



THE  
**SUNFLOWER**  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
RENO COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

**VOLUME 41 ISSUE 2 - May 2019 - ISSN 1048-048X**

## **The Dean Family**

*The Dean family has been associated with Reno County since their settlement here in 1873. This family history is provided courtesy of Jerry Hodgson Dean with the assistance of other Dean family members who grew up in Reno County. Jerry Dean is a member of RCGS. We are grateful for his dedicated work at documenting and sharing his family story with us.*



### **ALBERT APOLLOS DEAN**

Albert Apollos Dean moved to Reno County, Kansas in 1873 coming from New York. He homesteaded a half-section 4 miles west of Nickerson.

He was born on December 15, 1842 in Allen, New York, to Apollos and Wealthy Dean. He enlisted in the 85th New York Volunteer Infantry on September 1, 1861, at the age of 18, motivated to support the Union cause during the Civil War. After surviving the battle of Fair Oaks under General McClellan which resulted in 10,000 casualties, he was taken captive by the Confederate army when the garrison at Plymouth, North Carolina was captured on April 20, 1864. He was marched to Hamilton and then to Tarboro, where the prisoners were crowded into boxcars with about 50 men in each boxcar.

The train arrived at the infamous Andersonville Prison in Georgia on May 1, 1864.

In Andersonville, Albert Dean was forced to find his own shelter and he experienced all of the notable deprivations well documented in this prison camp. All of the prisoners were sick with scurvy, dropsy, starvation, and other diseases and exposures. In Albert's first month at the prison, an average of 90 prisoners died each day. A friend and fellow prisoner, **George Washington Benjamin**, helped him stay alive in prison. According to his daughter-in-law, Leora Dean, "Albert was wounded and sickly. George was big and husky so he made himself useful to guards so got along pretty well and would smuggle food to Albert." As the Union army advanced toward Andersonville In September

of that year, the Confederate army began forcing the healthy prisoners to march to their prison camp in Charleston, South Carolina. Albert Dean was too weak to walk, which would have ended with his being shot and killed where he lay, but again George Benjamin helped Albert by holding him up, walking out, and making the 310-mile march to Charleston. Albert was paroled from the prison there on December 11, 1864, before being discharged on July 10, 1865.

After the war, Albert Dean returned to New York and completed his college education there. His friend from the war, George Benjamin, married Albert Dean's sister, Adaline Augusta Dean.

It was at this time in 1873 when Albert homesteaded west of Nickerson, and began his life in Reno County. Here he and his neighbor, **George Brooks**, built a sod house on the property line, with half of this soddie on each man's homestead claim.

Eventually he was able to build a solid home on his property. Although it is no longer used as a dwelling, it remains standing and is visited by family members when they are able.

**THIS ISSUE: THE DEAN FAMILY**

## **JOHN & MARY WHEELER**

One mile south of Albert Dean's homestead claim, the family of **John & Mary Ellen (Ruddick) Wheeler** settled onto their new homestead in August of 1873. They traveled to Kansas by covered wagon from Illinois. John Oliver Wheeler had served in the 98th Illinois Volunteer Mounted Infantry during the Civil War, serving in Wilder's Brigade and the Army of the Cumberland. He received gunshot wounds in the hand and the back, and was eventually promoted through the ranks to First Lieutenant.

While Albert and John shared "war stories" together, it was John's daughter, **Emma Elizabeth Wheeler**, who caught Albert's eye. She was 11 years younger than Albert, having been born in Jasper County, Illinois, on February 14, 1854. Albert and Emma were married in Nickerson, Reno County, Kansas on June 13, 1875.

### **Mary Elizabeth Wheeler**

Last Sunday closed the earthly career of one of God's noble women, Mrs. J.O. Wheeler. For a long time she had been a sufferer and friends realized the end must come soon; but even so, the loss is heavily felt by many in this community to whom she was ver dear.

Mary Ruddick was born in Jackson county, Ind., August 8th 1831. Died at her home in Nickerson July 12th, 1914. Aged 82 years, 11 months and 4 days.

August 16th, 1852, she was united in marriage with J.O. Wheeler. To this union six children were born, four daughters and two sons. Of these, one son, Chas. H. Wheeler, remains to mourn her loss. Two sisters and one brother, several grandchildren and a host of friends lament her departure. It is not often that husband and wife are permitted to journey together as long as Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler - almost 62 years. No doubt he most of all who survive her will miss her most keenly.

She was born and reared among the Society of Friends, and professed conversion at the age of 8 years and so has given most of her life to the Master's service. She united with the Methodist Episcopal Church 11 years ago and her life has always been a blessing to her entire membership.

With her husband and family she came to Kansas in 1873 and has lived here or near here until called to the better world. Thee funeral was held from the M.E. Church Monday afternoon, the services being conducted by Rev. Abernethy. *The Nickerson Argosy, Thursday, July 16, 1914. Page 1.*

### **Another Pioneer Claimed By Death**

John Oliver Wheeler, son of Orrel H. Wheeler and Elizabeth (Love) Wheeler, was born in Jackson county, Indiana, November 8, 1830, and died at the home of his son Charles H. Wheeler in Hutchinson, Kansas, March 6, 1919, aged 88 years, 3 months, and 28 days.

On the 16th of August, 1852, he was married to Miss Mary Ruddick of Jackson county, Indiana. To this union were born six children: Emma E., who married Albert Dean; Alice, who married J.M. Asher; Solomon; Julia; Clara Jane who married William H. Dean; and Charles Harvey Wheeler, all of whom, together, with the wife and mother, have passed to the higher realm, except Charles H., who, with 14 grandchildren, are left to mourn the passing of their worthy ancestor.

Mr. Wheeler attended the common schools of Jackson county, Indiana, and was a student in the high school in Jennings county, Indiana. After leaving school he engaged in farming and also learned the carpenter's trade, and was following these pursuits when the Nation called for defenders of the Flag, and to perpetuate the union of the States. he answered the call by enlisting for service on August 14th, 1862, in the 98th Regiment Illinois Volunteers, Mounted Infantry, Wilder's Brigade, Army of the Cumberland, and served until the close of the war. He was twice wounded in action, and in recognition of his bravery and fitness to command he was promoted through the minor grades to First Lieutenant, and at the close of the war was in command of his company.

Mr. Wheeler came from patriotic ancestry. His paternal grandfather, Nehemiah Wheeler, served under Washington in the war of the Revolution entering the service at the age of 16 years and was present at the surrender of Yorkton. His maternal grandfather John Love was a soldier in the War of 1812. And their devotion for the cause of liberty was manifested by him in the meritorious service he rendered for the liberation of the Slaves of the Nation. He was permitted to live and witness that the spirit of loyalty manifested by his ancestry was transmitted by him to his worthy grandsons who

rallied to the Colors in the Great World War, in the persons of Ralph O. Wheeler, now in France; Gilbert L. Dean and John W. Dean, both recently honorably discharged from service.

After the war he resumed farming, and in May, 1873, he moved from Indiana to Kansas, and took a homestead four miles west of Nickerson, and he and his family endured all the hardships of the early settlers of Kansas. At the organization of Medford Township he was elected a Justice of the Peace. He was a worthy member of Reno Post, Grand Army of the Republic, and was loyal to its tenets, "Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty," until taps sounded, "The Soldier Sleeps."

Mr. Wheeler was converted at the age of 24 years, and from that date until his passing he lived a consistent Christian life, and grew in grace as he grew in years wholly devoted to the Master's work, and became a thorough Bible scholar and practiced its precepts. For 15 years preceding his death he became partially blind, which deprived him of the pleasure of reading the Word of God which he delighted to pursue.

He was frugal in his habits, generous to the unfortunate, and faithful to every trust imposed, and as a husband, father, neighbor, citizen, patriot, soldier and Christian, his life was rounded and complete.

The funeral services of Mr. Wheeler were held Saturday. A short service at the home of his son Charles in Hutchinson was followed by services here at the Methodist Church at 2 o'clock, by his Pastor Rev. L.E. McNeil. The G.A.R. burial service was conducted by his



comrades of the Post, and the remains were deposited in Wildmeade Cemetery beside his wife and children who preceded him. *The Nickerson Argosy, Thursday, March 13, 1919. Page 1.*

## ALBERT & EMMA DEAN

### Mr. Albert Dean & His Visitor

Mr. G. Lincoln, of Alleghany county, New York, was in Hutchinson to-day with his old friend Albert Dean, with whom he was visiting, and who lives in Medford township. He is well impressed with county and city, and so expressed himself. He was not expecting to see so much improvement in the county, nor such a bustling business city. Mr. Dean says he has begun marketing peaches. He first began hauling them off, but soon found he had too many to handle and accordingly advertised for people to come and load up at his farm. He has sold over 500 bushels, and will have as many more. He loaded a dozen light wagons at his farm yesterday. He seels them at \$1.00 per bushel. It is another proof that it pays to diversify farming, and that fruit growing is a large and growing business. Mr. Lincoln says that he is enjoying his visit very much, and will have some good things to say of Kansas when he returns to his home. He is a farmer himself, and knows a good county when he sees it. *The Hutchinson News. Wednesday, September 13, 1893. p. 6.*

### Back From New York

Albert Dean and daughter, of Medford township, have returned from a visit in New York state. They were in Livingstone county where a reunion of the old regiment, the Eighty-seventh New York, was held. In company E, to which Mr. Dean belonged, there were none of the boys left excepting Mr. Dean and his bunkmate, and the reunion was therefore not nearly so large as it has been in years past. *The Hutchinson News, Hutchinson, Kansas. Monday, September 12, 1904. Page 5.*

### Mrs. Dean Killed In Runaway

Albert Dean's brother (William) married Clara Wheeler, who was his wife's sister. William & Clara are buried in Nickerson. "The funeral of Mrs. William Dean, who was killed Saturday night in a runaway, was held at Nickerson Monday afternoon. Mrs. Dean and her daughter were returning in a wagon to their home 12 miles west of Hutchinson, when in going down a hill the neck yoke broke. This let the wagon tongue down and the wagon was overturned. She died soon after the accident." *The Hutchinson News. September 18, 1907. p. 5.*



**Mrs. Benjamin Dead.** Albert Dean's sister, Adaline Agusta Benjamin, died in 1908. "Mrs. G.W. Benjamin died Wednesday morning at her home 3 miles southwest of Nickerson, after an illness of several months, during which she was a great sufferer. Short services were held at the house this morning at 10 o'clock, and the remains were laid to rest in Wildmead cemetery. Special funeral services will held Friday at 10:30 a.m. at the M.E. Church, conducted by Rev. Rogers of Hutchinson, who was unable to be here today. Mrs. Benjamin was an intelligent and energetic woman whose influence was felt in whatever departments of public efforts she engaged, while at the same time she was always a loving and capable wife and mother. She will be sadly missed in both home and society. Words seem cold in expressing sympathy to the sorrowing husband and two sons in their bereavement. *The Nickerson Argosy, August 13 1908. Page 1.*

### **Albert A. Dean**

Albert Apollos Dean was born in Allen, Allegany county, New York, December 15, 1842 and the days of his childhood and youth were spent on his father's farm and in the schools of his native town. He enlisted at the age of 18 in Company E, 85th Regiment, New York State Volunteers, and served in the Army of the Patomac. He re-enlisted January 1, 1864. and was taken prisoner by the Confederates at the battle of Plymouth, N.C. April 20, of the same year, and for 9 months was held a prisoner of war, the most of the time at Andersonville, where he was reduced to a mere skeleton by starvation; and when he returned to his home he was but a shadow of his former self. Youth, vigor, health, all but life - and almost that - had been given for the country and the flag he loved. But the same indomitable will that sustained him through startvation and suffering, helped him to regain, in a measure, his strength, and when kansas was in her infancy he came here and founded a home in Medford township, where he has since resided.



G.I. Dean, the eldest brother, came here for a visit last September, and together they attended the National Encampment G.A.R. at Denver, Colo., and since that time he has been in failing health. Medicine proved unavailing, and two weeks ago he took the advice of friends who had received benefit at Exelcior Springs, Mo., and went to that health resort. For a few days he felt that he was improving, and wrote encouragint notes to his anxious family, but on Tuesday morning, November 28, a message came summoning his friends, and his wife and son took the first train and went to him as fast as steam could carry them. They had only been gone from home a few hours when another message brought the news of his death, which occurred at noon on Tuesday, November 28, Aged nearly 63 years.

The many beautiful flowers which covered his casket, contributed by loving friends... testify to the love we bore him.

### **Emma E. (Wheeler) Dean**

Emma E. Wheeler was born in Jasper Co., Ill. on Feb. 14th 1854. Died Aug. 16th 1912, aged 58 years six months 12 days. When she was 18 years of age she came with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J.O. Wheeler, to Kansas. In 1875 she was married to Mr. Albert Dean. To this union 7 children were born, all of whom survive to mourn her loss. Mr. Dean, her husband, died 7 years ago.



Mrs. Dean was converted 30 years ago, and united with the Congregational Church. She lived a consistent Christian life, and departed in the full faith of the Gospel. "Her children rise up and call her blessed." *The Nickerson Argosy. September 5, 1912. Page 1.*



## CHILDREN OF ALBERT & EMMA

**Frances Oliver Dean** was their firstborn, blessing his parents 9 months and 10 days after their marriage, on March 23, 1876. He, as well as his siblings, were raised on the “old homestead” west of Nickerson. He served as a private in Company A, 21st Kansas Infantry, during the Spanish-American war.



He married Nancy Arizona Guthrie, commonly known as “Zona,” on January 22, 1900 in Alva, Oklahoma and together they settled down to farm life 5 miles west of Hutchinson on Mohawk Road along the Arkansas River. Zona died of a ruptured appendix on February 21, 1941.

Frances, or “Frank,” died in Hutchinson at the age of 95 years, on July 26, 1971. Frank & Zona had 5 children: Floyd LaFayette Dean, George Emil Dean, Raymond Alton Dean, Gladys May Dean, and Clifford William Dean.



**Frederic Elmer Dean** was born in 1878. He served together with his older brother Frank during the Spanish-American War. However, he was in ill health at the time and spent time in the military hospital. Fred died in 1940, and is buried in the Wildmead Cemetery in Nickerson.

**Orra Hall Dean** was born in 1881 and died in Hutchinson, Kansas on July 26, 1971. He worked as a farm hand and never married. It is said that he was somewhat of a hermit, living alone and rarely bathing. The family joke was that when Orre went to bed his trousers would stand up by themselves in the corner of his room.



**Clara Mae Dean** (“Daisy”) was born in Nickerson in 1884. She was the oldest daughter. She lived in New York and was a buyer for Macy’s. She never married. Clara died in 1939 and is buried in Wildmead Cemetery in Nickerson.



**Gilbert Lincoln Dean** (“Bert”) attended the Dean school on the corner of the homestead, as had his siblings. As a young man he and his brother Fred traveled to the oil fields of California, staked a claim for gold at Lake Tahoe, dove for pearls in Louisiana, and hunted for baby parakeets in Mexico to deliver to the Riverside Park zoo in Hutchinson.

He married Leora Green and they settled in Hutchinson. They had 4 children: Patricia, Berta Lea, Mary Lou, Carlin Emery, and Gary Wayne Dean. Bert died in Hutchinson on March 23, 1973 and Leora passed away on March 14, 1994.

**Elva D. Dean** was the second daughter born, arriving in 1889. She died at about age 1. Her death notice is brief: "The infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Dean was buried Sunday, December 21, at the Salem cemetery." She has no headstone. *The Nickerson Argosy, Nickerson, Kansas. Thursday, January 1, 1891. Page 1.*

**Myrtle Hazel Dean** was born in 1892. She never married. She was a school teacher in a one-room school house in Reno County. When she retired from teaching she moved to New York to care for her aunt Daisy for some time, before returning to Kansas. She died in the Larned State Hospital in 1952 and is buried in Nickerson's Wildmead Cemetery.

**Elsie Fanny Dean** was born in 1899. As was her sister Myrtle, Elsie was a teacher in a one-room school house in Reno County. She married Ralph Cole and had one son, Lynn Seely Cole. When Elsie was 26 years old, just after the birth of her son, she was thrown from a horse and died from the injuries.



**Death Of A Sylvia Woman.** Mrs. Elsie Fanny (Dean) Cole, of Sylvia died at a local hospital Saturday afternoon, June 20, 1925. The funeral will be held from the Methodist Church at Nickerson. Mrs. Cole was born at Nickerson and was educated in the schools of that city. After graduation she taught school near Nickerson and Hutchinson. She was married March 4, 1924 to R.L. Cole, of Sylvia. Surviving her are her husband and infant son, 6 days old, four brothers and 2 sisters. *The Hutchinson News, Hutchinson, Kansas. Monday, June 22, 1925. Page 2.*

The community was saddened Saturday when the report came announcing the death of Mrs. Ralph Cole at the hospital in Hutchinson. She leaves a little son Linn Seely, just one week old. *Sylvia Correspondent for The Hutchinson News, Hutchinson, Kansas. Thursday, June 25, 1925. Page 11.*

Mr. and Mrs. **Lewis Forney**, Mr. and Mrs. **Albert Dean**, Mr. and Mrs. **John Justice**, and **William Pearson**, of Medford township, are in Hutchinson to-day as witnesses in the divorce case of their Medford Township neighbor, **Crawford** vs. **Crawford**. *The Hutchinson News. Friday, January 31, 1896. Page 5.*

The **Sunflower** is published quarterly by the Reno County (Kansas) Genealogical Society, PO Box 5, Hutchinson, Kansas 67504. To be added to the mailing list, submit materials, or for more information about the content listed in this issue, contact **Darren McMannis**, at **Darren@RenoCountyRoots.com**. RCGS reserves the right to edit submissions and other material for space, content, clarity, grammar, and spelling. This newsletter may be freely photocopied and distributed, in its entirety, as long as it is not reproduced for profit or personal gain.

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