

The Maine Genealogist

Journal of the Maine Genealogical Society

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EDITOR'S PAGE

The 1950 U.S. census was opened to the public last month and can now be found on various websites. It will take some time before accurate indexes become available, so other methods for finding people are needed in the meantime. The 1950 census, like others before it, is organized by enumeration district (ED). If you know the street where the people you are seeking lived, you can find the correct ED by using the Unified Census ED Finder tool (<https://stevemorse.org/census/unified.html>), and this will narrow the hunt to a manageable number of census pages to search. The first persons I tried to find were my parents. I knew they were living that year in Greenwich, Connecticut, but I didn't know their street address, since it was just a temporary residence. The ED finder tool identified fifty-two EDs covering Greenwich (including more than a thousand census pages), way too many to search through easily, so I have decided instead to wait until an index becomes available.

I next tried to find my grandparents whose address in a Boston suburb I did know. Putting in their town and street name, the finder tool identified a single ED in Middlesex County. I next went to the census itself, where I was able to navigate to that ED. But a page-by-page search of the thirty-two census pages for that ED did not turn up my grandparents. It was not until I realized that the border of Middlesex and Norfolk counties ran through the street where they lived that I was able to find them in another ED on the Norfolk County side of the street. Diligence paid off.

As genealogists we depend on indexes. Indexes are the entryways to the records and books we use every day. How much more difficult would our work be without indexes to deeds, probate records, vital records, censuses, and the books we consult? Indexes can be well constructed or poorly constructed. Many genealogies produced in the late nineteenth century contain a first-name index for the surname under study, but then a last-name-only index for others who were related or married into the family—a pain if one of those other surnames was a common one. The original indexes to the Lincoln County deeds and some of the earliest York County deeds are arranged by first letter of the surname chronologically, not alphabetically, resulting in a time-consuming searches. This prompted the recent project by MGS to redo the Lincoln County deed indexes in proper alphabetical sequence.

The increasing prevalence of digitization has revolutionized the way we access records. Using digitized online libraries, like those at archive.org, hathitrust.org, and Google Books, books can be searched for any name or string of words or characters, whether the book has a printed index or not. In Maine, nearly all courthouse deeds are now available online. While those records cannot yet be searched digitally, I like to open up two windows on my screen—one for the deed index and the other to view the deeds themselves. This allows me to peruse rapidly a large number of deeds by moving back and forth between the index and the deeds. I have found that this is even faster than working at the courthouse with the original deed volumes. The same split-screen technique can also be used to view pages in any original source or book where we need to move back and forth from an index to the original.

—Joseph C. Anderson II, Editor

IDENTIFYING THE PARENTS OF RHODA (PHOENIX) CILLEY OF WALDO COUNTY, MAINE?

By Julie K. Schellen, CG

Rhoda Phoenix of Thorndike, Maine, was married in Thorndike in March 1826 to Samuel Cilley of the neighboring town of Brooks, Maine.¹ Samuel was born in Buckfield, Maine, 2 January 1802, a son of Benjamin and Martha/"Patty" (Parsons) Cilley/Silley.² Rhoda died on 14 April 1835,³ and Samuel married a second time and remained in Brooks until at least 1880.⁴

Rhoda's birthplace has been shown as Knox, Maine,⁵ but her birth is not recorded in the town of Knox, nor has it been found elsewhere. No documents have been located that identify her parents, nor has a headstone or death record been uncovered that might confirm her birth date. In 1830 Samuel Cilley's presumed wife was listed as 20–29 years old.⁶ If the female in the census with him was Rhoda, her birth year would fall between 1800 and 1810.

Children of Samuel and Rhoda (Phoenix) Cilley:

- i JOANNA PHOENIX CILLEY, b. Brooks, 4 Aug. 1826,⁷ d. after 1870;⁸ m. JOSIAH ROBERTS of Brooks.⁹
- ii ERASTUS CILLEY, b. Brooks, 4 Aug. 1830,¹⁰ d. Wheatland, Vernon Co., Wisc., 24 March 1914;¹¹ m. (1) Brooks, 20 Nov. 1853, JANE M MORGAN;¹² m. (2) 20 Dec. 1892, Mrs. DELLA M. (FURMAN) GARDNER.¹³

¹ Thorndike VRs, book 1, n.p. [DGS #7596924, image 213].

² His birth is entered in the family record of Benjamin Silley, Buckfield VRs, 1:36 [DGS #7595320, image 27]. The 9 April 1793 marriage of Benjamin Silley and Pattey Person [*sic*, Parsons], both of Bucktown, is recorded in Turner, Maine (VRs, 1:53 [DGS #7724815, image 32]).

³ Jonathan Prince Cilley. *The Cilley Family* (Augusta, 1878), 25. This work was published while Samuel Cilley was alive and is currently the only record found that contains Rhoda's death date.

⁴ Sam^l Cilley household, 1880 U.S. Census, Brooks, Waldo, Maine, p. 285. Samuel m. (2) Brooks, 25 Feb. 1836, Hannah K. Cabbot, both of Brooks (Maine Delayed Vital Records, Maine State Archives, Augusta [DGS # 7015923, image 384]).

⁵ Death record of son William Cilley who d. Somerville, Mass., 14 Feb. 1907, giving his mother's birthplace as Knox (Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841–1910 [images, americanancestors.org], 1907/89:282). No birth is recorded for her nor for anyone named Fenix/Phoenix in Knox (Elizabeth M. Mosher, *Vital Records of Knox, Maine, Prior to 1892* [Camden, Maine, 1996]).

⁶ Samuel Silley household, 1830 U.S. Census, Brooks, Waldo Co., Maine, p. 397.

⁷ Maine Delayed VRs [note 4], Brooks [DGS #7031714, image 1680].

⁸ Josiah M. Roberts household, 1870 U.S. Census, Brooks, Waldo Co., Maine, pp. 80–81.

⁹ Earl M Rogers, ed., *Memoirs of Vernon County* (Madison, Wisc., 1907), 313.

¹⁰ Maine Delayed VRs [note 4], Brooks [DGS #7031714, image 1690].

¹¹ Wisconsin Original Certificate of Death (1914), Erastus Cilley.

¹² Maine Delayed VRs [note 4], Brooks [DGS #7015871, image 2901].

¹³ Retreat Town Clerk, Wisconsin Marriage Record, Erastus Cilley to Mrs. Della M Gardner, 20 Dec. 1892; Vernon Co.; Rogers, *Memoirs of Vernon County* [note 9], 314.

- iii WILLIAM CILLEY, b. Brooks, [calc.] 21 Nov. 1833, d. Somerville, Mass., 14 Feb. 1907, 72y 2m 23d;¹⁴ m. (int.) Belfast, Maine, 4 Jan. 1869, ELLA WHITTIER.¹⁵

THE PHOENIX FAMILY IN MAINE

The unusual Phoenix surname can be found with various spellings, including Fenwick, Fennick, Fennicks, Fennix, Fenix, Pheonix, Phenix, and Phoenix. Only two sources could be found that identify parents for anyone by the name of Rhoda Phoenix [or the name in its variant spellings] in the appropriate time frame: Stephen Whitney Phoenix's *Descendants of John Phoenix* (1867) and Robert L. Taylor's *Early Families of Limington, Maine* (1991).¹⁶ The Rhoda Phoenix identified in both was said to have been born on 16 January 1805, daughter of John and Joanna (Wilson) Phoenix of Limington, Maine. The 1867 work contains both original and derivative material. At first glance both works appear to point to John and Joanna as Rhoda's parents, but both also claim that their daughter Rhoda died young.

Stephen Whitney Phoenix acknowledged that some biographical information in his book came from an unnamed descendant of John and Joanna (Wilson) Phoenix.¹⁷ In an attempt to discover the identity of this unnamed source, John and Joanna's descendants were reviewed to determine which close family members were alive in 1867. John's daughter from his second marriage, Sophronia (Phoenix) Ordway, was alive at the time of publication,¹⁸ but she was born in New Hampshire, fifteen years after the birth of the last child from John's first marriage, and it is unclear how much contact she would have had with her older half-siblings in Maine. At a minimum, she might have had access to their names and birth dates. John and Joanna Phoenix had several grandchildren who were alive in 1867, and the source may have been one of the children of John's son Richard, since quite a bit of information is provided about Richard's descendants.¹⁹

Robert L. Taylor's work is a compilation of biographical sketches of families who resided in Limington. There are two Phoenix family biographies included: one for the family of John Phoenix and the other for the family of George Phoenix. Much of their content appears to be a summary of Stephen Whitney Phoenix's 1867 work, although Taylor did provide additional dates and places for a few individuals. Taylor was a native of Limington and died in 1996 after spending years compiling

¹⁴ Mass. VRs, 1841–1910 [note 5], 1907/89:282.

¹⁵ Belfast VRs, 4:191 [DGS #7592498, image 56].

¹⁶ Stephen Whitney Phoenix, *The Descendants of John Phoenix, an Early Settler in Kittery, Maine* (New York, 1867), p. 2; Robert L. Taylor, *Early Families of Limington, Maine* (Bowie, Md., 1991), 116. The 1867 work was published when at least two of Rhoda's children were alive.

¹⁷ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 7, 11.

¹⁸ "Mrs. Sophronia Ordway," obituary notice, *Fayette [Iowa] County Leader*, 26 Dec 1890, p. 1, col. 2 [image, newspapers.com].

¹⁹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14, 18–19.

the Limington families using town and family records, cemetery records, obituaries, family genealogies, manuscripts, and local school district polls.²⁰

Information about the spouses and the deaths of the youngest daughters of John Phoenix vary between the two accounts. In some cases, the information found in these works appears to be the only record of certain life events of these individuals.

THREE POSSIBLE FATHERS FOR RHODA

The earliest known Phoenix settler, John Phoenix, purchased twelve acres of land on Spruce Creek in Kittery from John Withers on 4 April 1664.²¹ Although the original John Phoenix left numerous descendants who remained in Kittery and in other parts of Maine for many generations, males with the Phoenix surname in New England had significantly decreased in number by the early nineteenth century.

There are three possible candidates for the father of Rhoda: (1) John Phoenix, mentioned above, the husband of Joanna Wilson; (2) John's older brother Richard Phoenix; and (3) John's younger brother George Phoenix. No other men have been found in New England with any of the different spellings of the surname who could be the father of Rhoda Phoenix Cilley.

JOHN PHOENIX OF YORK COUNTY (1770–1853)

JOHN PHOENIX was born in Kittery, 3 January 1770, son of Richard and Abigail (Moore) Phoenix, and he was baptized there, 19 August 1770.²² He married in Kittery, 22 September 1791, JOANNA WILSON.²³ Joanna, daughter of Elihu and Joanna (Mitchell) Wilson, was baptized in Kittery, 14 June 1772.²⁴

John Phoenix was living in Kittery in 1793 and in Sanford in 1799.²⁵ Land records showed he lived just over the Limington town line in Cornish in 1801,²⁶ and he was sworn in as a town surveyor in Limington on 11 April 1803.²⁷ He lived in Limington between 1801 and 1803 when he was sued by John Smith for defaulting on a

²⁰ Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], vii.

²¹ York Co. Deeds, 2:3.

²² Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11; Robert J. Dunkle and Valerie Ruocco, "Parish Records of the First Church and Society of Kittery, Maine, 1714 to 1791," *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* [NEHGR] 151[1997]:452. See also Everett S. Stackpole, *Old Kittery and Her Families* (Lewiston, Maine, 1903), 661–62.

²³ Kittery VRs, 2:100 [DGS #7595724, image 156].

²⁴ "Parish Records, First Church, Kittery [note 22], NEHGR 151[1997]:453; Stackpole, *Old Kittery* [note 22], 801.

²⁵ York Co. Deeds, 66:273; "Sanford, Maine, First Baptist Church Records 1772–1877," p. 331, John Finnix and Richard Finnix were added to the church membership list, 11 Aug. 1799 [DGS #8218636, image 370].

²⁶ York Co. Deeds, 72:214, John Finnix of Cornish to Thomas and Samuel Gubtail, 24 April 1801, recorded 27 Feb. 1805.

²⁷ Limington Town Records, pp. 122–23 [DGS #7595738, image 120].

note.²⁸ John Smith took John Phoenix to court again in 1805, because Phoenix, who was living in Limerick by then, had still not paid Smith on the Limington note.²⁹ John Phoenix was shown as a resident of Limington again between 1806 and 1811, when he was sued by Daniel Cleaves for defaulting on a different note.³⁰

A widower by 1822, John married a second time to ASENITH KENNISTON and moved to Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, as their daughter Sophronia was born there that year.³¹ John was living in Grafton County, New Hampshire, in 1830,³² and was still living there with Asenith in 1850.³³ John Phoenix is said to have died in Boston 1 October 1853, but this could not be verified.³⁴

Children of John Phoenix and his 1st wife, Joanna (Wilson):³⁵

- i JOHN WILSON PHOENIX, b. 15 April 1794, said to have drowned 12 Sept. 1820 when he fell overboard from a schooner in Delaware Bay;³⁶ m. NAOMI COSIER.³⁷
- ii JOANNA PHOENIX, b. 21 July 1795, d. Thorndike, Maine, April 1826;³⁸ m. 12 May 1820, MARK PEASE 2nd, both of Cornish, Maine.³⁹ Three of their children's births were recorded in the Thorndike town records.⁴⁰
- iii RICHARD PHOENIX, b. 28 Aug. 1797,⁴¹ d. Portland, Maine, 29 Aug. 1847, aged 47 [sic] years;⁴² m. Buxton, Maine, 5 Nov. 1818, SOPHIA COLE.⁴³

²⁸ York Co. Court of Common Pleas, 25[1802–1804], #202, pp. 254–55 [DGS #4720787, images 268–69], John Smith vs. John Finnix, note signed, 24 April 1801, judgment against the defendant recorded, 29 Aug 1803.

²⁹ York Co. Court of Common Pleas, 26[1804–1805], pp. 506 [DGS #4720792, images 519–20], John Smith vs. John Finnix, note signed, 24 April 1801, judgment against the defendant recorded, 25 Nov. 1805.

³⁰ York Co. Court of Common Pleas, 24[1800–1802], #139, p. 106 [DGS #4720784, image 454], Daniel Cleaves vs. John Finnix, yeoman, note signed, 8 Nov. 1806, judgment against the defendant recorded, 14 Jan. 1811.

³¹ “Mrs. Sophronia Ordway,” obituary, *Fayette [Iowa] County Leader*, p. 1. *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 22], 11, second marriage.

³² John Finnix household, 1830 U.S. Census, Peeling, Grafton Co., N.H., p. 12.

³³ John Phoenix household, 1850 U.S. Census, Rumney, Grafton Co., N.H., p. 168. Asenith was 67 years old and b. in N.H.

³⁴ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 13. A probate record for John Phoenix was not located in either Massachusetts or New Hampshire. A search for land records containing helpful familial connections in Grafton Co., N.H., and Suffolk Co., Mass., also had negative results.

³⁵ No birth or baptismal records for the children of John Phoenix have been located. Their names and birth dates taken from Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 13.

³⁶ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11, 13.

³⁷ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 22], p. 13.

³⁸ Thorndike VRs, p. 51 [DGS #7596924, image 36].

³⁹ “Marriages by Rev. Timothy Remick of Cornish, 1805–1842,” p. 5, Maine Genealogy Archives, archives.maine-genealogy.net: her name spelled Joanna “Finni.”

⁴⁰ Thorndike VRs, p. 51 [DGS #7596924, image 36].

⁴¹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 13.

⁴² Portland Deaths, 4:249 [DGS # 7595803, image 203].

⁴³ Buxton Vital Records, 3:69 [DGS #7592510, image 475].

- iv SARAH/SALLY PHOENIX, b. Limington, 9 Nov. 1800,⁴⁴ d. 25 April 1865, aged 54y 8m 24d, and bur. in Kelsey Cemetery, Knox, Maine;⁴⁵ m. 20 June 1822, DANIEL WENTWORTH.⁴⁶ Six of their children's births were recorded in Thorndike.⁴⁷
- v RHODA PHOENIX, b. 16 Jan. 1805, said to have d. young.⁴⁸
- vi ABIGAIL PHOENIX, d. unmarried in Limington, 4 Jan. 1836.⁴⁹
- vii LUCINDA PHOENIX, b. 27 Dec. 1807. Stephen Whitney Phoenix said Lucinda m. a “Mr. Cilley,” but Robert L. Taylor showed no such marriage for her.⁵⁰ Lucinda was still living on 4 April 1836, when the Limington town council voted that the clothing of the deceased Abigail Phoenix be given to her “youngest sister Lucinda.”⁵¹

Children of John Phoenix and his 2nd wife Asenith (Kenniston):

- viii SOPHRONIA PHOENIX, b. Wolfeboro, N.H., 4 Oct. 1822, d. in Iowa, 17 Dec 1890; m. 22 June 1845, ALVAH S. ORDWAY.⁵²
- ix JOHN PHOENIX [2nd], b. Fultonborough, Carroll Co., N.H., 12 May 1825,⁵³ d. Boston, Mass., 15 April 1864, aged 39 years;⁵⁴ m. Boston, 5 Dec. 1851, HARRIET F. LOVE of Conway, N.H.⁵⁵

In 1810, the John “Finnix” household in Limington included one girl aged 10–15 (Joanna) and four girls under 10 (Sarah, Rhoda, Abigail, and Lucinda), which accounts for all of the daughters named in the two compiled accounts. Sons John and Richard, aged 16 and 13, were not in the household.⁵⁶ The 1820 census shows

⁴⁴ Daniel Wentworth family record in Thorndike VRs, p. 50 [DGS #7596924, image 36]; her birthplace from the 1892 death record of her son John O. Wentworth (Maine Vital Records, 1670–1921, familysearch.org [DGS #4703985, image 3538]).

⁴⁵ Maine, Nathan Hale Cemetery Collection, ca. 1780–1980, familysearch.org [DGS #7586509, image 1009].

⁴⁶ “Marriages by Rev. Timothy Remick” [note 39], p. 6: Daniel Wentworth of Limington to Sally Finni of Cornish.

⁴⁷ Thorndike VRs, p. 50 [DGS #7596924, image 36].

⁴⁸ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 13; and Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

⁴⁹ Francis Meeds, “Record of deaths of Limington,” Day Books, 1816–1845, MS, Maine Hist. Soc., Portland, Coll. 3202; the town of Limington reimbursed Reuben Gilkey for making Abigail's coffin, William Marr for her funeral expenses, and Jonathan Nason for digging her grave (Limington town meeting, 7 March 1836, TRs, p. 102 [DGS #7595738, image 427]). Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], p. 13, says incorrectly “died young.”

⁵⁰ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 13; Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

⁵¹ Limington Town Records, p. 107 [DGS #7595738, image 429]. The record did not indicate whether Lucinda was married or not, nor did it give her residence.

⁵² All information from “Mrs. Sophronia Ordway,” obituary notice, *Fayette [Iowa] County Leader*, 26 Dec 1890, p. 1, col. 2 [image, newspapers.com].

⁵³ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 13; and Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116; his birthplace is given on his death record, see note 54.

⁵⁴ Mass. VRs, 1841–1910 [note 5], 176:60.

⁵⁵ Mass. VRs, 1841–1910 [note 5], 56:153.

⁵⁶ John Finnix household, 1810 U.S. Census, Limington, York Co., Maine, p. 685.

two females in the household, one aged 10–15 and the other aged 16–25,⁵⁷ but it is unclear which of the younger daughters they were.

RICHARD PHOENIX OF YORK COUNTY (1764–1859)

RICHARD PHOENIX, son of Richard and Abigail (Moore) Phoenix, was born in Kittery, 11 March 1764, and was baptized there, 25 March 1764.⁵⁸ He died in Alfred, Maine, 14 August 1859, aged 96 years, 5 months.⁵⁹ As Richard Finnx Jr., he married (1) Kittery, 3 November 1791, RUTH WILSON.⁶⁰ Ruth, the daughter of Samuel and Eleanor (Brooks) Wilson, was born 3 May 1768 and baptized 10 May 1768.⁶¹ She died in Alfred, 8 August 1810.⁶² Richard joined the First Baptist Church of Sanford with his brother John on 11 August 1799.⁶³ Richard married (2) Sanford, 26 May 1814, ABIGAIL MAXWELL, he of Alfred, she of Sanford.⁶⁴ Richard's will, dated 30 June 1838 and probated 3 April 1860,⁶⁵ names all of his surviving children: Richard Jr., Ruth, Eleanor, and Eliza, and grandson Joshua Fenix. Richard left the bulk of his estate to his two unmarried daughters, Eleanor and Eliza, who served as co-executrices.⁶⁶

Children of Richard Phoenix and his 1st wife, Ruth (Wilson):⁶⁷

- i JOSHUA PHOENIX, b. Kittery, 14 Sept. 1792, d. there 10 days later.⁶⁸
- ii JOSHUA PHOENIX (again), b. Sanford, 25 Oct 1793, d. Alfred, 29 March 1807.⁶⁹
- iii RUTH PHOENIX, b. Alfred, 29 Jan. 1796,⁷⁰ d. Alfred, 22 Feb. 1878, aged 82 years;⁷¹ m. Alfred 16 Sept. 1819, SETH MAXWELL of Wells.⁷²

⁵⁷ John Finnx household, 1820 U.S. Census, Limington, York Co., Maine, p. 517.

⁵⁸ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 10–11; "Parish Records, First Church, Kittery [note 22], NEHGR 151(1997):448.

⁵⁹ Frederick R. Boyle, *Early Families of Alfred, Maine* (Portsmouth, N.H., 2006), 273, citing the Alfred Methodist Church record book in the Alfred Historical Committee files.

⁶⁰ Kittery Vital Records, 2:100 [DGS #7595724, image 156].

⁶¹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 10–11; "Parish Records, First Church, Kittery [note 22], NEHGR 151[1997]:451.

⁶² Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 10–11.

⁶³ Sanford, Maine, First Baptist Church records 1772–1877," p. 331 [DGS #8218636, image 370].

⁶⁴ Sanford transcribed vital records, p. 199 [DGS #7724810, image 133].

⁶⁵ York Co. Probate Records, #5618 [DGS #7315324, images 1085–86, 1089].

⁶⁶ York Co. Probate Records, #5618 [DGS #7315324, image 1089].

⁶⁷ Names and birth dates from Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12; matching information in Boyle, *Early Families of Alfred* [note 59], 273, citing Alfred Hist. Soc. files.

⁶⁸ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12.

⁶⁹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12.

⁷⁰ Alfred, "Maine Death Records, 1761–1922," database, image 51, ancestry.com.

⁷¹ Boyle, *Early Families of Alfred* [note 59], 273, citing Alfred Baptist Church records.

⁷² Alfred VRs [DGS #7592479, image 103].

- iv RICHARD PHOENIX, b. Alfred, 24 Aug. 1798;⁷³ m. Alfred, 16 Sept. 1820, DEBORAH STEVENS.⁷⁴ Richard was still alive in 1870, listed on the census as insane.⁷⁵
- v ELEANOR PHOENIX, b. Alfred, 7 Sept. 1800,⁷⁶ d. unmarried, 17 Feb. 1869, aged 68 years.⁷⁷
- vi ELIZA PHOENIX, b. Alfred, 21 Dec. 1802,⁷⁸ living unmarried with her father and sister Eleanor in 1850,⁷⁹ and with her sister Eleanor in 1860,⁸⁰ not found in 1870.
- vii STEPHEN PHOENIX, b. Alfred, 22 July 1810, d. 22 Oct. 1832, unmarried.⁸¹

Richard's will and the 1820 Alfred census agree with the number of daughters as reported in the compiled accounts.⁸² Richard only had two daughters born between 1800 and 1810. His daughter Ruth, who was born in 1796, appeared in census records until at least 1870.⁸³ Both of Richard's unmarried daughters, Eleanor and Eliza, appeared in the 1850 Alfred census living with him.⁸⁴ Richard only had three daughters, Ruth, Eleanor, and Eliza, and they were all named in his will.⁸⁵ There is no place in this family for Rhoda (Phoenix) Cilley.

GEORGE PHOENIX OF YORK AND SOMERSET COUNTIES (1774–1866)

GEORGE PHOENIX, son of Richard and Abigail (Moore) Phoenix, was born in Kittery, 11 August 1774, and baptized there 21 August 1774.⁸⁶ He died in Portage City, Columbia County, Wisconsin, 1 February 1866.⁸⁷ He married ELIZABETH WILSON, their marriage intentions recorded in Kittery, 30 November 1794.⁸⁸ Elizabeth was born 28 July 1773, and died in Wisconsin, 3 September 1851.⁸⁹ No baptism was recorded for her at the Kittery church and her parents are unknown. It is curious to note that all three of the Phoenix brothers married Wilson brides.

⁷³ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12.

⁷⁴ Alfred VRs [DGS #7592479, image 41].

⁷⁵ Richard Fenix household, 1870 U.S. Census, Alfred, York Co., Maine, p. 20B.

⁷⁶ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12.

⁷⁷ Benapeag Chapter, DAR, "Graveyard records and tombstone inscriptions of Sanford," TS, Maine Hist. Soc., Portland, 1937, call #Mv Sa57.4, p. 12.

⁷⁸ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12.

⁷⁹ Richard Fenix household, 1850 U.S. Census, Alfred, York Co., Maine, p. 189B.

⁸⁰ Ellen Fenix household, 1860 U.S. Census, Alfred, York Co., Maine, p. 757.

⁸¹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 12.

⁸² Richard Fenix household, 1820 U.S. Census, Alfred, York Co., Maine, p. 557.

⁸³ Ruth W Maxwell household, 1870 U.S. Census, Alfred, York Co., Maine, p. 25A.

⁸⁴ Richard Fenix household, 1850 U.S. Census, Alfred, York Co., Maine, p. 189B.

⁸⁵ See note 65.

⁸⁶ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11; "Parish Records, First Church, Kittery [note 22], NEHGR 151(1997):455.

⁸⁷ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11. Neither a probate nor any land deeds were recorded for George Phoenix in Columbia Co., Wisc.

⁸⁸ Kittery VRs, 2:211 [DGS #7595724, image 214].

⁸⁹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11; Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 115.

George Phoenix was living in Sanford in 1799.⁹⁰ A few years later, in 1803, George's "neat stock, cattle, sheep and swine" mark was registered in Limington.⁹¹ He was still living in Limington in 1813,⁹² but had moved north to Phillips, Maine, by 15 March 1818, when the town clerk entered the family record of "George Fennick" in the town volume.⁹³ The record confirms his and Elizabeth's birth dates and lists the births of eight children. Also included was the birth date of George's mother, Abigail, who lived with them at the time. Later, death dates were added for George's youngest daughter, Liberty, in 1819, and his mother, Abigail, who died in 1821. George was still living in Phillips in 1840,⁹⁴ but he moved to Wisconsin in 1850.⁹⁵

Children of George and Elizabeth (Wilson) Phoenix:⁹⁶

- i GEORGE PHOENIX, b. Sanford, 14 March 1796,⁹⁷ d. July 1871 and bur. in Pleasant Valley Cemetery, North Freedom, Sauk Co., Wisc.;⁹⁸ m. Limington, 29 Nov. 1817, OLIVE LORD,⁹⁹ b. 31 July 1797, daughter of John and Eunice (Libby) Lord of Limington,¹⁰⁰ d. 11 March 1843.¹⁰¹
- ii SAMUEL WILSON PHOENIX, b. Sanford, 7 Jan. 1799,¹⁰² d. Deering, Maine, 25 May 1880, aged 82y;¹⁰³ m. Phillips, 17 June 1821, HAPPY WHITNEY,¹⁰⁴ b. Gorham, 1 Nov. 1801, daughter of Micah and Hannah (Cobb) Whitney,¹⁰⁵ d. in 1875.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁰ York Co. Deeds, 85:255, George and Elizabeth Fennix of Sanford to Moses Sweet of Kittery, 26 Nov. 1799, recorded 29 Oct 1811.

⁹¹ Limington TRs, p. 257 [DGS #7595738, image 190].

⁹² Benapeag Chapter, DAR, "List of direct taxes assessed against the inhabitants of the Eighth District of the States of Massachusetts: composed of the County of York, Maine, in the year 1813," TS, Maine Hist. Soc., Portland, 1940, Coll. 3034, p. 101.

⁹³ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 46]. Birthplaces were not listed.

⁹⁴ George Fenix household, 1840 U.S. Census, Phillips, Franklin Co., Maine, p. 42.

⁹⁵ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11.

⁹⁶ Names and dates of all in Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14–15; all except iv, vii, ix, and xii recorded in the George Fennick family record in Phillips [note 93].

⁹⁷ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 46].

⁹⁸ Gravestone photo, findagrave.com #63623418.

⁹⁹ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 11.

¹⁰⁰ Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 182.

¹⁰¹ Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 182.

¹⁰² Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 46].

¹⁰³ Portland Deaths, 7:153 [DGS #7595804, image 483].

¹⁰⁴ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14; the marriage intentions of Samuel W. Finnix and Miss Happy Whitney both of Phillips are dated 18 May 1821 (Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 64]).

¹⁰⁵ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14; Hugh D. McLellan, *History of Gorham, Me.* (Portland, 1903), 833–34; Happy was 69 in 1850 (U.S. Census, Westbrook, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 500). She is not to be confused with another Happy Whitney, b. Gorham, 16 Nov. 1802, daughter of Daniel and Abigail (Stone) Whitney, who m. James Kelly of Unity, Maine (McLellan, *Hist. of Gorham*, 834).

¹⁰⁶ Gravestone photo, Evergreen Cemetery, Portland, findagrave.com #133781897. The stone is eroded and her full date of death and age are illegible.

- iii ELIZA PHOENIX, b. 7 Aug. 1800, d. Limington, 23 Oct. 1802.¹⁰⁷
- iv son PHOENIX, b. 7 Nov. 1802, d. in infancy.¹⁰⁸
- v ELIZA PHOENIX [again], b. 12 March 1804, d. Sauk Co., Wisc., 24 Aug. 1866;¹⁰⁹ m. Phillips, 27 Jan. 1826, WINSLOW BRALEY, son of Hattil Braley of Phillips.¹¹⁰ They moved to Wisconsin.¹¹¹
- vi ROBERT MOORE PHOENIX, b. 24 Oct. 1806, widowed and living in Jackson Co., Wisc., in 1860;¹¹² m. Phillips, 20 March 1828, ROXANNA BRALEY, sister of Winslow above.¹¹³
- vii daughter PHOENIX, b. 15 Sept. 1808, d. in infancy.¹¹⁴
- viii CAROLINE PHOENIX, b. Limington, 10 Sept. 1809, d. Kossuth Co., Iowa, 10 Sept. 1895;¹¹⁵ m. Phillips, 20 Sept. 1827, HATTIL BRALEY [Jr.], brother of Winslow and Roxanna above.¹¹⁶ They were living in Kossuth Co., Iowa, in 1880.¹¹⁷
- ix WASHINGTON PHOENIX, b. 30 Sept. 1811, d. young.¹¹⁸
- x RUTH PHOENIX, b. 26 March 1813,¹¹⁹ d. Kilbourn, Wisc., 18 Aug. 1906;¹²⁰ m. (1) (int.) Phillips, 19 March 1831, DANIEL CLOUGH,¹²¹ who d. 9 Feb. 1857;¹²² m. (2) 1867 HIRAM ODELL,¹²³ Daniel and Ruth Clough were living in Fort Winnebago, Columbia Co., Wisc., by 1850.¹²⁴
- xi LIBERTY PHOENIX, b. 22 Oct. 1815, d. Phillips, 26 Nov. 1819.¹²⁵
- xii child PHOENIX, d. in infancy.¹²⁶

¹⁰⁷ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14; Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

¹⁰⁸ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14; Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

¹⁰⁹ Gravestone photo, Pleasant Valley Cemetery, North Freedom, Sauk Co., Wisc., findagrave.com #26649035.

¹¹⁰ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 346]; Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14. The name "Hattil" was a variation of the Puritan name "Hatevil."

¹¹¹ W. Braley household, 1860 U.S. Census, Baraboo, Sauk Co., Wisc., p. 447.

¹¹² Robert Pheonix household, 1860 U.S. Census, Lafayette, Monroe Co., Wisc., p. 66.

¹¹³ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 400]; Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14.

¹¹⁴ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 15; Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

¹¹⁵ Gravestone photo, Plainview Cemetery, Whittemore, Kossuth Co., Iowa, findagrave.com #89912728.

¹¹⁶ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 404]; Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14.

¹¹⁷ David Odell household, 1880 U.S. Census, Cresco, Kossuth Co., Iowa, p. 298B.

¹¹⁸ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 15; and Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

¹¹⁹ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 46]; "Mrs. Ruth Odell," obituary, *Portage Daily Democrat*, 29 Aug 1906, p. 3, col. 4 [image, newspapers.com].

¹²⁰ "Mrs. Ruth Odell," obituary [note 119].

¹²¹ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 360].

¹²² Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 14.

¹²³ "Mrs. Ruth Odell," obituary [note 119].

¹²⁴ Daniel Clough household, 1850 U.S. Census, Fort Winnebago, Columbia Co., Wisc., p. 178B.

¹²⁵ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, image 46]; *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 22], p. 15.

In comparing the names in George Phoenix's family record, the children listed in both compiled works match the number of children shown in various censuses by 1820.¹²⁷ George only had two living daughters around the age of Rhoda (Phoenix) Cilley—Eliza who married Winslow Braley and Caroline who married Hattil Braley.¹²⁸ Both Eliza and Caroline married in Phillips, and their headstone photos match the birth dates for them in the vital records and the compiled works. George's youngest daughter, Ruth, born in 1813, married Daniel Clough and then Hiram Odell, had no children, and died in 1906 in Wisconsin.¹²⁹ As in the case of Richard Phoenix, there is no logical place for Rhoda in the family of George Phoenix.

REVISITING THE FAMILY OF JOHN PHOENIX

The only viable family remaining in which to place Rhoda (Phoenix) Cilley is that of John and Joanna (Wilson) Phoenix. He indeed had a daughter named Rhoda, according to Stephen Whitney Phoenix's *Descendants of John Phoenix*, but that Rhoda supposedly died young. Another daughter, Lucinda, was said to have married a "Mr. Cilley." Could it be that the Stephen Whitney Phoenix simply confused Rhoda and Lucinda, and that it was Rhoda who married "Mr. Cilley"?

The only Mrs. Lucinda Cilley that could be found was a Lucinda Batchelder who married Moses Cilley on 11 July 1824 in Merrimack County, New Hampshire.¹³⁰ It has been shown that Rhoda Phoenix married Samuel Cilley in 1826 in Thorndike, Maine, where two of John Phoenix's daughters, Joanna and Sarah, also lived in the same decade. In a review of the Thorndike vital records, could Lucinda be the "Louisiana" Phoenix of Thorndike who filed marriage intentions with Stephen Spencer in Thorndike on 15 March 1828?¹³¹ Stephen Spencer, aged 45, a house joiner, and "Leusiana," aged 42, were living in 1850 in Knox, Maine, with four children, including two daughters named Rhoda and Sally.¹³² Louisiana Spencer died on 5 August 1888, aged 81 years, 7 months, and is buried in Knox Station Cemetery in Knox.¹³³ Based on the 1850 census, Louisiana was born about 1807 or 1808. Based on her gravestone, she was born in December 1806 or January 1807. Both dates reconcile within a reasonable margin of error with the reported 27 December 1807 birth date for John's daughter Lucinda. If Lucinda and Louisiana were

¹²⁶ Phoenix, *Descendants of John Phoenix* [note 16], 15; Taylor, *Early Families of Limington* [note 16], 116.

¹²⁷ George Finnix household, 1810 U.S. Census, Limington, York Co., Maine, p. 685; and George Fennix household, 1820 U.S. Census, Phillips, Somerset Co., Maine, p. 277.

¹²⁸ Phillips VRs, n.p. [DGS #7595792, images 346, 404].

¹²⁹ "Mrs. Ruth Odell," obituary [note 119].

¹³⁰ Merrimack Co., N.H., Marriage Records [DGS #4243145, image 786].

¹³¹ Thorndike VRs, p. 227 [DGS #7596924, image 108].

¹³² Stephen Spencer household, 1850 U.S. Census, Knox, Waldo Co., Maine, p. 304A.

¹³³ Gravestone photo, findagrave.com #51727384.

indeed the same person, then she did not marry "Mr. Cilley" as claimed, making it more likely that it was Rhoda who did.

SUMMARIZING THE EVIDENCE

Multiple pieces of evidence support John and Joanna (Wilson) Phoenix as the parents of Rhoda (Phoenix) Cilley. The 20–29 age range of Samuel Cilley's wife in the 1830 census matches that of John's daughter Rhoda Phoenix, born 16 January 1805. Rhoda was a resident of Thorndike at the time of her marriage in 1826, the same place where John's daughters Joanna and Sarah were also living. By 1826 John Phoenix was remarried and living out of the state. Rhoda was likely living with one of her older sisters in Thorndike at the time of her marriage. The four Phoenix women—Joanna, Sarah, Rhoda, and Lucinda/Louisiana—all lived in Thorndike at certain times between 1821 and 1830. No other Phoenix family members were found living in Thorndike.

Five of George Phoenix's children married in Phillips where he resided. Only two of Richard Phoenix's children married, both in Alfred where he resided. It is unlikely that Rhoda Phoenix would have been living unmarried in Thorndike in 1826 and marry in Thorndike if her parents were living in either Phillips or Alfred.

Rhoda Phoenix was not listed as one of George Phoenix's children in the family record which was entered in Phillips on 15 March 1818. Richard Phoenix did not name Rhoda as a daughter or any of her children in his will dated 30 June 1838.

Rhoda's oldest child and only daughter was named Joanna Phoenix Cilley, born 4 August 1826, just four months after the death of Rhoda's sister Joanna (Phoenix) Pease in Thorndike. Joanna, of course, was also the name of the Phoenix sisters' mother.

There were no men other than the brothers John, Richard, and George Phoenix who could be the father of Rhoda (Phoenix) Cilley. All of the evidence considered together presents a convincing case that her parents were John and Joanna (Wilson) Phoenix.

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