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ABOUT

Biographies of Named Individuals: George Peck case, 1880

This page provides biographical information on all participants named in the newspaper accounts. Most of this information was not included in the narrative for the sake of clarity, but may bring additional context to the lives of the people connected with George Peck's murder on January 12, 1880.

The following information was researched and compiled by Sarah Hedlund, Archivist/Librarian for Montgomery History, between July, 2019 and July 2020. Special thanks to those who assisted with research and genealogy, including Linda Frydl, Scott Jung, Doug Hill, and Tony Cohen. Also thanks to Glenn Wallace, for his research on the interred residents of Monocacy Cemetery in Beallsville, where most of the participants were buried. *Content copyright: Montgomery History, 2020, all rights reserved.*

GEORGE PECK AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS

The earliest record of **George Peck** (c.1858-1880) is in the 1867 Slave Statistics for Montgomery County, where he was listed as enslaved by William Poole at age 9. There is no indication of other family members with him then or later. In 1870, at age 12, he was living with Howard Griffith and family in Poolesville; the household included Howard's 14-year-old son William T. Griffith, who would also serve on the coroner's jury of inquest into Peck's death ten years later. In January of 1880, Peck was known to be working for Lemuel Beall as a farmhand; the census was taken that year in June, so he was not recorded in it, having been killed in January. He is assumed to be buried in the graveyard of Elijah Methodist Church, according to a newspaper account which stated his body was exhumed from a field and reburied in the churchyard by the Black community.

Also enslaved by William Poole (according to the Slave Statistics) was Louisa (King) Lear, and her five children: Ellen, Horace, and Amanda King, and Moses and Edward Lear (sometimes enumerated as Layer/Lair/Leah). By 1870, the Lears had been reunited with their patriarch, Edward Lear, and were living with the John A. Jones family in Poolesville (Ellen King is not found and may have married; Horace King was living on the A. Hempstone farm nearby). By 1880, Louisa was widowed and working as a cook in the household of Lemuel Beall, the same man that employed both George Peck and Ada Hays. There is no indication of family relationship between Peck and the Lear family, but as he was apparently an orphan child living enslaved alongside a mother with children his age, and later they worked for the same employer, at very least an acquaintance between them can be inferred.

THE REEVES/HAYS FAMILY

Ada Hays (b. 1869) was the girl allegedly assaulted by George Peck on January 10, 1880. Her mother, **Mary (Mollie) E. Reeves** (1846-1899?) was the daughter of Walter C. Reeves (1794-1872) and Nancy (Kirby) Reeves (b. 1806) of Virginia. The Reeves family appeared in the 1860 census in Loudoun County: Mary at age 15, born in Fairfax, along with four other siblings. She married John Hays (1845-1869) around 1866 and they had two daughters, Annie Hays (b. 1867) and Ada Hays (b. 1869). John Hays died in August of 1869, killed by "a blow to the head with a stick." Mary is listed as a 22-year-old widow in the Loudoun County 1870 census, with her two daughters.

She then married **Hyrocles M. Reeves** (1851-1940) in 1873. Hyrocles was the son of James T. Reeves (b. 1810) and Lucinda Reeves (b. 1827-1910). It is unknown exactly when the couple moved to Montgomery County, but there was a bill

of sale for livestock and crops from husband to wife, executed in December of 1877 in the Montgomery County land records, so they were in the area already by then. The couple had four more children by January, 1880, when Ada was eleven years old, but it is unclear where the family was residing when the incident involving George Peck occurred. There is no real estate in Reeves's name, so they were likely tenant farmers, either living on Lemuel Beall's property or nearby. They left Montgomery County before the 1880 census was taken, appearing in the Hampden area of Baltimore; Annie and Ada, now enumerated with the last name Reeves, were both recorded as working in a cotton mill. Neither of them can be traced past the 1880 census. Mollie died in 1900. Hyrcles remarried, had several more children, and died in 1940, having remained in Baltimore the rest of his life.

LEMUEL BEALL AND FAMILY

Lemuel Larkin Beall (1814-1881), employer of both Ada Hays and George Peck in January, 1880, was the son of James Beall and Margaret Smith Benson. At age 46, he married the 20-year-old Mary Elizabeth Hillard (b. 1840) in 1860 and their daughter Elizabeth Larkin Beall was born in 1861. Mary Elizabeth died in 1861, likely due to complications from childbirth, leaving Lemuel a widower. The infant Elizabeth was probably sent to live with her mother's family; in 1870 she is living with Mary's younger sister, Jane L. "Jennie" (Hillard) Reed (1844-1912) and her new husband James W. Reed—the couple had been married in 1869. Meanwhile, Lemuel Beall was living as a "retired farmer" with the Francis M. Griffith family—Francis was the brother of William T. Griffith, an adult son and neighbor of Howard Griffith, who employed Peck in 1870. By 1880, Beall is living in his own household, reunited with his grown daughter Elizabeth (age 17), and he had employed Louisa Lear as a live-in cook, as well as John Hall, another Black servant. Beall died in 1881 and is buried in Monocacy Cemetery. Elizabeth married Alfred C. Piquett in 1885.



Hanson Thomas Miles (1850-1926):
Hugh Miles's younger brother.

James Uriah "Hugh" Miles (1831-1912), appointed constable in Poolesville who had custody of Peck when he was abducted by a lynch mob, was the son of Lemuel Beall's sister, Elvira Murray (Beall) Miles and James Hanson Miles. He married Sarah Ann "Sallie" Benson (1832-1905) in 1856 and eventually had six children. In 1870, he was operating the Century Hotel in Poolesville. He was also on the board of trustees for the schools, and active as a deacon in the Poolesville Baptist Church. He was a registered voter with the Democratic Conservative party, and served as a constable in Montgomery County for more than 50 years, his last appointment being only weeks before his death.

OTHER KEY PARTICIPANTS

Reverend Calvin Livingston Amy (1837-1910?), who allegedly discovered Peck in the act of assaulting Ada Hays, was installed as the pastor of the Poolesville Baptist Church circa 1878, though he apparently resided with his family in Beallsville, near the farm of Lemuel Beall. He married Margaret Morgan Hamburg in 1865, and the couple moved around

from Pennsylvania to West Virginia, finally settling in Maryland. They eventually had nine children. The family is found still living in the 3rd District of Montgomery County in 1880, but Rev. Amy was replaced as pastor of the Baptist Church that year, shortly following the incident in Beallsville. Amy was reported in Westminster, MD by January of 1881, as pastor of the Gunpowder Baptist Church; the family moved from there to Baltimore County later that year. In the 1900 census, Amy was listed in the city of Baltimore's Ward 17, working as a druggist. In August of 1904 (at age 67), Amy was hospitalized for several days after he was found mentally incapacitated in the street and subsequently violent, possibly due to an overdose of laudanum. According to the newspaper report, his family refused to take action, insisting he should remain hospitalized, though he returned home two days later. He is not found in the 1910 census and is assumed to have died. His wife Margaret is listed as widowed in Baltimore in the 1910 and 1920 censuses; she died after 1920. No graves have been found for either.

VIOLENT IN HOSPITAL

**Rev. Calvin L. Amy Struggles
With Physicians.**

STRAPPED IN BED BY FORCE

**Had Been Found Dazed On A Vacant
Lot—Relatives Asked To Remove
Him To A Hospital Institution.**

Headline from the Baltimore Sun, August 14, 1904.

Stephen G. Donohoe (1809-1891) Justice of the Peace in Poolesville. Donohoe was born and died in Loudoun County, Virginia (his gravestone reads "Born and Died at Retirement." Retirement was the LeGrand family estate in Loudoun County. His wife was Mary Ann LeGrand, whom he married in 1837. In 1880, listed as married and employed as a Justice of the Peace, he was boarding with Louisa V. Hall in the town of Poolesville. He does not appear in any other Montgomery County censuses.

Dr. John W. Ayler (1838-1916), who examined Ada Hays for injury, was originally from Virginia, and only resided in the Poolesville area of Montgomery County for about 10 years. Born in Fredericksburg to George Ayler and Ann English Ayler, he studied theology before enlisting in the Confederate army in 1861, Company G, 20th Virginia Infantry, Army of Northwest; he was discharged that same year when the unit was dissolved. After marrying Eliza Flournoy in 1862, he continued both his medical education and military service, receiving his degree from the Medical College of Virginia at Richmond in 1863, and serving as a hospital steward, druggist and later physician/surgeon for C.S.A. hospital camps through 1865. He eventually had six children. During the time he lived in Poolesville (between 1875 and 1885), he was one of three resident doctors. Sometime before the 1890s, he returned his family to Virginia, settling in Newport News where he practiced as a city physician and remained for the rest of his life.

William T. Walter (1827-1909) owner of the store where George Peck was removed from the constable's custody by a mob. Walter appears at age 20 in the 1850 census, living in the Medley District with Franklin and Ann E. (Hall) Viers (1827-1885), a young couple with two small children. Franklin Viers died in 1857, and his widow, Ann, who by that time had four children, had inherited substantial land holdings, and held five people enslaved, is found in the 1860 census as head of house along with an adult named "William Viers," who is most likely William Walter (William Walter is not found in the 1860 census). The couple's first child, William Thomas Walter, Jr., was stillborn in 1861; William and Ann Walter were married in Washington, D.C. in 1862 (the marriage record incorrectly states or incorrectly transcribed William's name as "Walker"), and had two more children, Maurice (1868-1892) and Ida (1871-1932). In 1870, they were living as a blended family (Ida Walter, age 2, and the Viers children, Sallie and Lucy) in the Poolesville area, along with a Black couple listed as their "domestic servants," Levi and Eveline Brown, and their three small children. Maurice Walter's location in 1870 is not known; he may have been accidentally left off the schedule. In 1880, William and Ann (in their 50s) were living in Poolesville with Maurice and Ida and keeping a store. Ann Walter died in 1885; Maurice died in 1892. By 1900, William was living alone in Poolesville, still listed as a merchant; he died in 1909 and is buried in Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville.

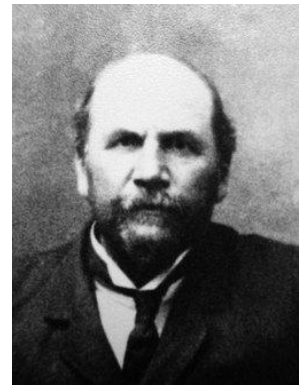
JURY MEMBERS



Charles F. Elgin (center) and family, c.1890s

Charles F. Elgin (1832-1914) Charles Fenton Elgin was born on March 12, 1832, in Aldie, Loudoun County, Virginia. He was in Washington in 1850, then moved to Montgomery County by the 1860 census. He married Helen Douglas Smith on January 29, 1863, and they had ten children over the next thirteen years, six of whom lived to adulthood. In 1860, he was listed as a clerk, but starting shortly after, he worked for the U.S. Naval Service, as a Master Laborer and shipbuilder for the C&O Canal company at Great Falls (his occupation was listed as "Canal Boss" and "Works on Company Boat"). In 1900 he was a Justice of the Peace, and in 1910 he was appointed Deputy Sheriff. He died of sudden heart failure on April 8, 1914, in Poolesville, and was buried in Beallsville.

Fremont Jones (1854-1911) Frederick Reginald Fremont Jones was the son of Thomas L. Jones and Sarah Elizabeth (Poole) Jones, with whom he is living through the 1870 census. He never married or had children. In 1880 and 1900, he was living with his widowed mother and two adult siblings. By 1910 he was working on his family's farm, still living with his sister Priscilla and a boarder. He died at age 56 of sudden heart failure in 1911 while sitting at the dining room table.



Fremont Jones, c.1900

Richard Spates (1840-1930) Richard Fremont Spates was born in Poolesville and lived there his entire life. He was the son of George W. Spates and Ann Boyd (Fields) Spates, he married Clara Elizabeth Karn of Frederick County in 1876 and they had six children. Their son J. Roger Spates would become the mayor of Rockville in 1926. In 1880 they were living near Edward's Ferry along with daughter Anna, and a Black cook named Mary Proctor. Clara died of heart disease in 1906; Richard died in 1930 at the home of his nephew Walter Butler, from a stroke which he suffered en route in an automobile from Poolesville to his home. Richard and Clara are both buried in Monocacy Cemetery in Beallsville.

Frank Spates (1853-1927) Franklin Pearce Spates was the younger brother of Richard, born in Poolesville. In 1870, at age 17, he was still living with his parents and siblings, along with a Black couple, George and Sylva Green and their infant daughter. At age 27, when he served on the jury of inquest in January of 1880, he was still working on his widowed father's farm along with his younger siblings. He may have married Annie L. Fields in Frederick in 1883, though this is not verified. However, Frank Spates left Montgomery County sometime before 1900. He cannot be traced between 1880 and 1920. By 1920, he was listed as "single" (not widowed) and living in New Mexico, engaged in mining operations, where he lived the rest of his life. He died suddenly of apoplexy, near Sherman, New Mexico in 1927; funeral arrangements and burial were at Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville.



J. Roger Spates, son of Frank Spates,
with his wife and child, c.1910



Frank Williams, c.1890

Frank Williams (1845-1906) Frank T. Williams was the son of John Thomas Williams and Ann Mariah (Talbot) Williams. He was a Confederate veteran, serving in Colonel White's batallion, Thirty-fifth Virginia Cavalry during the Civil War. After the war, he lived on his mother's farm until 1880, when he is found boarding in Poolesville, working as a store clerk. He married Georgia Griffith, daughter of Howard Griffith, in 1882 and after her death in 1891, married Mary Louise "Mollie" Dawson, who eventually survived him. He had no children with either wife. Frank Williams died of heart failure in 1906.

William T. Griffith (1856-1931) William Griffith was the son of Howard Griffith and Sarah Newton Chiswell. His mother died in 1859, and his father remarried Angelica sometime between 1870 and 1880. In 1870, George Peck lived with Howard Griffith's family in Beallsville, which included 14-year-old William and 18-year-old Georgia, eventual wife of Frank Williams above. In 1880, William Griffith was still living and working on his father's farm in Beallsville. He married Elizabeth Darnell Dade in 1883 and they had five children, two of whom lived to adulthood. He lived in Poolesville until sometime after 1920—he and Elizabeth were living with their son-in-law and daughter, Dr. and Mrs. Charles T. Pyles, at Hancock, Md. in 1930, shortly before William's death following a long illness, in 1931.



Howard Griffith, father of William T. Griffith and Georgia (Griffith) Williams. George Peck resided in his household in 1870.



Mollie (Offutt) Fyffe, wife of Thomas Fyffe, c.1868

Thomas H. Fyffe (1841-1908) Thomas Hungerford Fyffe (II), born in Poolesville, was the son of Thomas Hungerford Fyffe and Sarah Elizabeth Jones. His mother died in 1850; in 1867 his father died, and he married Mary Elizabeth "Mollie" Offutt. The couple lived on Thomas's family's farm in Poolesville for the rest of their lives; in 1870 they were living with their infant daughter Bettie, and also with a Black couple named George and Rachel Liles, who were helping with the farm labor, along with their three small children. In 1880 the Fyffes were managing on the farm with their own nuclear family (or employed servants/farmhands who were not living with them). Thomas and Mollie eventually had nine children, seven of whom lived to adulthood. Thomas died in 1908 and was buried in Monocacy Cemetery in Beallsville. Mollie continued to live on the farm with a couple of her adult children until her death in 1929.

Benjamin F. "Frank" Sparrough (1844-1914) Benjamin Franklin Sparrough was born in Gaithersburg to Benjamin Sparrough and Eliza Beale Padgett. He is not found in the 1870 census and may have been living elsewhere; he married his first wife, Catherine (Carlisle) Sparrough around 1874. By 1880, they were living in Poolesville with their three children and Catherine's mother Christie; Benjamin is "selling goods;" at this time possibly working for the store run by Charles Kolhoss, with whom Sparrough may have been living with in 1880 (the two families were enumerated in the same dwelling house). Sparrough was appointed postmaster for the Black community of Sugarland, from 1886 until 1890, and also operated a store there. After he was widowed in 1888, he married Cecelia Phillips in 1891, in Loudoun County, Virginia (where she was born), and they had moved to Washington, D.C. by 1893. They had one child together, Elsie Lee, who was born in D.C. in 1894. According to local lore, Sparrough left his Sugarland store under the management of a member of the Kolhoss family; the Sugarland store was eventually operated by Isaac Bell, while Nathan Johnson became Maryland's second Black postmaster, appointed to the Sugarland post office in 1896. Sparrough's obituary stated he was a painter, working that trade in Washington "for the past 15 years." He died there in 1914, at the home of his son, H.M. Sparrough, and was buried in Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville.



Sallie (Gott) Davis, wife of Thomas Davis

Thomas Davis (1847-1937) Arundel Thomas Davis was the son of Joshua Davis and Lucy Catherine (McDonald) Davis of Rockville, Maryland. Joshua was a blacksmith, and Thomas, at age 22 in 1870, was listed as a harness maker. His father died that same year, and in 1871, Thomas married Sarah Ellen "Sallie" Gott. They had three children; by 1880 they had moved to the Medley District, where Thomas was working as a merchant. Sometime before 1900, Thomas and family moved to the District of Columbia where he was engaged as a bookkeeper; he would remain there for the rest of his life. Sarah and Thomas died within a year of each other, in 1936 and 1937 respectively; they were both returned to Montgomery County and buried at Monocacy Cemetery.

George McIntosh (1837-1882) George William McIntosh was born in Virginia, likely in Fairfax County. In 1859, he married Annie E. Smith in Loudoun County, and the couple were living in Poolesville, Montgomery County by the 1860 census. They had two children before Annie's death in 1865; George then married Mary C. Mossburg in 1868 and had three more children before her death in 1877. George worked as a tinsmith in Poolesville, found there in 1870 with his wife Mary and two children, and 1880 as a widower with four children. George died in 1882.

Charles Matthews (1840-?) Charles was the son of William Matthews and Sarah (Fletchall) Matthews. He lived in the Medley District most of his life, growing up there 1850-1860. This family is not found in 1870 Montgomery County, but Charles's younger sister Ella married Benjamin R. White there in 1873. Charles was living with her and his brother-in-law in 1880, along with two of his own brothers, working on White's farm. Nothing more is known of his life.

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