

The C♦DPHS is an association of individuals dedicated to the preservation of the history of our community. To the preservation of the region's oral history, literary history, social history, graphic and pictorial history, and our history as represented by the region's artifacts and structures. To the preservation of this history for future generations. To the art of making this common heritage accessible to the public. And to the act of collaborating with other individuals and organizations sharing similar goals.

The Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical Society's

Letters, Email, Bouquets & Brickbats

— or —

*Bits of Chatter, Trivia, and Notices
— all strung together.*

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The Clayton ♦ Deer Park Historical Society's Mortarboard Index.

— Damon Smathers —

Contacting the Society:

We encourage anyone with observations, concerns, corrections, or additional materials related to these newsletters or the history of this region to write or email the Society. See the "Society Contacts" box on the last page of this issue.

On February 15th, 2023, Susan Dechant, President of the Northeast Washington Genealogical Society, sent our Society President Bill Sebright an index containing entries of surnames and events pulled from our own library of newsletters, the *Mortarboards*. This index was sorted alphabetically and also included dates, places, and events. This was a significant amount of work on Susan's part, and we can't thank her enough for sharing it with us. Susan stated we could "use and sort this database anyway we want." Therefore, my project over the last few months was to "map" our *Mortarboards* to her database. Without going into too many database details, I made sure to map her data entries to the correct *Mortarboard* year, month, and page number. This now gives us the option to search our library of *Mortarboards* for specific content. This is a significant step in making sure a large portion of our Society's work over the past 15+ years is more accessible and usable.

One of the biggest hurdles we face when tasked to find specific information is combing through our *Mortarboards* to see if we have applicable content readily available. Sometimes this can take 10 minutes, sometimes this can take much longer. In an effort to further expand our *Mortarboard* index, our next step with this project will be to include more specific keywords in our database. For example, you may want to search for "Standard Lumber Company" or "Arcadia Orchards Irrigation" or "Williams Valley School". Once this portion of the database is completed you will be able to find the correct

Mortarboard issue upon searching and download it directly off the website. In essence there is a vast amount of information concealed within our *Mortarboards* and we want to make sure YOU can find it.

In total our *Mortarboard* archives include 170 issues and 2500+ pages worth of historical content related to Clayton, Deer Park, and the surrounding areas. Longtime *Mortarboard* editor Wally Lee Parker stated, "One of my editorial philosophies regarding the *Mortarboard* was to make it data-rich – especially to the eye. Which is to say, I wanted the magazine tightly packed with ink in the form of photos, text, graphs, sidebars, and the like." This is a perfect description of what you will find within our library of newsletters. We have subject matter ranging from but not limited to prior businesses, past events, prominent figures, schools, churches, pioneers, and countless stories of lives once lived in the area. If your family has a history in Deer Park, Clayton or surrounding area there is a good chance they are mentioned in our *Mortarboard* index. You can download and search our index here: <http://cdphs.org/cdphs-index.html>. You can also find our index by visiting the front page of our website: <http://cdphs.org>.

It is encouraged for Society members and website visitors to view the recently released index and search for anything that piques your interest. In total there are over 7500 entries of names plus events captured from our *Mortarboards*. In the coming months we will be releas-

ing periodic updates to our index in hopes that you can easily find what you're looking for. Our main goal with the CDPHS *Mortarboard* Index is to further expand on a key element of our mis-

sion statement: "To the art of making this common heritage accessible to the public."

In Search of Louis Thiesmeyer — First Postmaster at Elk.

— Wally Lee Parker —

There are some significant problems when looking into a period of history beyond the memory of anyone living now. Under such circumstances an antiquarian's understanding must be drawn from records — documents, newspapers, diaries, letters, legal filings, and the like — or from physical artifacts — sketches, photographs, existent buildings, tools, and items of such lineage. While this diverse evidence may inform the creation of a hypothetical story, it's always wise to remember that extrapolating too much beyond what is clearly suggested by such flotsam is likely to turn what began as an historical story into fiction.

The search outlined here started with a document — an "application for the establishment of a post office at Elk, County of Spokane, State of Washington." It was dated "November 24th, 1891." This document was one of a series of microfilm images downloaded from a collection of like documents held by the "United States National Archives & Records Administration," these among a group cataloged under the title "Post Office Reports of Site Locations, 1837 — 1950." A link to that site will be included at the end of this article.

As pioneers moved into areas previously unsettled by any but native peoples, one of the services most desired was to have the United States Post Office deliver and pick up the mail. Early on this usually wasn't to an individual's address, but rather to some convenient location within the community. Deliveries and pickups were often made just once or twice a week. And for the patrons within an easy commute of such remote locations sometimes numbering less than a hundred souls, such post offices were often just a corner in a rural store or even a private home, and the compensation given for those acting as parttime postmasters was equally casual.

To begin the process of establishing such a post office, an application needed to be submitted. The upper portion of the application form — such as the one seen on page 9 — explains

the nature of the form and indicates that "a neighboring postmaster" will need to "certify to the correctness of the answers and return the location paper to the Post Office Department in Washington," — that being Washington, D.C. That portion of this form was signed by "E. G. Rathbone, Fourth Assistant Postmaster General." Mr. Rathbone served as said assistant from 1891 until 1893.

On the bottom portion of the application copied on page 9, the first signature line was signed by Louis Thiesmeyer, and dated December 16th, 1891 — Mr. Thiesmeyer being the intended postmaster at the Elk Post Office. The second certifying signature, that of "a nearby postmaster," was inked by Chattaroy's postmaster, Thomas Hogue.

Regarding the location of Elk's post office, the image on page 10 — assumedly from the next leaf of the indicated application — is a hand-drawn map identifying the proposed post office's location down to the quarter section. It then goes on to indicate said location as it relates to other area post offices — Chattaroy to the south, Idaho's Albany [sic] Falls to the east, Nickel to the west — and even though its direction isn't mentioned on the application — Calispell is clearly to the north.

The settlements at Chattaroy and Albeni Falls are well placed in the literature as to location. I'm finding essentially nothing about Nickel, though the December 16th, 1891 application states Nickel was along a north trending mail route some six miles due west of the proposed Elk Post Office — that suggesting it was about a mile and a half west of the lower reach of Eloika Lake. As for the Calispell Post Office, that had been established several years earlier some 18 straight-line miles north of the proposed Elk site. The materials provided by the National Archives site suggest Calispell deserves an article of its own, and that's under consideration.

The next research objective was to draw up as much information as currently available

P.K.

No. 1011.

(LOCATION PAPER.)

Post Office Department,

OFFICE OF THE FOURTH ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL,

APPOINTMENT DIVISION,

WASHINGTON, D. C., 11. 24, 1891

Sir: Before the Postmaster General decides upon the application for the establishment of a post office at Elk, County of Spokane, State of Wash., it will be necessary for you to carefully answer the subjoined questions, get a neighboring postmaster to certify to the correctness of the answers, and return the location paper to the Department, addressed to me. If the site selected for the proposed office should not be on any mail route now under contract, only a "Special Office" can be established there, to be supplied with mail from some convenient point on the nearest mail route by a special carrier (see section 733, Postal Laws and Regulations of 1887), for which service a sum equal to two-thirds of the amount of the salary of the postmaster at such office will be paid by the Department.

You should inform the contractor, or person performing service for him, of this application, and require him to execute the inclosed certificate as to the practicability of supplying the proposed office with mail, and return the same to the Department.

Very respectfully,

E. G. Rathbone
Fourth Ass't Postmaster General.

To Mr. _____
care of the Postmaster of _____, who will please forward to him.

STATEMENT.

The proposed office to be called

Elk

Select a short name for the proposed office, which, when written, will not resemble the name of any other post office in the State.

It will be situated in the N. E. quarter of Section 29, Township 29 (North or South), Range 44 (East or West), West, in the County of Spokane, State of Washington.
 It will be on or near route No. 711.324, being the route from Chataroy to Calispell, on which the mail is now carried once times per week.
 Will it be directly on this route?—Ans. No.
 If not, how far from it?—Ans. 12 Miles
 If not on any route, is a "Special Office" wanted?—Ans. Yes. To be supplied from Chataroy
 The name of the nearest office to the proposed one, on one side, is Nickel, its distance is 6 Miles miles in a west direction from the proposed office.
 The name of the nearest office, on the other side, is Albany Falls, its distance is 15 Miles miles in a East direction from the proposed office.
 The name of the other nearest office to the proposed one is Chataroy, its distance by the most direct road is 12 miles in a South direction from the proposed office.
 The name of the most prominent river near it is Little Spokane.
 The name of the nearest creek is Say Creek.
 The proposed office will be 1 1/4 miles from said river, on the W. East side of it, and will be 1/2 mile from said nearest creek, on the West side of it.
 The name of the nearest railroad is Spokane & Northern.
 If on the line of or near a railroad, on which side will the office be located: how far from the track: and what is or will be the name of the station?—Ans. East Side of R.R. 15 Miles from Track. Station Saagoon
 If it be a village, state the number of inhabitants.—Ans. _____
 Also, the population to be supplied by the proposed office.—Ans. About 150
 A diagram, or sketch from a map, showing the position of the proposed new office, with neighboring river or creek, roads, and other post offices, towns, or villages near it, will be useful, and is therefore desired.
 A correct map of the locality might be furnished by the county surveyor, but this must be without expense to the Post Office Department.

ALL WHICH I CERTIFY to be correct and true, according to the best of my knowledge and belief, this 16th day of December, 1891.

(Sign full name.) Louis Thiemeyer Proposed P. M.

I CERTIFY that I have examined the foregoing statement, and that it is correct and true, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Postmaster at Chataroy

(OVER.)

From the National Archives: Post Office Reports of Site Locations, 1837-1950 — Washington State.

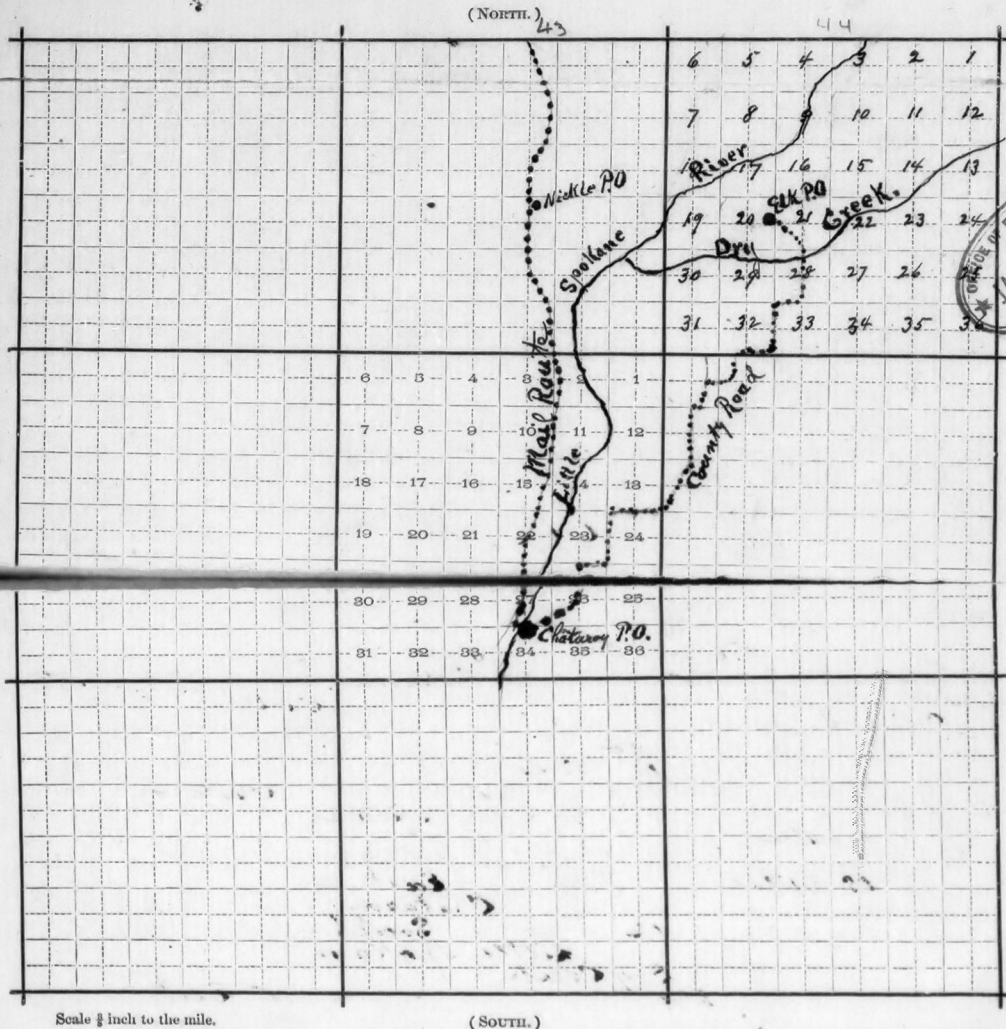
Be careful to answer the inquiries fully and accurately, or the case will not be acted upon.

Applications for post offices should be accompanied by petitions of the citizens interested.

Diagram showing the site of the Elk. Post Office,
 in Township 29 (N. or S.), Range 44 (E. or W.) of
 Meridian, County of Spokane Principal
 of Washington State
 with the adjacent Townships and Post Offices.

It is requested that the exact site of the proposed or existing Post Office, as also the roads to the adjoining offices, and the larger streams or rivers, be marked on this diagram, to be returned as soon as possible to the Post Office Department.

Elk, Wash



From the National Archives: Post Office Reports of Site Locations, 1837-1950 — Washington State.

regarding Louis Thiesmeyer.

The first item located was the following from the March 13th, 1892 edition of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. The article's heading read "Washington Post Offices," after which it stated, "The following post offices have recently been established in the state of Washington." Among the thirteen listed was, "Elk, Spokane County, Lewis Thiesmeyer." Of all the materials so far found, this is the only one that spelled Louis

Thiesmeyer's first name as "Lewis."

The next document is one that was filed in Seattle on 23rd of October, 1944 — this a "Washington State Department of Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Certificate of Birth — Delayed Registration." The application was for Louise Thiesmeyer, female, born December 2nd 1894 at Elk, Washington.

Louise's father is listed as 37 years old Louis Thiesmeyer, originally from Germany.

Her mother was Emma, maiden name Muehle, also a German immigrant and reportedly 34 years old at the time of Louise's birth. An image of this certificate is pasted on page 12 of this issue of the newsletter.

Returning to 19th century items, the May 30th 1897 *Spokesman-Review* carries an article titled "Educators Meet." The first sentence explains, "Matters pertaining to the public schools were discussed at length yesterday by the Spokane County School Offices' Association at the offices of Superintendent Hopson. At roll call 74 school officers responded, representing 53 districts." After stating the names of most of the attendees, including "T. Louis Thiesmeyer," the newspaper added, "Besides the officers mentioned were a number of teachers ..."

We can't assume this was our Louis in that there's nothing so far found that would suggest Elk's first postmaster used the initial 'T' prior to what we've been assuming to be his first name. Could it be a typo? Yes. Could it have some other meaning, such as "teacher?" Looking over the way the newspaper presented the list of names, I'm not seeing a pattern that would suggest such. So, at this point I'm not ruling out the possibility that Elk's Mr. Thiesmeyer was among those attendees classified as "school officers" — whatever that means. Since the actual Louis Thiesmeyer was sufficiently adept at reading English to qualify as postmaster, being a school official seems within easy reach.

The next mention is found in the March 7th, 1905 edition of the *Spokane Chronicle*. Under the lead "City and County Real Estate Transfers," the following notice, reproduced here exactly as written, reports "Section 20-29-44 — East 1-2 of se 1-4 and sw 1-4 of se 1-4; Louis Thiesmeyer to A. A. Jayne."

What we should assume from this is suggested by our next bit of evidence, this found in the 1911 Canadian Census for the Province of Alberta's District of Medicine Hat — said district being a large segment of the Province's southeast corner, said segment bordering with the Province of Saskatchewan on the east and the State of Montana on the south.

Sources indicate the 1911 census began in the summer of 1910 and ended late that year. The data accumulated was analyzed and made available in 1911.

Louis Thiesmeyer, his wife Emma, and their daughter Louise are all listed. The census form indicates they all have December birthdays — respectively in 1858, 1861, and 1894. Their ages on the birthday prior to being interviewed were 52, 49, and 16. Their place of birth, again

respectively, Germany, Germany, and the U.S.A.

Regarding their date of immigration into Canada, the reply box for each indicates 1906. And then for them becoming naturalization Canadian Citizens, 1910. Louis's occupation is "Farmer." And all three family members can read and write English and speak the same.

The next document is from Canada's 1916 Prairie Provinces Census, with Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba the provinces being tabulated. The Census District mentioned on Thiesmeyer's 1916 census form is Bow River, rather than Medicine Hat. I suspect this isn't saying the location of Louis's farm has changed, but rather it means the number and outlines of the census districts are being changed due to the rapid rise in southern Alberta's population occurring in those decades. It's probable the family's place of residence for all of the forms I'll be mentioning here was a farm somewhere within what would become Vulcan County — said administrative district formalized in 1951. The inclusion of an administrative "Rural Municipality" called Marquis is found on the 1916 form. According to 1916's final report, the population of the Municipality of Marquis was 450 souls that summer.

Looking forward a few years, the July 30th 1919 issue of the *Spokesman-Review* carried an article datelined "Elk, Wash., July 29." Following was this report. "Carl Muehle, an old resident of this place, died at his home Saturday. He leaves a family of five children here and one brother, William Muehle, and two sisters, Mrs. Emma Thiesmeyer and Mrs. Augusta McNaughton, all of whom are residing in Alberta." I believe the above-mentioned Emma Thiesmeyer was Louis Thiesmeyer's wife — that assumption confirmed by other materials.

The listing of Louis Thiesmeyer and family in 1931's census for the Province of Alberta, Electoral District of Bow River, Municipality of Marquis, is something of a physically revised mess — meaning containing scratch-outs and overwriting. Reading around it all, we see 72-year-old Louis Thiesmeyer listed as the head of household. Emma is absent. Forty-one-year-old William Haight, birthplace Ontario, is listed as Louis's son-in-law. Lulu is listed as Louis's 38-year-old U.S.A. born daughter, and as William's wife — best guess would be that Lulu is Louise's nickname, although so far this is the only place I've seen it used. Nine-year-old Fredrick, birthplace Alberta, is listed as William and Lulu's son and Louis's grandson. And the last child listed is 7-year-old Emma, the U.S.A. her stated birthplace.

CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH—DELAYED REGISTRATION

Full name Louise Thiesmeyer Sex f Date of birth Dec 2nd 1894
Place of birth Elk (City or town), Spokane (County), State of Washington

FATHER Full name Louis Thiesmeyer **MOTHER** Full maiden name Emma Muehle
Place of birth Germany Place of birth Germany
Color or race White Age 37 Color or race White Age 39
(Years) (Years)

(NOTE: Age of parents must be given as at time of this child's birth.)

AFFIDAVIT OF APPLICANT

I hereby declare upon oath that the above statements are true.
(To be signed by registrant, if possible)

Signature Louise Thiesmeyer (now Mrs. Haff) Address Wentworth Apts. Edmonds
Subscribed and sworn to before me on September 19th 1944, at Edmonton, Alberta (Place)
[SEAL] H. H. Gaubert Notary Public.

(APPLICANT—DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE)

ABSTRACT OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Kind of Document No. 1	Signed by	Issued by	Date Issued	Date Made
Affidavit of * aunt	Mrs. Harry Mc Naughton	Notary Public	Sept. 4, 1944	same

Information Concerning Registrant as Stated in Above Document

Birth Date or Age	Birthplace	Name of Father	Full Name of Mother
Dec. 2, 1894	Elk, Washington	Louis Thiesmeyer	Emma Muehle

Kind of Document No. 2	Signed by	Issued by	Date Issued	Date Made
Affidavit **	Marie C. Sudhoff	Notary Public	Aug. 21, 1944	same

Information Concerning Registrant as Stated in Above Document

Birth Date or Age	Birthplace	Name of Father	Full Name of Mother
Dec. 2, 1894	Elk, Washington	Louis Thiesmeyer	Emma Muehle

Kind of Document No. 3	Signed by	Issued by	Date Issued	Date Made

Information Concerning Registrant as Stated in Above Document

Birth Date or Age	Birthplace	Name of Father	Full Name of Mother

Additional information: *Affiant states she is a sister of registrant's mother and was present at the time of this birth.

**Affiant states she was a neighbor at the time of this birth, was 24 years old and has reason to know the above facts are true.

I certify that no prior certificate has been found for this registrant and that documentary evidence has been seen and read substantiating the facts above abstracted.

Filed at Seattle, Washington, on Oct. 23, 1944

A. Bailey
State Registrar.
By [Signature]

From Washington State Archives — Digital Archives.

I did find this obituary for Louise’s husband, William Daniel Haight, in the December 30th 1977 issue of the *Edmonton Journal*. To quote, “On December 28, 1977, William Daniel Haight passed away at the age of 88. Survived by his loving wife Louise, daughter Emma, grandson James, two brothers, John Lawson Haight of Glendale, California, and Wilfred L. Haight of Edmonton. He was predeceased by his son, Charles Fredrick in 1942.”

And then this, from the January 25th 1990 issue of the *Edmonton Journal*. “On January 23rd, 1990, Mrs. Louise Haight of Sherwood Park passed away, age 95 years. She leaves to mourn one daughter, Emma Haight of Sherwood Park. Louise was predeceased by one son, Fred in 1942, her husband, William in 1978, and one grandson, Jim in 1988.”

The closest documentation we have to the actual birthdates for the Thiesmeyer elders — Louis and Emma — are those stated in Canada’s 1911 census, where Louis’s birthdate was given as December 1858 and Emma’s as December 1861. A suggestion regarding the specific days in December can be found on the “*Find a Grave*” website. On such, Louis’s birthdate is listed as December 22nd, 1860, and Emma’s as December 24th, 1860. There’s an obvious inconsistency in birth years between the data from the 1911 census and that from the “*Find a Grave*”

website.

If we were to revise the dates of birth and death by substituting the years from the 1911 census for those from the “*Find a Grave*” website, but keeping the “*Find a Grave*’s” specific days in December, that would mean Emma’s age at death was 68 years, 3 months, and 28 days, and Louis’s 81 years, 10 months, and 15 days.

Further evidence that the birthyears for the elders couldn’t have both been 1860 is found in Louise’s application for a delayed birth certificate. Combining the birthdate data from the 1911 census and the “*Find a Grace*” website indicates that on Louise’s date of birth her father would have been just 8 days shy of 36 years old, and her mother ten days shy of 33 — rather than the 37 and 34 years given on the delayed certificate.

All these figures are a little bit off. But even then, the nearness of everything suggests a more than coincidental relationship.

Among other things, this search has suggested that Emma Thiesmeyer’s back home family — Elk’s Carl Muehle Sr. and descendants — have an extensive history in northern Spokane and southern Pend Oreille Counties. Hopefully we’ll be able to find enough information to flesh out that family’s history a bit more as well.

Links to Research Sources:

[Post Office Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950 | National Archives](#)

The images seen on pages 9 and 10 are from the above noted website. In the explanatory text on that page you’ll find subheadings titled “Contents of Site Reports,” “Arrangement of Site Reports,” and “Multiple Reports.” Read each carefully to fully understand how to navigate the rolls of images.

[Washington State Archives, Digital Archives](#)

Above is a link to the site containing documents such as that seen on page 12. That would include birth certificates, death certificates, marriage licenses and certificates of dissolution, among others. Though the records are far from complete, most of those that have been imaged are downloadable.

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Website — <https://www.cdphs.org>

Facebook — Login to your Facebook account, then type

“Clayton & Deer Park Historical Society” into Facebook’s search engine.

Society’s Office: South side of the Deer Park City Hall Complex, 300 Block of East ‘A’ Street — look for the sign.

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