

Tombstone Tuesday: Fireworks Incidents in 1863

SINGULAR AND FATAL ACCIDENT.—Several days since a young man, seventeen years old, passed a corner in the west division near which was a package of exploding fire-crackers. One of the dangerous missiles entered his mouth and completely cut in two his tongue. The poor fellow lingered in great agony until Tuesday, when death put a period to his sufferings.—*Chicago Tribune*.

Ten days since the son of Dr. R. B. Treat was so severely burned by one of these dangerous missiles as to be still kept in the house. There is far too much carelessness and danger in the use of all kinds of fireworks.

“Singular and Fatal Accident” in Janesville (Wisconsin) Daily Gazette, 20 June 1863, Vol. 7, No. 89, Page 3, Column 1.

And it wasn't even July 4th!!

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. See above caption for source.

Click to enlarge any image. Please contact us if you would like an image in higher resolution.

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Friday Funny: Spellbinding Entertainment

—The Young People's Societies of the M. E. Church will hold a union sociable on the church lawn Saturday evening, Aug. 3. Cake and ice cream will be served from 6 to 10 o'clock. Spelling contest between Senior and Junior Leagues at 8 o'clock. Don't fail to attend this spell-binding entertainment.

"Spellbinding entertainment" in Monroe,

Iowa. 2 August 1895 "Monroe Mirror," Vol. 23, No. 40, Page 3, Column 3.

[Roberts Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

Our ancestors Elizabeth Ann Murrell and her husband John Roberts lived in/near Monroe, in Jasper County, Iowa. It has always been a small town, and they made their own entertainment, as people still do in small towns. They were also members of the M. E. (Methodist Episcopal) Church there, so may have been chaperones or otherwise involved in this "sociable" on the church lawn.

Of course, don't miss the pun. Many of us know an incredibly wonderful man who was born in Jasper County, and who would never miss a chance for a pun... Maybe he came by that ability/terrible trait honestly by growing up in its midst? (Though this 'sociable' was way before his time.)

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. Source as above.

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[Tombstone Tuesday: Alfred and Marths S. \(BARRY\) PAYNE](#)



Headstone of Alfred and
Martha S. (BARRY) PAYNE,
Ivanhoe Cemetery,
Mundelein, Lake County,

Illinois, via Find A
Grave with kind
permission. (Click to
enlarge.)

[McMurray Family, Payne Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

Alfred and Martha Stedman (Barry) Payne had almost 55 years of marriage together before they were parted by the death of Alfred at age 79. Martha survived her husband by about 14 months. She was six years older than Alfred, so was 87 when she passed away.

The couple is buried in Ivanhoe Cemetery, in Mundelein, Lake County, Illinois. Their monument can be found in Section B-East-Lot 21.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. Images taken by a very kind Find A Grave photographer. Thank you for allowing us to use them!
2. Alfred Payne Find A Grave Memorial# 93659548—<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=93659548>
3. Martha Stedman (Barry) Payne Find A Grave Memorial# 93659547— <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=93659547>

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Amanuensis Monday: The 1880 Agriculture Schedule for Aaron and Ann Elisy (Murrell) Brown

OF THE PERSON WHO CONDUCTS THIS FARM.	ACRES OF LAND.								FARM VALUES.		
	CULTIVA.			IMPROVED.		UNIMPROVED.			Of farm, including land, fence, and buildings.	Of farming implements and machinery.	Of live stock.
	Owned.	Rents for fixed money rental.	Rents for shares of produce.	Tilled, including fallow and grain in rotation, (whether pasture or meadow.)	Permanent meadows, pastures, orchards, vineyards.	Woodland and forest.	Other unimproved, including "old fields" not growing wheat.	Dollars.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Magg. Ely	/			80					2200	75	750
Jonathan Ely	/			180					4800	100	550
Joseph Gasper	/			80					3000	200	980
John Sherman	/			80					2000	100	600
Brown Aaron	/		X	100					1800	200	600
Murrell, W. A.	/			240					6000	300	2200
Roberts, John	/			120					2400	100	300

1880 US Federal Census Non-Population Schedule for Mound Prairie Township, Jasper County, Iowa for Aaron Brown, page 9, Line 5. (Click to enlarge.)

[Roberts Family, Murrell Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

The year 1880 found Ann Elisy Murrell and her husband Aaron Brown, along with their children, in Mound Prairie Township, Jasper County, Iowa. In addition to being on the population schedule (the regular census list), the family was included on the 1880 Agriculture Schedule (AKA 'Non-Population Schedule') that listed the details of their farm. They were included in this census just before Wiley Anderson Murrell, Eliza's father, and her sister's husband, John Roberts.

In 1880 Aaron Brown owned the land he was farming (probably had a mortgage on it though), however Wiley and John were renting their land. (They were farming on shares- they worked someone else's land but provided a portion of their crops to the owner in lieu of paying a cash rent.)

An 'amanuensis' is one who copies manuscripts, or, in this case, we are using it to mean one who puts into a narrative what is basically a chart (the Ag census)- sort of writing it out to make a bit more sense.

Aaron and Eliza owned 100 acres, a farm slightly smaller than John Roberts' rented land of 120 acres, and much smaller than Wiley Murrell's 240 acres of leased land. (But they *owned* those 100 acres!) The value of Aaron and Eliza's farm, including land, fences, and buildings, was \$1800, and they had \$200 worth of implements and machinery to work it. The family had spent \$20 on building and repairing the farm during 1879.

The estimated value of all farm production, either sold, consumed by the family, or still on hand, for the previous year was \$1300.

The farm had 3 acres of grasslands that were mown to produce 4 tons of hay. This hay would be important fuel for the 'engines' of the day- horses and mules. The family owned 5 horses (not all would be the larger work horses) and 2 mules/asses. They did not have any working oxen.

The family had 4 "milch" cows on hand on 1 June 1880. The census lists 3 other "Neat Cattle"- probably beef cows for the family, and maybe including a bull for increasing the herd. Three calves were 'dropped' (born) during 1879, and 2 of their cattle were sold living; 1 died, stayed, or was stolen and not recovered. The total value of their livestock was \$600.

The 'milch' cows were important for making butter as well as the milk that would have been used for drinking and cooking. During 1879, 325 pounds of butter were made on the farm, most likely by Eliza and her daughters. (Only 2 of the 9 farms on that census page had higher butter production.)

The family did not own any sheep, but did have 23 swine (pigs) and 40 poultry birds, with the value of eggs produced in 1879 listed as \$160. The pigs were often women's work, and the poultry would have definitely been taken care of by the women and children- it was a busy life for all on the farm.

Aaron and Eliza's livestock was worth \$600 in total.

The family did not grow barley or buckwheat, but did plant 60 acres in Indian corn, the multi-colored corn that we now see as decorations in fall. This corn is usually preserved by drying (or making hominy in the south). The family farm produced 3,000 bushels of this corn, and 500 bushels of oats on the 20 acres planted; both were probably fed to animals. Four acres planted in rye produced 60 bushels, and 20 acres of wheat yielded 200 bushels. At least some of the wheat would have been milled into flour for the family's use, if not all. To finish off the family's needs for baking, 3 acres were planted in sorghum, yielding 500 gallons when pressed of a nutritious and somewhat sweet syrup that would have been used sometimes instead of sugar. They likely sold much of that or traded for other goods at the local general store.

The Ag Schedule also lists 2 acres planted in Irish potatoes (white), yielding 150 bushels to bake, mash, put in good

midwestern potato salad, etc.

The Ag Schedule also tells us what they did not grow on the farm: hops, tobacco, sweet potatoes, pulse (beans like soybeans), flax and hemp (both used for fibers and ropes), no broom corn, nor maple sugar/molasses. They also did not have any orchards, grapes/vinyards, nor a 'market garden' where they grew produce to sell. (They most assuredly had their own family vegetable garden, however.) They also did not have beehives for honey or wax, and did not sell any forest products.

Obviously, life on a farm was a very full day of work in the field, barn, chicken coop, pigsty, and home.

American farm life may seem easier today with big combines and computerized planting, but a farmer's life is still a tough one. We need to respect and appreciate our farmers and their families throughout all our history, as they built and fed America, and still do today. Having a secure food supply, by it being produced right here in America, is so important to our county's safety and security.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. 1880 US Federal Census Non-Population Schedule for Mound Prairie Township, Jasper County, Iowa for Aaron Brown, page 9, Line 5. Available on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.

Click to enlarge any image. Please contact us if you would like an image in higher resolution.

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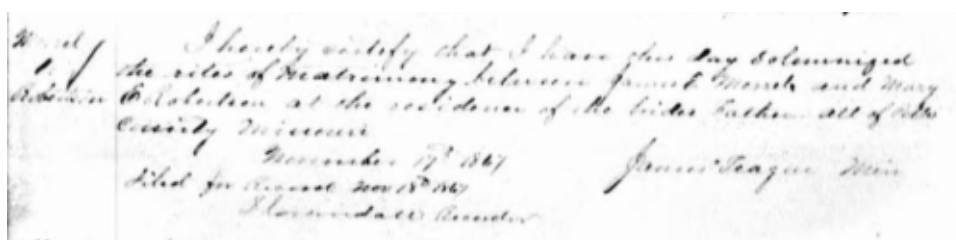
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Wedding Wednesday: The Marriages of James Edward Murrell



7 November 1867- Marriage Record for James E. Murrell and Mary E. Robinson. (Click to enlarge, but scan very hard to read.)

[Murrell Family, Roberts Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

James Edward Murrell received his final pay and discharge in Illinois after serving in the Union Army of the Civil War. We do not know if he returned to the family farm in Warren

County, Illinois, right after the war, or if he moved back to Missouri (where he had worked in 1860).

We do know, however, that he married Mary E. Robinson about two years after his discharge, on 17 November 1867 in Pettis County, Missouri. (Wonder if he had met Mary when he and his brother William Anderson Murrell were working in Missouri before the war?) The marriage record states that they were married at the home of the bride's father, and all were "of Pettis County," Missouri. So James had moved back to Missouri sometime after the war, and set down roots.

The parents of James migrated to Iowa in 1868, and some of their children went with them. Maybe, since some of their other children had moved far away from Warren County, Illinois, Wiley Anderson Murrell and his wife Mary Magdalen (Honts) Murrell had an easier decision as to whether or not they would migrate west. (See previous posts for details on this migration.)

We don't know Mary E. Robinson's history before the marriage, nor the names of her parents, so this is some additional research to add to the list.

James and Mary had 6 children born in Missouri: William Murrell b. 1869, James R. Murrell (1871-1951), Ida J. Murrell (1873-1917), Luther George Murrell (1877-1929), baby 1879-?, and Clifton Clemons Murrell b. 1882.

The family was in Elk Fork Township, Pettis, MO at the 1870 census. James was listed with Mary and 2-year-old son William. He was noted as a farmer with \$200 in personal estate- no real estate value was listed. This suggests that he did not own land, so taking a look at his neighbors was the next research, as he may have been farming for them or a family member. Sure enough, on the census page prior, is his brother John Murrell with wife Lydia Rayburn and their two children. (John and Lydia had moved to Pettis sometime between their marriage in

Warren Co., Illinois in 1862 and the 1870 census.) John was enumerated as a farmer with \$1740 in real estate value, and \$500 in personal estate value. Between entries for John and James a Benjamin Robertson and his wife and son were listed, and Benjamin was a farmer born in Missouri— he could be Mary's older brother if the names were confused (Robinson/Robertson). Benjamin had \$1950 in real estate and \$300 in personal estate. Both Benjamin and John were 5-10 years older, so could have been the big brothers, helping their younger sister and brother (respectively) get started in farming. None of these farmers are found in *The History of Pettis County, Missouri, including an authentic history of Sedalia, other towns and townships, together with ... biographical sketches...* by I. MacDonald Demuth, 1882, unfortunately, so it is hard to know more about their life and relationships.

James and Mary Murrell were still in Pettis County at the 1880 census, and in Calhoun, Henry, MO by 1900. Mary died 20 February 1905, and in 1910 James was living with his son James & family at age 68. Son James was listed as a farmer in Bowling Green Township, Pettis County, and they are noted as being on the Ag Schedule; they probably were living on the farm, maybe even the family farm?

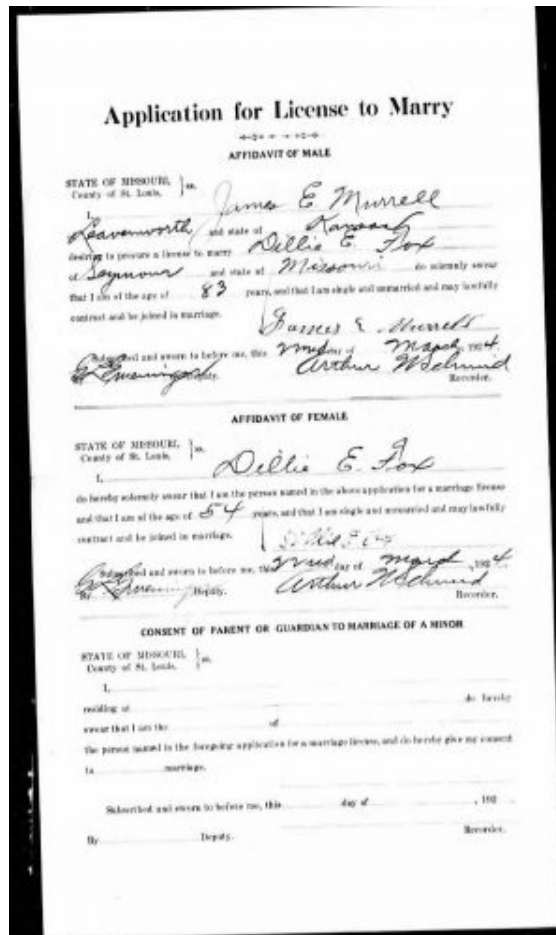
In 1912 at age 70 James was in a US National Home for Disabled Soldiers in Delaware, Leavenworth, KS and is noted there multiple times through 1922.

Life changed for James E. Murrell on 22 March 1924. He married Dillie E. Fox on that date in Clayton, St. Louis, Missouri. That is on the other side of the state from Kansas— wonder how this marriage came about? And how did we learn about this marriage?



James Edward Murrell and his wife, likely Dillie E. Fox, in the early 1920s at Seymour, Missouri.

The above picture was kindly provided by cousins (thank you!) but it did not seem to be taken before 1905, when Mary E. (Robinson) Murrell died. Additionally, Mary was only about four years younger than James, and the unnamed woman in this picture appears quite a bit younger. Finding the death certificate of James helped solve this mystery- the informant was "Dillie E. Murrell" of Seymour, Missouri. So this image is likely of James with his second wife. A search brought up a Missouri marriage record for the pair:



22 March 1924 marriage record for James Edward Murrell and Dillie E. Fox, via "Missouri Marriage Records 1805-2002" on Ancestry. (Click to enlarge.)

James and Dillie were to have two years together as husband and wife.

The rest of their story will be in a future post.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. James Edward Murrell, Find A Grave Memorial #60556601 <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=6>

[0556601](#)

2. Mary E. (Robinson) Murrell, Find A Grave Memorial #60556678
<https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=60556678>
3. Re: Find A Grave Memorials- please note that this author wrote the biographies on the memorials, so we are not plagiarizing in this post.
4. "The History of Pettis County, Missouri, including an authentic history of Sedalia, other towns and townships, together with ... biographical sketches..." by I. MacDonald Demuth, 1882.

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