

RUFUS CURTIS DAMON/DEMING/DEMMING

1792 - 1880

His migration from Massachusetts to Ohio to Illinois to California

“He moved west and was killed by Indians - oh really?”

It can sometimes be ‘a good thing’ when one begins a family history research project and NOT be able to foresee what lies ahead. In my ignorance about family history research when I began this project as a teenager, I thought that since I already had the biography of my Cobb-Deming great-great grandparents, most of my work was already ‘found.’ I ‘knew’ that a trip or two to the Latter Day Saints Family History Center would unfold all the information I needed – after all hadn’t I been told that ‘all’ our family information is kept with them? How naïve I was. Had I known how long this Quest would take me, I am not sure I would have started, but I am glad that I stuck with it. It has taken me many years to gather the story of my Deming family.

I grew up hearing adventure stories about my ancestors, John and Esther (Deming) Cobb and their trek across the prairie from Illinois to California in the early 1850s in their oxen drawn wagon. I decided to begin my family history research with this branch of my family as I knew where to find their biography in the Lake County, California 1880 History. This family was going to be easy - or so I presumed. I was a teenager when I began this quest and never thought to ask the names of the Cobb or Deming parents or siblings and they weren’t mentioned in the biography. Who were they?

My cousins, Ralph and Carol Hinton found a treasure that really started me on my way. Along the tree line of a meadow on Bottle Rock Road in Cobb, California, where I knew John and Esther (Deming) Cobb lived with their family during the 1850s, was a grave marker that reads, "Mary Ann Deming, wife of Rufus, died 1 January 1855 in the 56 year of her age." Was this Esther Deming’s mother? Was Rufus Deming her father? We didn’t know, but my research had begun.

The Biography of John Cobb stated that his wife, Esther Deming Cobb, was born in Ohio, but that was all it said about her background. Fortunately, I was planning a trip to Ohio to visit my son with a stop in Missouri to visit my aging parents. Going through microfilm at the Temple of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Independence, Missouri, the church I knew John and Esther Cobb were members in California, I found cards with the names John and Ester (Deming) Cobb. Ester E. (Deming) Cobb was born 7 October, 1821 in Belmont County, Ohio.

Now I had her date of birth and the specific area in Ohio where she lived. Her parent’s names were not listed. Church records were brief and kept on small 3x5 cards with no family information recorded. But, I had Esther’s birth date and location. Would I learn that her parents really were Rufus DEMING and Mary Ann DEMING as found on the grave marker in Cobb, Lake County, California? Or would they turn out to be related to the other DEMING family in Lake County, California whose biography was in the Lake County History?

As this research was during pre-computer days, I looked at IGI microfilm and microfiche databases in the Family History Center for Esther Deming. Unable to find her name, I quickly

learned to look at variant spellings of DEMING. This is when I, who pride myself on my ability to spell, learned that what we consider 'correct' spelling was, at that early time, not regarded as necessary or even a skill one aspired to have - spelling was phonetic and records were written by someone other than the person whose name is found in the record and they may have only been marginally literate. Rufus appears to have been 'literate' and after several very obvious and unsuccessful attempts when he was living in Illinois, at trying to have his name spelled as HE knew it, even he finally gave in to local spelling customs. Spelling of names are kept in this sketch AS FOUND in order that others also can find them. It was difficult enough the first time.

Rufus DAMON/DAMMON/DEMMING/DEMING was born 14 July 1792; he was the son of Eells and Huldah (Curtis) DAMON/Dammon of Scituate/Hanover, Massachusetts and the sixth of their nine children. This biographical sketch focuses on the life of Rufus, yet a bit of his ancestral family is in order to put him in historical perspective.

John DAMON, our immigrant ancestor was born in Tenterdon, Kent, England. John and his sister, Hannah were brought to the New World by their uncle, William Gilson about 1627, into the area called Scituate/Hanover Massachusetts. John Damon/Dammon and his descendants became an important part of the early history of New England and the newly growing nation where they owned property, paid taxes, actively participated in town life and served their country through several wars including King Philips War and the War of Independence - the Revolutionary War.

For about two hundred years, from 1627 until about 1820/21, our DAMON/DAMAN family remained in New England within close proximity to the coastline of Massachusetts just south of Boston - in Scituate/Hanover, Plymouth County, Massachusetts. Then came a time when families began to move away from the New England area.

The Migration West Begins

After the 1805 drowning death of his father, Eells Damon, in York, Maine, Rufus Curtis DAMON/ DEMING left 'the east' and became part of the westward migration movement. Just when he left 'home' has not been learned, nor do we know in whose company he traveled. Historians and Genealogists tell us that migrations were usually in family or allied groups. Did Rufus travel with other family members or did he travel alone? Had he been married previously? He was, after all, twenty nine (29) years of age when he married Mary Farra in Belmont County, Ohio. Did he have a previous family? Did he 'go west' searching work - and if so, what was his line of work? Had he served in the War of 1812? To date there is no proof that he served in this war and nothing was found stating his line of work. And, always there were nagging questions for which I wanted answers: What, when, why?

I found Rufus DEMING while looking at variant spellings of his name in the IGI - Latter Day Saints records (Utah Mormon Church). "Rufus Demming married Mary Farrah on 15 February 1821 in Belmont County, Ohio". This marriage license and their marriage occurred on the same day - note the spellings. Rufus' surname was spelled on the license as Demming and on the marriage record it is shown as Deming. Mary's name was spelled Farrah on this record. She was the daughter of Samuel and Hannah (Rees, Reese or Rhys) Farra. Their marriage license (#518) states that they were 'of Wayne,' a township in Belmont County, Ohio. Their license states: "Joshua Davis affirmed on 15 Feb 1821 that Rufus DEMING and Mary Farrah were of age." Their Marriage record (#573) states: "State of Ohio, Belmont County of, I Certify that I joined together in the holy bonds of Matrimony, Rufus DEMING and Mary Farrah on the 15th of

February 1821. Given under my hand this 20th day of Febr'y 1821, Jonas Alford, J. P." Another listing of the marriage of Rufus DEMING to Mary Farrah on February 15, 1821 is documented on page 142 in a Book of Marriages by Irene Mount Ochsenbein.

Rufus DEMING/Demming is not listed in the 1827 Enumeration of Males over age 21 in Wayne Township, Belmont Co, Ohio. (Belmont County Ohio records). Perhaps he was enumerated in the household of one of the Farra families as only names of heads of household were listed. There are several Farra names in the enumeration of Belmont County, Ohio, an area settled about 1816 mainly by Quakers from Pennsylvania which is where the Farra family originated. The early DAMON family in Massachusetts were Quakers - but it is unknown how long they remained with this faith. Rufus and Mary were married by a Justice of the Peace, not in a local church. This surprised me as I presumed the Farra family were Quakers and they would have had their marriage in that faith. I have since learned not to jump to conclusions so fast.

Rufus 'became a member of the Campbellite or Christian Church at an early age' and this may have been when that affiliation began. There is a (now defunct and apparently deserted) church of this name in the Village of Hunter in Wayne Township, Belmont County, Ohio which is where the Farra family lived. People would change their religious affiliation to accommodate their living conditions when they moved. This was not unusual as church was the social center of a town. Should the church they were 'affiliated with in one town not be available in their new community, they would logically attend the local church. The village of Hunter, Ohio where the Farra family lived now has zero population and the homes, the post office and other buildings apparently no longer exist leaving only the church and cemetery on the hill.

A Family Tree Maker file was found with Mary Farra from Belmont County, Ohio who married Rufus Dening (sic) on the date I found in the IGI and it was here I learned the names of their children as they are listed as 'heirs of Samuel Farra.' Searching for these early names means that one needs to be creative and search for variant spelling of names. Michael Anthony's file listed Mary Farra married to Rufus Dening (sic) with four children. Now I knew I could find my family - or so I thought.

Michael descends from Mary Farra's youngest brother, Isaac Farra. Correspondence with him revealed that he did not have any information about what happened to Mary or Rufus. He found Rufus' two Ohio marriages in the IGI and told me that he also did not know of any death record for Mary (Farra) Deming. He speculated that she most likely died from childbirth or during one of the cholera, typhoid, influenza or other epidemics of the time. Through Michael's file, I was able to follow the Farra line back to Philadelphia. Another Farra descendant, Irene Kreiger sent me a family group sheet with the names of the Deming children as shown on the Probate as 'heirs' of Samuel Farra: Joseph, Oliver, Esther and William.

Then, in a database of a Curtis family (Rufus's mother's family) there was one small notation that Rufus DAMON moved to Illinois where he died. Now I just KNEW I would be able to find the person with the answers. E-mail correspondence with a Curtis/Eells relative, Mark Eells (eells@lycos.com) confirmed that this was my Rufus DAMON/DEMING/ DENNING but that he knew nothing about Rufus other than Illinois which was 'when communication with him stopped' and the family in Massachusetts assumed he 'moved west and died.' Oh Really? I know he didn't die in Illinois as I knew he was in California in the 1850s. Mark was as anxious to know what happened as was I. Mark Eells gave me information on Rufus' father - Eells DAMON. Eells had been in the Revolutionary War and was a carpenter/ housewright; he died of drowning off Boon Island, Maine about 1805 while building a lighthouse.

After the birth of the four Deming children and the death of his wife, Mary (Farra) Deming, Rufus moved his family to Athens County, Ohio.

Here he married Lucy Tibbetts. Men married fairly quickly after their wife's death in order to have someone care for the young children. The next record found at the Ohio Historical Library Archives microfilm confirmed that: 'Rufus Demming married Lucy Tibbetts, by licence, on 28 November 1829 in Athens County, Ohio, Microfilm 0317290, Book 3, page 195, #573.' Lucy Tibbetts was 'from New Hampshire' and she had been married previously. I corresponded with Tibbetts family members who told me they lost track of her in Ohio. She may have brought a young son, a teenage daughter and an older man with her to this marriage - this is unconfirmed except they show up on the census.

A librarian at the Ohio Historical Library explained that as Lucy Tibbetts was a widow, a marriage license was considered to be the equivalent to a civil marriage. This librarian said that when women were 'in confinement' they often did not have church weddings. I haven't found an actual record of a infant and there were no infants in the Deming family in the 1830 Census, but she might have still been pregnant when the Census taker came around. Did Lucy die as a result of childbirth after the census? I wonder.

The 1830 Ohio Census of Athens Township, Athens County, Ohio, page 246 states: Rufus Demming, age 38 years old; with a household consisting of: 3 males under 10; 1 male 30-40; 1 male 60-70; 1 female 0-5; 1 female 15-20; and 1 female 30-40. From this Census I reasoned that the female under age 5 must be Esther as she was born in 1826 and the three small boys under 10 must be Joseph, Oliver and William. I felt elated, however, we still did not know the order of the birth of the boys or their birth dates. Then came the question - Who is the female age 15-20 and the male 60-70? Could this be daughter by a previous marriage or was I missing an earlier marriage of Rufus or was this a housekeeper? Also who was the male age 60-70? Those persons are still unknown. When, where, and why did Lucy die? I do not know the answer to these questions. I continue to search for information about her death in Athens County, Ohio and/or in Ellington, Quincy, Illinois. Or was it even somewhere in between on their way to Illinois? Again, we do not have the exact date of their leaving Ohio or arriving in Illinois.

Lucy Tibbetts DEMING must have died sometime before 1837. Early death records are not easily found. Lucy's name was not found in any of the Books or indexes for Athens County burials. It is possible that she may be buried in the Old Grave Yard located north of town where most of the burials were then, but I have no proof of this. Death records were not required at that time, so that makes it most difficult to find when anyone died and just where these women (and any children) are buried. Finding them would be 'by accident' I was told, as few headstones remain in the southeast Ohio area of Athens County that has been heavily mined for coal.

According to historical records of Joseph Deming in Wisconsin, Rufus moved his family from Ohio in 1832 to Ellington Township, Adams County, Illinois.

My westward migrating families - COBB - HINTON - DEMING - FARRA - just HAD to have crossed paths while moving around the country, especially in Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois or even in Missouri. Perhaps they traveled on one of John Cobb's keel boats along the Ohio rivers? This is too much coincidence to overlook. Many of those moving west stayed for 'a time' in Kentucky while waiting for the Indian lands in Ohio to 'open up.' Land in Ohio was considered to be highly prized, fertile, farming land. Is that what our family was doing? Quite possibly! Transportation was by often by river and keel boats were kept busy.

Next, from the online Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763-1900, Rufus married a third time, in Quincy, Adams County, Illinois, on 6 December 1837 to Sarah Perry. The certified handwritten copy of this marriage license states (verbatim): "Lawfully Authorizes to Celebrate Marriage - Greetings. You are hereby Licenced and Permitted to Cellebrate and certify the rites of Marriage between Mr. Rufus Deming and Miss Sarah Perry and for so doing this shall be your Sufficient Warrant. In testimony whereof I have herewith Let my hand and affixed the Seal of my Said Office at Quincy this Sixth day of Dec A,D, 1837. Nick(olas) Wren, Clerk, C.C.C.A.G." On the opposite side of the page is: "This certifies that I joined in marriage the within named Rufus DEMING and (Miss) Sarah Perry on the sixth of December A.D. 1837, Richard Genay, An ordained Minister of M. E. Church. Filed Dec. 7th 1837"

At this point it was early in my research and I questioned whether or not this was really my Rufus DAMON/DEMING or whether I was looking at different men named Rufus Deming with all these wives - however, they all needed to be researched thoroughly to learn whether this was indeed my ancestor. My family had doubts about this 'hobby' of mine and my sanity.

Marriage records purchased in 2001 while visiting in Quincy, Illinois included two marriages of Rufus Deming and two of John Cobb. One of these, that of John Cobb and Ester E. Demming confirmed John Cobb's Biography. John Cobb and Ester E. Demming were married in Quincy, Adams County, Illinois on 17 August 1848 by Henry Sebury a well known Justice of the Peace in Quincy who authored "Book of Remembrances of Quincy, Illinois."

I found another marriage for Rufus; his fourth marriage - in Quincy, Illinois, to Mrs. Mary Ann Mangum of South Carolina. This marriage license and certificate states: "Adams County, Illinois. To any regular Minister of the Gospel, authorized to Marry by the Society to which he belongs, Justice of the Supreme Court, Judge, or Justice of the Peace, GREETING--- These are to License and Authorize you to celebrate and certify the MARRIAGE of Mr. Rufus Demming and Mrs. Mary Ann Mangum and for so doing, this shall be your sufficient warrant. Given under my hand and the seal of the County Commissioner's Court at Quincy this Tenth day of June, A,D, 1848, J. C. Bernard, Clerk"...and... "STATE OF ILLINOIS, Adams County, I hereby certify that I joined in the holy state of MATRIMONY, Mr. Rufus Demming and Mrs. Mary Ann Mangum on the 10th day of June, A.D. 1848, given under my hand and seal, this 13th day of June A.D. 1848, Hugh Doyle, M. G. (Minister of the Gospel). Registered October 27/48 (October 27, 1848)."

Rufus was affiliated with the both the Christian Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church in Illinois, the church where he married Sarah Perry. Is this where he married Mary Ann Mangum? Those are also his church affiliations confirmed in his obituary in California AFTER I had researched his life.

(Mrs.) Mary Ann Mangum was about 50 years of age at the time of her marriage to Rufus Deming in 1848; the 1850 Illinois Census shows her age as 54 and she was unable to read or write. In their household is William Stone, age 19, a laborer. Was he a child of Mary Ann?

Rufus and Mary Ann Demming are shown in the 1850 Illinois State Census Index on p.136 in Ellington Township Dwelling 189, Family 191; Rufus Demming, age 54, white male, Gardner, value of real estate \$230.00, born in Mass. Mary A. Demming, age 54, white female, born in S.C., unable to read or write. Also living in their household was: William Stone, age 19, white male, laborer, born in Illinois. It is speculated that William might have been Mary Ann's son - he came to California with them and is found in census records living with the Love family. Women are not the only ones who

have 'memory lapses' when it comes to recounting their age. Rufus was born in 1792 - so in 1850 he was actually fifty-eight (58) not fifty-four (54).

Rufus and Mary Ann Deming were next found living in California but when and how did they come to California? Did they travel by ox-drawn wagon as did the Cobb family? Or did they sail down the Mississippi to New Orleans, change ships to Chagres, cross the Panama Peninsula then wait for another ship to sail to San Francisco? They obviously arrived before 1855. Their names are not in the Rasmussen book of California Wagon Train Lists, April 5, 1849 to October 20, 1852. I was told not to take that to mean they did not come overland or during that time period - just that their record is not in the book. These listings were taken from published newspapers of the time. I needed to learn whether they might have come by ship through Panama as this seems the likely mode of transportation for them.

In Louis Rasmussen's book, San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists, is: "the SS *Constitution* arrived in San Francisco on August 9, 1851 from Panama via Acapulco and San Diego. Among the passengers were -?- DAMON and M. DAMON. Sailed from Panama, July 15, at 6-½ P.M.; arrived at Acapulco at 9 A.M. the 24th; sailed the 26th at 9 A.M., detained two days, Steamship *Pacific* sailed on the 25th, bound down; 23 miles N.W. of Acapulco - spoke (with) steamship *Northerner*. Arrived at San Diego August 4, at 9 A.M.; the *Oregon* sailed same day; detained nearly 2 days, ran ashore twice in the harbor by pilot Keating, of Boat No. 2; sailed 6th. Left Acapulco barques *Bremen*, *Eureka* and sloop-of-war *Vandalia*; Left at San Diego, ship *Stephen Lurman*, barque *Whitton*, schooner. *Sophia* for San Francisco. Cargo: Not listed. Delivered to J. L. Howard; Ziba Holt. Passengers [taken aboard in] Panama and Acapulco." Are these OUR Rufus and Mary Ann Damon? I wonder. William Stone is not shown in this index.

Researching family history seldom brings results in a lineal time frame, however, at last I discovered Mary Ann DEMING, the fourth wife of Rufus Deming. After traveling to California, she died in 1855 and was buried in the meadow off Bottle Rock Road in Cobb, Lake County, California. The grave marker states that Mary Ann Deming was the wife of Rufus Deming, Esther Cobb's father - my 3rd Great Grandfather and Mary Ann was Esther's third step mother.

Lake County (California) Genweb has the photo of Mary Ann's gravestone. Bruce Anderson, on whose property the gravestone was located, has graciously given me written permission to publish it in my family history. If you are not able to see the tombstone on this format, go to <http://www.cagenweb.com/lake/lakegraves.htm>. Scroll down to Deming, Mary Ann and click on her name. This is the first proof of death of any of the wives of Rufus that I have found. This marker is now considered to be a historical grave marker in Lake County as this marker has the earliest date shown in the county. Photograph of grave marker of Mary Ann Deming at:

<http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/h/i/n/Margie-Hinton/>

MARY ANN, WIFE OF RUFUS DEMING
DIED JAN. 5, 1855 IN THE 56 YEAR OF HER AGE

Searching County of Napa (California) records, www.cagenweb.com, I found Rufus Deming in a listing of Napa County Ministers of the Gospel - 1850-1905. I quickly sent an email to the Napa County Genealogy Society requesting the name of the church that Rufus was affiliated with and the answer was that there was no recorded church associated with Rufus. I at first thought that perhaps he might have been affiliated with the same church that the Cobb family held membership even though I had not found DEMING names in the RLDS archives. Now I know that he was affiliated with the Christian Church (Campbellites) and the Methodist Episcopal Church.

A Napa County researcher, Dick Bruechert, President of the Napa County Genealogy Society sent me 'startling news' - Rufus DEMING performed 'many of the marriages in early Napa County' and Dick found yet another marriage for Rufus! On May 22, 1856, in Napa, Napa County, California, Rufus Denning was married to Jane Love by C. S. Victor, Minister of the Gospel. No church is listed here and it MIGHT be the Methodist Episcopal Church? So, this is marriage number five for Rufus.

Interestingly, the only Jane Love I found on Ancestry was from - you guessed it - Ohio. Perhaps there were others who were known or related to our family and/or who moved west with John and Esther or with Rufus and Mary Ann? I phoned several of the Napa City Churches and was unable to find any of them with connections to Rufus or Jane Deming or Denning. I am corresponding with a Love family and they are searching their records.

Rufus purchased land in Napa County between Yountville and Napa. Rufus DEMING is next listed in the California Census Index of 1870, in Napa Township, Napa County, page 066 (ancestry # CA12953414). Census: Microfilm Roll No. 75, microcopy 593, Page 78 of Napa Township, enumerated on the 28th day of July, 1870. Dwelling House No. 599, Family No. 620: DEMING, Rufus, age 71, Male, white, Farmer, born Massachusetts. (sic; he was 78). DEMING, Jane, age 65, Female, white, Keeping house, value of Real Estate \$2000, born Virginia. Hmmm. Value of Real Estate is in Jane's name. The household next door listed on this Census was: Family No. 621: Love, Samuel, age 30, male white, Laborer, born Ohio
Love, Sarah, 19 female, white, keeping house, born California
Stone, William, 39, male, white, Laborer, born Tennessee
Love, Rosa, 2/12, female, white, living at home, Born California in March of that year.

Probate records for Rufus and Jane Deming state that William Stone, is the same William Stone who was the son on Rufus' fourth wife, Mary Ann Mangum Deming.

Rufus and Jane Deming moved to the town of San Luis Obispo after the 1870 census. They purchased land and raised cattle and they lived here until their deaths.

The notice of the Death of Rufus Deming was found in the San Francisco Bulletin, dated 1880-05-11; Page 3 through the database of Jim Falkinbury.

Then, a kind volunteer in San Luis Obispo sent me his Obituary:

SAN LUIS OBISPO TRIBUNE, May 8, 1880.

DIED - DEMING

In this city, May 1st, 1880, Rufus DEMING, aged 81 years, 1 month and 18 days.

A GOOD MAN GONE. Death of an Aged and Useful Citizen

On Saturday last, Father Rufus DEMING died at his residence in this city. The following brief sketch of his eventful life is furnished by one who knew him well: The deceased was a native of the State of Massachusetts. Many years ago he emigrated to Illinois, where some of his children still reside. He came to California in 1858 (sic - it was before 1855), and settled in Napa county, where he resided for eighteen years. Soon after coming to California, he lost his fourth wife, and in 1856 was married to Miss Jane Love, who now survives him. Father DEMING has spent a long, active and useful life. As a citizen, he has been deeply interested in all that pertained to the welfare of his country; as a neighbor he as always merited and received the

confidence and esteem of those who knew him, while to his family he has been a devoted husband and father. In Napa county he had many friends, who will remember him with pleasure. Coming to San Luis Obispo nine years ago, he has made numerous friends here who will not soon forget him. Early in life he made a profession of religion, and united with the Christian Church, to which he was devotedly attached. For many years he was a local minister in the M. E. Church. He was a faithful worker in the cause and exemplified his profession by an upright and consistent life. One who had been intimate with him for twenty-five years, part of the time living in the same house, told the writer that he had never known him to manifest anger, though he had seen his feelings hurt so that he would weep like a child, yet he had no resentment. Though years of affliction impaired his mental vigor, his faith was strong, his hope ardent, and he was cheerful in view of his expected change. His aged companion and many friends have the sympathy of all their neighbors.

A portion of the Obituary is printed on page 284 in the History of San Luis Obispo County, California, Valley Publishers, Fresno, California, 1979, also in the San Luis Obispo History Book are descriptions of the various churches and while his obituary mentions the M. E. Church and the Christian Church, Rufus is not mentioned among the names of ministers with the Methodist Episcopal Church, it states: "The ministers of the various churches often held services in the other towns of the county, and organizations of societies were made and churches built, and the ministers of other localities often preached in San Luis Obispo. The Christians, or Campbellites, have been represented by Rev. Mr. Wright, Rev. Rufus DEMING, and others..."

Obituary of Jane Love Deming; October 1892; Newspaper published in: San Luis Obispo, CA. SAN LUIS OBISPO TRIBUNE, SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 9, 1892
Died - DEMING, at Arroyo Grande, Oct. 8, 1892, Mrs. Jane Deming, a native of Ohio, aged 87 years, 7 months and 4 days. Funeral services will be held at the residence of Mr. T. Seely, at 2 o'clock, Sunday, Oct. 9. Interment, I. O. O. F. Cemetery, Arroyo Grande.
<http://www.newspaperabstracts.com/index.php?action=displaycat&catid=593&page=3>

San Luis Obispo County Recorder; Deaths - Book 2 (old ledger register); Letter "D" entry 249
Oct. 8, 1892, Mrs. Jane Deming, female, 87 yr 7 mo 4 d, Buried Arroyo Grande cemetery, Date of Death, Oct. 8, 1892, Cause of death: Old age, T. J. Bowman.
Cemetery Records of South San Luis Obispo County, California 1877-1941
(Published by San Luis Obispo County Genealogical Society, Atascadero, CA 93422-0004, Evelyn Baxley, President, 1989-1990.)
DEMING - Jane, 10-8-1882, 87 yrs, 7 mos, 4 days;
DEMING - Rufus, 5-1-1880, 81 yrs, 1 mo., 18 days "Father and Mother"

I couldn't leave this biographical sketch here, now could I? No I had to search for the brothers of my great great grandmother, Esther Elizabeth (Deming) Cobb. Family history is fluid and new information continues to arrive which makes updates necessary. Recently received information has to be added to this sketch:

A descendant of William Deming, third son born to Rufus and Mary (Farra) Deming contacted me in 2009 and his story is being researched, compiled and will be written by Phil and Mary Deming. William Deming was born just eleven days prior to Mary's death in Belmont County, Ohio. He was raised in Ohio and did not move west with his family. The story passed down through the generations was that Rufus left William in Ohio, moved west and was killed by the Indians. That must have been difficult for a child to hear and accept. I suggest another scenario: an eleven day old infant needed to have a 'wet nurse' to feed him and care for his needs.

Possibly one of Mary's sisters or a nursing neighbor might have taken him into their family and they came to care for him enough to tell Rufus that when Rufus was ready to move west, he had a new wife and they wanted William to stay with them. The balance of the William Deming story in Ohio will be added to this sketch when it is completed as William's descendants lived in Belmont County into the early 1900s before they, too, moved west.

I have the story of Esther in California.

Joseph Deming and his family moved and settled in Wisconsin. I received historical information about his family and that will be added at a later date. That leaves Oliver who moved often and possibly married three women. Oliver may have died in Wisconsin, however, his descendants returned to Adams County, Ohio. The story of Oliver is being researched. Adams County, Illinois is where I am presently researching for Oliver's descendants. Rufus' obituary stated he had children there.

Our Deming family is grateful and indebted to San Luis Obispo volunteers who came to our aid in searching for Rufus. I want to THANK:

Linda Sullivan photographed the Deming grave marker and the Arroyo Grande cemetery sign.

Doreen Dishman, is to be Thanked and Commended (WITH A BIG, BIG HUG) for her dedication at going repeatedly to the San Luis Obispo Records office where she found Rufus' death notice in the 'misplaced' Death Book – she KNEW the book was there. Doreen sent me several newspaper articles related to the Deming family in San Luis Obispo and she found and sent the Obituary of Rufus Deming. Thank you so much Doreen and Linda - these 'final' items were needed to confirm my many years of Deming research.

Of course, I cannot leave this sketch without thanking my family members for their help with the story.

Thanks to Michael Anthony for sharing his Farra Family information with me.

I also thank Irene Kreiger with whom I continue to share Farra information. Irene read an early version of the long version of the Damon family story which helped me tremendously with family names and other information.

Last mentioned is Ralph and Carol Hinton who started me on my research quest and Ralph and I are in constant communication about family history as we both have been researching our family history since our teen years. Ralph is my sounding board and keeps me researching.

If any of you reading this sketch are related to the Rufus Deming family and wish more information on the early Damon/Deming family or a copy of the final research;

Please do contact us:

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