

Will the Real George Mowrey Please Stand Up?

By Dani Crossley

I was tasked with finding the parents of George Mowrey/Maurer/Mowery/Mourer/Moury. Here is what I was given to begin the search:

- 1) George was born about 1840 in Butler, PA
- 2) He married Emma Elizabeth Stone and was with her family in Hazle Township, Luzerne County, in the 1870 census
- 3) He died July 23, 1897 in Watertown, Codington County, South Dakota
- 4) He might be the George Mowrey listed in the 1850 census with John and Deborah Mowrey in Mifflin Township, Columbia County.

I first discovered that the George Mowrey, son of John and Deborah, who had been suggested as our George Mowrey in the 1850 census in Mifflin Township, Columbia County actually was not. This George Mowrey lived his whole life in Mifflin Township, dying there in 1914. Since our George died in South Dakota in 1897, we did not have a match.

So the big question was where was OUR George Mowrey in 1850 when he might have been living with his parents? The facts as they were presented to me were that he was born about 1840 in Butler, PA. I almost got off on the wrong path exploring the town of Butler in western Pennsylvania near Pittsburgh. Fortunately, I found a George Mowrey, 11 years old in 1850 in BUTLER TOWNSHIP, Luzerne County, PA. That's the next county east of Columbia County and I have a little research experience there. It also coincided nicely with the fact that George was in the 1870 census with his wife Emma Stone and her mother in Hazle Township, Luzerne County. There is also a possibility that the George Murry listed in the 1860 Hazle Township, Luzerne County census with the Simons family as a miner was our George.

The kicker, of course, was that George was not with his parents in the 1850 census. He was living with Samuel Thrasher, age 34; wife Molly, age 21; and son Edward, age 6/12. I tried to find Samuel Thrasher in the other surrounding censuses and had no luck at all. Then I noticed that someone had entered a correction for the Thrasher surname, changing it to Drasher. Imagine my surprise when upon clicking on the Drasher correction, I was the person who had submitted the correction in 2010! After I got over my shock, I realized that I had researched this Drasher family for a friend of mine and opened her tree to explore the family data there. Unfortunately, there were no Mowreys in that tree. At first I guessed that perhaps Molly's surname was Mowrey and George was living with his sister. It turned out that Molly/Mary's surname was Santee.

The fact that George was not living with his parents suggested to me that it was very likely his parents had died. I entered the last name Mowrey in its various forms in the newspapers.com website with the parameters of 1840-1850 hoping to find a death notice that might lead me to his parents. In the August 18, 1847 edition of *The Luzerne Union* (Wilkes-Barre, PA) appeared a notice for an "Orphans' Court Sale for the Estate of Abram Mowrey dec'd, late of Butler Township." The two Administrators of the estate were Philemon Santee and Jacob Drasher. I knew I was on the right trail.

Orphans' Court Sale,
Of the Estate of Abram Mowrey dec'd,
late of Butler Township.

BY VIRTUE of an order issued out of the Orphans' Court of Luzerne county, there will be exposed to public sale on Wednesday, the 20th day of October next at 2 o'clock P. M., at the house of Elias Acre, on the premises, the following described property to wit:

A tract of land in the Township of Butler, Luzerne County, and bounded on the north by lands of Jacob Huffaker; on the east by lands of William Beers and Jacob Eroh; on the south by lands of Peter Rote, and west by lands of the late Redmond Conyngham, and Philip Drum, containing two hundred and thirty two acres more or less, about one hundred acres improved, and having thereon erected a two story log house, a frame barn, saw mill and the necessary out buildings, with a large orchard on the said premises.

Also, one other piece of land situate in Butler Township, aforesaid, bounded on the north, east and south by lands of Henry B. Yost, and west by Michael Beislone, Jr., containing three acres more or less, with a small frame house thereon; late the estate of Abram Mowrey dec'd.

By order of the Orphans' Court.
 WM. P. MINER, Clerk.

TERMS OF SALE.—One third cash—one third in three, and one third in six months, with interest secured by Judgment on the property.

PHILEMON SANTEE,
 JACOB DRASHER,
 ADMINISTRATORS.

Butler, Aug. 15, 1847.

Findagrave.com had an entry for Abraham Mowery in Saint John's Cemetery, Saint John's, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. He was born 19 Oct 1802 and died 12 Oct 1846 (age 43). Through that findagrave.com entry I was able to find his wife Catherine **Drasher** Mowery in the same cemetery. She was born 20 Jul 1807 in Drums, Luzerne County, PA and died 3 Mar 1844. This date is wrong. Cemetery/burial records in the Annals of Sugarloaf Historical Association indicate she died 28 Mar 1844. This makes better sense as their daughter Catherine Mowery was born 11 Mar 1844 and survived. She married a John Hart and is buried in Mountain Grove Cemetery, Mountain Grove, Luzerne, PA, dying in 1896.

I returned to trying to find the connection between George Mowrey and the Drashers/Santees. I knew Abraham's wife Catherine was a Drasher. It appears she was a daughter of Samuel Simon Drasher and Anna Maria Miller, and sister to Jacob Drasher, one of the Administrators of Abraham's estate. Philemon Santee, the other Administrator, is Samuel Thrasher/Drasher's wife Molly's father. Therefore, George Mowrey was living with his maternal cousin Samuel Drasher in 1850. George's mother Catherine and Samuel's father John were siblings. Philemon was the father-in-law of Abraham's wife's nephew Samuel Drasher and also Abraham's next door neighbor.

ST. JOHNS BURIAL RECORDS

Katherine, wife of Abraham Maurer, died at the age of 36 years, 7 months and 12 days on March 24th, 1844, at 12:30 a. m., was born on August 12th, 1807, buried March 25th at 3 p. m.

Through further church, burial and orphans court records, I found that George had two siblings: Josiah, 1837-1900, who petitioned the court along with George to have guardian Jacob Drum assigned in 1855; and Catherine Mowrey Hart, 1844-1896.

Mary/Molly Santee Drasher (wife of Samuel) died in 1852 a couple weeks after giving birth to daughter Sara Adeline, who died three months after her mother. Samuel was with his father's family in the 1860 and 1870 censuses.

I have a possible lead on Abraham's father, but that project will have to wait for another time. I finished my search confident that our George Mowrey was the son of Abraham and Catherine Drasher Mowrey of Butler Township, Luzerne County, PA.