

Watson - Blackith - Adams - Pearce Connections

England to Michigan to Chicago to New York City to Vermont



There is a nice paper trail for the Watson family. Seth Watson (1814-1861), son of Thomas Watson, and Jane Tunnard Blackith (1819-1851), daughter of Joseph Blackith, married April 17, 1843 in Whaplode, Lincolnshire, England. They had two children--a boy who died early and Harriet Blackith Watson, baptized June 6, 1846. The family is listed in the 1851 Whaplode census.

Jane Watson died April 1851 and Seth Watson married second Sophia F. Bobbins. Seth, Sophia and little Harriet arrived in New York City aboard the *Ship Independence* on June 21, 1852 and made their way to Pontiac, Oakland County, Michigan. Seth was a blacksmith. Seth and Sophia had five or six children in Michigan.

Harriet Blackith Watson/Adams/Kensington
Photo taken in Chicago

Harriet Blackith Watson married Henry Adams in Pontiac in 1867. Henry was a painter and glazer by trade. The Adams family is found in the 1870 and 1880 Census for Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan. The couple had three children.

William Seth Adams 1869-1959
Frances Emma Adams 1871-1949
Albert Edward Adams 1875-1945

About 1882 Henry Adams disappears from the Grand Rapids city directories and in 1885 to 1890 is listed in the Chicago directories. In March 1891 in Chicago Harriet divorced Henry for drunkenness.

I don't know anything about Henry Adams and his ancestors. He may remain the black sheep/brick wall of the family.



Until Henry Adams was sent packing, the Adams family lived at 194 East 25th Street in Chicago. Harriet's daughter Frances Emma Adams married John Irving Pearce in 1891 at this house and here Pearce's mother Hester Ann Beers/Pearce/Myers 1848-1891 lived her last months.

On January 9, 1894, Harriet married Dr. Milo Leonard Kensington.



Dr. Kensington was born MacKenzie in Vermont but legally changed his last name. This photo is from the 1891 graduating class, University of Illinois College of Medicine, College of Physicians and Surgeons

Harriet and Milo lived in Chicago. Dr. Kensington died December 4, 1919 in Chicago and is buried in Oak Woods Cemetery.

Harriet Blackith Watson/Adams/Kensington moved to Rockford, Illinois and died there on March 19, 1934.

Frances Emma Adams and John Irving Pearce



Frances Emma Adams married John Irving Pearce at the Adams family home, 194 East 25th Street in Chicago, on March 11, 1891.

John Irving Pearce (son of James Monroe Pearce and Hester Ann Beers) first worked with his uncle J. Irving Pearce in the management of the Sherman House hotel in Chicago. Then he took on work as a traveling salesman for a wholesale drug firm.

Frances and Irving had two children--a daughter Madeline who died early and my grandfather John Irving Pearce, Jr.

Frances Emma Adams 1871-1949

The 1900 census find the couple living in Hamilton, Ohio. At some point they moved back to Chicago and lived at 745 Montrose Boulevard.

John Irving Pearce died in 1907, age 38, from typhoid, leaving his widow and seven year old son, John Irving Pearce, Jr. Rushville papers were asked to copy his obituary.



John Irving Pearce 1867-1907

In 1912, Frances's brothers Albert and William came to Chicago for a visit.



This photo from the Ruth W. Pearce album is 1912 in Chicago.

- Top left - probably Harriet Watson Adams 1846-1934
- Top middle is Marie Groth 1898-1933 who married Frederick Leslie Ockerlund. In the 1910 Chicago census, Frances A. Pearce and her son John are living on Montrose Avenue where the Pearce and Groth families shared a duplex.
- Top right - probably Frances Adams Pearce 1871-1949
- Bottom from left is Albert E. Adams, John I. Pearce, Jr. and William S. Adams. Albert and William are brothers of Frances A. Perce.

Frances and her son moved to New York City by 1915. John attended the Kent School in Litchfield, Connecticut and then launched his career in New York City with the William H. Muller Company and its subsidiary Iron & Ore Corporation of America. John started off as a clerk and retired as traffic manager and director of the company.

In New York City, Frances was a dressmaker and took in one or two borders.

In 1923 Frances Adams Pearce and her son John purchased 16 acres in Peru, Vermont, and had a summer home built. Until her death in 1949, Mrs. F. A. Pearce was a summer resident of Peru, duly noted by the Peru gossip column in the local newspapers. Like clockwork, she would open the house in the spring and close up in the fall when she returned to New York City.

Peru, Vermont, is situated in the heart of the Green Mountains, only ten miles from Manchester, the railroad station of the Rutland Road to Montreal. A stage from Peru meets all trains.

As only a limited number of guests can be accommodated, it is suggested that reservations be made early.

References exchanged; terms on application; special reductions for families.



Springhaven Lodge

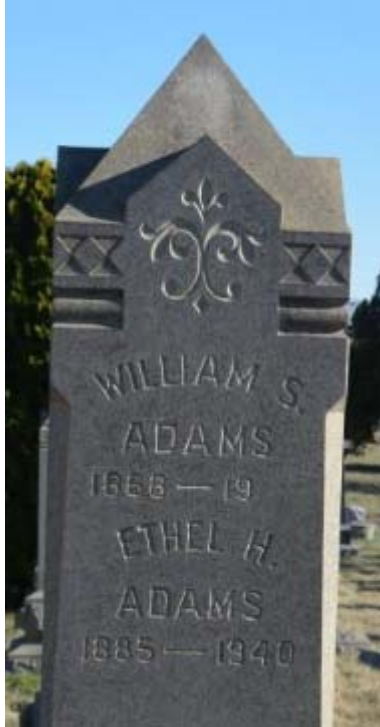
In a little four page pamphlet, Mrs. Frances A. Pearce, Hostess, advertised the Peru house as "Springhaven Lodge." I don't know if this was ever a going concern.

In Vermont, Frances drove a Model T-- only on sunny days and 15 mph down the middle of the road.

Frances had a short-lived second marriage to a local Peru man, Eugene C. Simonds. The marriage only lasted three or four years but Eugene is fondly remembered by the Pearce family.

Frances's brothers Albert and William came for visits in Peru.

Frances Adams Pearce is buried in the Village Cemetery in Peru.

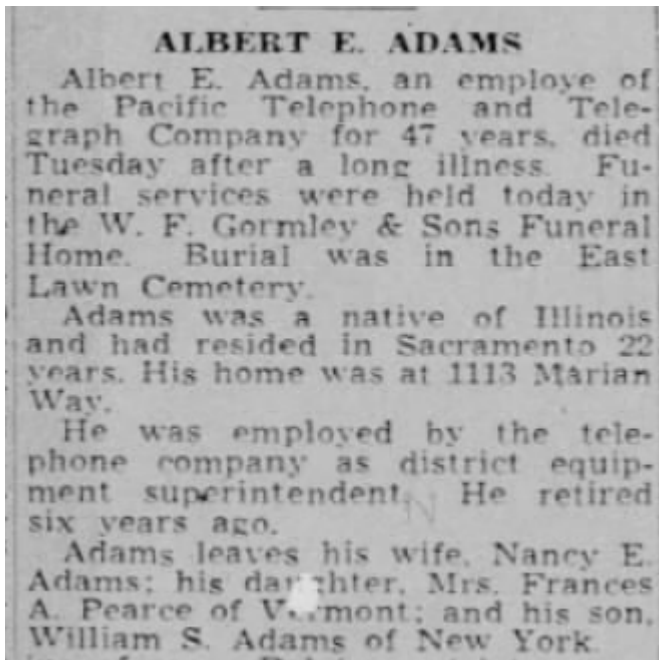


William Seth Adams 1869-1959 worked as a travelling salesman for P.W. Lambert & Co. of New York City which sold high grade leather goods. In 1908, William and his boss's son Julius C. Lambert traveled through Europe on a buying trip.

William had a short-lived first marriage. His second marriage was to Ethel McNeal. Her parents ran a boarding house in Wilmington, Delaware--a likely meeting place for a traveling salesman. The couple lived in New York City. After Ethel's death in 1940, William often spent summers with his sister Frances Pearce in Peru, Vermont. I knew Uncle Willie. He died in 1959 at the age of 90.

Hopefully Uncle Willie is interred with Ethel. The monument at the Riverview Cemetery in Wilmington does not include his death date.

Albert Edward Adams 1871-1945 also had a short-lived first marriage. His second marriage was in August 1919 in Eureka, California, to Nancy B. Wilson. Albert went into the telephone business early on and ended up in California.



In 1918 employees of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company were recruited for service in World War I. Albert served in the 411th Telegraph Battalion which traveled through France installing telephone lines and switchboards. Read about it here: *Memories of the "411th" Telegraph Battalion in the World War*, Compiled and edited by C.H. Moore.

<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/007701767>

5-31-1945 *Sacramento Bee* -California
Mrs. Frances A. Pearce is Albert's sister
William S. Adams is Albert's brother

A Descendant of Seth Watson and Jane Tunnard Blackith

1 Seth Watson b: 1814 in England d: May 16, 1861 in Pontiac, MI Age at death: 47 est. Burial: Oak Hill Cem, Pontiac, MI

.. +Jane Tunnard Blackith b: 1819 in England m: Apr 17, 1843 in Whaplode, Lincolnshire, England d: 1851 in England Age at death: 32 est.

..... 2 Seth Blackith Watson b: Dec 1, 1844 in England d: 1845 in England Age at death: 1 est.

..... 2 Harriet Blackith Watson b: 1846 in England d: Mar 19, 1934 in Rockford, IL Age at death: 88 est.

..... +Henry Adams b: 1839 in England m: May 1, 1867 in Oakland, MI Divorce: Mar 1891 in Chicago d: Unknown Age at death: ?

..... 3 William Seth Adams b: Oct 29, 1869 in Grand Rapids, MI d: May 9, 1959 in Manhattan, NY Age at death: 89 Burial: maybe Riverview Cem, Wilmington, DL with Ethel

..... +Eva Goff Scrafford b: 1873 in New York m: Mar 27, 1898 in Milwaukee, WI

..... *2nd Wife of William Seth Adams:

..... +Ethel McNeal b: 1885 in DL m: 1906 d: Aug 13, 1940 in Queens, NY Age at death: 55 est. Burial: Riverview Cem, Wilmington, DL

..... 3 Frances Emma Adams b: Oct 12, 1871 in Grand Rapids, MI d: Oct 23, 1949 in Bennington, VT Age at death: 78 Burial: Village Cemetery, Peru, VT

..... +John Irving Pearce b: 1867 in Rushville, NY m: Mar 11, 1891 in Chicago, IL d: Jun 3, 1907 in Chicago, IL Age at death: 40 est. Burial: Rose Hill Cem, Chicago, IL

..... 4 Madeline Pearce b: Jan 16, 1893 d: Jan 16, 1893 Age at death: 0

..... 4 John Irving Pearce, Jr. b: Jul 7, 1897 in Chicago, IL d: Dec 2, 1976 in Clearwater, FL Age at death: 79

..... +Ruth Lois Waterman b: Feb 7, 1901 in Brooklyn, NY m: Sep 29, 1923 in New York City, NY d: Apr 8, 1982 in Clearwater, FL Age at death: 81

..... 3 Albert Edward Adams b: Dec 24, 1875 in Grand Rapids, MI d: May 29, 1945 in Sacramento, CA Age at death: 69 Burial: East Lawn Memorial Park, Sacramento, CA

..... +Frances R. Unknown b: 1875 m: 1897

..... *2nd Wife of Albert Edward Adams:

..... +Nancy B. Wilson b: 1892 in Eureka, California m: Aug 1919 in Eureka, CA d: May 1971 in Sacramento, CA Age at death: 79 est. Burial: East Lawn Memorial Park, Sacramento, CA

..... *2nd Husband of Harriet Blackith Watson:

..... +Milo Leonard Kensington b: Jan 2, 1845 in VT m: Jan 9, 1894 in Benton Harbor, MI d: Dec 4, 1919 in Chicago, IL Age at death: 74 Burial: Oak Woods Cem, Chicago, IL