



MASSOG

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George Waitt: a Chain of Links to Malden, Massachusetts

*Submitted by Steven L. Dahlstrom**

Waitts Lake lies in the northeast corner of the state of Washington. Located in Stevens County, this beautiful 472-acre lake lies seven miles south of Chewelah and 2.5 miles west of Valley. Named for the early pioneer George Waitt, the lake provides residents and vacationers with exciting outdoor activities. For the purposes of this report, I will refer to him as George Waitt (WA). The surname Waitt (Wait/Waite) was found with variant spellings throughout the records. In general, I chose Waitt to represent the family in Washington. If the name was spelled “Wait” in a document, the spelling portrays that of the record. The spelling “Waite” generally refers to the original immigrants and their descendants. The Waitt spelling generally applies to family members living near Malden, Massachusetts.

The family of George Waitt (WA) often wondered where their ancestor came from and who his parents were. Over the years, the family had compiled a wonderful record of George’s descendants.^[1] When George died in 1898, his obituary noted that:^[2]

He was born in Boston, Mass., but when quite young went to California and from there he came north. He has often said he went up the Frazier river as far as any white man that ever lived and placer mined in the far north years ago. If his biography were correctly written it would furnish interesting reading as any one that ever spent a life on the Frazier [would know]. He took part at different times as scout, Indian interpreter, trapper, prospector, guide and packer; in fact, he played all the parts of an old time frontiersman and no one has ever accused him of having a dishonorable trait. His friends have often left their little differences to him to settle and were always satisfied with his decision.

Family stories told of his desire to leave Massachusetts and seek his fortune during the California Gold Rush. George probably arrived in Washington Territory before 1862; when he married Josephine Peltier, the daughter of Solomon Peltier.^[3] The family history says:

At Fort Walla Walla or Fort Colville, George caught on with the U.S. Army as a mule skinner, and hauled freight and supplies, with the pack mules, for the Army prior to and during the Civil War. According to my Uncle Bob, his mule train consisted of three hundred (300) mules; with two hundred mules packing every day. One hundred would be rested each day, and trail along behind the main column. Thus, each mule would pack for two days, and rest on the third. The mule train was led by a ‘bell’ mule. A guy would be riding this lead mule, and above the bridle, and attached to the top of the bridle above the ears was a heart shaped piece of wire metal. Attached inside the ‘heart’ was a bell. As the mule walked, the bell would ring, and the single file of mules behind it would keep time with the bell.

* This article was originally compiled by Steven L. Dahlstrom as “George Waitt: A Chain of Links to Malden, Massachusetts,” a report to Richard Waitt, Spokane, Washington, 1 November 2012 and has been lightly edited to conform to *MASSOG* style; published with permission from the client.

¹ Robert K. Waitt, “In the Moccasin Tracks of The Waitt Family of Valley, Washington, 1768–2008: Chronicles of the Life, Times, Memories, History and Assorted Yarns, As I Know It” (Sammamish, Wash., 2008).

² “One More Pioneer Gone,” obituary of George W. Waitt, *Statesman Index*, Colville, Wash., 7 October 1898, unpaginated clipping, Stevens County Historical Society, Colville.

³ Stevens County, Washington, Marriage Certificates, 1861–2009, A:5, marriage of George Waitt and Josephine Peltier, 7 December 1862, Stevens County, Washington Territory.

Census records consistently describe George as a farmer, born in Massachusetts, between 1834 and 1837.^[4] Unfortunately, none of the documents examined indicated exactly where or when George was born, who his parents were, or even his middle name.

The Search for George Waitt in Massachusetts

Massachusetts vital records and census lists were scoured to determine if there were any candidates matching what little was known about George (WA). Fifteen individuals bearing some form of the name George Wait/Waite/Waite, born about 1834–1837, were identified but eliminated by marriage, residence, or death records. Four more individuals were not eliminated:

1. George Wayland Waite/Wayte/Wait, son of Nathaniel and Sarah (Neagles) Wait, born 11 May 1834 in Malden, Middlesex County, Massachusetts.^[5]
2. George Waitt, born about 1833 in Massachusetts, and living in 1850 with the family of Lewis Richardson at Melrose, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, age 17, a farmer.^[6]
3. George Wait, age 23 (born about 1832), was found in the 1855 Massachusetts State Census, at Malden. He was listed alongside Luther Wait, age 25. Both men were carpenters living in a large group, probably a boarding house.^[7]
4. George Wait, age 17 (born about 1838), an apprentice, was living in the household of George H. Hall (or Fall) in Malden, age 39, a carpenter, in 1855.^[8]

Nathaniel Waitt, of Malden, Massachusetts

The following excerpt from Deloraine P. Corey's *The Waite Family of Malden, Mass.*, published in 1913, provides some background concerning his research:^[9]

In 1878 Mr. Corey reprinted from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register his account of the Waite family of Malden. The same year Mr. Henry E. Waite of West Newton reprinted his Waite family of Boston, followed in 1884 by his "Ten Generations in New England." Mr. Corey's pamphlet gave the early generations only and there remained considerable material on recent generations, which was unpublished. The data gathered, during forty years of his life, had been obtained by considerable correspondence and resulted in an account of the family, in the last century, which was not to be obtained from the official records. The work was a labor of love for his maternal ancestry and done in odd moments during a life devoted to business cares and many services rendered to his city, state and the general public. His regret that the work was unfinished, inasmuch that no records were obtainable for considerable data, was perhaps his excuse for not publishing a work, which was of great interest and pleasure to him. The liability of the loss to future generations by the destruction of the labor of so many years is the excuse for printing this work of Mr. Corey.

WALTER KENNETH WATKINS

⁴ 1870 U.S. Census, Fort Colville Precinct, Stevens County, Washington Territory, roll 1683 p. 210B (born ca. 1834); Washington State and Territorial Censuses, Stevens County, Washington Territory, 1887, online at *Ancestry.com*, image 3 (born ca. 1837).

⁵ *Births, Marriages and Deaths in the Town of Malden, Massachusetts, 1649–1850* (Cambridge, Mass.: University Press, 1903), 99.

⁶ 1850 U.S. Census, Melrose, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, roll 324, p. 280.

⁷ 1855 Massachusetts State Census, Malden, Middlesex County, dwelling 414, family 430 [FHL 0,953,951].

⁸ 1855 Massachusetts State Census, Malden, Middlesex County, dwelling 642, family 668; [FHL 0,953,951].

⁹ Deloraine P. Corey, *The Waite Family of Malden, Mass.* (Malden: n.p., 1913), 4.

Corey outlined the family of individual #109, Nathaniel Waitt as follows:^[10]

NATHANIEL⁶ (Ezra⁵, Ezra⁴, Jonathan³, Joseph², John¹), b. in Malden Dec. 21, 1787; res. in Malden; d. July 14, 1856. Cordwainer, 1831. He m. Sept. 15, 1814, Sarah, dau. of Michael and Sarah Neagles of Malden, b. Feb. 4, 1796; d. Sept. 21, 1884, ae. 87 yrs. 7 mos.

CHILDREN, born at Malden:

- i. Sarah, b. Mch. 9, 1815; m. (int. July 7, 1838) John Pierce of Woburn; d. Feb. 5, 1843, at Woburn.
- ii. Harriet, b. July 19, 1816.
- iii. Nathaniel, b. Mch. 4, 1818; d. Dec. 2, 1880.
- iv. Elizabeth, b. Jan. 14, 1819.
- 179 v. Michael Neagles, b. May 21, 1822; d. Jan. 18, 1892.
- vi. Joanna, b. Sept. 28, 1824; m. ____ Tewksbury (living at Winthrop, 1877).^[11]
- 180 vii. Ephraim Buck, b. Nov. 14, 1827; d. July 21, 1900.
- viii. Caroline Brown, b. April 20, 1830; m. Dec. 25, 1848, Calvin Atwood of North Chelsea.
- ix. Martha Ann, b. Mch. 13, 1832; m. May 24, 1854 (rec.) Edward Fuller of Malden.
- x. George Wayland, b. May 11, 1834.
- xi. Charles Wallace, b. Sept. 8, 1836.* [*Charles W., b. in Malden and Mary B., b. in Lynn; had Annette Russell, b. 1866, died May 21, 1867.]

In 1850, Nathaniel and Sarah lived in Malden, but George Wayland Waitt does not appear in the family listing.^[12] No record of George's death was found in Malden vital records. George did not appear with his parents in the 1855 Massachusetts state census.^[13] Nathaniel Wait died at Malden on 14 July 1856.^[14] Nathaniel's will, proved and allowed 14 October 1856, provided for his "beloved wife Sarah Wait," during her lifetime. Upon her death, he gave to his "now living" children the remainder of the estate after her death. He listed the following heirs: Harriet Gordon, Nathaniel Wait, Jr., Michael Wait, Elizabeth Robbins, Joanna Tewksbury, Martha Fuller, Ephraim B. Wait, George W. Wait, Charles W. Wait, and Caroline Attwood. The file contains several documents signed by all of the children except George Wayland Wait.^[15] The probate file contained documents requiring publication of various notices in the *Malden Mirror*, and the *Boston Daily Atlas*. Unfortunately, none of the notices included a list of heirs.

DNA Research

The Waite Genealogy Research Forum was founded in 1984 to collect, preserve, and publish genealogical data pertaining to the Waite family. Sue Waite-Langley administers the group's website (www.waitegenealogy.org) which explains that research preserves and extends the lines of four primary immigrant Waite groups: Richard Waite of Watertown, Massachusetts; the Lincolnshire Lines, Richard, Gamaliel, and Thomas; John Waite of Malden, Massachusetts; and the Southern Waite(s) Families. In 2002, the group began the Waite Genealogy DNA Surname Project. To date, 108 test kits have been ordered through familytreedna.com. 101 test kits have

¹⁰ Corey, *Waite Family*, 68–69.

¹¹ Joanna married George W. Tewksbury at Chelsea, Massachusetts, in 1841 (*Vital Records of Chelsea, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* [Boston: Wright & Potter, 1916], 432).

¹² 1850 U.S. Census, Malden, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, roll 323, p. 395.

¹³ 1855 Massachusetts State Census, Malden, Middlesex County, dwelling 241, family 247 [FHL 0,953,951].

¹⁴ Massachusetts Vital Records from 1841, 103:95.

¹⁵ Middlesex County Probate, File 43,711.

been returned (7 mtDNA testing and 94 for Y DNA testing), and results for 99 have been posted.^[16]

Richard “Dick” Waitt, great-grandson of George Waitt (WA), submitted a DNA test for comparison to known lines. The results confirmed that he matched a known descendant of John Waite of Malden on 36 out of 37 markers (the difference is on marker #458). However, a match on marker #458 also occurred with an unattached line descending from Jonathan (born 1761). As more family members are located and submit tests, these results will become more significant. The results supported the conclusion that Dick was also a descendant of John of Malden.

The Letter

During this research, Richard Waitt discovered a copy of a letter in his files from Joanna Tewksbury to “Dear Brother George:”^[17]

Winthrop – Nov. 9th 1890

Dear Brother George,

Received your last letter of July 10th and was very glad to hear from you and to know that you and your family were well and hope that your crops are very good this year. We are all well as usual. We did not raise much this year – had sweet corn that sold well – potatoes enough for our use with other vegetables – apples were scarce in town. Harriet has been here this summer and paid us all a visit. She looks well and we had a good time with her – did you get her picture – she said she sent you one?

Edward and Martha are here often to visit us. Harriet and Martha went to see our dear Fathers and Mothers grave in Malden Centre. Uncle Eben lives with Watts – he has bought his father’s place and fixed it quite nicely - he is 93 this winter.

Livie has been home this summer – her daughter lives here and is a type writer in Boston. I have been busy or should have written before.

Write when convenient as I am always glad to hear from my dear brother. With much to all I remain your loving sister.

/s/ Joanna Tewksbury

This correspondence contains several data-points that helped identify the author:

Data-point	Comment
“Dear Brother George”	The letter, from archives in Stevens County, Washington, probably refers to George Waitt (WA).
Date: 9 November 1890	Both George Waitt (WA) and Joanna Tewksbury were living on that date.
Author: Joanna Tewksbury of Winthrop, Mass.	Joanna (Waitt) Tewksbury, daughter of Nathaniel Waitt, married George Tewksbury and lived in Winthrop, Mass. in 1877. She died there in 1904. ^[18]

¹⁶ Waite Genealogical Research Forum, *WGRF Waite Genealogy* (<http://www.waitegenealogy.org>: accessed 03 October 2012).

¹⁷ Letter from Joanna Tewksbury, Winthrop, Massachusetts, to her “Brother George” dated 9 Nov. 1890, regarding family news, photocopy in possession of Richard Waitt of Spokane, Washington, in 2012.

¹⁸ Massachusetts Vital Records from 1841, Deaths, 1904, 99:22, her parents Nathaniel Waitt and Sarah Neagles, all born in Malden. She was buried in Winthrop Cemetery.

Signature of Joanna Tewksbury	The signature of Joanna on the letter matches her signature as found in the probate file of Nathaniel Waitt.
“Harriet had been here this summer”	Harriet, born 19 July 1816, was the second child of Nathaniel and Sarah Waitt, and a sister to Joanna.
“Edward and Martha are here often to visit us”	Martha Ann, born 13 March 1832; married 24 May 1854 Edward Fuller of Malden. She was a sister of Joanna.
“Harriet and Martha went to see our dear Fathers and Mothers grave in Malden Centre”	Nathaniel Waitt and Sarah (Neagles) Waitt are buried in Salem Street Cemetery in Malden. ^[19]
“Uncle Eben lives with Watts he has bought his father’s place and fixed it quite nicely he is 93 this winter.”	Probably Ebenezer Neagles, born 19 Nov. 1798 in Malden, s. of Michael and Sarah Neagles. He died 6 March 1897 in Malden of old age at 98 years 3 months 15 days. ^[20] His sister (Joanna’s mother) Sarah (Neagles) Waitt died of dysentery at Malden, 22 Sept. 1884 (age 88 years 7 months 18 days). ^[21]
“Livie has been home this summer her daughter lives here and is a type writer in Boston.”	Probably Elizabeth, born 14 Jan. 1819, sister of Joanna.

The letter, describing members of Joanna’s family, clearly appears to be from Joanna (Waitt) Tewksbury, the daughter of Nathaniel and Sarah Waitt.

Final Link: The Deed

Deep in the bowels of the Registry of Deeds for the South District of Middlesex County lies the final link in the chain.^[22] Sarah Waitt, wife of Nathaniel Waitt, died 21 September 1884. The family proceeded to sell the family home to Delia Roach on 7 April 1885. All of the remaining children of Nathaniel and Sarah, including George W. Waitt (WA), agreed to the sale. Since George was away from Massachusetts, he and his wife, Josephine, appeared before S. F. Sherwood, Justice of the Peace, Che-we-lah Precinct, Stevens County, Washington Territory, on 5 February 1885, and acknowledged, “their free act and deed.”

Conclusion

A thorough search of existing Massachusetts records did not find evidence that George Wayland Waitt married or died in Massachusetts. George was not listed in the family of Nathaniel and Sarah in 1850 or 1855 census records, nor did he sign any documents during the probate of Nathaniel’s estate, strongly suggesting that he had left the area. This is consistent with family stories about George (WA) coming to California in the early 1850s and settling in Washington Territory by 1862.

DNA evidence confirmed that Richard Waitt, great-grandson of George (WA) descends from John Waite of Malden, as did Nathaniel. While the results do not confirm that Richard is a

¹⁹ Photograph of his gravestone and an illegible photograph of a monument to her (and others?) in the Salem Street Cemetery in Malden, online at *FindaGrave.com*. Annotations for both include detail.

²⁰ Massachusetts Vital Records from 1841, 472:525.

²¹ Massachusetts Vital Records from 1841, 356:137.

²² Middlesex County Deeds, South District, 1699:162.

descendant of Nathaniel and not some other descendant of John¹ Wait, it does not discourage the possibility.

While no direct evidence had been found showing that George Waitt (WA) was the same person as George Wayland Waitt, son of Nathaniel and Sarah (Neagles) Waitt, born 11 May 1834 in Malden, Massachusetts, the letter found in Stevens County archives strongly supported the probability that he was.

Finally, the deed conveying the remainder of the estate of Nathaniel Waitt, proved that George W. Waitt, of Chewelah, Stevens County, Washington Territory, was George Wayland Waitt, the son of Nathaniel and Sarah (Neagles) Waitt.

Will of Nathaniel Waitt, of Malden, Massachusetts:

In the name of God, Amen. I, Nathaniel Wait of Malden, County of Middlesex & Commonwealth of Massachusetts, being weak in body but of a sound & disparing mind & memory. Calling to mind the uncertainty of human life & being desirous of dispensing of my worldly affairs do make & publish this my last will & testament, hereby revoking all other wills & testaments by me made. My will is that my – funeral charges should be paid by my Executor hereinafter named as soon as may be convenient after my decease. Item, I give, devise & bequeath to my beloved wife, Sarah Wait, the use, income & improvement of all my real estate, real, personal or mixed, of which I shall die seized & possessed, or to which I shall be entitled at the time of my decease. And if at any time said income shall be insufficient for her maintenance & comfort, then it is my will that so much of said estate shall be used or disposed of as shall be sufficient to yield to my said wife such comfortable support during her lifetime. Item, I give and bequeath to my several children which are now living to wit. Harriet Gordon, Nathaniel Wait Jr., Michael Wait, Elizabeth Robbins, Joanna Tewksbury, Martha Fuller, Ephraim B. Wait, George W. Wait, Charles W. Wait & Caroline Attwood, each an equal part of all the estates remaining after the decease of my said wife, to them the said children & their heirs forever. Lastly, I hereby nominate & appoint Gilbert Haven of Malden to be the Executor of this my last will & testament. In testimony whereof, I have hereto set my hand & seal this first day of July eighteen hundred & fifty six.

/ss/ Nathaniel Waitt

Signed, sealed & declared by said testator to be his last will & testament in our presence, who in the presence of the testator & at his request & in his presence of each other have signed our names as witness.

/s/ Jacob Cheevers

/s/ Eben^r Neagles

/s/ Samuel W. Neagles

The Final Link: The Deed:

Know All Men by These Presents That we Harriet Gordon, of Lynn, County of Essex, David C. Robbins and Elizabeth B. Robbins wife of said David, in her right, of Malden, County of Middlesex, Michael N. Waitt of said Malden, George W. Tewksbury, Joanna Tewksbury wife of said George W. in her right of Winthrop, County of Suffolk, Ephraim B. Waitt of Saugus, County of Essex, Calvin Atwood, Caroline B. Atwood wife of said Calvin, in her right of Revere, County of Suffolk, Edward Fuller, Martha A. Fuller, wife of said Edward in her right of said Malden all in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts George W. Waitt of Washington territory in consideration of fourteen hundred twenty two and 22/100 dollars paid by Delia M. Roach of said Malden the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell, and convey unto the said Delia M. Roach her heirs and assigns eight undivided ninths of a certain piece or parcel of land with the buildings thereon, situated in that part of said Malden called Linden, bounded northerly by land of David C. Robbins, one hundred fifty six and 35/100 feet; easterly

by land formerly of Ebenezer Neagles, one hundred seven and 50/100 feet; southerly by Salem street, one hundred eight and 90/100 feet; westerly by land of D. C. Robbins, one hundred twenty two & 84/100 feet; containing fourteen thousand seven hundred and forty (14740) square feet, more or less.

To Have and to Hold the granted premises, with all the privileges and appurtenances thereto belonging, to the said Delia M. Roach and her heirs and assigns, to their own use and behoof forever. And we do hereby, for ourselves and our heirs, executors, and administrators, covenant with the said grantee and her heirs and assigns that we are lawfully seized in fee-simple of the granted premises; that they are free from all incumbrances, that we have good right to sell and convey the same as aforesaid; and that we will and our heirs, executors, and administrators shall Warrant and Defend the same to the said grantee and her heirs and assigns forever against the lawful claims and demands of all persons. And for the consideration afore said we, Hannah Waitt wife of said Michael N., Susan L. Waitt, wife of said Ephraim B. and Josephine Waitt, wife of said George W. do hereby release unto the grantee and her heirs and assigns all right of or to both dower and homestead in the granted premises. In Witness Whereof we the said Harriet Gordon, David C. Robbins, Elizabeth B. Robbins, Michael N. Waitt, George W. Tewksbury, Joanna Tewksbury, Ephraim B. Waitt, Calvin Attwood, Caroline B. Atwood, Edward Fuller, Martha A. Fuller, George W. Waitt, Hannah Waitt, Susan S. Waitt and hereunto set our hands and seals, this eighteenth day of February in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty five.

Signed and sealed in presence of
Joseph A. Koontz
Thomas Graham

Harriet Gordon (seal)
Ephraim B. Waitt (seal)
Susan S. Waitt (seal)
Joanna Tewksbury (seal)
George W. Tewksbury (seal)
Martha A. Fuller (seal)
Edward Fuller (seal)
Caroline B. Atwood (seal)
Calvin Atwood (seal)
Elizabeth B. Robbins (seal)
David C. Robbins (seal)
Michael N. Waitt (seal)
Hannah Waitt (seal)
George Waitt (seal)
Josephine Waitt (seal)

Territory of Washington ~ County of Stevens ss. February 5, 1885. Then personally appeared the above named George Waitt and Josephine Waitt his wife and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be their free act and deed, before me – S. F. Sherwood, Justice of the Peace, Cha-we-lah Precinct, Stevens County, Washington Territory – Middlesex ss. April 7, 1885.

Recd. & Recorded.

Attest Chas. B. Stevens Reg.

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