

Indiana to Kansas, Oregon, and Beyond Tracing Warnocks from Jay County

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Soon after the Civil War ended two Warnock brothers left the Hoosier State to homestead in Kansas. The oldest, Levi Kitridge Warnock, was probably retracing a portion of the overland route he used as a Forty-Niner seeking riches in the California goldfields. His brother, William Perry Warnock, may have decided to go west after hearing his older brother's descriptions of the West.

Levi remained in Kansas the rest of his life, and most of his children stayed in the Kansas-Oklahoma area. Although William died in Kansas in 1869, most of his descendants continued William's westward odyssey, traveling to north-eastern Oregon's Wallowa Mountains a dozen years later. In some ways, the saga of the brothers and their families is typical of the period of western expansion that pushed America's boundary to the Pacific Ocean.

Both brothers were born in Gallia County, Ohio—Levi in 1823 and William the following year. They were the oldest of nine children of Francis Warnock (1801–1883, born in “old Bedford County,” Pennsylvania, son of Robert and Nancy [Halley/Haile] Warnock) and Sarah Cline (1797–1886, born in Hardy County, Virginia, daughter of William and Susannah [Lance] Cline). Francis and Sarah were married in Gallia County. By the time Levi and William went west, their parents were well-established residents of Noble Township, Jay County, Indiana. Most of Francis and Sarah's seven other children remained in the vicinity of Jay County, where Warnock descendants still live today.

Levi demonstrated an adventurous spirit and a streak of irresponsibility when he left Portland, the Jay County seat, immediately after hearing

news of the California gold strike. The family tradition is that he left for California without saying farewell to his family. His obituary says that he “got gold fever.” The 1850 census strongly suggests that he was elsewhere, since his wife and children were living with Levi's parents in Jay County. However, the 1860 census of Noble Township shows Levi as a bricklayer, so it is reasonable to infer that he did not strike it rich.

Levi's wife was Susan Priscilla Jones, whom he married in Jay County on June 8, 1843. Born on April 9, 1828, in Steuben County, New York, she was the daughter of Robert Leetus Hooper and Jane (Crawford) Jones. Levi and Sarah had twelve children, the first eleven born in Jay County and the last one in Dickinson County, Kansas (see Appendix A).

William was married twice. His first marriage was to Mary Celinda Adney, born on January 7, 1827, to Daniel Adney Jr. and his wife, Ann, whose maiden name was also Adney. Celinda died in Jay County on January 10, 1850, and was buried in an Adney family cemetery near Fort Recovery, Ohio. William married Nancy Anderson in Mercer County on June 5, 1851. Nancy, born in Ohio on August 1, 1829, was the daughter of David and Jane (Scott) Anderson. William had a son and a daughter by Celinda and



Levi Kitridge Warnock (1823-1893)
(Gene W. Warnock Collection,
courtesy of Ann [Warnock] Burford)



Susan Priscilla Jones Warnock (1828-1867)
(Gene W. Warnock Collection,
courtesy of Ann [Warnock] Burford)

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nine children by Nancy, all but the last two born in Jay County (see Appendix B).

Pension documents in a National Archives and Records Administration file related to Levi's oldest son, Francis Marion Warnock, who died in the Civil War, place Levi in Jay County on June 25, 1865. Later that same year, Levi was in Kansas.

on January 8, 1886, and Levi died there on September 14, 1908.

William's pioneer saga ended tragically in Kansas when he drowned on June 24, 1869. The *Junction City Weekly Union* (July 13, 1869) reports that, while "endeavoring to drive some stock from the bottom lands [along Chapman Creek] to the bluff . . . so rapid and unexpected was the

In little more than a decade, members of the . . . Warnock families had moved from . . . Indiana to Kansas and beyond.

William probably did not arrive in Kansas until 1866. Family information indicates that his next-to-youngest child, William, was born in Dickinson County on November 6, 1866. The brothers may not have settled immediately in Dickinson County, since the Francis Marion Warnock pension file places them at Ogden, Riley County, Kansas, in 1867. However, they may have had to go there to execute affidavits.

Based on Levi's obituary (*Topeka Capital*, September 14, 1908), he spent part of 1866 and 1867 supplying meat to workers building a Union Pacific Railroad branch line. The late Cline William Warnock of Bucyrus, Ohio, learned that Levi was a subcontractor for William "Buffalo Bill" Cody, who had the contract to supply meat to Union Pacific construction crews. The Eighteenth Cavalry Regiment protected railroad construction crews from hostile Indians, but Cline believed that Levi probably had no such protection. Levi's obituary says he killed 648 buffalo to feed the workers.

After their families joined them, the Warnock brothers homesteaded in different Dickinson County townships. One of William's descendants indicates they "built dugouts . . . into the side of a hill" that then were "walled up with rock." Besides serving as temporary housing for the two large families, these crude shelters satisfied Homestead Act requirements that families live on and cultivate 160-acre tracts for fourteen months to earn title to the land.

Levi was an expert trapper and fisherman. He also served as a justice of the peace for thirty years, and, according to his obituary, "never had a case reversed." Susan died in Dickinson County

current that before he [William] reached the bluffs, he was hemmed in on all sides and in attempting to swim across a ravine was drowned."

William's widow, Nancy, and Levi administered William's estate. His death left Nancy with sole responsibility for nine children, the oldest seventeen and the youngest one. A Wallowa County, Oregon, history suggests that this period was exceptionally difficult for the family, reporting that after William's death, his widow "with the children moved from their homestead to Abilene. To support the family, she took in boarders, some being riders who had driven cattle from Texas along the Chisholm Trail to the railroad [head] at Abilene. The older boys herded cattle and gathered buffalo bones, selling them for \$3.50 a ton."

In Dickinson County, Kansas, on September 26, 1874, more than five years after William's death, Nancy married Jonathan Armantrout, born in 1846 in Champaign County, Ohio, to James and Sarah Armantrout. The Wallowa



Nancy (Anderson) Warnock
Armantrout (1829-1883)
(Courtesy of William DuBois Jr.)

County history states the family "spent the next few years on the stepfather's homestead." The history adds that "in May 1879, with three covered wagons, a few saddle horses and a little money, the family joined a 90-wagon emigrant train to Oregon." A short biography of Daniel Welbaum Warnock, one of William and Nancy Warnock's sons, states that he and his brothers "walked most of the way, killing game for food."

The Wallowa County history indicates that "they arrived Aug. 12 near the present site of Joseph, where the oldest son Tom [Joseph Thomas Warnock], having come to the Wallowa country the previous year, had laid a foundation and filed a claim. The first winter was spent on the John Boner place on Hurricane Creek. The boys split 10-foot rails that they traded for cattle or sold for one and one-half cents each." The 1880 census for Silver Creek Township, Union County, Oregon, which later became part of Wallowa County, shows Jonathan and Nancy Armantrout with a household of twenty people, including all of Nancy's children by William Warnock and Jonathan's brother, David Armantrout.

Continuing, the Wallowa County history reports that "in the spring, the family moved to

Alkali Flat, where Enterprise would later be located. . . . That fall, the family located on Crow Creek, where, for the next two years, they milked 87 cows . . . [and] made butter with a water powered dash churn, 60 pounds at a time, and hauled it to Baker, Pendleton and Walla Walla [Oregon], selling a two-pound roll for 35 cents."

Nancy died in Wallowa County on August 13, 1883. Her sons then divided their cattle and operated independently. Their ranches became large operations, with more than a thousand head. Until 1901, in the spring the Warnocks worked together on cattle drives through the Wallowa mountain country to summer pastures and market.

In little more than a decade, members of the Levi and William Warnock families had moved from Jay County, Indiana, to Kansas, and beyond to the mountainous region of northeastern Oregon. As outlined in the appendixes below, the children of Levi and William quickly dispersed over several states, including California, Kansas, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Utah, and even resided as far away as British Columbia, Canada.

APPENDIX A: THE FAMILY OF LEVI KITRIDGE WARNOCK AND SUSAN PRISCILLA JONES

1. **FRANCIS MARION WARNOCK** was born in 1844 in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN. After having been paroled from a Confederate prison during the Civil War, he was fatally injured while carrying

ammunition to skirmishers in the battle at Fort Blakeley, AL. Francis died on Apr. 5, 1865, and was buried in the Mobile, AL, Memorial Cemetery.



Francis Marion
Warnock
(1844-1865) Civil
War soldier, courtesy
of Ken (Warnock)
Hawford

2. **SARAH JANE WARNOCK** was born Sept. 28, 1845, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died Nov. 16, 1919, in Chapman Twp., Ottawa Co., KS. On Jan. 20, 1866, in Jay Co., she married John J. Burgman (b. May 8, 1842, Noble Twp., Jay Co., s/o Noble Twp. pioneer settlers David and Rebecca Bergman (IN)/ Burgman (KS); d. Mar. 31, 1922, Ottawa Co., KS).
3. **MARGARET WARNOCK**, twin of Sarah Jane Warnock, was born Sept. 28, 1845, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and probably died in infancy.

4. **LUCY ANN WARNOCK** was born May 13/14, 1849, probably in Jay Co., IN, although her obituary says "Honeyton [Huntington] Co., Ind.," and died on Feb. 21, 1923, in Dickinson Co., KS. On Oct. 21, 1869, at Abilene, KS, she married Purlay Shry (b. Jan. 2, 1841/1842, Meigs Co., OH, s/o Jacob and Deborah Shry; d. May 25, 1926, Sutphen, KS). Shry served in Co. K, 99th OH Inf. Regt. in the Civil War and sustained wounds at the Battle of Stones River near Murfreesboro, TN, and later, in a railroad accident. His injuries eventually led to deafness and total disability.
5. **AMON BRADBERRY WARNOCK** was born Feb. 21, 1853, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died Sept. 15, 1915, near Keystone, Creek Co., OK. He married 1) Mar. 30, 1873, in Abilene, KS, Nancy Elvira Wells (b. Oct. 5, 1852, Salem, OH, d/o Ferris Wells and Susannah [Hines] Wells Shry; d. June 20, 1924, Chapman, KS). Amon married 2) Apr. 4, 1880, in Dickinson Co., KS, Margaret J. Boles (b. 1853, d/o Hardin and Elizabeth [Crook] Boles; d. 1923, Keystone, OK). Amon's first wife, Nancy, married 2) Nov. 21, 1883, Dickinson Co., KS, Ross Jones Warnock, Amon's younger brother.

6. **JOHN ROBERT WARNOCK** was born Nov. 15, 1854, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died before 1929. He married Nov. 21, 1883, Louise Steinbruck (b. 1866; d. Sept. 23, 1929, Abilene, KS). In 1910 John lived with his brother Amon in Cherokee Co., OK, and his wife resided in Sherman Twp., Dickinson Co., KS. This suggests a divorce, but a Dickinson Co. newspaper's notice of Louise's death indicates she was John's widow.
7. **ROSS JONES WARNOCK** was born Mar. 13, 1856, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died at Vinita, OK, on June 20, 1924. He married Nov. 21, 1883, Nancy Elvira (Wells) Warnock, the former wife of Ross's older brother Amon.
8. **JAMES GILRUTH WARNOCK** was born Nov. 19, 1858, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died Dec. 7, 1900, in Dickinson Co., KS. On Sept. 17, 1891, in Dickinson Co., he married Jane E. Leist (b. 1864; d. 1907). Leist may be her maiden name since Dickinson Co. records show James marrying "Jennie Straw."
9. **MARY CELESTIA WARNOCK** was born Oct. 11, 1860, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died Dec. 23, 1937, in Dickinson Co., KS. She married Apr. 3, 1881, in Dickinson Co., John Franklin "Frank" Freeman (b. Sept. 13, 1854, near Little Rock, AR—on his family's move west from NC—s/o George Walton and Sophronia Elizabeth [Sorrels] Freeman; d. Nov. 26, 1922, Chapman Twp., Dickinson Co., KS).
10. **PHOEBE ELIZABETH WARNOCK** was born Nov. 27, 1862, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, and died Apr. 28, 1939, at Milford, KS. (Her tombstone spells her first name as "Phoebie" and confirms that she was "born in Indiana.") Phoebe married John Henry Theodore Steinbruck (b. Jan. 29, 1861, Clay Co., KS; d. Feb. 16, 1943, Milford, KS).
11. **ELLEN ORINDA WARNOCK** was born Sept. 4, 1864, in Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN. In Dickinson Co., KS, on Jan. 20, 1889, she married Francis M. Leathers (b. 1857, Shelby Co., IL, s/o David M. and Lydia [Gochenour/Cothenour] Leathers; d. after 1930). Ellen and Francis later lived at McKenzie Twp., Burleigh Co., ND. They either divorced or she died before 1910, the year Francis remarried.
12. **FRANKIE MELVINA WARNOCK** was born Mar. 31, 1867, in Dickinson Co., KS, and may have been the first white child born on Chapman Creek. She died Apr. 29, 1943, near Nash, Grant Co., OK. In Dickinson County, on Mar. 30, 1889, she married Hugh Evans (b. Jan. 22, 1863, Solsberry, Greene Co., IN; d. June 1932, near Nash, OK). After Frankie and Hugh married, he farmed near Chapman, KS. When a neighbor offered to trade a Cherokee Strip tract in OK for one of the Evans's horses, Hugh inspected the property, agreed to the trade, and in 1894 the family moved to present-day Grant Co., OK.

APPENDIX B: THE FAMILIES OF WILLIAM PERRY WARNOCK

THE FAMILY OF WILLIAM PERRY WARNOCK AND MARY CELINDA ADNEY

1. **SARAH MARGARET WARNOCK** was born on Nov. 8, 1847, probably in Mercer Co., OH, and died there on June 11, 1882. Margaret married Dec. 7, 1867, Hallett M. Scott (b. probably Noble Twp., Jay Co., IN, s/o William and Margaret Scott). The 1870 census shows Margaret and Hallett in Jay Co., IN, with one daughter, Charlotte, but they do not appear there in later censuses. An Adney family genealogy states they had "children" who "went to live with Nelson Armantrout, Fort Recovery" after Margaret's death. Margaret is buried in Green Mound Cemetery, Fort Recovery, OH.
2. **FRANCES LEVI WARNOCK** was born Sept. 19, 1849, Mercer Co., OH. He moved to Dickinson County, KS, possibly with his father and stepmother, and there on Aug. 20, 1869, may have married Sarah Mayne.

THE FAMILY OF WILLIAM PERRY WARNOCK AND NANCY ANDERSON

1. **JOSEPH THOMAS "TOM" WARNOCK** was born Nov. 3, 1852, in Jay Co., IN, and died June 11, 1936, in Coos Co., OR. He was a cattle rancher in Wallowa Co., OR, and later lived in CA, eventually returning to OR.

2. **DAVID DICKSON WARNOCK** was born Apr. 13, 1854, in Jay Co., IN, and died Aug. 15, 1939, at Dayton, Yamhill Co., OR. David was a cattle rancher in Wallowa and Yamhill counties. He married June 22, 1874, Eva Ray (b. 1857, IL; d. May 10, 1947, Douglas Co., OR).



David Dickson Warnock (1854-1939) and his wife, Eva (Ray) Warnock (1857-1947) (Courtesy of William DuBois Jr.)

3. **CELINDA JANE WARNOCK** was born in 1856 in Jay Co., IN. She married Nov. 16, 1875, Dickinson Co., KS, George G. Branscom (b. Sept. 19, 1848, IA, s/o Daniel and Nancy [Gregg] Branscombe; d. Mar. 1, 1924). In 1910 Celinda and George lived at Ogden, Weber Co., UT.

Alexander Joshaway "Alex" Warnock (1858-1922) (Courtesy of William DuBois Jr.)



4. **ALEXANDER JOSHAWAY "ALEX" WARNOCK** was born Jan. 14, 1858, in Jay Co., IN, and died Sept. 25, 1922, at Portland, OR. He married Ellen Agnes Shields (b. 1863, probably Jay Co., IN, d/o Albert S. and Susannah [Ault] Shields). Alex was a Wallowa Co., OR, cattleman whose ranch was alongside the Snake River.

5. **DANIEL WELBAUM "DAN" WARNOCK** was born Sept. 1, 1859, in Jay Co., IN, and died Mar. 28, 1929, at Eugene, OR. He married 1) Apr. 15, 1883, Wallowa Co., OR, Mariah Martha Mortenson (b. Denmark, Dec. 27, 1864, adopted d/o James and Mariah Mortenson; d. Mar. 11, 1913, Modesto, CA [where the Warnocks were visiting friends]). Daniel married 2) Fanny Heckman. Daniel was a Wallowa Co., OR, cattleman, a blacksmith, horse breeder, and hotel operator. He also had banking interests.

6. **MARY ELIZABETH "MOLLIE" WARNOCK** was born May 5, 1862, in Jay Co., IN, and died Apr. 22, 1931, at Klamath Falls, OR. She married 1) Oct. 9, 1881, Wallowa Co., OR, Luther Guy Perkins (b. Aug. 14, 1860, Waupaca, Portage Co., WI, s/o Harmon and Cornelia [Dwinnell] Perkins; d. Jan. 18, 1947, Central Point, Jackson Co., OR). After their divorce, Mollie married 2) [---] Johnson. They lived at Ashcroft, BC, Canada. She married 3) William B. Miller.



Mary Elizabeth "Mollie" (Warnock) Perkins Johnson Miller (1862-1931) (Courtesy of William DuBois Jr.)

Family of John Viet (1858-1925) and his wife, Ruhama Edith (Warnock) Viet Hunt (1864-1941). Sons in the back row are (left to right): Robert William, Harry Louis, Perry Granvill, John Charles, and David Alexander. Daughter Gertrude stands between their parents (Courtesy of William DuBois Jr.).



7. **RUHAMA EDITH WARNOCK** was born Apr. 14, 1864, in Jay Co., IN, and died July 16, 1941, at Grass Valley, Nevada Co., CA. She married John Viet (b. Mar. 30, 1858, Springfield, IL; d. Mar. 5, 1925, Monrovia, CA). They resided in Wallowa and Lincoln counties, OR, and in CA. For a time, John operated a general store at Eddyville, OR. After his death, Ruhama married 2) [---] Hunt.

8. **WILLIAM PERRY "BILLY" WARNOCK JR.** was born Nov. 6, 1866, in Dickinson Co., KS, and died Sept. 15, 1951, at Enterprise, OR. He married Lucy Angeline Shields (b. Oct. 27, 1875, Dickinson Co., KS, d/o Albert C. and Susannah [Ault] Shields; d. Apr. 10, 1950, Enterprise, OR). They jointly operated a ranch with their siblings, Alex and Ellen [Shields] Warnock. Billy and Lucy later lived at Imnaha and Enterprise, Wallowa Co., OR.

9. **ROBERT NELSON WARNOCK** was born Oct. 6, 1868, at Abilene, KS, and died Feb. 26, 1941, at Oswego, OR. At Enterprise, OR, he married 1) Lilly Graves (d/o Lysander Graves). He married 2) at Lebanon, OR, Daisy (Neal) Wood (b. 1879, OR, d/o Moses Neal). He married 3) Sedama "Sadie" Knyiston/Kenniston (b. ca. 1883). He had one or more children by each wife. Robert's obituary (*Enterprise Record Chieftain*, Mar. 13, 1941) says he "went to western Oregon 35 years ago," or about 1906. He was a stockman "who ran cattle in the valleys and canyons"; he operated a photo studio at Enterprise; and he ran "a taxi in Portland for a dozen years."

Bibliographic Statement

No single source of information exists for descendants of Francis and Sarah (Cline) Warnock. Much of this data was extracted, bit by bit, from censuses, newspapers, pension files, public records, and other primary sources or obtained from family members. Data collected by the late Cline William Warnock of Bucyrus, Ohio, possibly is the most extensive body of Warnock information available. Some of the accompanying photos come from his collection.

Some of Francis and Sarah (Cline) Warnock's descendants are profiled or mentioned in M. W. Montgomery's pioneering 1864 *History of Jay County, Indiana*, published in Jay County's 28th year (Chicago: Church, Goodman, and Cushing); in Doctor Milton T. Jay's 1922 *History of Jay County, Indiana* (Indianapolis: Historical Pub. Society); in *Jay County, Indiana, 1982*, published by the Jay County Historical Society (Portland, IN); in the 1901 *Biographical Memoirs of Jay County, Indiana*, issued by B. E. Bowen Company (Chicago); and in the 1887 *Biographical and Historical Record of Jay and Blackford Counties, Indiana*, issued by Lewis Publishing (Chicago). Limited information also appears in publisher H. H. Hardesty's *Historical Hand-Atlas . . . and History of Jay County, Indiana* (Chicago, 1881) and in J. Will Kelley's *New Atlas of Jay County, Indiana* (Portland, IN, 1901).

County histories—notably *An Illustrated History of Union and Wallowa Counties* (Spokane, WA: Western Historical Pub., 1902) and *The History of Wallowa County, Oregon* published by the Wallowa County Museum Board ([Enterprise?], OR, 1983)—are important sources of information for the Oregon descendants of William and Nancy (Anderson) Warnock.

Although the latter history focuses on Daniel W. Warnock's descendants, it provides ample information on his siblings and parents. Cemetery inscriptions and a description of the Warnock brothers' cattle operations in Wallowa County on the Oregon American History and Genealogy Project Web site (www.oregongenealogy.com/ahgp) and on the USGenWeb pages (www.usgenweb.org/) are also helpful.

Published information on Levi and Susan (Jones) Warnock and their descendants is difficult to find. Because Dickinson County, Kansas, historical publications contain so little information, family histories were the most significant sources. A typical example is Homer Freeman's 1992 *George Walton Freeman Families* (Santa Barbara), which has data on descendants of Mary Celestia (Warnock) Freeman and spouse, John Franklin Freeman.

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