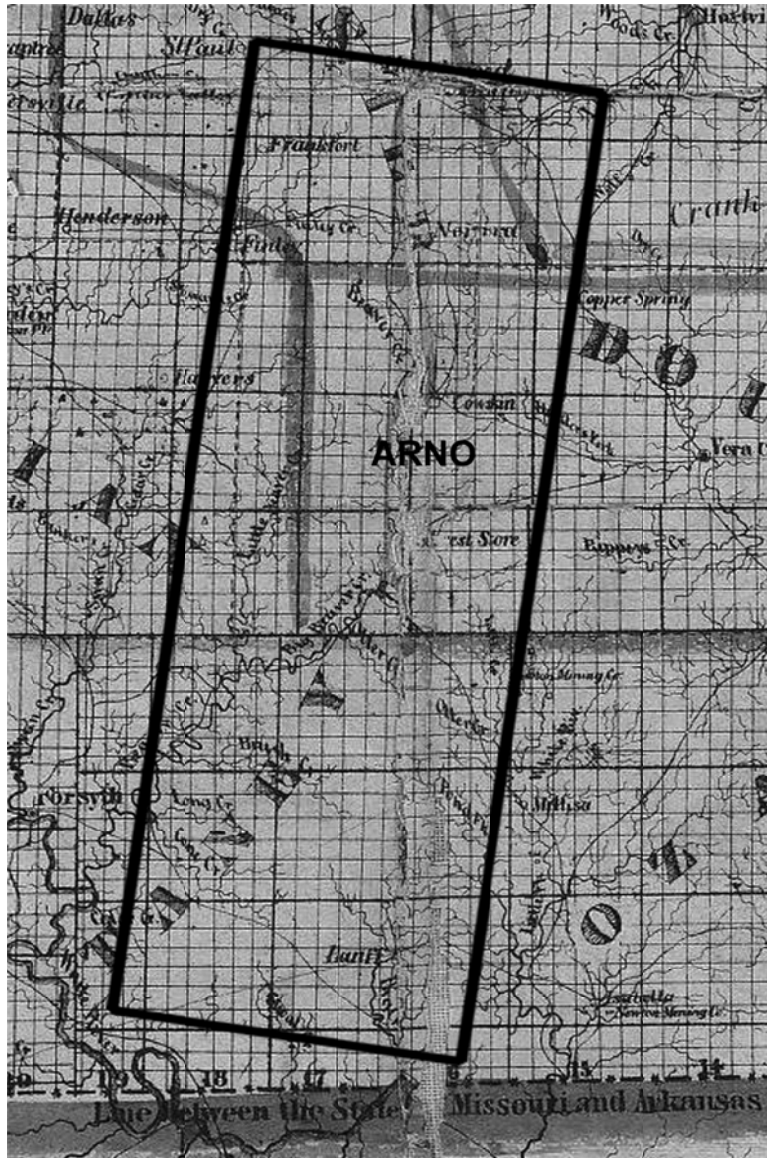


Tracing the Morris Family of Big Creek, Taney County, Missouri

by Morris descendants Nancy (Morris) Boyd and Ken Brown



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Nancy (Morris) Boyd and her husband, Curt, have operated the century-old Boyd family farm in southwestern Iowa near the Missouri River for many years. Over the past decade, Nancy took advantage of the internet in her spare time to learn more about her father's ancestors than earlier genealogists would have believed possible.

Nancy's cousin, Ken Brown, of Springfield, MO, has spent almost twenty years researching the history and families of his birthplace, Douglas County, MO. Much of his work is published in the Douglas County (MO) history journal and can also be referenced from his web site listed at the end of this article.

In this article, the two cousins have joined forces to document and publish all they've discovered about Tommy Morris, an early 1830s pioneer on Big Creek, and his descendants. Watch for the words "probable", "probably", and "presumably" in this article. While most of the findings have been proven in a manner that would suit most trained genealogists, there are instances where the authors have reached a reasonable conclusion worthy of mention. They have listed their contact information at the end of the article, and would be happy to share and compare information with other interested family historians).

The authors published a similar article in the Winter 2010 issue of the Douglas County (Mo.) Historical Journal entitled "John W. Morris—Have Family-Will Travel." At that time, the information about Big Creek below had not been determined. The Douglas County Journal also included short articles about two descendants of old Thomas Morris—William F. Morris and Amanda (Morris) Brown—both of whom raised their families in Douglas County near Ava—that information is not included in this article.

Foreword

This article covers many decades of history for the Morris Family. To help minimize reader confusion, the following will be used to distinguish between similar named individuals:

- Thomas Morris (b. 1786 – d. 1858) is called **Old Thomas** or simply **Tommy** (the same as used by S.C. Turnbo in his manuscripts).
- John Morris (b. 1822 – d. 1877), a son of Tommy, is called **John** or **Uncle John**.
- Thomas Morris (b. 1826 – d. 1862), another son of Tommy, is called **Thomas**.
- John W. Morris (b. 1847 – d. 1912) son of Thomas, is called **John W**.

PART 1: 1830-1860--TOMMY, JOHN AND THOMAS MORRIS

Those Wonderful 1840s Surveyor Maps

In 1846, surveyors contracted by the Federal Government came into the Big Creek valley in southeast Taney County laying out the original grid of Townships, Ranges, and Sections that is still used today. This was a first step toward permanent land ownership by the county's earliest settlers. The land descriptions provided by this grid let homesteaders prove their claims in the next decade, the 1850s, and beyond.

On their hand-drawn maps, the surveyors would identify the names of families already having established farms on the land (although some surveyors appear to have been more diligent than others in these notations). **Exhibit 1** shows the 1846 map for Sections 23-26 plus Sections 35-36 of Twp. 22, Rng 17, along Big Creek. In the latter two sections (35 and 36), the surveyor entered the words *Morris'* and *Morris' yard*. It was not far from where Hampton Hollow emptied into the Big Creek from the west.

The left half of **Exhibit 2** (a 1995 road map) shows all 36 sections of Township 22, Ranges 17, in southeastern Taney County. The right half shows Township 22, Range 16, which was originally in Taney County but transferred to newly formed Ozark County in January 1841.

Boundary Change Reminder: all of the area on Exhibit 2 was in Greene County Missouri from January 1833 until January 1837 at which time it was transferred to newly formed Taney County. Then in January 1841, Range 16 (on the right side of Exhibit 2) was removed from Taney County and thereafter included in newly formed Ozark County.

The 1846 Tommy Morris farm is identified on Exhibit 2 as Point A on Big Creek in Taney County. It is almost three miles due south of where the surveyor identified *Jn(?) Taber's* place (Point D). Taber's place was shown on the west bank of the East Fork of Big Creek. On the West Fork of Big Creek, about a mile east of the Tabers, *Wm. Clark's* place was identified (Point E).

Summary of Key Points identified on Exhibit 2 with letters as follows:

- A At this point, the Morris Family place was identified by Federal surveyors in 1846—presumably the home of who S.C. Turnbo calls “Tommy Morris.” The Morris family never obtained a land patent at Point A, and it was not claimed by anyone until the early 1900s by unrelated families.
- B Location of Rhodes Cemetery where Tommy Morris (b. 1786 - d. 1858) and wife, Dollie, were buried. Their remains are in unmarked graves next to two daughters and their Taber husbands.
- C At this location, a land patent was obtained by Tommy Morris’ son, John Morris, in 1859, in Section 13.
- D At this point, the Taber Family place was identified by Federal surveyors in 1846. Isaac and Fielden Taber first obtained land patents in this Section 1 in 1891 and 1895 respectively.
- E Wm. Clark Family place identified by Federal surveyors in 1846. In his Big Creek story, S.C. Turnbo tells of the Clark Family doing very well on Big Creek but “...soon after the war broke out the family was stripped of their worldly goods and the family moved to Nemaha County, Nebraska.”
- F At this location, Thomas Morris (the father of the authors’ John W. Morris), acquired 40 acres on March 27, 1861, right before the war broke out later that year.

All of surnames mentioned above—Morris, Hampton, Clark and Taber (Tabor)—are mentioned prominently in S.C. Turnbo’s manuscripts, particularly in his stories about Big Creek. William A. Yates used Turnbo’s Big Creek memories as an introduction to his article “The Taber Family of Big Creek Taney County, Missouri” published in the Summer 1972 Issue of the WRV Historical Quarterly. Yates followed Turnbo’s memories with a detailed history of the James Taber family beginning with the family’s movements out of Virginia into Illinois and then into the Big Creek area by 1835. (As the following article will outline, the Morris family traveled from the same Illinois County, Macoupin, around the same time).

1830s Westward Migration of Tommy Morris and Family

Old Thomas “Tommy” Morris was born in 1786 in Georgia and died in 1858 on Big Creek in Taney County, MO, and he was buried in the Rhodes Cemetery (Point B). His wife’s name was Dora (Dorothy or Dollie). The two were married in Georgia before moving west. They were in Tennessee, Kentucky and Illinois before coming to the south central Missouri area in the 1830s. Thus Tommy was one of the early settlers in the area as confirmed by the Turnbo Manuscripts.

Dollie was born in 1788 in Georgia and died after 1850 in Taney County, MO. Like her husband, Tommy, Dollie was buried in the Rhodes Cemetery. In adjacent unmarked graves at Rhodes are James and Celia (Hall) Taber. Also buried nearby are two of the Morris daughters and their Taber husbands: (1) Elizabeth and Archibald Taber, and (2) Matilda and Isaac Taber. *Note: Turnbo states that a daughter of Tommy Morris (who he called “Dollie”) was the first person buried at Rhodes and it was before 1846. The authors have not been able to confirm whether this was a daughter or if Turnbo was remembering Mrs. Dollie Morris who died after the 1850 census.*

Thomas and Dollie also had a daughter, Louisa. Louisa was born in Georgia in 1809 and married Charles Lair while her Morris family was in Macoupin County, Illinois. Louisa and Charles are shown as living next to her parents in the 1830 census for Macoupin County.

In addition to Thomas and Dollie’s three daughters just listed, they are believed to have had these three sons and possibly more:

- John Morris -- he was born in 1822 in Tennessee and died in 1877. Uncle John’s first wife Nancy (who was married first to a Brown) was born circa 1815 in Tennessee and died in 1873 or 1874.
- Thomas (our John W.’s father). He was born in 1826 in Illinois and died in 1862. Thomas’s wife, and John W.’s mother, Sally (Brown), was born circa 1830 in Arkansas and died in 1877.
- Russell was born in 1828 in Illinois. Uncle Russell and his family were enumerated in the 1860 Census for Swan Township in Taney County. His wife, Amanda (maiden name unknown), was born in Tennessee.



Rhodes Cemetery -- Morris & Taber row -- Jan. 27, 2011

1840s and 1850s in Big Creek Township.

Tommy's daughter, Louisa, and her husband Charles Lair migrated into Missouri with the original Morris family in the 1830s. The couple is shown in the 1840 census for Taney County, Missouri, next door to Louisa's parents, Tommy and Dollie Morris. (The 1840 census taker probably found the family at Point A shown on the Exhibit 2 map). Next door, Uncle John and Aunt Nancy Morris's household included three children with the Brown surname:

- J. Brown, born 1826 in Arkansas
- G. Brown, born 1832 in Arkansas
- W. (William A.), born 1835 in Arkansas.

These Brown children are believed to be Nancy Morris's children by an earlier marriage. (Note on William A.: after William A. Brown's first wife died, he married Susan/Susanna (Smith) Taber. She was the widow of Hartwell Taber, a son of our John W.'s Aunt Elizabeth (Morris) and Uncle Archibald Taber. With Nancy (Brown) Morris and William Brown as probable mother and son, it also seems probable that Sarah (Sally) Brown who married Thomas Morris was Nancy's child. Sally was born in Arkansas in the 1830s, the same as Nancy's other children.

The 1850 census taker found the households of (1) Tommy (Old Thomas) Morris, (2) Russell Morris, (3) John W.'s father, Thomas, and (4) the Tabers next to each other. It's not clear whether the Tabers were with the Morris families at Point A or vice versa at Point D.

- Family 576 -- Tommy and Dollie Morris
- Family 575 -- Thomas and Sally Morris (with John W. as a child).
- Family 574 -- Russell and Amanda Morris. Russell was Thomas's brother.
- Families 573, 572, & 571 -- James Taber, Hartwell Taber, and John Taber families

1860 -- Thomas Morris Family Has Moved Off Big Creek to Ozark County

By 1860, our John W.'s grandparents, Tommy (who died in 1858) and Dollie Morris, had passed away and buried side-by-side in the Rhodes Cemetery, Big Creek Twp, Taney County, MO (see Point B on map).

The Thomas and Sally Morris family (including John W. as a youth) were listed in the 1860 Ozark County Census. Likely the census taker found the family at Point F on the map in Ozark County where Thomas acquired land in 1861. The Thomas and Sally (Brown) Morris household included:

- John W. Morris, recorded as 1848 but should be 1847.

- Amanda C. Morris, born 1853.
- Nancy Morris, born 1857. (This child probably died young as she was not found on the 1870 census for the family). Missing from the 1860 census, however, was another daughter named P.J. Morris. She was born about 1850 and must have died young as well.

Early Civil War Years Tragic for the Morris Family

Had it not been for the Civil War, and the subsequent death of Thomas Morris in the war, the Morris family might have remained for decades along the Taney-Ozark County line between Rueter and Theodosia included on Exhibit 2. Instead, the family (like the Clarks mentioned by Turnbo) had to move north away from the border war conflict. This caused later Morris descendants to leave footprints in several places including Webster and Douglas Counties, Boone County in Arkansas, and Sequoyah County in Oklahoma.

Thomas Dies in Union Camp at Rolla—in 1861, John W.'s father, Thomas Morris, enlisted early on with the Union Army's 4th Regiment of the Phelps Volunteers. The commander was Capt. George W. Evans whose descendants still live in the Toledo area of northwest Ozark County. Like many soldiers in the Civil War, Thomas died of disease and not in combat. His death occurred in February 1862 in Rolla, Mo. where his unit was assembled. The reason for his death was listed as bronchitis (or winter disease).

As a result of Thomas's death and the border conflict, Thomas's widow took her family north to Miller County MO (post office address Pleasant Mound) in the Missouri River Valley. Based on later pension affidavits, her family was probably in the company of other Taney/Ozark county families including members of the Kesse and Haskins families. The Morris family did not find their way back to the border until several years after the war.

Widow's Pension Application Process Begins--In 1863, Sally Morris initiated a pension application for herself and that of her two surviving minor children--John W. and Amanda C. The final file compiled over the next 23 years grew to over 100 pages - this file provided valuable history about the family both before and after the Civil War.

In several affidavits in the civil war file of Thomas Morris, William A. Brown (who was Uncle John Morris's stepson and Sarah/Sally Morris's probable brother), stated that he knew Thomas and Sarah (Brown) Morris, and that he was present along with Nancy Morris when the couple were married February 11, 1844, in Taney Co. Missouri, and that he could testify to the state of the health of Thomas Morris, before he enlisted in the Civil War. (Evidence was needed that Thomas had not died from a pre-existing condition).

Elsewhere in the file is a statement that both William A. Brown and his wife, Susan (Taber), knew of the family and remembered when a son, the authors' ancestor, John W. Morris, and a daughter, Amanda C. Morris, were born. The affidavits listed in Table 1 made various attestations such as: (1) the signer knew Thomas before the war (and he was in good health); (2) the signer was present at the marriage of Thomas and Sally Morris; or (3) the signer was present when Sally gave birth to one of the two children—John W. and Amanda C. (married Canifax).

The 1885 affidavit of Jesse Brown is interesting in that Jesse stated he was present at Sally (Brown) Morris's death in 1876, and he helped bury her body that day. He is the great-grandfather of co-author, Ken Brown; and while there is an implication that the two (Jesse and Sally) were relatives, no connection has been discovered in the Jesse Brown family history study.

Pension Effort Leads to Little—Thomas Morris's widow remarried in 1865 (to a Connor) and died in 1876. There's no indication that she ever received pension payments. Thomas's daughter, Amanda, did draw a pension until her death in 1883 after which her own daughter received payments. The older child, John W. Morris (the authors' common ancestor), does not appear to have received much if any money from the application. However, the length of the file suggests he certainly kept trying even after his sister's death.

To collect anything on a Civil War pension, minor children had to be under the age of 16 at time of the application (in this case 1863). It would appear John's age was right on the borderline and caused the authors to speculate his birth year was changed from 1847 to 1848 in later affidavits in an attempt to get around this technicality.

Table 1 – Providers of Affidavits in the Thomas Morris Pension Application File	Table 2: John W. Morris’s Family Tree
<p><u>Signer’s name, Post Office (Year)</u> BAKER Willy, Miller County (1863) BROWN Jesse, Ava (1885) BROWN Susannah, Arno (1885) DAY H.B., Arno (1887) EVANS Cap. George W. (1877) FRIEND Elijah (1885) FRIEND John, Isabella (1883) FRIEND Rutha, Isabella (1885) FRINK H.E., Arno (1887) HAMPTON Thomas G.W., Arno (1887) HASKINS E. J. (1883) HASKINS J. L. (1884) HASKINS James A. (1877) HASKINS Joseph, Miller Co. (1864) HASKINS Joseph R., Thornfield (1883) HASKINS Lorenzo D. (1884) HERNDON Elisha, Brown Branch (1886) HINTON A.D. (1885) KESSEE Taton, Webster Co. (1864) LAWRENCE John, Arno (1886) MARTIN Moses C., Webster Co. (1864) RICHARDS F.M., Rome, (1887) SALLEE James H., Thornfield (1884, 1885) TABER Aaron, Rome (1885) TABER Isaac, Banff (1885) TABER J., Thornfield (1885) TABER Jeremiah, Thornfield (1884)</p>	<p>John W. MORRIS (b. July 6, 1847 - d. May 7, 1912) + Married in 1866 Martha E. EMBRY (b. 1846 - d. 1876) Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Jane MORRIS (b. ca 1868 - d. 1923) Married William DECKARD • Sarah E. MORRIS (b. 1869 - d. 1940) Married James Joseph “Babe” WALKER. • Rebecca E. MORRIS (b. 1872 - d. ?) Married William M. MARLER • William Franklin MORRIS (b. 1873 - d. 1947) Married Martha Malissa SPURLOCK. • Lucinda Alice (Allie) MORRIS (b. 1876 - d. 1910) Married Clark Williams + Married in 1876 Caroline HONEYCUTT (b. 1856 - d. 1935) Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amanda Melvina MORRIS (b. 1877 - 1959) Married James Lihu BROWN • Thomas W. MORRIS (b. 1878 - d. 1948) Married Mary Sevetta POTTS • Nancy Jane MORRIS (b. 1880 - d. 1880) • Matilda Francis “Fannie” MORRIS (b. 1881 - 1919) Married Isaac Jackson HALL • Laura A. MORRIS (b. 1882 - d. before 1920) Married Clyde GOODING • Nora MORRIS (b. 1886 - d. ?) Married (1) George MEADOWS, (2) Blue RIGSBY, (3) KINCADE. • Ollie MORRIS (b. 1886 - d. 1923) Married Samuel Berton WINGATE • Daniel H. MORRIS (b. 1890 - d. 1926) Married Hattie POTTS • Dora D. MORRIS (b. 1894 - d. 1981) Married William COVINGTON • Dovie Mae MORRIS (b. 1897 - d. 1976) Married Edward COVINGTON </p>

PART 2: 1870-1912— John W. Morris, the Grand-Son of Big Creek’s Tommy Morris

From the beginning, the central focus of the authors’ family research has been their common ancestor, John W. Morris (b. 1847 – d. 1912). Reportedly he never talked to his family about his parents or his grandparents. John W. was born in Taney County (probably on Big Creek at Point A) on July 6, 1847, about a year after the Federal surveyors came through Big Creek valley.

The Civil War pension file of John W.’s father, Thomas Morris, provided a big break in the authors’ research. In one key affidavit dated May 13, 1885, John W. listed his residences beginning in 1862 as follows:

- In early 1862, his post office address was Forsyth in Taney County.
- In March 1862 (one month after the death of his father, Thomas) John W. moved to Webster County with a post office address of Marshfield. *Note: at only 16 years of age, John W. would have been accompanied by his widowed mother and young sister.*

- In March 1863 John W. moved further north to Miller County with a post office address of Pleasant Mound. In 1866 (with the Civil War ended) John W. moved back to Webster County, post office address again Marshfield
- In 1872 John W. moved to Ozark County, post office address of Pilands Store.
- In 1878 John W. moved to Douglas County with a post office address of Rome (this is in Campbell Township)
- Finally as of May 1885, the date of the affidavit, John W. had moved to Benton Township of Douglas County, post office address of Ava.

The above movements generally agree with the accepted birth places of John W. and Martha's children although William F. stated he was born in 1873 in Taney rather than Ozark County (see Morris family tree in Table 2). John W. and Caroline Honeycutt must have been married almost immediately after Martha's death in 1876 as their first child, Amanda Melvina, was born on February 9, 1877. Caroline Honeycutt was the daughter of Webster County, MO pioneers, Austin and Anna (Deckard) Honeycutt. This same Honeycutt family had many descendants grow up in Ozark County.

John W. Morris would go on to father 15 children - five by his first wife, Martha Embry, and ten by his second wife, Caroline Honeycutt. (See Table 2). Before he finally settled down in Sequoyah County in eastern Oklahoma, John left footprints and descendants in present day Douglas, Ozark, Taney and Webster Counties in southern Missouri, and in Boone County in northern Arkansas. John died in 1912 in Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. The descendants of his younger children would largely remain in Oklahoma and raise their families there.

As the old cliché goes, John W. "never let moss grow under his feet." Unlike many, he didn't plant himself and his family in one place for decades on end as did many of the area's old Taney and Ozark County families mentioned throughout this article. For example, his two marriages both occurred in Webster County, and his children by each wife were born in various Missouri counties -- Webster, Douglas, Taney and Ozark Counties.

Two of John W.'s older children who stayed in south central Missouri after the Civil War and raised their families there were: William F. Morris and Amanda M. (Morris) Brown. The authors each descend from these two as follows:

- John W.'s son, William F. "Bill" Morris, was a successful Ava merchant from around 1915 until the late 1930s. **W. F. "Uncle Bill" Morris was co-author Nancy (Morris) Boyd's great grandfather.** His son, William "Earl" Morris, was her grandfather, and Charles Ray Morris was her father.
- John W. Morris's daughter, Amanda Melvina "Aunt Mel" Morris, married James Lihu "Jim" Brown, a grandson of Lyhue and Betsy (Hall) Brown, some of Douglas County's very earliest settlers. Uncle Jim and Aunt Mel raised 12 children on their farm south of Ava, and they have many descendants in the county today. **J. L. "Jim" and Amanda (Morris) Brown were Ken Brown's grandparents.** Orville "Jake" and Kiree (Hartley) Brown were Ken's parents.

1870 -- John W. (at age 23) Married and in Webster County

By 1870, Thomas's widow, Sally Morris (now age 39), was in Webster County along with her two children, John W. and Amanda. Both children had become adults and had families. In 1866, John W. had married Martha Embry, and around 1868, Amanda C. had married Joseph Canifax.

Note: Amanda C. died about 1883 leaving one daughter, Sarah Canifax, who married Enoch Garrison. Sadly Sarah Garrison and her baby died as well before 1900.

The 1870 Webster County Mo. Census showed Amanda C. and Joseph Canifax living a couple of households away from Amanda's brother (John W.) and mother (Sally Connor). John W. and Martha's house was quite full. The 1870 census takers enumerated the following occupants:

- John, age 23,
- Martha, his wife, age 24
- Daughter Mary Jane, age 3
- Daughter Sarah, age 1
- Nancy Morris, age 59, who was born in Tennessee. This is John W.'s Aunt Nancy who married his Uncle John Morris. [See Exhibit 3]
- Sarah Conner, age 39, born in Arkansas. This is John W.'s widowed mother who later married a Connor. (The Civil War file of Thomas Morris stated that Sarah Brown Morris, the widow, remarried in 1865 to Joseph H. O. Conner in Miller County Missouri).

Exhibit 3: Uncle John and Aunt Nancy in 1870

Aunt Nancy Morris, age 59, was in the household of her nephew, John W. Morris, in Webster County in 1870. We offer no speculation as to why her husband, 49-year old Uncle John Morris was enumerated in the 1870 Taney County census with 30-year old Susan Permelia Hampton. His 1870 household also included the following:

- Elizabeth Hampton, b. 1863
- Russell Hampton, b. 1866
- Mary F., b. 1868

Uncle John's Civil War Pension File--Uncle John Morris served in the Ozark County Home guards under Captain Thomas Stones. His pension file contains affidavits dated from 1891 through 1921 signed by Permelia, her son, Russell, and other individuals. They are summarized as follows:

- Permelia stated that John Morris's first wife, Nancy, died in 1873 or 1874.
- L.D. Haskins stated that he married John Morris and Permelia Hampton in 1875, and Permelia stated she had not been married before that time.
- Permelia's son Russell used the name Morris in an affidavit to state that he is Permelia's son but did not mention his relationship to Uncle John.
- Both Isaac Taber and Permelia stated that John Morris died in 1877.
- Russell stated that his mother, Permelia, died in his home in 1921.

Besides Permelia's three children (Elizabeth, Russell, and Mary F.) born before 1870, she had three other children in the 1870s, and they are listed on the 1880 Taney County Census: (1) Susan Morris, b. 1873; (2) Jimpsey Morris, b. 1875; and (3) William R. Morris, b. 1876. In her household in the 1880 Census is another child, John Morris, born that year.

John W.'s Oldest Daughters Marry in Douglas County

From 1878 until 1885, John W. had his family in Campbell Township (Rome area) of Douglas County. During that period, his oldest daughters became teenagers. In 1885, John W.'s oldest daughter, Jane, at 17 years of age, became the bride of William Deckard. The Deckards were a long-time Campbell Township family, and a little valley south of Rome near the Ozark County line is recalled by today's old-timers as the location of "Deckard Town."

Consistent with his May 1885 pension affidavit about his movements, John W. would leave Jane and William Deckard there in Campbell Township and move his family near the county seat, Ava, in Benton Township. Jane remained near Rome until her death in 1923. John W. Morris appears in the 1885 listing of tax assessment for Benton Township; it stated that he owned 2 horses, 3 milk cows, 13 sheep and no hogs.

In 1886, 14-year-old Rebecca Morris married 17-year old William M. Marler while her parents were living in Benton Township.

Moves to Isabella by 1891--Exactly when John W. moved his family back into Ozark County has not yet been discovered. Of course no 1890 census records exist. But John W. and Caroline's first child, Amanda Melvina Morris, married James Lihu Brown on December 1, 1891, at Isabella in Ozark County.

At 14 years of age, Amanda M. listed Isabella, Ozark County, as her postal address. At that time, Amanda was still in the Morris family home helping with four younger sisters and two younger brothers. Years later "Aunt Mel", as Amanda M. was often called around Ava, reportedly said about her young age of marriage: "Well, I was already taking care of babies; I just figured I might as well be taking care of my own." Amanda returned to Benton Township in Douglas County with her new husband in 1891 where she and "Uncle Jim" Brown would raise a family of 12 on a farm about five miles south of Ava now owned by the Ross family.

Moves to Gainesville by 1896?--Another child, 15-year-old Matilda Francis Morris, listed Gainesville post office when, in 1896, she married Isaac Jackson Hall of Silverton in Douglas County. Holding to the theory that these young girls stayed at the home until married, we believe that John W. had moved again within Ozark County by the date of that marriage.

Although 23 in 1897, John W.'s only son by first wife Martha, William F. Morris, married Martha Spurlock Manning. Both listed Gainesville as their postal address. However, in her 1898 marriage to J.J. "Babe" Walker, John W.'s daughter,

Sarah E. Morris, listed Squires in Douglas County as her postal address. Being almost 30 years of age at the time, Sarah E. may have been living near there with another family. For example, the area was close to her older sister Amanda "Mel" and her Brown in-laws. The store owner at Squires (John Squire) was married to Frankie Brown, an older sister of Aunt Mel's husband, James Lihu Brown.

1900 Census Puts John W. In Boone County, Arkansas

John W. and Caroline's youngest child was Dovie Morris born in 1897 in Ozark County. With most of their older children married and established in southern Missouri counties, John W. and Caroline crossed the state line into Arkansas before the census taker came around in 1900. According to the 1900 census of Harrison Township of Boone County, the Morris household included John W. (age 53), Caroline Morris (age 44), and their six minor children plus their son, Thomas W., age 22.

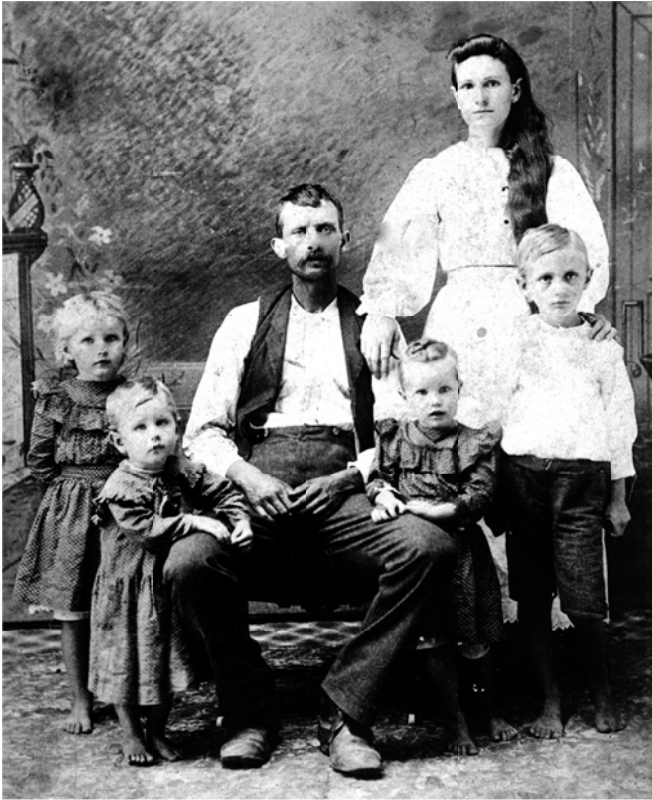
The circa 1900 photo of the family is the only one the authors have of John W. Morris. It came from a granddaughter, Daisy Hall Sherman, who said she was born in this Boone County Arkansas house in 1901. Her parents were Isaac Jackson & Matilda Francis "Fannie" (Morris) Hall. In Daisy's own handwriting, she wrote the identities of everyone listed below the photo.

Everyone listed in the 1900 Morris household were in this picture except for Thomas W. Morris (age 22) and Ollie J. Morris (age 13).

Isaac J. and "Fannie" Hall were still in Ozark County in 1900 but having lost their first child at infancy in 1897, they may have joined the Morris family in Arkansas for assistance in the birth of Daisy which occurred there on Dec. 29, 1901, in the Boone County home.



Boone County, AR (circa 1900) -- "Left to Right -- my grandfather, John Morris, Aunt Laura in doorway with guitar; (Aunts) Dovie & Dora; Grandmother Caroline Morris; then Uncle Dan and Aunt Nora." Signed by Daisy (Hall) Sherman who was born there.



James Lihu and Amanda (Morris) Brown -- ca 1899-1900
 Children (left to right): Rosa (married Elmer Davis of Ava);
 Jesse (in a dress), married Lena Spurlock of Squires; Bertha
 (married Neal Davis of Ava), Sherman (married Frankie Harri-
 son of Gainesville.



L-R: Amanda (Morris) Brown, her mother, Caroline (Honeycutt)
 Morris, her sisters, Nora (Morris) Meadows and Dora (Morris)
 Covington. The picture was taken at the Brown farm south of
 Ava in the late 1920s.

1910 Census Precedes John W.'s Final Years in Eastern Oklahoma

Where does John W. Morris appear on his final census record in 1910? Well, it was in Prices Chapel Township, Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. This county is the area across the Arkansas River west of Fort Smith.

Based on his tombstone and his mother's 1863 affidavit, John was born on July 6, 1847. He would die in Sequoyah County in May 1912 at the age of 65. He is buried at Akins Cemetery just a few miles northeast of Sallisaw, the county seat. Also buried at the Akins cemetery are Caroline, who died in 1935, plus four of their children--Ollie Wingate, Daniel H. Morris, Dora Covington and Dovie Covington.

Where Are John W.'s Descendants Today?

Of John W.'s 15 children, only three were boys. Thus many of John W.'s living descendants today carry a surname other than Morris. For the most part, John's older children by Martha Embry stayed in the Midwest and particularly southern Missouri. Except for his first child by Caroline Honeycutt (Amanda Melvina), virtually all of Caroline's children started their families in eastern Oklahoma, and many of these descendants still reside there.

Descendants in Southern Missouri--Within Douglas and Ozark Counties, John W.'s descendants might have surnames of Brown, Davis, Deckard, Hall, Marler or Walker. (Note: some of the Hall children may have moved to Arkansas and then Oklahoma where descendants still live).

Two of Amanda "Aunt Mel" (Morris) Brown's daughters, Rosa and Bertha, married Davis brothers, Elmer and Neal, in Douglas County, and a very large number of their descendants still live in Douglas County.

Descendants Within Oklahoma--Within Oklahoma, descendants of Thomas W. and Daniel H. Morris may still carry the Morris surname. Some of the family tree information was provided by a grandson of Thomas W. Morris, Dennis Earl Wilson.

Two of the youngest girls married Covington brothers in Sequoyah Co., OK. The two families provided many descendants for John W. and Caroline, all of whom stayed in Oklahoma. Other surnames within Oklahoma could be Wingate and Kincade, and no doubt there are more.

Conclusion and Contact Information

The article being published here will be distributed to all known descendants of John W. Morris and his two wives. Both authors want to reach out to our Morris cousins as well the Honeycutt family. Also, collaboration with other Taney/Ozark County families like the Tabers and the Haskins families would probably be beneficial to both sides. Feel free to contact us by mail, email or phone.

Nancy (Morris) Boyd
1984 210th Street,
Percival, IA 51648
Tel: (712) 529-4349
Email:
geniegirl@iowatelecom.net



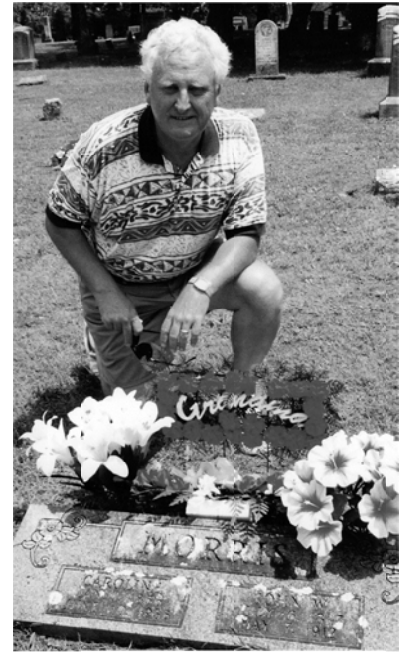
Nancy (Morris) Boyd
Percival, Iowa

Kenneth Brown,
4108 E. Eastmoor St.,
Springfield, MO 65809
Tel: (417) 882-4547
Email:

ozarkuncle@gmail.com

Web and Blog sites:

- www.ozark-uncle.net
- ozarkuncle.blogspot.com



Ken Brown, Springfield, MO
at the John W. & Caroline
(Honeycutt) Morris Graves
Sequoyah Co. OK.