

William W. Converse (1855–1929)

Report to Brian Converse
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WILLIAM W. CONVERSE (1855–1929)

Steven L. Dahlstrom^[1]

The death record of Henry Kelley Converse tells us his parents were William W. and Rebecca (Dugan) Converse.^[2] The following research centers on finding more information about William, and his possible parents. While limited in scope, I am happy to report that I was able to gather a substantial amount of information and develop potential leads for further exploration.

Typically a project such as this starts with an examination of U. S. Federal Census records. Several of these records help provide a partial timeline of William's life.

In 1880, the records show that William and his new wife, "Moriah" were living in the home of her father, Hiram Dugan, a hatter, in Somerset, Pulaski County, Kentucky.^[i] Also living in the household were some of Hiram's other children: Charles (age 20, a teamster), John (age 18, a laborer), and Sallie (age 15). By then, William and his wife had their first child, Fannie (age 6 months).^[3]

1890 Census records do not exist; almost all of them were destroyed by fire. The next census was conducted in 1900. In that record, we see a much fuller portrait of the family. By then, William, now 44 years old (born in September 1855), described as a millwright, had several children with his wife, now called "Rebecca": Fannie L. (age 20, at school), Charles D. (age 18, day laborer), John (age 10, at school), William S. (age 9), Kelley (age 7), George (age 4), and Amarcus (age 3); all born in Kentucky.^[4]

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² "Kentucky Death Records, 1911-1955," index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/NSC6-BR5> : accessed 25 Nov 2013), Henry Kelley Converse, 1939.

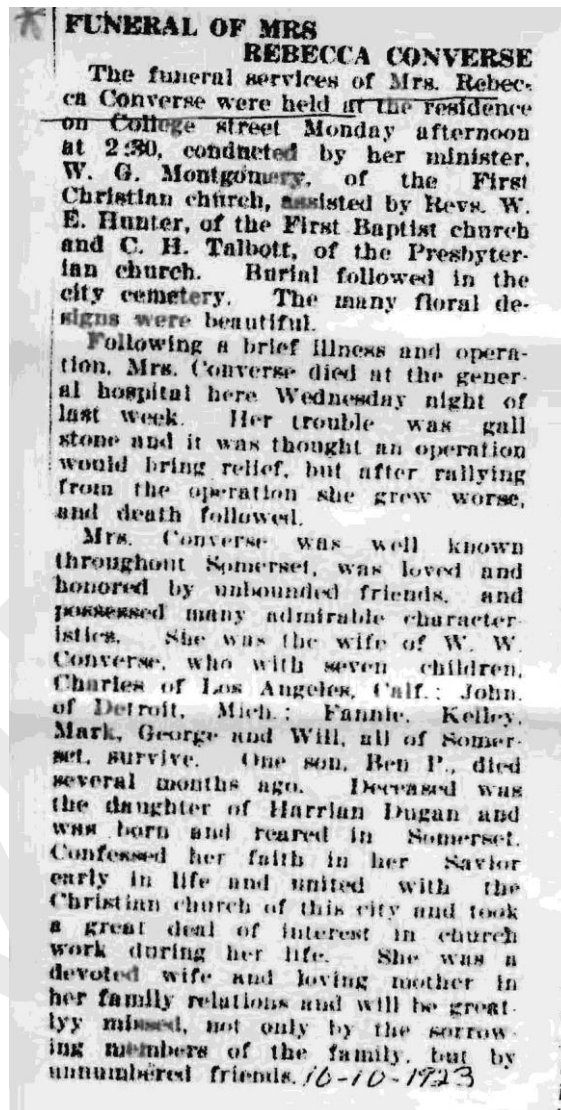
³ 1880 U.S. Census, Pulaski County, Kentucky, population schedule, Somerset, ED 86, p. 94 (stamped), page 3, dwelling 24, family 24; family of Hiram Dugan; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 30 November 2013); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,254,440.

⁴ 1900 U.S. Census, Pulaski County, Kentucky, population schedule, Somerset, ED 99, p. 2 (stamped), sheet 2A, dwelling 31, family 33; family of William Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 24 November 2013); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,240,549.

The 1910 Census shows a couple of changes. First, William's occupation was listed as a "carpenter" building houses. Second, another child was born after the 1900 census and is listed as "Ben", a ten-year-old son. In this record, it seems as though the census taker used more informal names for the children, including: Fannie, Will, Kelley, George, Mark, and Ben.^[5]

As the children grew older, they stayed together. In 1920, the family was still living in Somerset. William was 64, and Rebecca was 61. All of the children, ranging from Fannie (38) to Ben (19) were still in the household.^[6]

Soon tragedy struck the family. The matriarch of the family, Rebecca died in 1923. Her obituary relates that some of her children had moved out, including Charles of Los Angeles, and John of Detroit.^[7] In addition, the youngest, Ben [Benjamin Ingram],



⁵ 1910 U.S. Census, Pulaski County, Kentucky, population schedule, Somerset Ward 1, ED 183, p. 80 (stamped), sheet 1B, dwelling 21, family 21; family of Wm Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 4 December 2013); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,374,513.

⁶ 1920 U.S. Census, Pulaski County, Kentucky, population schedule, Somerset Ward 1, ED 199, p. 20 (stamped), sheet 9A, dwelling 180, family 205; family of William Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 4 December 2013); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 597.

⁷ "Funeral of Mrs. Rebecca Converse," *Commonwealth Journal*, 10 October 1923; photocopy of clipping received from the Pulaski County Historical Society, Somerset, Kentucky.

died a few months before her. I was able to obtain his obituary, and found he died from tuberculosis at the age of 23.^[8]

Finally, one learns of the passing of William, our subject, in 1929. His obituary appeared in the local newspaper, and mentions the circumstances surrounding his death.^[9]

This article contains a few important clues. First, he had been a resident of the county for more than 40 years, having moved there from Pennsylvania. It gives his date of birth: October 1, 1855. A well know contractor, he had been responsible for constructing many of the buildings in Somerset. This article also mentions that he attended the First Christian Church.

During this portion of the research, I was assisted by volunteers from the Pulaski County Historical Society who made copies of their files, and made inquiries. They checked with the County offices, funeral homes, and the cemetery. It appears that when William died, there was no official death record filed, and the only record seems to be this obituary.

Unfortunately, nothing in any of the records tell us the identity of William's parents. However, there are clues that point us to possibilities.

3-25 1929
CONVERSE — Mr. William W.
Converse, prominent Somerset contractor and farmer, died suddenly of a heart attack at his farm on the Crab Orchard pike Monday morning at 11 o'clock. He had been a resident of this county for more than 40 years, having moved here from Pennsylvania. He was born October 1, 1855. He had engaged in the contracting business most of his life and had planned and assisted in the construction of many buildings in Somerset and thruout the county.

Last winter he suffered an attack of influenza and never fully recovered, but he continued his active life until his death. Sunday he as usual attended Sunday School and church at the First Christian Church, where he was a member. Saturday night and Sunday morning he spent considerable time at the river assisting in saving buildings threatened by the high water. He is survived by one daughter, Miss Fanny Converse of Somerset, four sons, Charles, of Los Angeles, Cal.; Dr. W. E. Converse, George Dugan, Mark and Kelly, of Somerset. Funeral services were held at the home on College Street, Wednesday afternoon, conducted by Rev. W. G. Montgomery. Interment was in the City Cemetery.

⁸ "Converse," obituary of Benjamin Ingram Converse, *Commonwealth Journal*, 20 March 1922; photocopy of clipping from the Pulaski County Historical Society, Obituary Book, Somerset, Kentucky.

⁹ Obituary of William W. Converse, originally printed in the *Commonwealth Journal*, clipping from the Pulaski County Historical Society, Obituary Book, Somerset, Kentucky. Also reprinted in *Excerpts from the 1929 Commonwealth*, published by the Pulaski County Historical Society, Book One of Two, unknown page.

The obituary and census records tell us that William Converse was either born in September, 1855, or on October 1, 1855, in Pennsylvania. An examination of census records leads to one possibility.^[iii]

In 1860, the census of Elk, Warren County, Pennsylvania, finds the family of Henry E. Converse, (age 32, a millwright), his wife, Ellen (age 25), and two children: Lydia (age 8) and Bill (age 5). Bill would have been born about 1855.^[10]

The same family appears in the 1870 census in Corydon, Warren County, Pennsylvania, consisting of Henry (age 41, a millwright), his wife, Ellen (36), and children: Lydia (17), William (14), and James (7).^[11]

The genealogical question then:

Is the William Converse of Somerset, Kentucky, the same William Converse, son of Henry E. and Ellen J. (Morrison) Converse, of Corydon, Pennsylvania?

The evidence is found in the death records of the children.

James H. Converse

In 1900, the family of James H. Converse lived in Titusville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania. James was married to his wife Anna (born Sept. 1872). They had been married for two years and were yet to have children.^[12]

¹⁰ 1860 U.S. Census, Warren County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Elk, p. 87 (written), dwelling 609, family 609; family of Henry E. Connese [Converse]; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 16 December 2013); citing FHL microfilm publication 805,190.

¹¹ 1870 U.S. Census, Warren County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Corydon, p. 90 (stamped), page 3, dwelling 22, family 20; family of Henry Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 24 November 2013); citing FHL microfilm publication 552,960.

¹² 1900 U.S. Census, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Titusville Ward 3, ED 49, p. 104 (stamped), sheet 3B, dwelling 56, family 69; family of James H. Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 02 January 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,241,400.

Unfortunately, James died accidentally in 1906. Several newspaper accounts of his passing provide the details surrounding his death:

Titusville Contractor Dropped Dead Yesterday^[13]
James H. Converse Fell From Bicycle and Was Dead When Found.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., Oct. 21.—(Special.)—James H. Converse of Titusville, Pa., a carpenter and contractor lately employed in this city, fell from his bicycle to the ground in Danforth street this afternoon. When assistance reached him he was dead. While his eyes protruded from their sockets and his neck was broken by the fall, it is believed by physicians who attended him that death was due to a stroke of apoplexy. His body was taken to the morgue and his wife, now visiting in Hornell, N. Y., was notified. Converse came to Rochester two years ago and had worked for various contractors of this city. Lately he had started in business for himself as a contracting carpenter.

James H. Converse was 42 years of age. He was well known in Titusville as a carpenter. He worked for J. A. Nixon on the construction of the Titusville Iron company's boiler shop and was at different times in the employ of local builders. With his wife, who was formerly Miss Anna DeWitt, he occupied apartments in the Harris building at 44 East Walnut St. Three weeks ago in Rochester, Mr. Nixon saw Mr. Converse and talked with him. Last night at the home of his father-in-law, Jacob DeWitt of North Martin street, it was stated that Mr. Converse left Titusville last spring and that his wife expected to join him soon in Rochester. He was a quiet, steady and industrious man, of whom many Titusville people will have kindly recollections. It could not be stated last night whether the body will be brought here for burial.

Body of J. H. Converse Arrived in Titusville^[14]
Funeral Services Will Be Held at the Methodist Church Tomorrow.

The body of the late James H. Converse, who died suddenly in Rochester, N. Y. at 3 o'clock Sunday afternoon, was brought to Titusville over the Dunkirk, Allegheny Valley and Pittsburg railroad at 9:20 o'clock last night and taken directly to the residence, No. 44 East Walnut street.

¹³ "Titusville Contractor Dropped Dead Yesterday," *Titusville (Pennsylvania) Herald*, 22 October 1906, p. 1, col. 4; "Newspaper Archive Collection," digital image, *Worldvitalrecords* (<http://www.worldvitalrecords.com> : accessed 29 January 2014).

¹⁴ "Body of J. H. Converse Arrived in Titusville," *Titusville (Pennsylvania) Herald*, 23 October 1906, p. 2, col. 1-2; "Newspaper Archive Collection," digital image, *Worldvitalrecords* (<http://www.worldvitalrecords.com> : accessed 29 January 2014).

Funeral services in his memory will be held at the Methodist church at 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon and will be followed by interment in Woodlawn cemetery. The body was accompanied by the bereaved wife and by Mrs. Elmer E. Harris of Buffalo.

As soon as word of Mr. Converse's death reached his wife at Hornell where she was visiting her sister, she left immediately for Rochester. A post mortem examination and coroner's inquest were concluded about 11 o'clock yesterday morning. The coroner's physician expressed the belief that Mr. Converse died as the result of a rupture in the right auricle of the heart. He was alone on Danforth street when seized with the fatal attack and no one knows whether he fell from his bicycle or had dismounted before he was stricken. The deceased is survived by his widow and a stepson, Chauncey Converse. There also remain to mourn his death two sisters and a brother: Mrs. Lydia Beck of this city; Mrs. Maude Cecil of St. Louis, and W. W. Converse of Somerset, Ky. He was 43 years of age and up to the time of his death had not been afflicted with any disease more serious than occasional attacks of rheumatism.

Mr. Converse was a man of quiet, unassuming life. He was a capable man and his friends considered that he had a bright future as a contractor and builder. He had secured a foothold in Rochester and his opportunity to prosper in that city was considered exceptionally good. He was held high in the estimation of all his acquaintances and in his family was a model husband and father. He was a member of Queen City Lodge, No. 304, I. O. O. F., the Knights of Maccabees and the Titusville Carpenters' union. At the service tomorrow afternoon the Odd Fellows will attend in a body.

Personals...^[15]

Miss Frances Flatt and J. Morrison of Corydon and William Converse of Somerset, Ky., are here to attend the funeral services of James H. Converse at the Methodist church this afternoon.

Services in Remembrance of Late James Converse^[16]
Church Funeral Wednesday, Followed by Burial in Woodlawn

¹⁵ "Personals," *Titusville (Pennsylvania) Herald*, 24 October 1906, p. 8, col. 4; "Newspaper Archive Collection," digital image, *Worldvitalrecords* (<http://www.worldvitalrecords.com> : accessed 31 January 2014).

¹⁶ "Services in Remembrance of Late James Converse: Church Funeral Wednesday, Followed by Burial in Woodlawn." *Titusville (Pennsylvania) Herald*, 25 October 1906; clipping obtained by Stephanie Hoover from Pennsylvania State Archives.

Funeral services over the remains of the late James H. Converse, who died suddenly in Rochester, N. Y., Sunday afternoon, were held at the Methodist Episcopal church at 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon. The Rev. S. M. Gordon, pastor of the congregation, assisted by Queen City Lodge of Odd Fellows. Mr. Gordon read from the thirty-fourth Psalm and spoke briefly of the deceased. In the exercises of the Odd Fellows Fred Kerr acted as chaplain and E. M. Ross as noble grand. Singing for the sad occasion was furnished by Mr. and Mrs. Earl J. G. Lovett, Miss Leota Dower and Earl Taft. The pallbearers were E. M. Ross, David Case, Fred Kerr, R. A. Kerr, C. C. Felton and M. B. Chick, all members of Queen City lodge. There was a large attendance of the Carpenters and Joiners' union, with which the deceased was identified. Many beautiful flowers, including some set pieces, nearly covered the casket. The interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

The highlighted sections relate that James H. Converse was a brother of Lydia Beck of Titusville, Mrs. Maude Cecil of St. Louis, and William Converse of Somerset, Kentucky. These siblings, Lydia, William and James, match the children of Henry E. Converse of Corydon. However the mention of Maude Cecil is problematic. Her connection will be explored later.

Final confirmation of James' relationship to Henry was found in his death certificate. The document clearly identifies Henry Converse and "Nellie" Morrison as James H. Converse's parents.^[17]

Lydia (Converse) Beck

Census records again point to details of the life of Lydia. Her first mention was the 1880 census in Titusville. There one finds the family of John Beck (age 33), his wife, Lydia (age 28), and their daughters, Agnes (age 7), and May (4 months – February).^[18]

By 1900, the family had expanded to include more children and consisted of: John (b. Oct. 1846), Lydia (b. March 1852), Ella May (b.

¹⁷ State of New York, Department of Health – Bureau of Vital Statistics, Certificate and Record of Death, cert. no. 44540, filed 22 October 1906; James H. Converse, died 21 October 1906 at Rochester, Monroe, New York.

¹⁸ 1880 U.S. Census, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Titusville, ED 122, p. 215 (stamped), sheet 2B, dwelling 11, family 12; family of John Beck; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 26 January 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,255,121.

Jan. 1880), Daniel (b. Oct. 1886), William (b. Oct. 1890), Sylvia (b. Nov. 1888), and John (b. Dec. 1892).^[19]

In 1910, the family, still living in Titusville, had been reduced as children moved out and started their own families.^[20]

Lydia died 20 February 1916.^[21] Her death certificate was obtained, but unfortunately did not clearly identify her parents, only giving “Converse” for her father, and “unknown” for her mother. Her obituary did provide a few more details, including a mention of her brother, William of Somerset, Kentucky, and a half-sister, Maude:

Mrs. John Beck^[22]

Lydia Beck, wife of John W. Beck, died at the family home, 107 Brook street at 4 o'clock yesterday morning. She had been ill about two weeks. Besides the husband, she leaves four children: Daniel Beck, Mrs. Harry Rosequist, William P. Beck and John C. Beck, all of this city. She also leaves a brother, William W. Converse of Somerset, Ky., and a half-sister, Mrs. Maude Slater of East St. Louis, Mo. Mrs. Beck had resided in Titusville since 1876 and was well known by a large number of persons. The funeral will be held Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock, Rev. William G. Klein of St. Paul's Reformed church officiating and the burial will be in Woodlawn cemetery. Friends are requested to omit flowers.

Half-sister Maude

The mention of Maude ties the whole discussion together. To understand her role, one needs to examine the 1880 census of Louisa, Lawrence County, Kentucky. There one finds the family of H. E.

¹⁹ 1900 U.S. Census, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Titusville Ward 2, ED 47, p. 68 (stamped), sheet 68B, dwelling 20, family 21; family of John W. Beck; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 04 January 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,241,400.

²⁰ 1910 U.S. Census, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Titusville Ward 4, ED 48, p. 180 (stamped), sheet 4A, dwelling 92, family 100; family of John W. Beck; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 04 January 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,375,346.

²¹ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Certificate of Death, cert. no. 21458, filed 22 February 1916; Lydia Beck, died 20 February 1916, Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania; digital image obtained by Stephanie Hoover from the Pennsylvania State Archives.

²² “Mrs. John Beck,” *Titusville (Pennsylvania) Herald*, 21 February 1916, p. 8, col. 5; “Newspaper Archive Collection,” digital image, *Worldvitalrecords* (<http://www.worldvitalrecords.com> : accessed 29 January 2014).

Converse (a 50 year-old carpenter, born in Pennsylvania), his wife, Mary B. (age 26, born in Kentucky), a son, “Tip” (age 17, born in Pennsylvania), and a daughter, “Maud” (age 6, born in Kentucky).^[23] While “Tip” is too old to be the child of Mary, he is the right age to be James H. Converse.

Tracing Maud through census records indicates she was married twice, the first at a very young age. The first record shows the family of Frank M. Cecil, a foreman at the iron works in Middlesboro, Bell County, Kentucky. His wife is Maude B. Cecil, born July 1876 (age 23). The couple had been married 9 years. They had a 6 year-old son, William (b. Oct. 1893). Frank’s brother, Henry also lived with the family.^[24]

The next census in 1910 helps confirm Maude Cecil’s relationship. By then, her family had moved to East St. Louis, Saint Clair County, Illinois. Her husband Frank had taken a job as a special agent for the railroad. Lydia Beck’s obituary was in error when mentioning “Mrs. Maud Slater of East St. Louis, Mo.,” instead of Mrs. Maude Cecil of East St. Louis, Illinois.^[25]

At this point, there is some confusion surrounding the records. The 1920 census finds Maude living as the wife of Clinton Hadfield in East St. Louis.^[26] The same arrangement is found in 1930.^[27]

²³ 1880 U.S. Census, Lawrence County, Kentucky, population schedule, Louisa, ED 54, p. 422 (stamped), page 8D, dwelling 71, family 76; family of H. E. Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 05 December 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,254,427.

²⁴ 1900 U.S. Census, Bell County, Kentucky, population schedule, Middlesboro, ED 18, p. 293 (stamped), sheet 14B, dwelling 249, family 299; family of Frank M. Cecil; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 03 March 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,240,508.

²⁵ 1910 U.S. Census, Saint Clair County, Illinois, population schedule, East St. Louis Ward 6, ED 124, p. 75 (stamped), sheet 4A, dwelling 80, family 80; family of Frank M. Cecil; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 19 March 2014); citing FHL microfilm publication 1,374,335.

²⁶ 1920 U.S. Census, St. Clair County, Illinois, population schedule, East St. Louis Ward 5, ED 156, p. 250 (stamped), sheet 5A, dwelling 90, family 110; family of Clinton Hadfield; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 March 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 404.

²⁷ 1930 U.S. Census, St. Clair County, Illinois, population schedule, East St. Louis, ED 68, p. 187 (stamped), sheet 20A, dwelling 469, family 486; family of Clinton Hadfield; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 March 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 2,340,292.

However, I was able to locate a marriage record for Clinton and Maude, dated 17 November 1938 at Fayette County, Tennessee.^[28]

The image shows a marriage record from Fayette County, Tennessee. On the left, a vertical strip contains the text: "I solemnized the Rites of Matrimony between the within named parties, on the 17th day of Nov. 1938. a. w. Whitaker Jr. When Returned, Nov. 17 1938." The main part of the document is a rectangular box with the heading "STATE OF TENNESSEE, FAYETTE COUNTY." It contains the names "Clinton L. Hadfield" and "Maude Converse Cecil" in cursive. The text states they are bound to the State of Tennessee in the sum of Twelve Hundred and Fifty Dollars. It includes a witness line: "Witness our hands and seals, this 17 day of Nov 1938" with signatures for "Clinton L. Hadfield" and "Maude Converse Cecil". Below this, it says "The Condition of the above Obligation is such, that whereas the above bounded Clinton L. Hadfield, has this day prayed and obtained a License to marry Maude Converse Cecil; now, if there is no lawful cause to obstruct said marriage, and for which License is desired, then this obligation to be void, otherwise to remain in full force and virtue in law." The bottom of the box has "ATTEST: Ruffus Matthews, Clerk." and a line for "By _____, D. C."

The record raises questions about the relationship between Maude and Clinton. Was this a “re-marriage”, or their first marriage? And, why did they choose to get married in Tennessee?

Maude and Clinton continued to live in East St. Louis, and were recorded there in the 1940 census.^[29]

The final piece of the puzzle concerning Maude was found by obtaining her death certificate. The document gives her full name: Maude Bell Hadfield; her date of birth: 16 July 1880 in Louisville, Kentucky [probably incorrect date – she was listed as 6 years old in the 1880 census]; her father’s name: Henry E. Converse; her mother’s name: Mary Belle Kendall; her Social Security number: 344-40-6591; and her place and date of death: 28 November 1967 at the Memorial Nursing Home, Belleville, St. Clair County, Illinois.^[30]

²⁸ “Tennessee State Marriages, 1780-2002,” database and images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 22 March 2014), entry for Maude Converse Cecil, 17 November 1938, Fayette County, Tennessee.

²⁹ 1940 U.S. Census, St. Clair County, Illinois, population schedule, East St. Louis, ED 82-49, p. 943 (stamped), sheet 12A, household 255, line 71-72, family of Clinton Hadfield; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 March 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 880.

³⁰ Illinois, Medical Certificate of Death, State File No. 67-059437, filed 30 November 1967; Maude Bell Hadfield, died 28 November 1967 at Memorial Nursing Home, Belleville, St. Clair, Illinois.

Proof Summary:

The relationship between William W. Converse of Somerset, Kentucky, and William W. Converse, son of Henry E. Converse can be summed up by a few simple facts:

1. James H. Converse, Lydia Converse Beck, William W. Converse of Somerset, and their half-sister Maude Converse Cecil Hadfield were siblings.
2. James H. Converse's parents were Henry Converse and "Nellie" Morrison.
3. Maude Converse Cecil Hadfield's father was Henry E. Converse, and she was probably born in Louisville, Kentucky.

Conclusion:

William Converse of Somerset, Kentucky, is the son of Henry E. Converse and Ellen J. (Morrison) Converse, of Corydon, Pennsylvania.

HENRY E. CONVERSE

Henry E. Converse is buried in Highland Cemetery, Williamsburg, Whitley County, Kentucky. The inscription on his gravestone indicates that he was born 17 June 1830, and died 29 April 1886.^[31]

Henry first appears in the 1850 census, living in Corydon, Warren County, Pennsylvania, with the family of William and Esther Morrison.^[32] However, he also appears to be listed in the family of John and Elisabeth Converse at South Valley, Cattaraugus County, New York.^[33] One explanation for this duplication could be that Henry was working on another farm during this time period. South Valley, and Corydon are only a few miles apart along the Allegheny River. Today's maps show the area as a reservoir, but in those days, it was a river.

Henry Converse married Ellen Morrison in Corydon, 11 May 1851.^[34] Ellen was the daughter of Abel Morrison and Lucinda Richards and was born 16 January 1835.^[35] The Morrison family includes Revolutionary War soldiers.

As previously mentioned, Henry and Ellen had the following children; Charles (who died 23 November 1854 – age 11 months, 12 days), Lydia, William, and James.^[36]

³¹ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<http://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 05 December 2013), photograph by "Thereasa/Thunderbird584", memorial page for Henry E. Converse (1830–1886), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33,706,201, citing Highland Cemetery, Williamsburg, Whitley County, Kentucky.

³² 1850 U.S. Census, Warren County, Pennsylvania, population schedule, Corydon, p. 749 (written), dwelling 2165, family 2168; family of William C. Morrison; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 15 February 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 832.

³³ 1850 U.S. Census, Cattaraugus County, New York, population schedule, South Valley, p. [unmarked], dwelling 43, family 43; family of John Converse; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 15 February 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 479.

³⁴ Cynthia DeChano, Researcher, Warren County Historical Society, letter to Steven Dahlstrom, 17 December 2013; citing Constable's Book, Corydon, kept by John E. Woodbeck, permission to copy given by Mary Woodbeck Kirwin.

³⁵ E. J. P. Sage, *Samuel Morrison of Bucks and Lycoming Counties, Pennsylvania and some of his descendants: with a brief sketch of John Owen* (Rutland, Vt. : Tuttle, 1936), 55.

³⁶ In – Joan M. McRae, "Marriage and Death Notices Extracted from Warren County, PA. Newspapers," Vol. 1, 1848–1865, copyright 1982, self-published, p31, the following notation: "Died at Corydon 23 Nov., CHARLES, infant son of Henry E. and Ellett [Ellen] J. CONVERSE, aged 11m 12d," appeared in the *Warren Mail* 09 December 1854.

Henry may have served in the Civil War. One record details his registration for the Civil War draft at the age of 34. The record gives his place of birth as Jamestown, New York (slightly west of South Valley).^[37] Two service records were located that suggest that Henry was possibly a private in Co. M, 9th Cavalry, and 102nd Pennsylvania Inf.^[38]

While Henry and Ellen are listed in the 1870 census, Ellen apparently died soon afterward in 1871. She is buried in the Dixmont State Hospital Cemetery, in Allegheny County.^[39]

The next year, Henry married, as his second wife, Mary Bell Kendall on 13 August 1872.^[40] She was born 16 February 1854 in Spencer County, Kentucky, the daughter of James Allen and Martha E. (Martin) Kendall.^[41] Their daughter, "Maud" was born soon afterwards.

It is not clear what prompted Henry to move to Louisville, and later Williamsburg. There were several land transactions found in the Whitley County Deeds – Grantor Book:^[42]

Grantor	Grantee	Date	Book
Converse, H.E. and wife	Cumberland River Lumber Co.	05 Dec. 1883	13, p. 405
Converse, H.E.	Nellie Newkirk	15 Sep. 1884	14, p. 208

³⁷ "U.S., Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865," database and images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 4 December 2013), entry for Henry Converse.

³⁸ "M554: Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Pennsylvania," database and images, *Fold3* (<http://www.fold3.com> : accessed 24 March 2014), entry for Henry Converse, Co. M., 9th Cavalry, and entry for Henry Converse, 102nd Pennsylvania Inf.

³⁹ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<http://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 16 December 2013), photograph by [no picture of grave marker], memorial page for Mrs. Ellen Converse (1834–1871), Find A Grave Memorial no. 76,952,420, citing Dixmont State Hospital Cemetery, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁰ "Kentucky Marriages, 1785-1979," index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FWP8-F2N> : accessed 24 Mar 2014), Henry E. Converse and Mary Bell Kendall, 13 Aug 1872; citing , reference ; FHL microfilm 812414. The image does not appear online but is available on microfilm.

⁴¹ "Kentucky, Birth Records, 1852–1910," database and images, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 19 March 2014), birth of Mary B. Kindle [Kendall], 16 February 1854, Spencer County.

⁴² Brenda Wyatt Meadors, Treasurer and Co-Editor "Whitley Branches," Whitley County Historical and Genealogical Society, to Steven L. Dahlstrom, letter, 06 March 2014, research findings including a copy of "Whitley County Deeds" Grantor Book Index, p. 204.

and wife			
Converse, Rebecca and W.W.	Kentucky Lumber Co.	28 May 1889	20, p. 118
Converse, Rebecca and W.W.	Alice Chinn	26 Aug. 1890	22, p. 386
Converse, Rebecca and William	J. H. Davis	19 Apr. 1888	18, p. 210
Converse, Rebecca and William	Shird Stanfill	04 Nov. 1886	16, p. 198
Converse, W.W. and wife	J. P. Mahan	21 Dec. 1890	20, p. 492
Converse, W.W. and wife	T. B. Mahan	21 Dec. 1890	20, p. 492

Morrison Family

Ellen Morrison is a direct descendant of the Revolutionary War patriot, James Morrison. Quite a bit of information concerning his family was found in the *History of Warren County*:^[43]

One of the earliest of the old pioneer families of Warren county was that of James Morrison, a soldier of the Revolutionary War. The family came to that part of the county on which Warren borough now stands, when only three log huts marked the place. They built a log house near the old fort, where the family stayed until 1804, when the moved to Kinzua. At the latter place one of the sons of James Morrison, Abel Morrison, who was born in Lycoming county, August 3, 1795, married Lucinda Richards, a daughter of James Richards, and in the fall of 1827 moved to Corydon. Lucinda Richards was born in Lisle, Broome county, N. Y., January 23, 1801. The children of this marriage were Nancy, born January 15, 1819, married first Amos Flatt, who died, and second, John B. Carr, who was killed during the late war; John Wesley, born July 15, 1820, died August 16, 1825; Alanson G., born February 21, 1832, married January 24, 1846,

⁴³ J. S. Schenck, *History of Warren Co. Penna.*, (Syracuse: D. Mason, 1887), pp. 559–560, lxx-lxxi addenda.

to Ann E. Enos; Fanny, born January 15, 1824, married September 8, 1841, to E. R. Covell, and died December 14, 1881; James R., born April 10, 1826; Martha, born May 9, 1828, being the first white female child born in Corydon, married Jarvis L. Forbes; Flavius Josephus, born September 23, 1832, married December 18, 1856, to Sarah E. Bradley; Ellen J., born January 16, 1832, married Henry E. Converse, April 27, 1851, and died October 11, 1871; Adeline, born March 15, 1837, married Robert M. Patterson; William Henry, born March 8, 1841. Abel Morrison was an extensive lumberman and farmer, and in every respect a self-made man. He died Christmas day, 1874. His widow, Lucinda, still occupies the old family residence with her son, William H., who is the youngest child. Lucinda Morrison possesses a remarkable memory. Every name and date given above was furnished by her entirely from memory, and a subsequent comparison with the family record disclosed not a single error. Indeed, so wonderfully does she retain dates and events of earlier days that she is a standard authority on all questions arising concerning her children, three—Alanson G., James R., and William H.—were soldiers in the late war. Three of her sons-in-law, and three of her grandsons, also served in the army. This certainly shows that patriotism runs in the family. James R. Morrison married February 13, to Sarah F. Walker.

There is more information about the Morrison family in the *History of Warren County*, and I would direct you to pages 559–560 for a description of the early days of Corydon.

James Morrison, the pioneer who came to Corydon was the son of Samuel Morrison the immigrant, who was born in Ireland 05 January 1701, and his wife, Mercy Mayes, who was also born in Ireland in 1716. An extensive account of the family of Samuel Morrison may be found in *Samuel Morrison of Bucks and Lycoming Counties, Pennsylvania and some of his descendants*.^[44]

Of course, the next question is, “Who were Henry’s parents?”

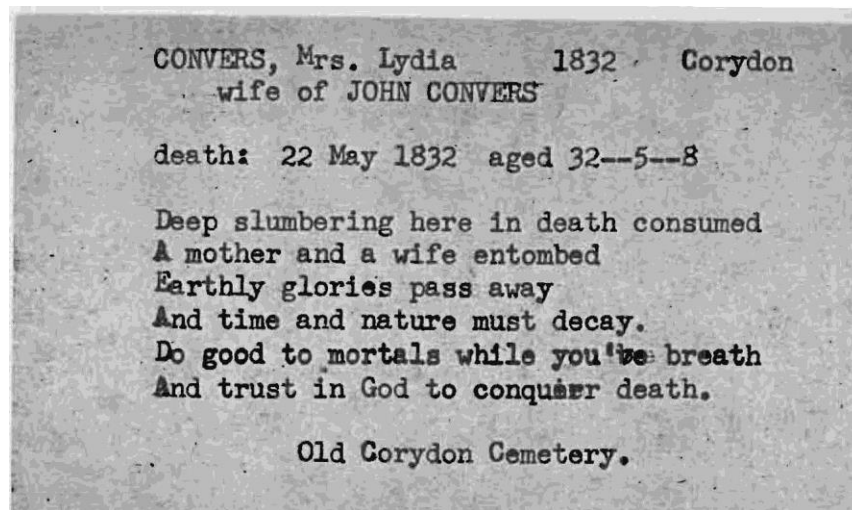
It is likely that Henry E. Converse’s father was John Convers(e), a merchant who kept the first store at Corydon from the time of his arrival in 1830 until his death a number of years thereafter.^[45]

⁴⁴ E. J. P. Sage, *Samuel Morrison of Bucks and Lycoming Counties, Pennsylvania and some of his descendants: with a brief sketch of John Owen* (Rutland, Vt. : Tuttle, 1936), 54–55.

⁴⁵ Schenk, *History of Warren Co.*, 561.

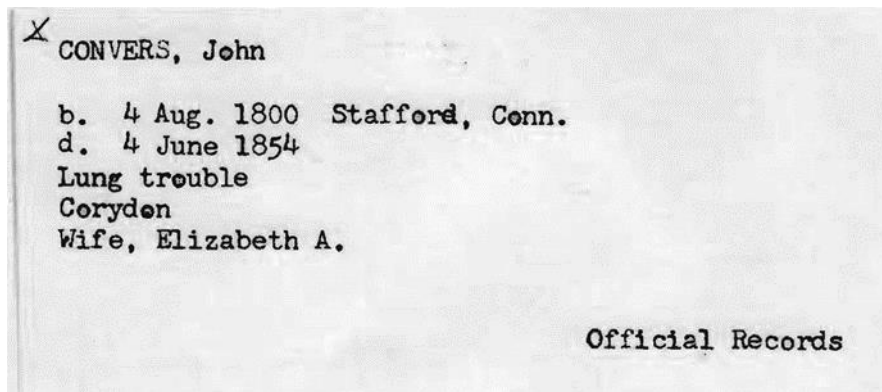
Three index cards relating to John Convers were located in the Warren County Historical Society archives.^[46]

This card probably describes the death of Henry's mother, Lydia, in 1832. The Old Corydon Cemetery no longer exists. It was covered by the formation of a reservoir. The graves were moved to the Riverview Cemetery.

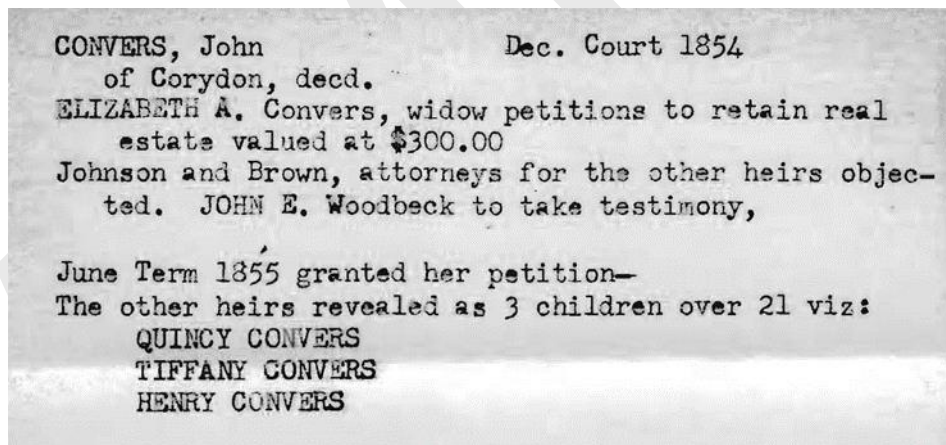


This card points to a date and place of birth for John Convers – 04 August 1800 in Stafford, Connecticut. It also gives the name of his second wife – Elizabeth. I did a quick check of Connecticut birth records and did not find an immediate match. This connection should be followed in depth.^[iii]

⁴⁶ Cynthia DeChano, Researcher, Warren County Historical Society, letter with attachments to Steven Dahlstrom, 17 December 2013.



This card relates to a court case following the death of John Convers that pertained to his estate. John died without leaving a will. I was able to obtain a copy of the court proceedings, but the existing record only relates the decision, and did not include testimony or details.^[47] From this card, we know that John had a least three children who were over 21 in 1854: Quincy, Tiffany, and Henry. This supports the notion that Henry E. Converse is the son of John.^[48]



While I did not find a record that points to John as Henry's father, these records strongly suggest the link.

⁴⁷ Pennsylvania, Warren County, Registers Docket 3, estate no. 263, p. 120, Estate of John Convers, dec'd. See also: Pennsylvania, Warren County, Orphan's Court, Docket 1, page. 31, 02 December 1854, Estate of John Convers, deceased, Application of Widow to retain real estate.

⁴⁸ In – Joan M. McRae, "Marriage and Death Notices Extracted from Warren County, PA. Newspapers," Vol. 1, 1848–1865, copyright 1982, self-published, p31, the Estate Notice for John Converse, Corydon Twp., appeared in the *Warren Mail* 06 July 1854.

Further research suggested:

Research of the type chronicled in this report often raises more questions than it provides answers. There are several lines of inquiry that would be interesting to pursue. When appropriate, I have noted in the text as endnotes, further areas that may be followed. They include:

ⁱ The family of Hiram Dugan is well documented and contains links to some of the earliest residents of Pulaski County. An exploration of this family line would be very beneficial.

ⁱⁱ There may be church records in Warren County that would point to his baptism. It would be necessary to retain a researcher familiar with church records to determine if this is the case.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Barbour Collection covers many of the early records of Connecticut towns. There are many Converse families listed in the 1800 census for Stafford. An examination of available records was beyond the scope of this project.