

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society is a group of individuals dedicated to the preservation of the history of the area just north of Spokane, Washington. The Society collects oral, literary, and pictorial history to publish and otherwise make accessible to the public.

The Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society meets on the second Saturday of each month at 9 AM. We gather at the Clayton Drive-In, located just off Highway 395 on Railroad Ave.

THE

CLAYTON/DEER PARK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mortarboard

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THE 1921 OIL BOOM IN THE CLAYTON-DEER PARK AREA

By PETER COFFIN

INTRODUCTION

In the first two decades of the 20th century oil was beginning to replace coal as the primary source of energy for the United States. Oil well drilling in California, Wyoming and Texas during this period of time had discovered millions of barrels of oil at relatively shallow depths. In California's Los Angeles Basin nearly every topographic high was an anticline and produced oil from depths of less than 2000 feet when they were drilled. Oil seeps such as the La Brae tar pits were obvious signs indicating the presence of oil in the basin. In the late teens and early 1920's eastern Washington with its undulating topography became a target for oil promoters and confidence men. Oil companies such as the Clayton Oil Company, the Wild Rose Oil Company, the Eastern Washington Oil Company, the Big Dome Oil Company and the Deer Park Oil Company were formed and issued capital stock which was sometimes ex-



Figure 1: Eastern Washington Oil Company sales booth in 1920's. This company drilled the well shown in Figure 4. I wonder if the oil samples on the table were among those analyzed by the United States Geological Survey. (Photograph from the Collection of Gerald Quinn)

changed with landowners for oil leases.

Even before this time oil exploration had taken
(Continued on page 566)

Free — Take One

(Continued from page 565)

place in the Clayton Deer Park area. A newspaper article reported that an area somewhere in the "... immediate vicinity..." of Clayton was drilled to depths of nearly 2400 feet in 1901. Oil was supposedly recovered from this well at the rate of 300 barrels per day but a casing collapse and "... exceedingly cheap..." California oil caused the well to be abandoned¹. It seems incredible that the location of such a good well had been lost in the time period from 1901 to 1921. In 1900 other oil well drilling had occurred in the Wild Rose area where Ezra Eickmeyer had worked on the well. Almost all of the material for this article was taken from newspaper articles which probably are incomplete and possibly mistaken in some of the details reported. There are newspaper articles reporting oil leasing and drilling in the Deer Park-Clayton area in the teens, the 1930's and the 1940's.

LAND LEASING AND DRILLING PROMOTIONS

The topography of the Deer Park and Clayton area contains ridges of high ground that became the centers of oil leasing. Commonly an oil company will send out its land man, or a contract land man, to check courthouse mineral ownership so they can be sure of whom they approach for a lease. The oil company then begins to lease a block over what is mapped as having the most potential. The potential lease block is generally large enough to include all the possible oil accumulation area so that if a well was drilled as a discovery the oil company would own most of the potentially productive acreage for future development drilling.

As soon as court house title checking and land leasing begins everybody takes notice and usually local entrepreneurs and business men also begin to lease land in hopes of taking part in a discovery. Many small companies were formed to lease lands and were generally promotional schemes designed to sell stock and potentially enrich the principals of the company.

An example of local citizens forming a company was the Deer Park Oil and Gas Company that was created to develop "Deer Park's oil resources" with

a stock capitalization of \$1,500,000. The seven incorporators were: E. N. Robinson (President of Arcadia Orchards Company), O. F. Kelly (President of the First State Bank), O. F. Follevaag (attorney and Vice President of the First State Bank), M. Binzen (retired "capitalist"), H. H. Evans (Proprietor of the Deer Park Drugstore), O. E. McCutchon (President of the Deer Park Hardware), and W. M. Leuthold (President of the Deer Park Lumber Company). All of these men were citizens of Deer Park and not associated with any oil promoter from outside the area. This group was reported as having acquired leases for potential drilling².

Another attempt to capitalize on the oil boom was the 1921 advertisement the Deer Park Groshong Land Company ran in the Deer Park Union with the headline of "OIL OIL OIL"³. This advertisement hinted at the possibility of oil and gas being under the farm lands it listed for sale.

CLAYTON-DEER PARK POTENTIAL OIL AREAS

In the Clayton-Deer Park area there are north-northwest trending topographic highs. Notably the topographic high between Wild Rose Prairie and Williams Valley along Monroe Road, the topographic high extending from just north of Denison to northwest of Deer Park and the Dahl Road area, and the topographic high extending northward from the old lumber mill site towards Enoch Road and Montgomery Road west of Spring Creek⁴. These topographic high areas were interpreted as anticlines similar to those in California which produced oil from shallow drilling depths.

The parallel between "anticlines" and positive topographic relief was drawn in a March 1921 Deer Park Union newspaper article⁵. In this article "geologists" are reported to have made this connection. The article commented further that land owners whose land had been leased were convinced that there was no good reason why oil "...will not

(Continued on page 567)

(Continued from page 566)

be found here...”.

In the Clayton area an “oil magnet” operated by a George Mizner indicated that there was an oil pool 2800 feet wide and said that this was over 5 times as wide as the Burbennett oil field in West Texas. It is unclear in this newspaper article that the oil magnet had been operated over the Texas oil field which was said to be only 500

feet wide at that time. The Burbennett field is today a giant field and covers a much larger area than reported by Mr. Mizner. The magnet consisted of a box with two sticks sticking out of it. As testimony to the accuracy of the oil magnet Mr. Mizner had operated it near the house of Alfred L’Ecuyer in Spokane where oil had supposedly been seeping into the basement for some time. During that survey one of the sticks broke due to the strength of the signal from the oil accumulation⁶.

RESULTS OF DRILLING IN THE CLAYTON-DEER PARK AREA

Two wells were drilled on the Wild Rose topographic high. The deepest well (Wild Rose Prairie No. 1) was drilled with cable tools by the Wild Rose Oil Company (Garrett and Williamson according to the Washington State Division of Mines and Geology⁷) in 1901 to a depth of 2227 feet northeast of the Wild Rose Church near the inter-



Figure 2: Photograph of parts of a “Standard Drilling” rig being delivered to Spokane and the Eastern Washington Oil Company for use in the 1921 drilling boom. The boiler would have been used to generate steam for the cable tool drilling machinery.

section of Wild Rose and Monroe Roads (NE/4SW/4 Section 34, T28N-R42EWM). No oil or gas was discovered in this well. A second well (Garrett and Williamson, Wild Rose Prairie No. 2⁷) was drilled (deepened as Mr. Burdega suggests?) with cable tools in 1921 to the east on the Madden farm just north of Wild Rose Road (NE/4 SE/4 Section 34, T28N-R42EWM) to a depth of either 600 feet or 1600 feet in 1911⁷.

The Madden well had an interesting history. In February of 1921 a fire destroyed the derrick, the engine house and other machinery on this well. A gas pocket was claimed to be the source of the fire⁸. The drill rig was rebuilt and drilling resumed. The newspaper article reported a strong water flow was struck at 370 feet that lifted water 12 feet above the ground level. There was a gas odor associated with the water flow so the well was reamed out to set casing to shut off the water flow⁹. My Father told
(Continued on page 568)

(Continued from page 567)

me that there had been a fine artesian water well on his Grandparent's farm (the Madden farm, which was the SE/4 Section 34, T28N-R42EWM). I assume that this artesian well was the remains of the well drilled for oil and gas. Mr. Burdega told me that this well is plugged with a large mushroom shaped lead plug which allows water to seep from it today.

Another well was to be drilled on the topographic ridge northwest of Deer Park near Enoch road west of Spring Creek but events in Spokane caused these plans to be abandoned. Plans were also being made to drill another well near Clayton in May of 1921^{5,10}. A standard drilling rig had been delivered to Clayton and timbers were being moved to the drill site to construct the drilling derrick¹¹. As with the Enoch Road well Spokane events caused the drilling of this well to be abandoned.

COLLAPSE OF THE BOOM

The leasing and drilling boom in the Clayton-Deer Park area had been encouraged by the reports of an oil seep in a basement on the south hill area of Spokane. On November 17, 1921, the Deer Park Union newspaper printed a map (Figure 3) outlining the Spokane South Hill "oil" district. An oil spring is marked on a lot next to Southeast Boulevard halfway between 10th and 11th Avenues.

On December 15, 1921, the Deer Park Union¹² reported that A. I. L'Ecuyer and his wife had been arrested on a federal charge of mail fraud. The oil "spring" in their basement was "salted" to convince investors to invest thousands of dollars in oil drilling schemes in eastern Washington. Officials of the United States Geological Survey and the United States Bureau of Mines reported that four samples of oil sent in from the Spokane area analyzed as a mixture of possible kerosene, vegetable oil and/or animal fat. The director of

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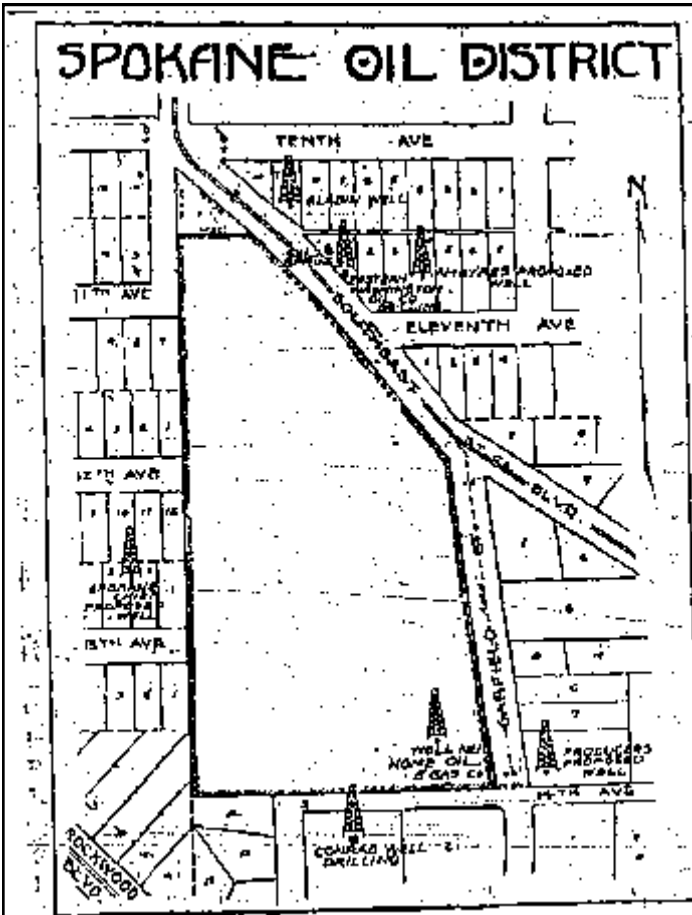


Figure 3: Map showing proposed well locations on Spokane's South Hill near the reported oil seep. (Deer Park Union, November 17, 1921, page 4)



Figure 4: Photograph of one of the derricks drilling for oil on Spokane's south hill in 1921. Location is shown on the map in Figure 3. This type of timber derrick would have been used for drilling in the Deer Park and Clayton area. (Photograph from the Collection of Gerald Quinn)

(Continued from page 568)

the Geological Survey said that he had "...no faith in presence of oil in commercial quantities in eastern Washington and northern Idaho..."¹². With this report the 1921 oil boom in the area quickly subsided.

NOTES

1. Anonymous, 1921, Chances good for striking oil here, says geologist: Deer Park Union, February 3, 1921, p. 1.
2. Anonymous, 1921, Local oil and gas company formed: Deer Park Union, March 10, 1921, p. . .
3. Deer Park Union February 17, 1921, p. 3.
4. Anonymous, 1921, Oil in this section: Deer Park Union, January 20, 1921, p. 1.
5. Anonymous, 1921, All eyes on Deer Park's oil

be sure of one being accurate!)

8. Anonymous, 1921, Oil rigging at Wild Rose is consumed by flames: Deer Park Union, February 17, 1921, p. 1.
9. Anonymous, 1921, Indications of gas found on Wild Rose: Deer Park Union, April 7, 1921, p. 1.
10. Anonymous, 1921, Collins to start drilling: Deer Park Union, June 3, 1921, p. 1.
11. Anonymous, 1921, Oil rig is unloaded at Clayton Field: Deer Park Union, June 14, 1921, p. 1.
12. Anonymous, 1921, Spokane oil interests get solar plexus blow: Deer Park Union, December 15, 1921, p. 1.

fields: Deer Park Union, March 3, 1921, p. 1.
6 Anonymous, 1921, "Doodle-Bug" show big oil pool near Clayton: Deer Park Union July 7, 1921, p. 1.
7. Livingston, V. E., Jr., 1968, Oil and Gas Exploration in Washington 1900-1957: Washington State Division of Mines and Geology Information Circular No. 29, P. 41. (The state data seems to differ from the newspaper dates, operators and other accounts, I am referring to both to try to

**COMMENTS ON AN OIL BOOM IN THE
CLAYTON-DEER PARK AREA
M. DAVID BURDEGA**

On October 31, 2011, Peter Coffin asked me about my remembrances about oil well locations on his family property on Wild Rose Prairie. My remembrances differ a little from what the state of Washington has reported. The most significant difference would be the location of the deeper well that was drilled on the Prairie. The surface casing for this well is still visible at the southeast corner of Crosscut and Monroe Roads (approx NW/4 NW/4 Section 34-T28N-R42EWM) not in the SW/4/NE/4 of Section 34 T28N-R42EWM. When I was a boy a pit near this well was filled with crankcase waste oil from the drilling rig. I think this well was drilled in 1944 (Wild Rose R. P. Well #3).

On the Madden farm (SE/4 Section 34-T28N-R42EWM) there is an artesian well that still seeps water to this date and must be the well that Elden F. Coffin (Peter Coffin's father) remembered. The depth of this well was over 1000 feet (the state reports depths of 600' or 1600'). Somewhere in my files I have a driller's log for this well which

stated that there were oil sands in commercial quantities. There were also at least two other wells drilled in the SW/4 of Section 34-T28N-R42EWM that the state of Washington does not list. I remember Ezra Eickmeyer telling of working on one of these wells as a teenager. Certainly the newspaper reports of the Madden well date some drilling to 1921. Wells drilled during the early part of the 1900's sometimes took years to drill. Sometimes time elapsed between drilling period to allow the promoters to sell stock to raise money to continue drilling.

At least two wells were drilled in the NE/4 SW/4 Section 34-T28N-R42EWM northeast of the present Wild Rose Prairie Church. One of these wells was the Wild Rose Prairie No. 1 drilled in 1901. Ezra Eickmeyer told me about this well on which he had worked. One of these wells hit a water flow that could not be shut off. Apparently new surface casing was set at an angle to shut off the water flow so drilling could proceed.

**Historical Fragments #1:
Washington Brick & Lime's Henry Brook
By Wally Lee Parker**

(reprint from "The Bogwen Report" — www.thebogwenreport.blogspot.com)

I personally don't like working any type of puzzle — unless it's something in the nature of a jumbled pile of antique data fragments. Maybe it's the challenge of finding a bunch of historical bric-a-brac from various sources and then trying to fit them all together tightly enough to make sense. I think it may be that interpretive challenge — a challenge that seems inherent in historical research — that makes history such an interesting hobby — providing one finds infuriation and frustration interesting. Take for example the riddle of Henry Brook and Joseph H. Spear. Those are names that should interest Washington State's *Clayton/Deer*

Park Historical Society. Brook and Spear are the two individuals most responsible for founding the town of Clayton — as a logical by-product of creating Clayton's brick and terra cotta works. If you're happy leaving it at that — just a couple of disembodies names — there's no reason to read further. But if you've a modicum of curiosity about who they were and how their founding of Clayton came about, then we have a mystery.

Other than a few paragraphs regurgitated from this or that random article, we don't really know that much about them. As far as I know
(Continued on page 571)

(Continued from page 570)

there's no published biography on either — meaning there's no readily available compendium of notes. So if we want to understand these people, their lives, their motivations, we're going to have to dig the facts out for ourselves. This all assumes there are sufficient facts stuffed into this and that musty archive to dig out — sufficient facts that we'll be able to puzzle together images meaningful enough to mollify our curiosity at least a little.

And that's what this occasion column, "*Historical Fragments*," is all about — finding shards from the past and puzzling them together. This kind of thing is likely to prove a collaborative and often argumentative process. If it works, bits of the past will come into some degree of hear-to-for unrealized focus. If it doesn't, it may be best to lay any given puzzle aside and come back to it some other day — after a few more shards have been uncovered.

Whichever, let's drop a few bits of data regarding Mr. Brook — the slightly senior of the Brook and Spear partnership — on the table, move those bits around a bit and see what we can see.

First, there's this notation from page 190 of an 1887 book by Chauncey Hobart, Doctor of Divinity, titled *History of Methodism in Minnesota*.

"From the Richfield charge Henry Brook, now in Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, was recommended to the traveling connection. He labored faithfully in several charges in the Minnesota Annual Conference. On account of failing health he was later compelled to take a supernumerary relation which still continues."

To me this ecclesiastic terminology amounts to Greek. I could troll the internet for an explanation, but sometimes, even in this age of electronic marvels, the quickest answers can be found by chucking my 15 pound *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* onto my desk. Definition #37 of the word "*charge*" is when a religious congregation is "*committed to the spiritual care of a pastor*." By that I assume *Random House* is saying the pastor is spiritually caring for the congregation, not vice versa — though I suppose it actually goes both ways. And as for "*supernumerary*," I think definition #2 is telling me that Henry Brook may have moved into the territories — that somehow referenced by the term "*traveling connection*" —

but as far as his continuing activities within the Methodist ministry, that was being continued though reduced to the role of "*an assistant or substitute in case of necessity*."

So, are we anywhere close to understanding the above? And if we are, what exactly is meant by the above mentioned "*failing health*?"

The answer to the last appears on page 3, in column 2 of the January 18, 1908 *Spokesman-Review*. In one of those endless headlines newspapers were once so fond of, the story begins, "*Henry Brook Dies on Ship / Widely Known Spokane Man Succumbs on River / Accompanied by Wife and Son -in-law, He Was on Way to California*."

"Portland, Ore., Jan, 17, - Henry Brook, a brick manufacturer of Spokane, die of heart disease at 11:30 o'clock Tuesday night, on board the steamship Roanoke, while that vessel was bound down the (Columbia) river. The body was taken ashore at Astoria and prepared for shipment to Spokane. Mr. Brook was attended by his wife and J. M. Moore, a son-in-law.

"Deceased was 60 years old, and in route to California for his heath. He had engaged passage for himself, wife and son-in-law to San Pedro. He had suffered a stroke of paralysis about three months ago. When Mr. Brook was seized with violent pains in the heart, Captain Dunham of the vessel was summoned, but life was extinct before the master reached the stateroom. When Astoria was reached the remains were covered with the ship's flag and as the body was being carried ashore the bell tolled in accordance with the time-honored custom. The body was shipped to Spokane tonight. "Henry Brook, who died on the steamer Roanoke, was a pioneer contractor and builder in Spokane.

"He left here recently for California, accompanied by his wife and his son-in-law, J. M. Moore, 1023 Sixth Avenue, this city. Besides his wife, he leaves four daughters, three of whom, Mrs., W. S. McCrea, Mrs. J. M. Moore and Mrs. Mark F. Mendenhall, live in the city, and Mrs. J. E. Daniels of Northport, Wash.

"Mr. Brook was born in England in 1842. After coming to this country he was a minister in the Methodist church in Minnesota for several years until throat trouble made it impossible for
(Continued on page 572)

(Continued from page 571)

him to do the work. He came to Spokane in 1883 and worked as a general building contractor. He was president of the Washington Brick, Lime and Manufacturing Company. It is expected the body will arrive here today.”

That in general specifies why Mister Brook had to step down from the pulpit but could still continue on within the church. We can reasonably assume (always a chancy thing) that public speaking and “throat trouble” are not a happy combination. Regarding an exact diagnosis, even in 1908 there was such a thing as patient confidentiality.

As for what those “supernumerary” duties mentioned in Chauncey Hobart’s book may have been, a fragment of an article appearing on page 6, column 4, of the January 29, 1916, edition of the *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, and titled “Saw Spokane in Seventy-Eight / Get Mark of Pioneer Wedding / Theodore Pynn is One of Those Who Apply for Their Certificates,” hints at an answer.

The “certificates” the above headline is alluding to appears to be a stash of “11,000 uncalled-for marriage certificates” that had been accumulating in the care of Spokane County Clerk Glen B. Creighton, who was, as of the date of the article, attempting to “locate the owners” of said certificates. And here enters the above noted “Mr. Pynn,” whom, the paper reported, “marched into Spokane as a soldier in 1878 (and) today appeared at Mr. Creighton’s office and secured the certificate of his marriage on January 1, 1885, to Theolinda Charlotte Johnson.”

So what does the above have to do with our Mister Brook? That appears in a later paragraph.

“He (Mr. Pynn) took out his marriage license on December 20, 1884, and a weird looking specimen of official paper is the certificate of his marriage, which was written on the New Years’ day following. It could easily be mistaken for a sheet dropped from a personal letter, being written by Henry W. Brook, the minister, upon a decidedly commonplace looking blue-lined correspondence paper, absolutely devoid of any embellishment except the big gold seal placed upon it today by Mr. Creighton.”

It would be interesting to try to figure out what this “11,000 uncalled-for marriage certificates” was all about — such alluring distractions

being one of the hazards of historical research. But what we’re specifically interested in is the name of the minister — one Henry W. Brook.

Is this our Mister Brook, co-founder of Clayton, Washington? Most likely — but the ‘W’ gives me pause. That’s the first time I’ve run into Henry’s middle initial. So until we see some reliable cross-referencing, that middle initial, along with this newspaper article, will remain slightly iffy.

However, there’s no ambiguity in this recollection from this 1954 issue of the *Spokane Daily Chronicle*. Dated Tuesday, November 9, this page 5, column 1, 2, and 3 article headlines “Pioneer Church Goer to Be Honored.” The pioneer in question being the same Mrs. W. S. McCrea mentioned as family in the above death notice — Mrs. McCrea being one of Henry’s daughters.

The McCrea’s 1954 address is given as W1023 Sixth, Spokane — the same address given in the above 1908 obituary for son-in-law J. M. Moore.

We should record addresses when we find them. While it might be of some interest to the people currently living in those homes — assuming the buildings still stand — changes in those addresses might also tell us something about our subject’s changing social and economic circumstance.

In this particular instance is it significant? We don’t know.

In this “Pioneer Church Goer” article Mrs. McCrea identifies herself as a daughter of Henry Brook, the co-founder of Washington Brick and Lime. Significantly, that social nicety of early Spokane — and that general Victorian era nicety of submerging a married woman’s identity beneath that of her husband — has frayed enough that we now know Mrs. W. S. has a name of her own. Katharine.

In this article (still, incidentally, under copyright), Katharine describes her family’s 1883 arrival in Spokane on a Northern Pacific Railroad train. “It took us a week to make the trip,” she said. “We had to carry our own food on the train and our own bedding. The berths were just slats of wood.” Not exactly the kind of travel amenities we’d expect for the wealthy.

(Continued on page 573)

Katharine described Spokane — seen through 8 year old eyes — as “*all sunshiny and lovely.*” But of the town itself she said, “*The wooden sidewalks were not uniform and the streets weren’t paved.*” Suffice to say that a lot of the brick used to initially pave over those streets would come from a company her father — along with Joseph Spear — would, within 5 or 6 years, incorporate.

But the headline for this particular article reads “*Pioneer Church Goer.*” That alluded to the fact that Katharine had been going to the same church for 71 years. Her entire family started attending Spokane’s First Methodist Church “*the next day*” after arriving in Spokane. The article noted that in 1918 the church’s name was changed to Central Methodist Church. But Katharine’s attendance record is nearly unblemished — and then only with an occasional Sunday off for illness.

The article adds several other threads that may prove of use to us. It describes Katharine’s father as “*a Methodist minister*” — not a onetime Methodist minister. And to that it adds, “*He preached in Minnesota, but not after coming to Spokane.*”

And that takes us back to Theodore Pynn — out and about in 1916 looking to retrieve the original and now certified copy of his marriage license. Said marriage license suggests the Methodist Church did indeed continue to recognize Henry, Spokane businessman, as a minister even after he had become “*supernumerary*” to the pulpit.

But the “*Pioneer Church Goer*” article has a puzzle to mix in among the answers. We’ve seen mention of Henry Brook’s daughters, but in passing this Spokesman-Review article used the phrase “*Katharine Brook came west from Minnesota with her parents and brothers and sisters.*” So far that’s the only mention of “*brothers*” found. Is that an error on the part of the reporter — a misread note or lapse of memory? Or is there a suggestion of tragedy, since later articles only refer to daughters?

But even with the daughters there was some tragedy.

On Sunday, June 9, 1940, page 1 of section 3 of the Spokesman-Review carried across columns 7 and 8 the following typically June headline, “*Engagements, Weddings Feature Month of Romance.*”

Among the current weddings noted under that headline was the announcement of the 50th anniversary of the June 3, 1890, marriage of Mrs. J. E. Daniels “*in the house still standing at Fifth and Wall as one of the early day landmarks.*” No actual address is given, but the significant lines in this article read, “*Mrs. Daniels is one of five daughters of the late Mr. and Mrs. Henry Brook. Her youngest sister was drowned in a lake tragedy years ago.*” And then continues to list the other sisters, “*Mrs. William S. McCrea of Spokane, Mrs. M. F. Mendenhall of Seattle, and Mrs. W. H. Moore of Tacoma.*”

So, three more items to watch out for — the missing “*brothers,*” the lost sister, and why Mrs. J. M. Moore is also listed as Mrs. W. H. Moore? Typo? Report’s error? Remarriage to another Moore? As all researchers eventually learn, it can prove very embarrassing to assume too much too quickly.

As for the not missing sisters, we still need ‘real’ names. On Sunday, January 22, 1893, page 18, column 4 of the *Spokesman Review* notes that “*Mr. and Mrs. Henry Brook have issued invitations to the marriage reception of their daughter Harriet Helen to Mr. Mark Francis Mendenhall, Tuesday evening, January 31, from 8 to 10 o’clock, 700 Fifth Avenue.*”

Two things then. Mrs. Mendenhall has now become Harriet Helen (Brook) Mendenhall, and the “*house still standing at Fifth and Wall as one of the early day landmarks*” in the June 9, 1940, article may have an address.

Of course things are never that simple. Is the above Harriet Helen Mendenhall really Harriet Helen. A *Spokane Daily Chronicle* article published on page 2, column 2 of the February 4, 1893 issue states, “*Mr. Mark F. Mendenhall and Miss Nellie Brook were united in marriage at the residence of the bride’s parents Mr. and Mrs. Henry Brook on Tuesday evening.*”

Between readers of the *Spokane Chronicle* and *Spokesman-Review* in those early days, the question was always which newspaper to believe. Just as in later years when both were owned by the same family — when the *Chronicle* was the morning paper and the *Review* the evening — people said it was a choice between the morning liar and the evening repeater. Did the *Spokesman* have it

Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society
Newsletter — Issue # 46 (February) — 2012

wrong? Did the *Chronicle* have it wrong? Or was “Nellie” actually Harriet Helen’s nickname? It’s a puzzle.

As regards that 1940 Sunday article above — a *Spokesman Review* article printed just a few days before on Tuesday, June 4, 1940, had noted this on page 8, column 1. “On a sunny afternoon, June 3, 1890, the then Miss Mary E. Brook became the bride of James E. Daniels, at a ceremony that took place at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs., Henry Brook, W706 Fifth.”

In 1890 Henry and wife are living at W706 Fifth. So where does the house addressed at 700 Fifth Avenue fit in? Isn’t historical research wonderful?

The June 4th article goes on to give us some much needed background on Mary E. (Brook) Daniels’ husband, James. Since this article is still under copyright, we need to exercise some caution. James — coming from Wisconsin where he was born — arrived in the area in 1886. He first settled in Cheney, and in 1887 moved to Spokane. A “collector of customs” at Northport, Washington, “for several years,” he was also appointed “Chinese Inspector” by President Harrison.

There’s an unsavory story in just the sound of that term. And indeed, it was exactly as it sounds — the job of enforcing the Chinese exclusion laws in effect from 1882 until 1943.

The article also notes that “for a while” James was “associated with Mr. Brook as superintendent of the Washington Brick, and Lime Company at Springdale.” The article finishes by noting that Daniels was also the United States Customs collector at Spokane for many years.

And then there’s this last little oddity regarding Henry’s son-in-law, J. M. Moore — the son-in-law that was with him when he died. During the Spanish-American War he appears to have been a Captain in company L of the Washington Volunteers — then engaged in actions on the Philippine Islands. A *Spokane Daily Chronicle* article found on page 1, column 7 of the May 12, 1899 issue says, “Letters from the

volunteers contain some interesting bits of information that the press dispatches do not give. A recent letter from Captain Moore of Company L to Mrs. Henry Brook of this city relates some amusing incidents. He says the Filipinos declare there are three kinds of soldiers — the regulars, the volunteers, and “those big Washington devils.” They say the latter are not like other soldiers for “they never stop to eat, sleep or smoke — just fight all the time. They are those big, dirty, fellows.”

Would the above Captain Moore have been Mr. J. M. Moore, Mrs. Brook’s son-in-law? Or was it W. H. Moore — whose name also appears on occasion? Or is all this confusion a by-product of a time when newspaper type was set by hand and similar names easily transposed? Add to that the fact that the optical search engines used to scour these old newspapers are far from perfect. By that I’m suggesting a lot is being missed.

But at least now we know Henry Brook had a family. We know more than one of his four son-in-laws was something of a force within the community. We know that more than one of his daughters was often mentioned in the society section of the newspapers. And we know Henry continued to be a strong force within Spokane’s religious community. And all this suggests that if we dig hard enough, in time the puzzle of Henry Brook will resolve into much more than just a name.



In the background is C/DPHS display at Winterfest January 2012. You may recognized the balcony of our old DPHS gymnasium.

Clayton/Deer Park Historical Society Minutes — January 14, 2012

In attendance: Alan Berg, Pat Parker, Wally Parker, Don Reiter, Mary Jo Reiter, Warren Nord, Lorraine Nord, Mark Wagner, Betty Burdette, Marilyn Reilly, Sharon Clark, Pete Coffin, Judy Coffin, Lonnie Jenkins, Ella Jenkins, Bill Sebright, Florene Moore, Kay Parkin, Becky Cooke, Tim Fischer, Penny Hutten, Lynn Wells, Allan Fackenthal, Mike Reiter, Roberta Reiter, Bob Gibson, Eddie Olson, Don Ball, and Lorraine Ball.

Society president, Bill Sebright called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM. Bill talked about and/or showed: 1) Wally Parker has put part 1 of 6 parts of his update of “Tuffys War” on his blog. The link is: <http://thebogwenreport.blogspot.com/2012/01/tuffys-war-part-one-of-six.html> 2) A picture of the Washington Brick and Lime Christmas tile was passed around. Mike Stone sent it to us from Cheyenne, Wyoming. Mike doesn't know the story of how it got to Wyoming. Bill connected Mike with Ron Endlich who knows about such tiles. 3) Bill is trying to write an article on the Brickyard Tavern and is looking for anyone with information or pictures. 4) Also anyone with information about the Clayton Community Church, please get it to Bill. 5) Showed a picture of Warren Nord's Marine Uniform in an honor case made by Cory Nord. 6) Paid our dues for The Heritage Network.

Tim Fischer had questions about the old Forrester School area. He will talk to Pete Coffin, Eddie Olson, Warren Nord, and Bob Gibson after the meeting.

Lynn Wells brought books from the Westerner in for the group to look at.

Treasurer, Mark Wagner reported that there is \$3,482.53 in the main checking account. There were \$424.00 in deposits.

Secretary, Grace Hubal emailed her report (Grace had to miss the meeting.): 1) Sent out 2 thank you letters. 2) Printed a thank you certificate

for Jake Wilson and will mail it with his honorarium.

Vice President, Pete Coffin reported: 1) An unexpected amount of insurance money lost in Texas has been recently returned to me and it will allow digitization of the Arcadia Orchards 35 mm film. This may occur later this year when better weather will allow a drive to Seattle. 2) A set of all twelve 1939 *Deer Park Union* biographies has been assembled and a binder containing them will be circulated. They could be used as Mortarboard filler and as a booth display item. 3) A visit to the Spokane Valley Museum found the book “Spokane Corona: Eras and Empires.” It has much historical data about Spokane County and eastern Washington. He think it indirectly documents the origin of the name Dragoon Creek by the passage of Col. Wright's “Dragoons” on their way to Colville to protect it from Indians. 4) A proposed Mortarboard article on Deer Park's Post Office is about completed. A draft was circulated. A final critical date for the Post Office move from the Kelley house town library to the hotel and a critique by past Post Master Lester Newell need to be found and reviewed. 5) Two more articles for the Mortarboard are in early draft form. One is on the smudge pots employed by the Arcadia Orchard and the other is on area rural post offices.

Print Editor, Sharon Clark handed out Mortarboard #45. She mentioned that the Society is always looking for more articles. There is some correspondence from Belgium about Florene's Uncle Alva Eickmeyer and his World War II adventures in this newsletter.

Webmaster, Penny Hutten reported : Our thanks go to Jake Wilson for the new Clayton/Deer Park website. It is finished and everything has been moved to the new one from the old website. The old website will go away this Sunday, Jan. 15th. Please look over the new site www.cdphs.org and
(Continued on page 576)

(Continued from page 575)

let me know what you think. The new site has to either have the navigation buttons combined or we need to use another template. If you are using Internet Explorer for a browser you can view all the links, but if you're using Firefox, part of it is blocked. We will have a meeting next week to address that issue. Jake did a wonderful job of moving the huge volume of pages and images to the new site and I thank him for all his hard work. Penny made a motion to give Jake a \$50 graduation gift, Betty seconded motion and it passed.

Winterfest- Betty moved that we have a booth at Winterfest. Sharon seconded the motion. It was passed.

Florene Moore made a motion to join the North Spokane Farm Museum and pay membership dues. Penny Hutton seconded. Motion passed.

Next meeting will be on February 11, 2012.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:01AM.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Wagner,
acting Secretary.

Editorial Policy Regarding Correcting Errors and/or Omissions

Information published here is compiled from many sources, including personal memories. It is often difficult or impossible to verify such recollections through outside documentation. Our editorial policy toward the veracity of personal recollections tends toward the casual – since little harm is normally done by such errors. But our editorial process also invites public review and input regarding the accuracy of the information we publish, and when such review either suggests or reveals errors or items open to dispute our “Letters” department will act as a forum allowing the airing of such disagreements in an effort to ascertain the truth and correct any probable or demonstrated errors. We also believe it’s important that such disagreements be recorded, even if they can’t be settled to the satisfaction of all parties.

We encourage everyone to submit any arguments as to fact to the editor in writing — since the written form reduces the chance of further misunderstandings. As is standard policy, all letters will be edited for spelling, word usage, clarity, and — if necessary — contents. If advisable, the editor will confer directly with the letter writers to insure that everyone’s comments and corrections are submitted in a literate, polite, and compelling manner — as best suits the editorial image of this Society’s publications.

Society Want Ads

WANTED: Information and photos regarding the history of the Brickyard/Ramble In Tavern

WANTED: Any stories and photos of your family’s history in connection with their occupations and

settlement in the Clayton/Deer Park Area

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Visit our New Web Site: cdphs.org

Special Thanks to this month's volunteer proofreaders — Florene Moore, Charles Stewart