

LUTHER HAGERDON

Luther Hagerdon was born sometime between 1806 and 1810, most likely in New York. His birth year is estimated at this point based on various census records. As of today, I haven't yet found any official birth records, baptism records or specific birth dates. Most online researchers believe that Luther is the son of Henry Hagerdon (Hagedorn and other various spellings exist). At present I have nothing but circumstantial evidence linking Luther with Henry and Candace. As more searching continues, the details may become clearer.

We see Luther listed in the Ohio Tax Lists in Cleveland, Cuyahoga, Ohio in 1833 with some personal property. I don't find him any additional years in these tax records.

It is believed that Luther married Fanny C Pettey sometime around 1830. The assumption is that they were married in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, but despite marriage records existing in that area back to 1810, no record of Luther and Fanny's marriage exists in Cuyahoga County (unless the spellings in the records are quite different). It was assumed for many years that this was a Fanny PERRY based on the family statements that they were first cousins to Commodore Perry and that one sister went to stay with Grandmother Perry. DNA results and documentary research strongly point to Luther marrying Fanny PETTEY

Luther and Fanny's oldest daughter Emily kept a diary that is transcribed in the book "A Lovely and Comfortable Heritage Lost" by Ellen Osborn. In her diary Emily notes that she was born on May 7, 1834 in Cleveland, Ohio. However, the Wisconsin birth records record that she was actually born in Brown County, Wisconsin in 1835. Ellen Osborn reports that there are some discrepancies in Emily's notes depending on the version. The facts line up relatively close, but not exactly and based on the fact that Wisconsin was still a territory, it's hard to tell if Emily was born in Wisconsin, or that they just finally registered her birth in Wisconsin.

For the next few years, we have some good records for Luther and his family in addition to Emily's diary.

The next record I find is for L Hagedone in the WI 1836 State Census where they are in Brown County, WI.

Luther Hagadorn is then listed in the 1838 Wisconsin State Census in Astor, Brown County, Wisconsin.

Thanks to some online newspapers, Luther is listed a handful of times there and we get an idea of what activities he was involved in. There are a handful of records of Mortgage Sales, in February of 1839 the Wisconsin Democrat lists accounts audited by the board of county commissioners of Brown County and there we see L Hagerdon with \$45 for transporting paupers and in May of 1839 Luther Hagedon is listed in the Wisconsin Enquirer as a

supporter of holding a Territorial Convention in order to nominate someone to represent the territory in Congress. From this I make the assumption that he was fairly involved in the government of the territory.

The next record I have for Luther is the 1840 Federal Census. In this record we see Luther as a Male 30- 39, Fannie as a Female 20-29, the 4 children that they have at this point. Emily as the one female, Eber and Charles as males under 5 and then a male 5-9 that I believe to be John. With the family there are also 8 males 20 – 29. I have no guesses who these men are.

Luther Hagedon is next listed in the WI 1842 State Census in Green Bay North Ward, Brown County, WI.

The next few years present a few more newspaper items to show Luther's adventures. The most notable may be found in the Green Bay Republican on Dec 5, 1843. In this article it is noted that the Schooner Eclipse, owned and sailed by Mr Luther Hagedon while on her way from Mackinac to Green Bay two weeks prior struck a reef near Louse Island and was a total wreck. Most of the cargo was saved with the exception of the sugar and salt that dissolved in the water. Mr Hagedon and a companion – all that were on board at the time of the disaster – reached Green Bay last week nearly worn down with hunger, cold and fatigue; having traveled 80 miles on foot in a trackless wilderness, through mud, ice and water, with no covering at night and little to eat. What's really interesting is that this shipwreck is listed on wisconsinshipwrecks.org -

<https://wisconsinshipwrecks.org/Vessel/Details/158>

The Wisconsin Republican in Jan 1845 has an advertisement in which Luther Hagedon is looking for 6-8 good carpenters who want steady work and good pay.

In March 1845 the Wisconsin Republican has a piece where the undersigned, Luther Hagedon, is looking to lease or see the Green Bay Iron Foundry.

The Daily National Pilot out of Buffalo, New York in December 1845 lists shipping crafts owned by citizens of Green Bay. It starts with the Steamboat Enterprise, Capt L Hagedon.

Emily's diary also makes the note that "Father had made a great deal of money in speculating in one way and another and concluded to build a boat. He, with a few men, went into the woods and got out timbers, and hauled them down to the river shore. He then employed ship carpenters and the result was that in a few months the brig "Rocky Mountain" slid from the skids....she went until she came to the city of Cleveland, where he sold her. He then returned and built a gristmill."

At this point life changes for the family, as Fanny dies on June 13, 1846.

Emily notes in her diary that at this point there were 8 children, 5 boys and 3 girls. I am able to locate and track all three of the girls, and three boys. Presently, I believe that the oldest son was John O according to the research done by Ellen Osborn and the mention of a letter waiting for John when the family arrived in California. John is also listed in the 1854

Poll Tax assessment in California. One of them may have been an infant, as Emily does note that when her mother died, there was an infant a few months old let to her charge. There are no records of this infant child that I have found. Emily also records that between her mother's death and Luther's next marriage he hired various people to help keep house and calls their once happy home a "living hell".

Ohio Marriage Records show that Luther married Zilpha Ann Reynolds in Cuyahoga County, Ohio on Nov 19, 1847.

The dates are a bit muddled as to when the family left Wisconsin for California, but the best estimate is based off Emily's marriage. She was married on Jan 1, 1854, and she consistently states that she was married three months after arriving in California so it is presently assumed that they left Green Bay in 1853.

This trip overland must have been challenging. Emily recounts some of the trials and challenges as well as some of the fun experiences. What is surprising is the youth of their party. Luther is somewhere around 40 years old. His new wife Zilpha is in her early 20's. Emily as the oldest child is about 18 or 19. James Knox, my direct line ancestor, and the youngest known of Fanny's children is about 10. Zilpha has a newborn, Francis who was born in 1852. Can you imagine making the overland journey with such a young family?

The family stops in Placerville, El Dorado County, California.

From here, the records on Luther grow sparse. In April of 1862 there is notice of a letter waiting for him in the Sacramento Bee.

There is a record of the family in the California, U.S., Pioneer and Immigrant Files collection in Ancestry. This collection lists Charles Luther Hagerdon as the husband of Fanny Perry. I believe that this is a confusion of Luther and his son Charles Luther. It also states that the family came once to California overland in 1850 and again via ship in 1853. The application was submitted by Mary Johnson Robb and seems unlikely that they would traverse the trail twice as a family. Emily Hagerdon Johnson is also listed and only listed individually in the records and as traversing the trail once overland.

FamilySearch.org shows Luther Hagerdon, Zilpha Hagerdon and James K Hagerdon as grantors on June 17, 1864 in Stanislaus County, CA. The grantee is JE Durham and is recorded in Book 3 pages 399 and 400. That would lead me to believe that they were still in California in 1864.

The next and final record I have with Luther's name is his listing in the 1870 Federal Census. They family is in Webster, Hamilton, Iowa. This is the one good record we have of Luther's age where he lists his birth date as 1807 in New York. He is listed as a farmer, with a Real Estate Value of \$1000, and a Personal Estate Value of \$650. With him are Zilpha, James K (my direct line ancestor and the last child from Fanny), and the three children Luther has with Zilpha.

I have been unable to find information on where Luther and Zilpha go from here. They are not found in any census records with their children, and for now seem to have just disappeared. One day, the next set of records will appear leading to more information.

I have searched in the Iowa records and have hired a researcher to look at some of the records in the Iowa state archives, but as of July 2024 still no leads on where Luther and Zilpha are after 1870

As can be seen from the notes above, Hagerdon is spelled a variety of different ways. In each listing above I document Hagerdon however it appears in the referenced document.

Luther and Fanny had 8 children as reported by their daughter Emily

- **Emily Jane Hagerdon (1834 – 1917)**
- **John O Hagerdon (about 1835 - ?)**
- **Eber Adam Hagerdon (1837 – 1871)**
- **Charles Luther Hagerdon (1838 – 1880)**
- **Mary Elizabeth Hagerdon (1840 – 1931)**
- **Harriet A Hagerdon (1841 – 1863)**
- **James Knox Hagerdon (1842 – 1932)**
- **Infant son? (abt 1845 - ?)**

Luther and Zilpha had 3 known children and family legend states that there were twins who died tragically after arriving in California

- **Francis Leroy Hagerdon (1852 – 1879)**
- **Ellen Hagerdon (1855 – 1917)**
- **Albert Hagerdon (1856 – 1915)**
- **Twins?**

FANNY C PETTEY

Fanny Pettey was born on March 25, 1811 likely in New York (based on a calculation of her birth based on information provided on her grave) to Michael Pettey and Elizabeth Avery.

We know that she married Luther Hagerdon before 1834 when Emily was born.

I determined that Fanny was a daughter of Michael Petty and Elizabeth Avery using the following process. I was able to identify some DNA matches that connected to my mother and to one of her first cousins along with a known descendant of Emily Hagerdon the first daughter of Luther and Fanny that were not in my tree. Using those shared DNA matches, I did documentary research and was able to determine from two primary sources that Fanny likely is a Pettey. First, we found the obituary for Fanny's sister Elizabeth Avery Petty Bennett in the Green Bay Press-Gazette on July 15, 1913. In that obituary Elizabeth's descendants list that "when 19 years of age, she came to Green Bay with her sister, Mrs Luther Hagerdon, whose husband owned the first line of steamboats which ran between Green Bay and Buffalo." The spelling of Hagerdon instead of Hagerdon is just as printed in the newspaper. The other piece that helps tie all of this together is that in his War of 1812 Pension documents and in his will Michael Pettey lists his daughter Elizabeth – married to Thomas Bennett. What a great find!

In the December 30, 1895 edition of the Oshkosh Northwestern Paper (also reprinted in the Jan 1 1896 Des Moines Register and the Jan 1, 1896 San Francisco Call) there is a letter that brokers in Oto, Iowa sent to Milwaukee stating that the heirs of Fanny Hagerdon could potentially lay claim to about 400 acres of land that was Fanny's via a land grant in 1840. A search in the online archives in Wisconsin for court cases did not result in any findings. This must have been settled out of court, but I wonder if this provides some sort of clue to a death date for Luther.

ZILPHA ANN REYNOLDS

Zilpha Ann Reynolds was born in about 1829 and is the daughter of Daniel Benjamin Reynolds and Zilpha Ann Peters.

I have a record of Zilpha's marriage to Luther.

Interestingly, Zilpha is found in the 1860 Federal Census living next to her brother Rufus Reynolds in York, Medina, Ohio. At this point she is listed as a seamstress with \$200 in Real Estate and \$250 in Personal Estate. She has her son Francis who was born in Wisconsin, daughter Ellen, born in California, and son Albert who was born in Ohio living with her. So far, Luther has not been found in the 1860 census.

Then in the 1870 Federal Census she is seen with Luther as noted above in Iowa. From there, Luther and Zilpha seem to disappear. At some point the records will appear that locate either their next move, or life event.