

# The Royce Quarterly

Fall 2024

A Publication of the Royce Family Association (RFA)

Volume 37 Number 4

**Co-Editor's Note:** Inside this edition of *The Royce Quarterly* you will find important information regarding the reinstatement of membership dues. Co-editor Kate Renner explores multiple leads on her ancestor William Rice who she believes may have headed west to seek his fortune in gold during the California gold rush. During this tumultuous year of elections in our country, I got to wondering whether any of our Royce/Royse/Rice ancestors had political pursuits. I was amazed at what I found, and after much research I have concluded that the state of politics in the 1850's had many similarities to the state of our country in 2024.

**DON'T FORGET to CHECK OUT the NEW and IMPROVED: Royce Family Association Website @ [roycefamilyassociation.org](https://roycefamilyassociation.org).**

## New and Improved RFA Website

Our Royce Family Association president Lori DiDonato has been working with web designers to complete the RFA's website. You may see a few changes if you visit [roycefamilyassociation.org](https://roycefamilyassociation.org) in terms of content, layout and links. We are nearing the finalization of our website. Lori has been working with a company named Vznayres. Since we started working with them in May, we have already seen an uptick in interest in the RFA. People are finding our website and subscribing which is the result of the SEO/search engine optimization that Vznayres is facilitating. In the near future the website will include more information about the Y-DNA project, a link to download Al Rhods' book "The Royce Family in America". Also you are now able to pay dues online via credit card. If you log in to the site, you can click on "My Account" to see some members-only features: RFA bylaws and board members, DNA Project information, and under "Member Resources" you can find

older and more recent newsletters. If anyone has difficulty logging in, please email Kate Renner at [K8renmayo@gmail.com](mailto:K8renmayo@gmail.com)

## **ROYCE FAMILY ASSOCIATION DUES COLLECTION FOR 2025**

The RFA paused publishing after the Fall 2020 issue of the Royce Quarterly and resumed in the Winter of 2023. Although dues were announced in 2023 there has been no real effort to collect them. Some existing members did pay dues in 2023 and/or 2024 and we have a number of new members who joined and paid dues in 2024. Now that the association is back on its feet with distribution of the Royce Quarterly and a fully functional website, it's time to get caught up on dues. If you paid dues in 2023 or 2024 you're paid up through 2025 (or 2026 if you paid twice). For members who have not paid dues since before 2023 we are asking that you pay the \$15 annual fee by the end of January 2025. We will be sending emails to those members. If you're not sure where you stand, feel free to send an email to our treasurer, Diana Royce Smith, at [diana1319smith@comcast.net](mailto:diana1319smith@comcast.net).

You can pay online at our website [roycefamiliyassociation.org](http://roycefamiliyassociation.org). Once you have logged in, select "Become A Member" from the top menu bar or anywhere on the site that you see a "Become A Member" button. Please indicate if you are a new or renewing member. If you are paying online, you do not have to print and mail the form on the "Become a Member" page. Renewing members do not have to fill out the "connection to Robert Royce" section. If you prefer you can send a check to Diana at 1930 Oak Ave., Boulder, CO 80304-1319.

Thank you all for your patience. We hope you appreciate the work we've done to bring the Royce Family Association into the 21st Century and that you're enjoying the interesting and informative Royce Quarterly. If you haven't paid dues in the last two years, we certainly hope you'll renew your membership now. If we don't hear from you after a reminder, you may be dropped from our membership list and will no longer receive the newsletter or have access to the members area of the website.

**The Royce Family Association is Now on Facebook!** A Facebook group called Royce Family Association (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1127883208081516>) was formed to initiate a presence on social media. If you are on Facebook and interested in joining the private group, input the name into the Facebook search bar, upper left side, answer a few questions, and you should be admitted. If that does not work, please email Kate Renner at [k8renmayo@gmail.com](mailto:k8renmayo@gmail.com).

## **BigY 700 DNA Progress Update From Lloyd Docter**

I am just back from England and Morocco. During my trip I met for a second time with Vicki Manners, the professional genealogist that we have retained to conduct a fresh review of the Robert Royce family history in the Stamford, UK area. Vicki will be comparing what she finds with the earlier work done by Charles Julian and then endeavor to resolve any open issues. This process will transition to working on a list of candidates for BigY 700 DNA testing in the UK. We hope to be able to conclusively prove that the Robert Royce of Ketton/Stamford we have been viewing as our ancestor is in fact the correct Robert Royce.

So far, Vicki has completed a review of both the actual original church records from Stamford, Ketton and other nearby areas. She has identified records confirming key Robert Royce family birth, baptism and death records. She is now working to confirm Robert's father's birth/marriage/death as well as other important family information. Based on her work to date it appears that Robert's father was from Ketton, the same city Robert was baptized in. Ketton is about 3 1/2 miles from Stamford.

Vicki has now started to look for sons or brothers of Robert's father who may have stayed in England so that we can build parallel family trees to identify individuals that are good candidates for BigY DNA testing.

I will work with our genealogist Vicki Manners on a written story concerning the preceding.

---

## **Ancestor died? Or Disappeared? The Lure of the Gold Rush?** **By Kate Renner**

I have a Rice ancestor whom I have always assumed died in Indiana in the late 1840s. But I may have found him, or a man of the same name, as a miner in California in 1850 and 1860. My second great-grandfather was William Rice, born about 1800 in Otsego County, NY, son of Ebenezer Rice (1772-1836) and Esther Shepard (1778-1848). The family migrated west after 1816, the year without a summer. Ebenezer owned a saw mill (documented in "A History of Otego" by Stuart Blakely) that was wiped out in the spring flooding. I have a copy of a family letter about this migration which will be published separately. William was not named in the letter, which had several other inaccuracies, but I believe the lineage is correct, because he was named in his father's will in Scott County, IN.

William resided in Decatur County, IN in 1840 and the last paper trail for him was when his 17 year old son petitioned to have his uncle, Giles Rice, be his guardian.

This was on 8 Feb 1847 in Scott County where the uncle lived. There was no record of guardianship for the five other children, all of whom were younger and female. The Decatur County historian said there should be guardianships for all of them. But I have also been told that record books sometimes disappear from county clerk offices. Besides, 1847 was too early to be taking off for the gold rush. So what was going on with William Rice? Indiana did not have death records at that early date. His parents and several siblings were buried in the Rice cemetery in Scott County, IN; even his brother who died in 1816. But not William. Neither Scott or Decatur Counties have any records on William after 1847, and I checked two additional counties for guardianship records. Did he die or desert the family?

The California Gold Rush, 24 January 1848-1855, was one of the largest migrations in human history. Over 300,000 people made their way to California, initially by steamship from the Gulf or East Coast, a journey that could have taken 4-5 months. In the spring of 1848, most miners in California were from California. More fortune seekers travelled to California in 1849, hence the term "49ers". They came from a variety of backgrounds, including farmers, teachers, doctors, and many others. If William made his way from Indiana to the Iowa/Missouri border with Kansas and Nebraska, he might have joined other gold seekers headed west in 1849, traveling over 2,000 miles through deserts and mountains. Native American tribes were always on the lookout for gold seekers. That would have been a difficult journey, but not impossible for someone living in Indiana.

I will outline the records for William Rice, found in California, but I may never know if they pertain to my ancestor. There were a couple men named William Rice in various parts of California at that time. I ruled out ones that were not in the mining counties. One William P. Rice staked a claim in Placer County, CA with 16 other men in 1852. That man turned out to be William Perry Rice, born 1822 in Ohio. Three others named William Rice were young men from different parts of Indiana. I am astonished at how many men of all ages and from many U.S. states were in California, working as miners in the 1850 and 1860 census records.

There are many records for a William Rice, miner, in California from 1850 to 1872.

- 9 Oct 1872 Butte County voter list said he died, age 47, birth place NY
- 1870 census Ophir, Butte, CA, miner, age 70, born NY
- 1868 Ophir, Butte, CA, registered to vote
- 1866 born NY 1800, a miner in West Point, Calaveras Co, CA
- 1860 census, miner in Salmon forks, Klamath Co, CA, age 60, born NY
- 1853 newspapers, list of letters for William H. Rice at Auburn, Placer Co which is 45 miles from Sutter Co
- 7 Sep 1852 Placer Co, CA, claim with other men for water rights from Canon Creek for mining (Likely a different William Rice)
- 1850 census miner in Lacy Bar and Manhattan Bar, Sutter Co, CA, age 45, born NY

Using the Familysearch text search function I found several deeds in Calaveras and Placer Counties for sales and purchases for William P. Rice and William M. Rice.

William Rice was recorded in California in the 1850, 1860 and 1870 census records, working as a miner, born NY about 1800. The birthplace and approximate birth year were consistent in those three records. In the 1850 census, he was at Lacy Bar and Manhattan Bar in Sutter County, along the American River. The term bar refers to a huge bend in the river where large deposits of gold and other heavy metals are found which may be covered with sand or soil. In this era, panning for gold was the only available method in the mountainous terrain. Hydraulic mining, crushing rock to release gold, began in some areas in 1853. In 1860 he was at Salmon in Klamath County and in 1870 he resided at Ophir in Butte County.



He was listed on the California Great Registers (voter rolls) in Calaveras County in 1866 and 1867 and the Register for 1872 stated that William Rice of NY died in Butte County on 9 October 1872. A newspaper mentioned he died 6 Oct 1872 age 47 and a native of NY. My ancestor definitely could not have been 47, but newspapers contain errors. Family Search indicates that Butte County has death records going back to 1859. On the off chance there is some confirming data on the DC, I requested it.

There was nothing in the Butte clerk's office or from Cal State-Chico's special collections. There was a great genealogical collection in Paradise California but there was that awful wildfire in 2018 which resulted in many losses.

Why did he move so much? Always searching for a better chance at wealth? After the gold rush, the economy suffered. The area experienced unsettling strife and violence. The "Klamath and Salmon River Indian War" and the 1858-1864 "Bald Hills War" involved European-American vigilantes hunting down and killing most indigenous adult males and killing, capturing, or enslaving women and children. Also a factor was the Great Flood of 1862 which swept away the riverside settlements, mining works and ferries. In 1874 Klamath County was finally abolished and land divided between Siskiyou and Humboldt Counties. Present day Del Norte County occupies part of Klamath County. Forks of Salmon is now in Siskiyou County. Forks of Salmon was originally a California Gold Rush settlement in the now defunct Klamath County, California. It has had its own post office from September 30, 1858, until today, with a short break from October 16, 1871, to August 28, 1872. After the discovery of an important gold strike near today's Yreka, California in 1851, prospectors flooded the area. This was described in detail by Joaquin Miller in his semi-autobiographical novel *Life Amongst the Modocs*.

I received a very detailed response from a volunteer with the Siskiyou County Genealogical Society which reflected how county borders were fluid and records might wind up elsewhere:

"Tracking the miners that moved here and there with the latest news of Gold are really hard to track. Add the boundary line changes. When the California State was created, all land north of Redding was in Shasta County, then Klamath County was created on the north edge of Shasta Co and Siskiyou County along the Oregon State line. Then they played musical boundary lines to dissolve Klamath County and created Trinity, Del Norte and Humboldt Counties. Siskiyou County got some of the records from Klamath County and Trinity and Humboldt Counties got other records. Most of the mining records went to Humboldt County. But the miners frequently had one person go to the land office in Humboldt County and he was supposed to file the claims under all the miners' names but frequently only filed under his own name."

Many of those counties had harsh winters that prohibited staying there year round. Animals could graze from early summer until September, so many miners worked in the summers and went to the towns for the winters. It appears that my William Rice must have done that. The volunteer said that surface mining (panning for gold) was the common mining method used until the 1880s because there was no way to get heavy equipment up into the mountains until much later. She also suggested that I check with county recorders' offices in several counties for mining claims: "Siskiyou County has some written books on Mining Claims - they are not digitized and you



have to search by the name of the Mine. These records are at the Siskiyou Co Recorder's Office and have to be hand searched by the employees. They won't let the citizens go through the books".

114.

To all whom it may Concern

Notice is hereby given that we the undersigned have formed ourselves into a company for the purpose of constructing a ditch to conduct the water from Canon Creek (about five miles above Cold Spring) to Indian Hill and vicinity; that we have at the present time about two miles of said ditch completed and that we lay claim to the use of the water of said Canon by priority of right (except the claim of that ditch leading from said Canon to Dutch Flats) in accordance with the custom of miners. That notices were posted on the ground about the 1<sup>st</sup> of June since which time the company have labored upon the same.

Cold Spring Place Co Cal

September 7<sup>th</sup> 1852.

J. F. Talbot  
Henry T. Ashton.

P. S. Maguire & Co

W. P. Rice

Saml H. Cowdon.

W. S. Walker

Profr Jones & Co

James Proffitt

Levi Garner.

Zadock Garner

Alanson Beebe

G. W. Tuckey

de Tuckey

Cyrus Smith

Wesley Armstrong.

J. N. Rintney & Co

Wm Roul

Recorded this the 7<sup>th</sup> day September A.D.  
1852 at 10 o'clock P.M.

L. H. Hawkins

deputy Recorder

## H. H. Rice letter about Ebenezer Rice 1772-1836

A letter written circa 1950 by descendent Halleck Rice concerning the westward migration of the Rice family. Halleck Rice, (1871-1966) one of Ebenezer's great grandsons, through son Giles and grandson Russell + Viola Rawlings. Typed as originally transcribed with added corrections. Shared by Tom Rice.

*"It was the latter part of winter or early spring in a small village on the Allegheny River (records show it was actually the Susquehanna River) in state of New York, when my Great Grandfather awoke one morning to find river flooded and everything he owned washed away except small amount of personal property.*

*Being a mill-wright and owner of small sawmill, he was broke and a discouraged man. He was a young man at that time in his late thirties, or early forties. My Great Grandfather Ebenezer and Great Grandmother Rachel (Name on tombstone in River Cemetery is Esther Rice) and their small family of five children namely: John Wesley, Stephen, Ebenezer Jr., Rheuben and little girl of five years old, her name has slipped my memory. (There were 10 children living at that time before the move to Indiana—only the youngest, Giles, was born in Indiana.)*

*My Grandfather, Giles Rice was not born until three years after they came west. The father being of hard pioneer spirit—they decided to start for new country. Building themselves a large raft and loading what little property they had left on raft and start down river. Their personal property consisting of some house-hold, two or three cows, one team of horses and one covered wagon.*

*We realize what it is to start for new country not knowing where your home will be or what you will do for livelihood having come west with family in 1907. But our forefathers were people of courage and will power. So their loaded family, stock and house-hold on raft and started down river. I imagine the river was still high and full of debris, floating logs, stumps and even uprooted trees. But Great Grandfather was river man and said to be a great swimmer and did not fear the hazardous trip down river on raft. So they floated along keeping as close to shore as possible, no doubt on account of family and stock. They finally came to small settlement on river called Lawrenceberg or Lawrenceville. The little girl being sick, they decided to abandon the raft and start across country with family in covered wagon driving the stock in front of them as customary in early days but the little girl to their sorrow, died on trip and they had to bury her at side of trail, there being scarcely any roads at that early date of 1808 or 1809. (It must have been later because Ann Rice was born in Otsego NY in 1814 and Giles Rice was born in Scott County IN in 1818.)*

*So they piled up stones on grave to keep predatory animals from disturbing it, thinking no doubt to return at some future time and place marker at her grave. My Great Uncle Stephen did return 40 years later and found his sister's grave. He went on to his old home in New York but found none of Rice's. They had all left home and their descendants are scattered over U.S. somewhere. They seemed to be of a restless adventuresome nature. After the death of the little girl they must keep their courage and travel on and get settle as soon as possible. There was great risk in traveling in those days, the Indians were still a menace and to be considered. There were hungry*



timber wolves, panthers and other wild animals that might prey on them or their stock so they had to be ever on the alert. My Great Grandfather being chased by panther at one time and had a very narrow escape, according to my Grandmother's story, just being able to get in house as panther struck door, according to story the marks of his talons were on door until the old homestead house burned down. The old folks finally arrived with their family on what was at that time the new purchase which now is southern Indiana where they settled. (It was the town of Wooster, near New Frankfort.) So they decided to settle down and clear their home in what was solid woods at that time, now the eastern part of Scott County, Indiana. But another tragedy and sorrow was heaped upon them. John Wesley, their oldest son (he was the third oldest) was killed by falling tree while working in clearing. It was late spring when they arrived at their destination. The woods were noisy with song birds of all kinds, there were wild bees, coveys of quail, the red-buds and dog-woods were in full bloom, the foliage on trees was full, there was a clear stream of water near by and spring on hillside, so it must have seemed an ideal spot for a home to them with abundance of wild game almost a paradise to them after their long trip down river and overland trip through wilderness.

But a few years later there was great excitement in the settlement, the Indians had broken out and were on war-path, having killed and scalped 22 people, twelve miles from their settlement but they were never molested by Indians. But the Pigeon Roost Massacre was not soon forgotten by them. There stands a monument to the memory of those that were buried there today. We are well acquainted with some of their descendants of that terrible tragedy. But the first, second and third generations are all gone and nearly half of fourth generation.

The older Rices are most of them are buried upon hill in what is known as Rice Graveyard. I am the fourth generation and in my 80th year. 142 years has passed since that first settlement of Rices and old brick house that my Great Grandfather Ebenezer Rice built still stands on the old homestead. The older Rices were all religiously inclined and I have every hope and faith that they have attained that more abundant life and their influence lives on through their posterity."

My Royce lines: Robert (born 1603), Nehemiah, Nehemiah, Ephraim, Ebenezer, Ebenezer, William, Lucinda (born 1840)  
And Robert (born 1603), Nehemiah, Joseph, Thomas, Phebe, Ebenezer, William, Lucinda (born 1840)

Sources: The Royce Family in America by Alvin Lee Rhods, 2005

Wikipedia

Tom Rice, North Vernon, Indiana

**Transcription of Stephen Rice's obituary names all his siblings which the Halleck Rice letter does not.**

His obituary reads: "On Thursday morning, June 1st Uncle Stephen Rice of Johnson township, passed from among the living. Mr. Rice was born in Otsego Co. NY on the 10th day of May, 1798. He was the oldest of eleven children. His father's name was Ebenezer Rice. The names of Stephen's brothers and sisters are William, Eben, John Wesley, Reuben, Russell, Giles, Lucy, Polly, Esther and Ann. Of these eleven pioneers, four are still living and their average ages, omitting the two {must be John Wesley and the girl who was buried on the Ohio River} who died young, is about 66 years. In the year 1817 Ebenezer Rice with his large family immigrated to the 'far West' in accordance with the popular adage of the times 'Westward the course of empire takes its way' and cropped one summer near Lawrenceburgh Ind.--when he removed to land near the ancient town of Wooster now stands, where he entered upon the pre-emption plan about 400 acres of land, varying in price from \$1 to \$2 per acre. Stephen was naturally the first to accumulate property of his own (he being the oldest) which he secured on the same or almost the same terms, as his father had done.

In the year 1821 he wooed and won a poor girl named Rhoda Condra with whom he lived pleasantly until her death March 2, 1877. Miss Condra, who was almost eight years older than her husband, was born in Rutherford County NC in the year 1790. She with her father's family had penetrated the wilds of Indiana before it became a state in our union. The following are a few events of Mr. Rice's life: He joined the M. E. church in 1828 but dated his conversion from 1842. He was a punctual and regular attendant at church during his life and was one of its strongest financial supporters. He united with the Odd Fellows of Wooster about the year 1852, in which lodge he is said to have been a worthy member. After the Wooster lodge surrendered her charter to the Grand Lodge of Indiana about 20 years ago, he did not attach himself to any lodge until last winter, when after producing satisfactory evidence, he was admitted into the Lexington lodge as an non-beneficial. His political history is identified with the Whig, the Republican and the Greenback parties with he voted, and never asked an office. For several years during the days of Jackson he was accustomed to participate in the annual regimental and battalion muster service for mutual protection from the Indians who were incited to hostility by the treatment of border mercenaries. He never was engaged however in political service. At one time in his life he was engaged in working in the river canal at Louisville. His early trading was done chiefly at Charlestown, 22 miles distant, and more recently at Lexington. He resided on the farm he entered for 64 years and in the house in which he died for 45 years. He has three children, 13 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren yet living. The names of his children are Wesley, Sylvester and Mahala (Law) aged respectively 60, 57 and 55 years. On April 13, 1877 Stephen Rice was again married to Mrs. John Ward with whom he happily spent the remainder of his life. In his last illness he was attended by Drs. Sarver of Wooster, Lothrop of Lexington and White of Kent who pronounced his disease paralysis, caused by softening of the brain. The stroke that prostrated him occurred when he was at work on his farm, about 12 days before his death. One of his sons, learning of his prostration, conveyed him to the home on a sled. Death was apparent from the first but his 'iron constitution' yielded very reluctantly to his imperial command and he lingered for several days. At 2 o'clock Friday afternoon June 2nd his funeral was preached by Rev. Dr. Heiser from the text: "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city." The remains were interred by the Lexington Lodge I.O.O.F. in the Rice burial ground. Thus lived and died one of the oldest pioneers of our county, a consistent father, brother and husband and a good citizen. May we profit and forever cherish his virtues."-----The Chronicle, Scottsburgh IN Thursday 29, 1882.

## Sources:

Probate Records of Scott Co., Ind., 1820-1847, Greear & Bogardus, Muscatuck Press, 1970 source of date of 8 Feb 1847.

Placer County Archive

Online Archive of California California Digital Newspaper Collection

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/>

Other Names on his claim dated 7 Sep 1852

J. F. Talbot 1850 JA Talbot born 1813 in MA, miner in Calaveras; 1860 JA Talbot b 1820 Ireland miner in Calaveras

Henry T. Ashton 1850, Henry A. Ashton born 1831 Indiana, miner in Placerville; 1860?

P L Mafune or Maguire 1850, 1860 one in Grass Valley, b.1834 IR, labor with miners, other in Shasta, b.1840 IR, miner with father b. 1807 IR

W. P. Rice 1850 Sutter CA, 1860 Klamath CA. In the 1852 census he was in Placer, on the same page as Carnes and Zaner. He was born OH in 1822. In 1860 still in Placer, born 1818.

Samuel D. Cowdon 1850 Placerville, miner b 1820 IN; 1860 ?

Wm S. Walker 1850 with Ashton in Placerville, miner, b. 1831 Indiana; 1860?

George Zaus?? George Zaner, or Zance b. 1821 PA in Placer 1852, same page as Carnes James Proffitt

Levi Carnes Karnes in 1852, innkeeper born 1804 MA

Zadock Carnes watchmaker b 1805 MA in Placer Co

Alanson Beebe 3 in 1850 all born NY, in NY, OH, IL; 1860 had 2, one born NY in IL, other born MA in IA; got a pension in 1891, from Michigan, maybe Stockbridge or

Alanson Beebe 3 in 1850 all born NY, in NY, OH, IL; 1860 had 2, one born NY in IL, other born MA in IA; got a pension in 1891, from Michigan, maybe Stockbridge or Wolverine, arrested in Sacramento in 1851 for stealing \$800 of his mates' gold dust, had a claim in 1864 in Utah; formerly of Co L, 2nd Calif. cavalry, native of NY, admitted (maybe to Vet hospital?) from Santa Cruz in 1899, died 28 Oct 1913, born 1826; in 1902 he was of Santa Cruz. Enlisted in SF in 1861; jumbled trees. Guy who died in 1913 was in Illinois during Gold Rush years

GW Richey 1850, 1860: GM Roche b. 1824 KY miner in Yuba, CA; 1860?

D Richey ?

Cyrus Smith 9 in 1850 all in NY, PA, IL, WI, MI; 1860 b 1824 NY miner in El Dorado CA

(John) Wesley Armstrong from Fountain Co, IN, arrived at Rough and Ready in 1851, went to Sacramento in 1852, returned to the trade of plow making, studied, became lawyer in SF in 1855, then Superior Court Judge. Born 1834, died 2 Mar 1896, no kids but wife and sister

Joseph Nelson Puntney in Placer on Voter roll in 1869, 1871 and 1879. JN Puntney Joseph Nelson Puntney also Puntney in Placer in 1867, 1871 and 1879. Born 1824 in VA but resided in Indiana last. There were Puntneys in Rush County, IN

Wm Pool 1850 few with W as middle initial, including George W b 1827 IN; 1860 3, one in El Dorado b. 1831 England, and 2 in Grass Valley, both born England 1829 and 1831 Wm Pool

---

## **‘Tis The Season for Politics!**

**By Anne McGreevy**

Since it is a presidential election year, I thought it would be timely to shake the branches of the Royce family tree and see if any former elected ancestors reveal themselves. Oh boy, what an amazing find!

Robert Royce (b. 1605) and Mary ? (b. 16??), my 9th great-grandfather and 9th great-grandmother, had 7 children including Sarah, Nehemiah, Jonathan, Nathaniel, Samuel, Isaac and Ruth. I am a descendent of Nehemiah (b. 1637).

Nehemiah was a founder of the town of Wallingford, Connecticut where he built a house in 1672 and raised his family. Nehemiah 1 (b. 1637 in England), married Hannah Morgan (b. July 16, 1642 in Roxbury, Suffolk, Massachusetts) on November 20, 1660 in New London, Connecticut. They also had seven children including Joseph, Joanna, Mary, Margery, Esther, Lydia and Nehemiah (b. March 1682). Again I am a descendent of Nehemiah 2 born in 1682. But this is where I diverge from my ancestral line and explore the line that descends from Nehemiah's older sister Lydia.

Nehemiah's sister Lydia, two years his senior, was born on May 28, 1680. She was the 7th child born to Nehemiah Royce 1 and Hannah Morgan and the youngest of 6 girls. She also had both an older and younger brother (my 8th great-grandfather). Therefore, Lydia is my 8th great-grand aunt. Perhaps, you are a descendant of Lydia?

Lydia was born in Wallingford, Connecticut in 1680 and married a younger Daniel Messenger (b. 1683) on January 20th 1704 in Wallingford. Ten months later on November 30th in 1704 in Wallingford, Lydia and Daniel's daughter Suasanah was born. She would eventually become the eldest of 7 siblings. Suasanah married Ebenezer Hopkins II ( b. June 24th 1699) on June 7, 1727 in Hartford, Connecticut. Ebenezer and Suasanah had nine children including their youngest, Tabitha Hopkins (b. October 16, 1745) born in Harwinton, Litchfield, Connecticut. In approximately 1732 Ebenezer purchased land from his uncle Samuel Sedgwick of Hartford and moved his young family to the Harwinton/Litchfield area of Connecticut where their daughter Tabitha was born. Tabitha married Dr. Abithar **Millard** (b. June 22, 1744) born in Rehoboth, Bristol, Massachusetts on Sep. 30, 1761 in Amenia, Dutchess Co., NY. Then in 1770 Ebenezer moved to Pittsfield, Vermont where he was one of the original settlers. Litchfield is approximately 40 miles northwest of Wallingford and Harwinton is 10 miles east of Litchfield. Pittsfield is another 190 miles north of the Litchfield area.

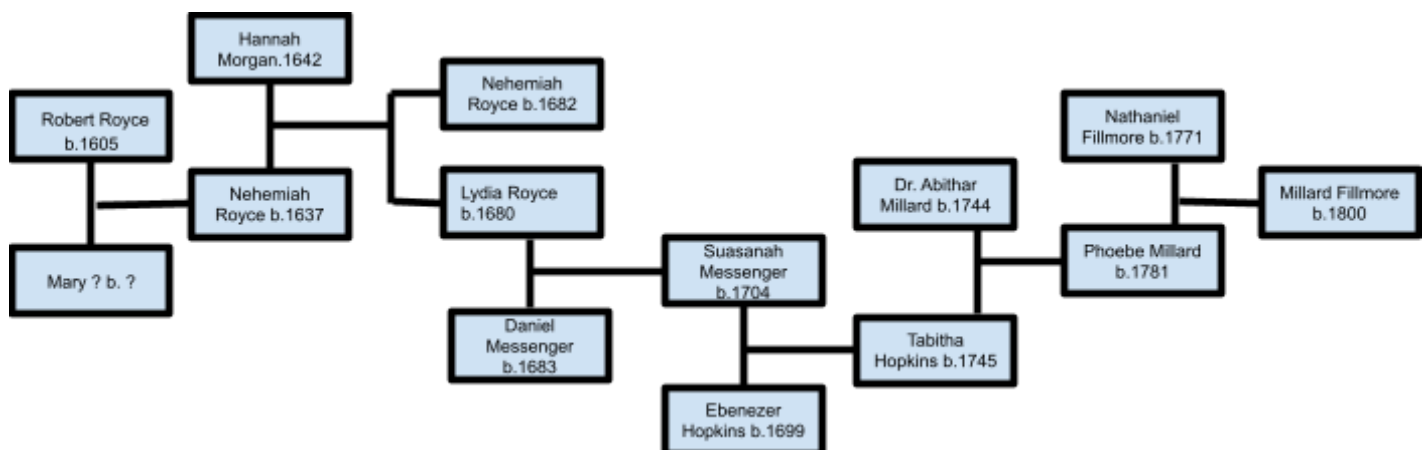
Suasanah was one of the Royce descendants who eventually moved away from Connecticut. Tabitha and her husband Abithar continued to move around as well. Their children are listed as being born in various parts of New York State, and Massachusetts. I assume they followed Tabitha's parents, Suasanah and Ebenezer to Pittsfield, VT because their youngest child is listed as being born there. Pittsfield, VT is approximately 170 miles north of Suasanah's original birthplace in Wallingford.

**Do you see where this is going?**

Tabitha and Abithar had at least 4 children including Phoebe (b. August 12, 1781) in Pittsfield, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. Phoebe married Nathaniel Fillmore Junior (b. April 19, 1771) in Bennington, Bennington County, Republic of Vermont. Phoebe would have been 15 when she married Nathaniel in 1796. They had nine children including their second born, Millard Fillmore (b. January 7, 1800), *who became the 12th Vice President and 13th President of the United States!* Unfortunately, Millard's mother Phoebe, did not live to see Millard become President, dying 20 years prior.

## Millard Fillmore's Family Tree

The good news is that President Millard Fillmore was not the worst President on



rankings of effectiveness of the U.S. Presidents, though he consistently ranks in the lower third. Most recently he was ranked at #38 out of 46 according to a 2022 survey of historians, political scientists, and presidential scholars. Historians place blame on President Fillmore for the signing of the Fugitive Slave Act passed by Congress, which required that slaves be sent back to their enslavers and free states were ordered to cooperate in their capture and return. At least Millard Fillmore is not ranked dead last and on a brighter note, he was elected as vice president and served as president.





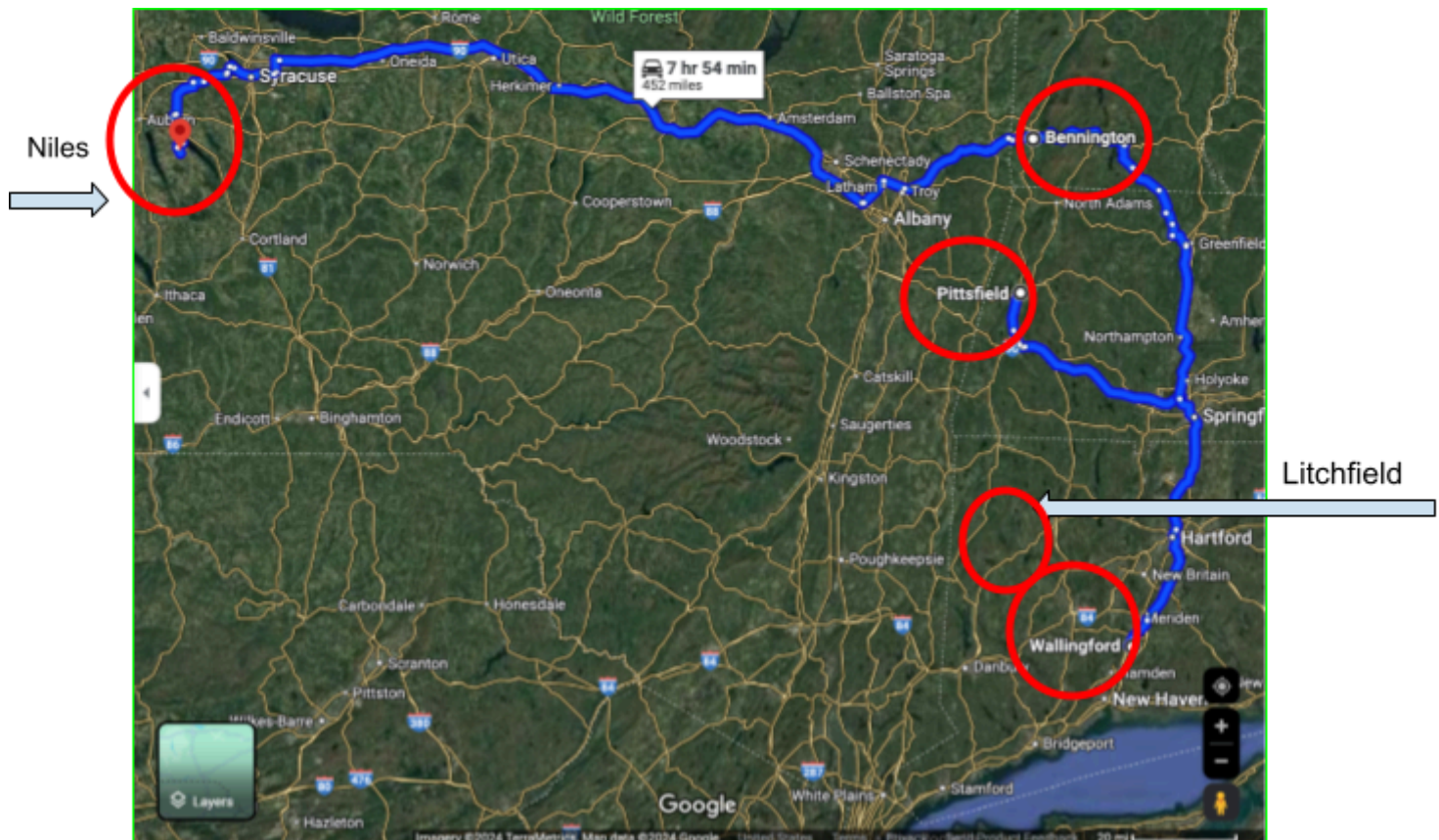
Jim Evans, Wikipedia Contributor

The original boyhood home of Millard Fillmore was a log cabin and was torn down in the 1930's and a replica was built in its place. Here is a link to an image of the original cabin. Copyrights are owned by Getty Images.

<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/the-early-home-of-president-millard-fillmore-in-new-hope-news-photo/3292594>

Millard was born on January 7, in 1800 in Locke, Cayuga, New York which is 200 miles west of Bennington, Vermont where his father, Nathaniel Fillmore, was born and his parents married. His father was a farmer in Bennington. In his mid-twenties Nathaniel and his brother purchased property in the Finger Lakes region of New York, but lost their new farms due to poor surveys, unauthorized land titles and dishonest land agents. Nathaniel worked as a tenant farmer and occasional school teacher to support his family. He then moved his family to Niles, NY where he eventually worked as a justice of the peace. Later in life he purchased a farm in East Aurora near Buffalo, NY., which became successful. Millard Fillmore's younger years were spent in poverty. He had no formal schooling. At age 14 Millard apprenticed to a clothmaker and while in Niles, young Millard Fillmore worked as a clerk for their landlord who was a judge. Millard studied to become an attorney and eventually

passed the bar and began working as an attorney in Buffalo and aspired to become a politician. Eventually he was elected to the New York House of Representatives in 1828 (not bad for a 28 year old) and the House of Representatives in 1832.

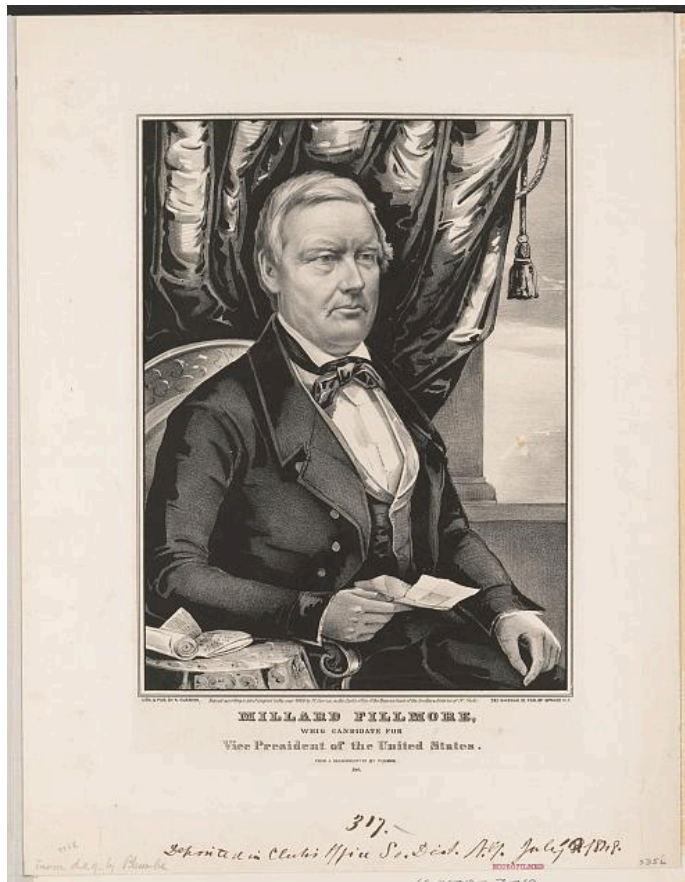


Google Maps: Shows location and distance of Wallingford, CT., Litchfield, Ct., Pittsfield, VT., Bennington, VT, and Niles, NY

Millard Fillmore was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives when he was elected as Vice President on November 7, 1848 serving with President Zachary Taylor. They were both nominated by the Whig Party. The campaign was in the wake of the Mexican-American War, the Fugitive Slave Act was front and center, and the Civil War was looming in near future. Abraham Lincoln who would later become president in 1861 campaigned for the Whig Party in 1848. When the votes were counted Taylor and Fillmore received 163 electoral votes and Cass and Butler received 127 electoral votes. (The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/statistics/elections/1>)



**Election advertisements: Millard Fillmore on the left for Vice President and on the right Taylor and Fillmore are promoted together by the Whig Party for the 1849-1853 Presidential and Vice Presidential term. Library of Congress.**



The campaign was full of personal attacks on both sides, with the “Democrats calling Taylor vulgar, uneducated, cruel and greedy, and the Whigs attacking Cass for graft and dishonesty”. Graft is a form of political corruption. Together, Taylor and Fillmore, began their 1st term in 1849. After a conflict with southern states in 1850 over the concern about slavery, Taylor died suddenly only a year into office. Millard Fillmore assumed the Presidency, but by 1853 he failed to secure the nomination for his party's next bid for the presidency. Fillmore was a member of the Whig party and the party was fractured over his signing of the Fugitive Slave Act which was part of a compromise between the Southern and Northern States. Fillmore served as President for only 16 months. One notable fact was that Fillmore was the last president to predate the democratic and republican parties and he was the last president not to be affiliated with the democratic or republican parties.

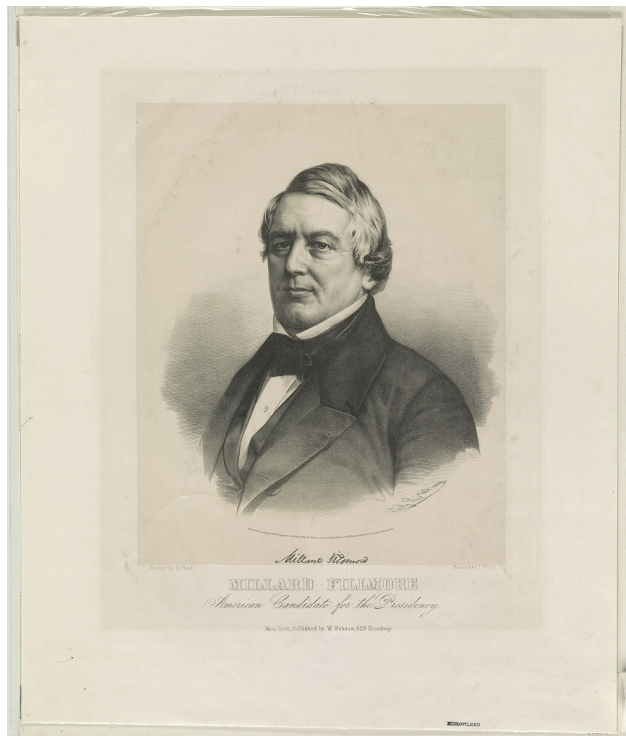
The Whig party was formed in 1834 and was active until 1854. It was composed of groups of people who banded together in opposition to what they perceived as executive tyranny of “King Andrew” Jackson. The term Whig was taken from the British party opposed to royal rights and privileges.



Portraits of President Millard Fillmore and his first wife and First Lady Abigail Powers Fillmore. Abigail died of pneumonia a few weeks after the end of President Fillmore's term in office in 1853. Library of Congress.

Below is a link to more information regarding the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.

[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/fugitive.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/fugitive.asp)



President Millard Fillmore. Library of Congress.



President Fillmore did not receive the nomination for the next presidential election. Franklin Pierce became President in 1853 and President Millard Fillmore spent part of his time travelling to Europe in 1855-6 grieving the loss of his wife Abigail and his daughter who died of cholera shortly after Abigail's death. It was there that he received notification that the Know Nothing Party (American Party) nominated him for President for the next upcoming election in 1858. While travelling in Italy he accepted the nomination for President in 1856. Below is an excerpt from his acceptance of his nomination for President.

*"MR. FILLMORE'S ACCEPTANCE. Paris, May 21, 1856. Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, informing me that the National Convention of the American party, which had just closed its session at Philadelphia, had unanimously presented my name for the Presidency of the United States, and associated with it that of Andrew Jackson Donohon for the Vice Presidency. This unexpected communication met me at Venice, on my return from Italy, and the duplicate mailed thirteen days later, was received on my arrival in this city last evening. This must account for my apparent neglect in giving a more prompt reply. You will pardon me for saying that, when my administration closed in 1853, I considered my political life as a public man at an end, and thenceforth I was only anxious to discharge my duty as a private citizen. Hence I have taken no active part in politics; but I have by no means been an indifferent spectator of passing events, nor have I hesitated to express my opinion on all political subjects when asked, nor to give my vote and private influence for those measures I thought best calculated to promote prosperity and glory of our common country. Beyond this, I have deemed it improper for me to interfere. But this unsolicited and unexpected nomination has imposed upon me a new duty from which I can not shrink; and therefore, approving, as I do, the general objects of the party which has honored me with its confidence, I cheerfully accept its nomination, without waiting to inquire of its prospects of success or defeat. It is sufficient for me to know that by so doing I yield to the wishes of a large portion of ' my fellow-citizens in every part of the Union, who, like myself, are sincerely anxious to see the administration of our government restored to that original simplicity and purity which marked the first years of its existence, and, if possible, to quiet that alarming sectional agitation, which, while it delights the monarchists of Europe, causes every true friend of our country to mourn."*

Internet Archive: Library of Congress

<https://ia800207.us.archive.org/23/items/mrfillmoreathome01buff/mrfillmoreathome01buff.pdf>

Fillmore was running against a Republican (John C. Fremont) and a democrat (James Buchanan). Buchanan received 178 electoral votes, Fremont received 114 and Fillmore 8.



**President Millard Fillmore died of a stroke At the age of 74 in 1874 in Buffalo, NY.**

*“Washington , March 9, 1874.*

It is with deep regret that the President announces to the people of the United States the death of Millard Fillmore, one of his honored predecessors, who died at Buffalo, N.Y., last evening.

The long-continued and useful public service and eminent purity of character of deceased ex-President will be remembered beyond the days of mourning in which a nation will be thrown by the event which is thus announced.

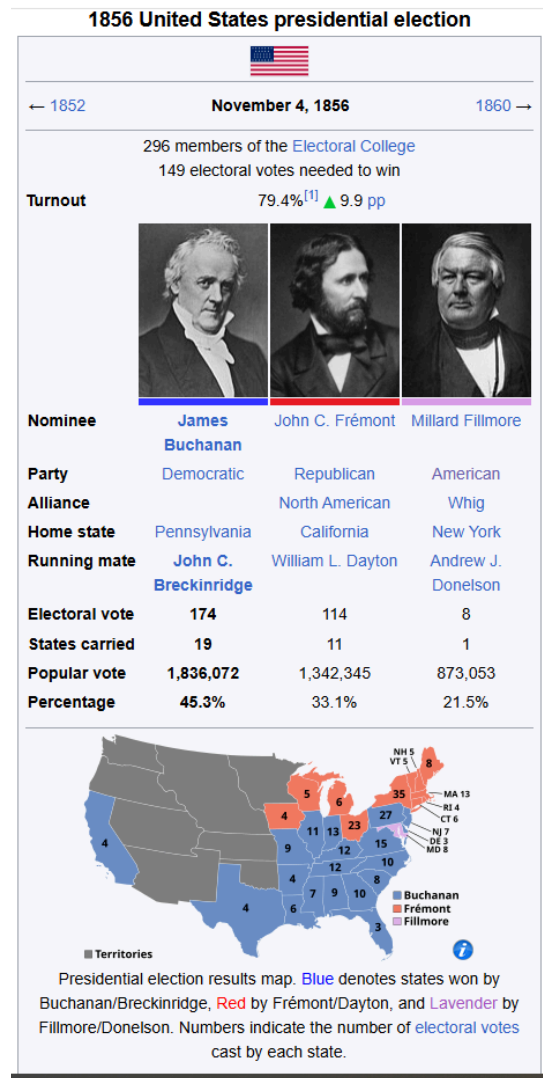
As a mark of respect to his memory, it is ordered that the Executive Mansion and the several Departments at Washington be draped in mourning until the close of the day on which the funeral shall take place, and that all business be suspended on the day of the funeral.

It is further ordered that the War and Navy Departments cause suitable military and naval honors to be paid on the occasion to the memory of the eminent citizen whose life is now closed.

U.S. GRANT”

**Link to timeline of Millard Fillmore’s Life:**

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/millard-fillmore-papers/articles-and-essays/time>



**Wikipedia:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1856\\_United\\_States\\_presidential\\_election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1856_United_States_presidential_election)

**The Royce Family Association  
1930 Oak Ave.  
Boulder, CO 80304-1319**