' six children were all at Mansfield, CT between 1718 and 1735. Their names are different (Moses, Jeshuran, Hannah, John, David, Peter) from 1700 Moses's children (John, Daniel and Aaron). (25) The one exception is John, baptized 28 Aug 1726 in Mansfield (**1726 John**), the fourth child of 1689 Moses versus John, the eldest of 1700 Moses, born in 1720 (1720 John).

Comparison of children's baptism and birth dates

Moses 1689 – baptisms		Moses 1700 – births	
Source: Mansfield 1st Congregational Church record images on Family Search		Sources: Aaron Royse 1806 statement & JV Thompson Journal #18	
Moses	16 March 1718		
Jeshuran (Jasper)	1 May 1720	John	12 Oct 1720
Hannah	24 May 1724	Daniel	Unknown
John	28 August 1726		
David	19 January 1729/30	Aaron	3 Jan 1734
Peter	20 April 1735	Girl	1736

One John or Two?

While the preceding focused on differentiating between two men named Moses Royce/Royse, these men each had sons named John. Hundreds of Ancestry users have conflated the two Johns as well. Careful research indicates that there were in fact two different men. To differentiate between them, for reasons given below, the son born in the Highlands of New York will be referred to as 1720 John with surname spelled Royse, and the other man as 1726 John with surname spelled Royce.

Moses Royce born 1689 in CT had a son named John, baptized in Mansfield on 28 Aug 1726 (26). The son of 1700 Moses Royse has been listed for years as having been born in 1725 perhaps because Aaron Royse's statement discussed earlier says 1700 Moses first married in 1725 or perhaps because of the 1726 baptism of the Connecticut John. However, an entry in a J.V. Thompson Journal (27) quotes 1700 Moses's great grandson, Rice (Royse) Gaddis, as having written in a memorandum that **his grandfather**, John Royse, was born 12 Oct 1720.

J.V. Thompson Journal, Vol. 18, p. 426

At residence of Miss Ruth A. Lewis No 432 Columbus St Wilmington, Oct 11, 1926 2:44 PM … She says she was born in 1849 & her mother, Sarah Rannells was the daughter of Wm Rannells & his wife Leah Gaddis, daughter of Col Thomas Gaddis. She says her great Uncle Rice Gaddis was a printer & she has a printed "memorandum" 22 & 23 lines which he made up of his father's family which is as follows:

John Rice was born Oct 12, 1720

Hannah Rice (wife of John) born Sept 25, 1720

Thomas Gaddis was born Dec 28, 1742.

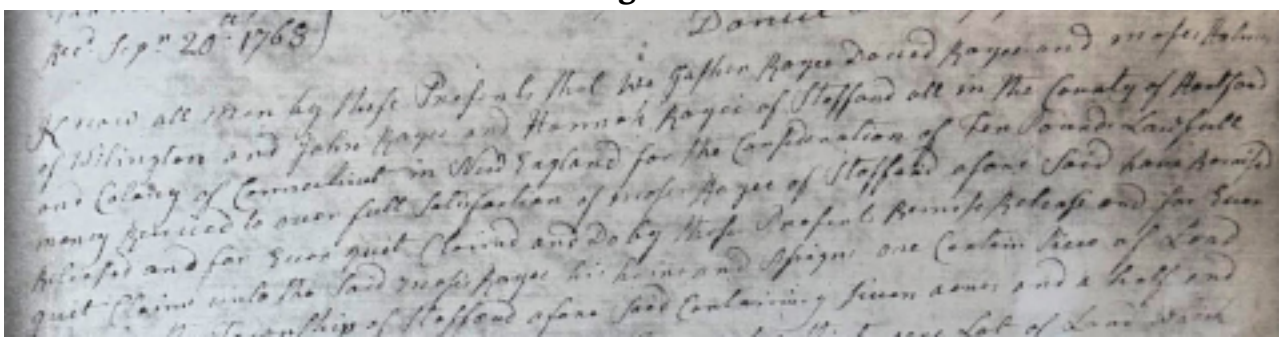
Hannah Gaddis, wife of Thomas Gaddis & daughter of John & Hannah Rice was born Nov 14, 1742…

Prior to 1900, Josiah VanKirk Thompson of Uniontown, Pennsylvania researched the genealogies of various early Pennsylvania settlers, most of whom were originally in the Cumberland Valley. Rice Gaddis' mother was 1720 John's daughter, Hannah **Royse** Gaddis, who lived in southwestern Pennsylvania, not far from her parents. The memorandum was passed down to Rice by her daughter, Leah.

John's birth year being 1720 means Aaron's statement was wrong about 1700 Moses's first marriage occurring in 1725 or perhaps Moses was married three times. Furthermore, 1720 John would likely not be the son of 1689 Moses since his son, John, was baptized in 1726. A great many trees erroneously have 1726 John as the man whose will was filed in 1808 in Virginia (28). However, records show that he was still in Connecticut long after 1720 John had moved west of the Blue Ridge.

1726 John's father had moved to Stafford, CT by 1755 when Stafford town records show that 1726 John married Susannah Fenton. The births of their first six children were recorded in Stafford. (29) When 1689 Moses died in 1768 in Stafford, CT (23), his heirs signed a quit claim deed in which son John Royce was identified as "of Stafford." (30)

1768 Deed Between 1689 Moses' Surviving Children



Moses Royse of the Highlands of New York

By Anita Royse Montgomery and Kate Renner (continued)

Around 1769, 1726 John moved to Willington, CT where his wife was born and where extended family still lived. Their next four children were born in Willington, the last in 1775. (31) The Willington Town Historian believes there were three men named John Royce/Rice in Willington in the 18th century, and two were father and son, therefore 1726 John and his son 1758 John. (32) Jeshuran/Jesher Royce, the brother of 1726 John lived there from 1753 until his death. In 1755 Jeshuran bought 52 acres in Willington (Book C pp. 316-317) (33) and in September 1769, a 17-acre parcel of that was sold to John Royce of Stafford (Book D page 396). (34) Earlier in December 1763, John Royce of Stafford bought a portion of the 200-acre farm of Samuel Fenton, his father-in-law (Book D, p. 156). (34) In a 1782 deed, John Rice of Willington bought 12 acres from David Lillibridge (not recorded until 26 March 1799 in Book H, p. 146). (35) The 1785 will of Samuel Fenton in Willington CT mentioned his daughter Susannah Rice and two other married daughters but none were named as "wife of." (36) Two deeds between 1726 John and his son 1758 John are important because they include language identifying 1726 John as the "hon'd father" of John Royce Jr.

14 Nov 1800: John Royce of Willington to John Royce Jr. of Union (12 acres originally bought of David Lillibridge) (Book G. p. 197). (35) Then on 14 Jun 1802 John Royce (Jr) of Union sold to his "hon'd father John Royce of Willington" the same land he had bought in 1800. (Book G, p. 281). (35)

When and where did 1726 John die? Willington town records are especially scarce for deaths. John almost certainly did not die in Hampshire County, VA, given the number of land transactions in Willington. On 16 Feb 1805, John Royce deeded to the town of Willington (Book H p. 27) (35) "In consideration of the support and maintenance during my life, 14 acres I purchased from David Lillibridge." In the town meeting minutes, on 5 December 1808, the town voted to dispose of a lot that John Rice previously deeded to the town of Willington. (37) Had he died by then? Was this 1726 John?

Meanwhile, 1720 John received several land grants, participated in land surveys, and executed leases in Hampshire County, VA (later WV) beginning in 1763 when he was said to be "of Hampshire County." (38) It is likely that he was in the area even earlier, even before Lord Fairfax obtained the land and began issuing grants. Many people were there as squatters, so few paper records exist. He is listed on tax rolls from 1782 through 1802. His will was drawn on 15 Sep 1803. He apparently died shortly thereafter because he is not listed on the land record tax list in 1803 (39) and from 1804 on the listings are for his heirs (40). His date of death is often erroneously given as 1808 because his will was not probated in Hampshire County, VA (WV) until that year. However, additionally the will names his son, Daniel, as an executor. Daniel died in 1804 (13) so if John were still living then, it seems likely he would have named a replacement executor. Willington town records imply that 1726 John lived beyond February 1805.

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Known children of 1720 John are John Jr., Hannah, Frederick, Elizabeth, Sarah and Daniel. (41) DNA testing is in process on another likely son, Benjamin. John and Sarah are the only names that overlap with 1726 John's children. Further proof that these were two different men.

Y- DNA Evidence and Descendants of Moses Royse/Moses Royce

The key to conclusively solving the mystery of two Moses Royce/Royses may have to be found via Y-DNA testing. Y-DNA is a sex chromosome. It is carried only by men and passed on from father to son. (Women don't have Y-DNA.) It is nominally unchanged through the generations, but the occasional changes that do occur -- mutations -- are passed on to all male children and allow us to see where lines of inheritance split. (42) Anita has three male Royse relatives who have done Y-700 DNA tests, and they all descend from 1700 Moses, 1720 John, Frederick (c.1750-1825). Comparison of those results with those of a male who directly descends from one of 1689 Moses's sons would hopefully confirm or refute whether or not there were two different Moses, and that is in the works.

Testing by additional men can be expected to enhance our understanding of the relationships among men who are descended from Robert Royce -- particularly those who have not fully identified their line of descent from Robert. If you are a male with the last name of Royse, Royce, Roys or Rice, it would be greatly appreciated if you took the BIG Y-700 test from familytreedna.com. Alternatively, if you know such a man, you can ask them to take the test. Family Tree DNA frequently has sales on their tests. If larger tests are not affordable now, men could consider the more affordable Y-37 test, and the sample could be upgraded at a later date. **For more information**, please contact the authors at k8renmayo(at)gmail.com.

Conclusions

What little is known of Moses Royse of the Highlands stems from the 1806 Aaron Royse's statement which established the family as living in the Highlands, Orange County, NY, and the migration to Virginia (WV). Due to 1700 Moses' nomadic occupation, it is unlikely that paper land records will ever be found for him. However, those facts are corroborated by the pension declarations of Solomon Royse, Aaron's son, and by Edna Norton's paper confirming that Mary "Polly" Royse Core had such a statement in her possession.

Available records seem to indicate that 1700 Moses was NOT the same man as the 1689 Moses who fathered six children in Mansfield, CT between 1718 and 1735 and had numerous land transactions in Windham County, now Tolland County. Their sons, 1726 John Royce and 1720 John Royse also would appear to be two different men. The 1768 Stafford, CT deed that disposed of the land of the late 1689 Moses Royce to Moses Royce, Jr. from his siblings named son John as "of Stafford." Meanwhile, John Royse son of 1700 Moses had settled in Hampshire County, VA (WV) in 1763 or earlier and

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remained there until his death circa 1803. In addition, the two sons named John were born about six years apart and most of their children had different names. DNA testing of known descendants of 1689 Moses Royce and 1734 Aaron Royse are underway.

It is unlikely that any record proving the parentage of 1700 Moses will be found. Y-DNA evidence may eventually reveal more about it, but that is an article for another day. Meanwhile, current Y-DNA evidence does allow us to claim him as one of ours.

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