

The Fossil

Volume 122, No. 2, Whole No. 406 ♦ Sunnyvale, California ♦ January 2026

Mary Morgan Ware: Publisher of Edith Miniters' Last Amateur Journalism Contribution

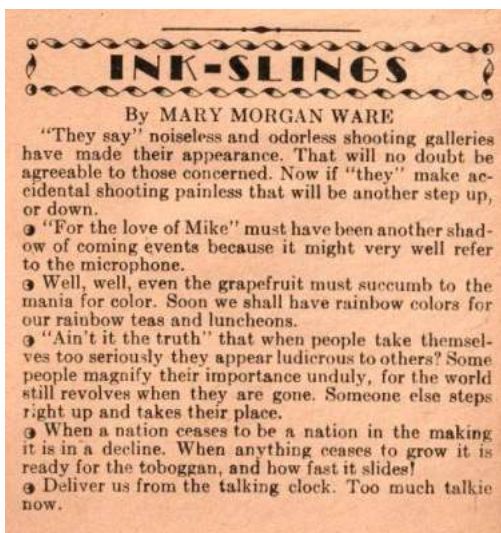
by Ken Faig, Jr.



A FEW writings by and about Edith Miniters (1867-1934) were published posthumously in amateur journals, most notably in the Winter 1936 and Spring 1938 numbers of Hyman Bradofsky's *The Californian*. However,

Mrs. Miniters' own final living contribution to the hobby was "Cuddley Music," published in the January 1929 number of Mary Morgan Ware's *Pot Pourri* from Bennington, Vermont. Like Mrs. Miniters' first contribution, "Bert Gifford's Masterpiece," made to the January 1884 number of Oscar L. Knapp's and Edward H. Mountel's *Cincinnati Amateur* (when she was still Edith May Dowe), I have not managed to find any copy of Edith's final contribution. Lacking this, I set out to find what I could discover concerning Mary Morgan Ware, the amateur journalist who put Edith's final contribution into her hands in printed form.

Today, the discoverable footprint of Mary Morgan Ware in the amateur journalism hobby is rather small. In addition to *Pot Pourri*, she is known to have published volume 1, number 1 of *Mamow's Shuttle* from West Chesterfield, New Hampshire in September 1930. The National Library of New Zealand (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington) owns a copy. She had a short column "Ink-Slings" in Harold Segal's *The Sea Gull* for April 1932, which I found on Mark Brosey's website *Jake's Journals*:



She contributed a short poem to Victor Moitoret's *The Victorian* for December 1934 (also from *Jake's Journals*):



She probably contributed poetry most prolifically to Charles W. Smith's *Tryout*. The website Fiction Mags Index provides a chronological list of her published pieces. The final one was in *Driftwinds* while all others were in *The Tryout*:

Ware, Mary Morgan:

When the Clock Struck Twelve, (ss)
Jul 1921

Live Well Today, (pm) Aug 1923
Procrastination, (ar) Mar 1925
Christmas Thoughts, (ar) Jan 1926
Farewell, Old Year, (ar) Jan 1926
Fishing, (ar) Mar 1927
Attic Furnishings, (ar) May 1927
Gratitude, (ar) Dec 1927
Let's Carry On, (ar) Mar 1928
O Tempora! O Mores!, (ar) Apr 1928
Time at the Wheel, (pm) Apr 1928
Yesterdays, (pm) Apr 1928
Poor World, (ar) Nov 1929
The Easy Yoke, (pm) Jul 1930
Nothing but Words, (pm) Jul 1930
Song in the Willows, (pm) Jun 1931
Autumn Winds, (pm) Feb 1932
The N.A.P.A. Club, (ar) Jun 1932
Silk Purses, (ar) Nov 1932
Speedomania, (ar) Dec 1932
They Auto Not, (ar) Aug 1933
Remember the Weekday, (ar) Jul 1934

"Wake Not the Old", (pm) Feb 1936

Abbreviations:

ar = article
pm = poem(s)
ss = short story

Peter Morgan contributed this 1955 poem by Mrs. Ware to his Find-A-Grave memorial (number 92563556) discussion of the poetess:

Poem written by Mary about 1955:

YESTERDAYS.

by Mary Morgan Ware.

The yesterdays are so many,
Ghostly, and grim, and gray;
I haven't done my best with them;
And there's but one today.

Could the yesterdays be recalled,
And each one used today,
I doubt that we'd accomplish more.
With them in any way.

I've left so many tasks undone,
I'm filled with much dismay.
The yesterdays are so many,
And only one today.

A good way to begin a discussion of Mrs. Ware may be to reprint this discussion of her parents from Peter Morgan's Find-A-Grave discussion:

Family lore has it that Mary's father Hiram Morgan was a teacher at West Chesterfield Academy, a private school and that her mother Alice Whitney was a student at the time that she became pregnant. There was a hasty marriage, and Hiram and Alice went to Nebraska and stayed with Hiram's older brother Flavius for a time where Mary was born. Alice was 16 at the time. [The 1900 census erroneously indicates that she was born in September, 1871.] A Vermont marriage record indicates that she married Sidney Levi Ware on September 24, 1890 in Brattleboro, Vermont, further identifying that she was 18 at the time and living in Chesterfield, New Hampshire. Two children were born of this union: Hazel & Willis.

Peter Morgan took this photograph of the marker in Thomaston (Maine) Village Cemetery for Mrs. Ware, her brother Herbert Morgan (Peter's grandfather) and her sister-in-law Olive (Lermond) Morgan:

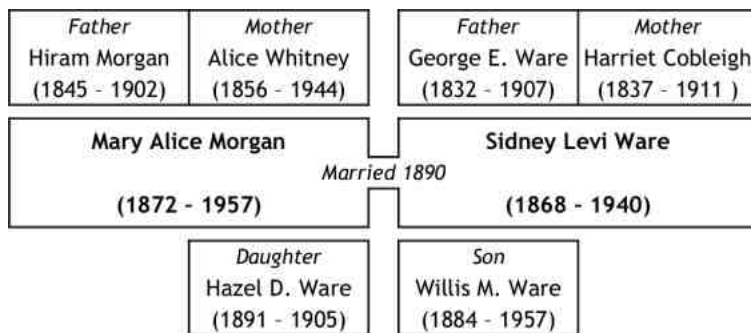


Mary Alice Morgan (FamilySearch LR96-SJ6) was born in Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska on Sept. 24, 1872, the daughter of Hiram Bliss Morgan (b. Nov. 14, 1845 Rutland, Vermont, d.

Nov. 12, 1902 Chesterfield, New Hampshire) and Alice Jane Whitney (b. June 1856 Vermont, d. 1944). Peter Morgan gives the dramatic family account of how Mary Alice came to be born in far-away Wood River, Nebraska. Hiram and Alice joined Hiram's elder brother Flavius Josephus Morgan (b. Aug. 20, 1844 Rochester, Vermont, d. Apr. 11, 1920, Wood River, Nebraska) there after Alice became pregnant while she was a student and Hiram was a teacher at the West Chesterfield (New Hampshire) Academy.

Hiram and Flavius were both sons of Josephus [Joseph] Morgan (b. Apr. 30, 1795 Rutland, Vermont, d. Oct. 19, 1884 Hall County, Nebraska) and his wife Calista Bliss (b. July 8 [also reported as June 8], 1808 Addison County, Vermont, d. Jan. 9, 1882 Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska). The 1850 U.S. census had enumerated Joseph and Calista and their family in Rochester, Windsor County, Vermont (all born in Vermont): Joseph Morgan, age 55, farmer, \$1500 real estate; Calista Morgan, age 42; Louisa M. Pratt, age 20; Caroline Pratt, age 14; George M. Pratt, age 10; Flavius J. Morgan, age 5; Hiram B. Morgan, age 4; David A. Morgan, age 2; Rosanna Morgan, age 87; Caleb Morgan, age 59, artisan. Rosanna (Welch) Morgan (1763-1852) was Josephus's mother. Caleb Morgan (b. Sept. 22, 1789 Vermont) was the brother of Josephus Morgan; he was the oldest male child of Caleb and Rosanna (Welch) Morgan.

Calista Bliss married (1) ca. 1829 James Pratt by whom she had children: (1) **Louisa M. Pratt** (b. June 26, 1830 Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont, d. Apr. 26, 1900 Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska) who married July 13, 1869 (Rochester, Vermont) Patrick Cassidy (b. 1800 Ireland, d. 1875), the son of Hugh and Elizabeth Cassidy (groom's third marriage, bride's first); (2) **Emily Pratt** (b. 1832/33 Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont, d. 1875), who married Mar. 5, 1860 (Cornwall, Addison County, Vermont) Elson Kincaid Rockwell (1832-1901), the son of Reuben and



Immediate family of Mary Morgan Ware

Eliza Rockwell; (3) **Caroline E. Pratt** [Clara in 1880 U.S. census of Gardner, Buffalo County, Nebraska] (b. February 1835 Vermont, d. 1900-10 probably Nebraska), married 1872 Samuel Chandler (b. Aug. 9, 1832 Campton, Grafton County, New Hampshire, d. July 24, 1916 Valley County, Nebraska), resided Garfield, Buffalo County, Nebraska, June 1, 1900; (4) **James Erwin Pratt** (b. July 2, 1838 Vermont, d. July 15, 1914 Wright Township, Otter County, Michigan) who married Dec. 9, 1874 (Seneca, Ohio) Mary Maltby Brown (b. May 5, 1854 Michigan, d. Sept. 24, 1912 Barry County, Michigan), the daughter of William Brown and Mary Maltby; (5) **George M. Pratt** (b. Apr. 15, 1840 Vermont, d. Sept. 16, 1914 Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska). James Pratt probably died during the period 1840-43. Calista (Bliss) Pratt married (2) ca. 1843 Josephus Morgan.

James Pratt was probably the son born to William and Jary Pratt in Salisbury, Vermont on May 19, 1800. In 1830, his Salisbury, Vermont household consisted of one male age 20-29, one male



Towns in Addison County, Vermont. New York State is immediately to the west.

age 30-39 [James], one male age 70-79 [James's father William?], 1 female age under 5 [Louisa], two females age 20-30 [Calista and one other], and one female age 30-39, totaling seven free white persons.

Calista was the daughter of Noah Bliss (1759-1840) and Elizabeth Martin (1785-1860) (from whom her children Louisa M. Pratt and George M. Pratt may have taken their middle names). The patrilinear ancestors of Calista Bliss were Noah Bliss Jr. (1759-1840), Noah Bliss Sr. (1734-1801), Daniel Bliss (1702-1782), Jonathan Bliss (1666-1719), Jonathan Bliss (1626-1687), Thomas Blisse (1588-1647) (married 1814 Davenport, Northumberland, England), John Blisse (d. 1617) and William Blisse. The four generations from Jonathan Bliss (1626-1687) through Noah Bliss, Sr. (1734-1801) all married in Rehoboth, Massachusetts.

Joseph and Calista and their family were enumerated in Granville, Addison County, Vermont in the 1860 U.S. census (all born Vermont): Joseph Morgan, age 66, farmer, \$1600 real estate, \$819 personal estate; Calista Morgan, age 51; Flavius J. Morgan, age 16, at school; Hiram Morgan, age 14, at school; David A. Morgan, age 12, at school; Caleb Morgan, age 70; Louisa Pratt, age 29. Flavius Morgan enlisted as a private in the 21st New York Cavalry (Company A) on July 18, 1863, and was discharged on Aug. 31, 1866. He was enumerated in Shelton, Buffalo County, Nebraska in June 1890 as part of the veteran's census. The youngest of the three Morgan brothers, David Anson Morgan (b. June 20, 1848 Vermont, d. Jan. 10, 1916 Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska) eventually gravitated to Nebraska as well. In both the 1900 and the 1910 censuses, David A. Morgan was enumerated in the household of his step-brother George M. Pratt (b. Apr. 15, 1840 Vermont, d. Sept. 16, 1914 Nebraska) in Shelton, Buffalo County, Nebraska. George M. Pratt was a single farmer in both years. He had been born in Vermont. His mother's birthplace was given as Vermont in both censuses, but his father's birthplace, given as Vermont in the 1900 census, was given as Massachusetts in the 1910 census. David A. Morgan was described as a widower in both censuses. His occupation was given

as farm laborer in 1900 and as farm hand (working out) in 1910.

By 1870, Hiram Morgan, age 24, had settled in Grand Island, Hall County, Nebraska, where he worked as a farmer. Hiram would return to West Chesterfield, New Hampshire in time to take up his post as a teacher at the Academy and to impregnate student Alice Jane Whitney. In 1870, Josephus and Calista Morgan were still in Granville, Addison County, Vermont (all born Vermont): Josephus Morgan, age 76, farmer, \$1800 real estate, \$100 personal estate; Calista Morgan, 62, keeping house; George M. Pratt, age 30, farm worker; Caroline E. Pratt, age 74, at home. In 1880, Flavius Morgan and his wife were farming in Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska, and had a daughter Addie, age 4, and a son Charles, age 2, both born in Nebraska. Flavius's mother and father were also in his household in 1880. Perhaps Caroline E. Pratt was a sister or sister-in-law of Calista Bliss's first husband James Pratt. James's and Calista's daughter Caroline E. Pratt (1835-1900/10) was probably named in her honor.

Hiram B. Morgan and his young bride did not apparently find life in Wood River, Nebraska as congenial as did his elder brother Flavius Josephus. Flavius married Hattie L. E. Hanscom (b. Oct. 28, 1857 Vermont, d. June 8, 1914 Wood River, Nebraska), the daughter of Isaac Cox Handsom (1822-1897) and Ellen C. Smith (1831-1901) and raised a family in Wood River. However, Hiram and his young bride returned to New England. In the 1880 U.S. census they and their young daughter were enumerated in Chesterfield, Cheshire County, New Hampshire: Hiram B. Morgan (head), age 34, Universal[ist] minister, born Vermont of Vermont-

born parents; Alice J. Morgan (wife), age 24, keeping house, born Vermont of Vermont-born parents; Mary A. Morgan (daughter), age 7, born Nebraska of Vermont-born parents.

When the 1900 U.S. census was enumerated, Hiram's household was still in Chesterfield, Cheshire County, New Hampshire: Hiram Morgan (head), age 54, born November 1845 Vermont of Vermont-born parents, no occupation, in first marriage for 28 years; Alice J. Morgan (wife), age 43, born June 1856 Vermont [parents' birthplace not shown]; Herbert Morgan (son), age 19, born November 1880 New Hampshire of Vermont-born parents, day laborer. Herbert Morgan (b. Nov. 21, 1880 West Chesterfield, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, d. Aug. 8, 1961, Augusta, Maine) married (Aug. 24, 1908) Olive M. Lermond (b. May 10, 1873 Warren, Knox County, Maine, d. Jan. 3, 1934 Thomaston, Knox County, Maine), the daughter of David and Florilla E. Lermond. Herbert and Olive are buried with Mary Morgan Ware in Thomaston (Maine) Village Cemetery. Hiram and Alice also had a son Julius H. Morgan who lived only a few days in 1875.

The Morgans and Whitneys all had many generations in New England. Josephus Morgan (1795-1884) was the son of Caleb Morgan (1753-1847) (Revolutionary War veteran), the grandson of Caleb Morgan (1716-1775), the great-grandson of Caleb Morgan (1716-1775) and the great-great-grandson of Jonathan Morgan Sr. (1681-1750). Jonathan had lived in New London, Connecticut. Alice Jane Whitney was the daughter of Benjamin Nichols Whitney (1815-1903) and Louisa Ruthina Lowell (1822-1915). Her earlier male progenitors were Oliver Whitney (1784-1857), Joshua Whitney (1754-1812), Caleb Whitney (1729-1822),



Business section, Ninth Street, Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska (Wikipedia)



Chesterfield West Cemetery, Chesterfield, New Hampshire (Find-A-Grave)

Jonathan Whitney (1699-1773), Richard Whitney Jr. (1660-1723), Richard Whitney (1623-1719) (who was born in Middlesex, England and died in Concord, Massachusetts), John Whitney (1592-1673), Thomas Whitney (1560-1637), Sir Robert Whitney III (1543-1612), Sir Robert Whitney II (1517-1567), and Robert Whitney (1497-1555) of Hertfordshire, England.

Mary Alice Morgan married Sidney Levi Ware (b. June 1868 Vermont, d. Aug. 21, 1940 Westmoreland, New Hampshire) of Chesterfield, New Hampshire in Brattleboro, Vermont on Sept. 24, 1890 (if this date is correct the bride married on her eighteenth birthday). Sidney was the son of George Erastus Ware (1832-1907) and Harriet Elizabeth Cobleigh (1837-1911). His patrilinear ancestors were George Erastus Ware (1832-1907), Erastus Ware (1809-1882), Levi Ware (1767-1845), Ezra Ware (1741-1815), John Ware (1700-1775), John Ware (1670-1751), John Ware (1646-1718), Robert Ware II (1611-1699) (who was born in Suffolk, England and died in Dedham, Massachusetts), Robert Bryden Ware II (1589-1665), Sir James George Ware (1568-1632), Sir Christopher Ware (1644-1610), and Roger De La Warre.

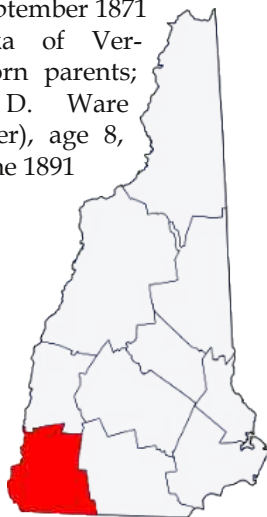
The 1870 U.S. census enumerated George and Harriet Ware in Hartland, Windsor County, Vermont: George Ware, age 38, farmer, \$5000 personal estate, born New Hampshire; Harriet E. Ware, age 32, keeps house, born New Hampshire; Herbert H. Ware, age 12, born New Hampshire; Zannie J. Ware, age 3, born Vermont; Sidney L. Ware, age 1, born Vermont. There were also

two farm laborers and three domestic servants in their household.

George and Hattie (Cobleigh) Ware were enumerated in Westmoreland, Cheshire County, New Hampshire in the 1880 U.S. census: George Ware (head), age 48, ferryman, born New Hampshire of Vermont-born father and New Hampshire-born mother; Hattie E. Ware (wife), age 42, keeps house, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born parents; Herbert H. Ware (son), age 22, at home, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born parents; Zannie J. Ware (daughter), age 13, at home, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born parents; Sidney L. Ware (son), age 11, at home, born New Hampshire of Vermont-born father [sic] and New Hampshire-born mother; Alice M. Ware (daughter), age 3, at home, born New Hampshire of New-Hampshire born parents.

I'll spend a short paragraph on Sidney's siblings. Herbert Henry Ware (1858-1930) married Martha Jane Dinsmore (1861-1941). Susannah Josephine [Zannie J.] Ware (1866-1953) married Frank Ashley Jackson (b. 1872) Alice Mabel Ware (1877-1967) married Charles Henry Hart (b. 1870).

The 1900 U.S. census enumerated the family of Sidney Ware in Westminster, Windsor Co., Vermont: Sidney Ware (head), age 31, born June 1868 Vermont of New Hampshire-born parents, farm laborer; Mary M. Ware (wife), age 28, born September 1871 Nebraska of Vermont-born parents; Hazel D. Ware (daughter), age 8, born June 1891 New Hampshire of



Above: Cheshire County (shaded) in New Hampshire

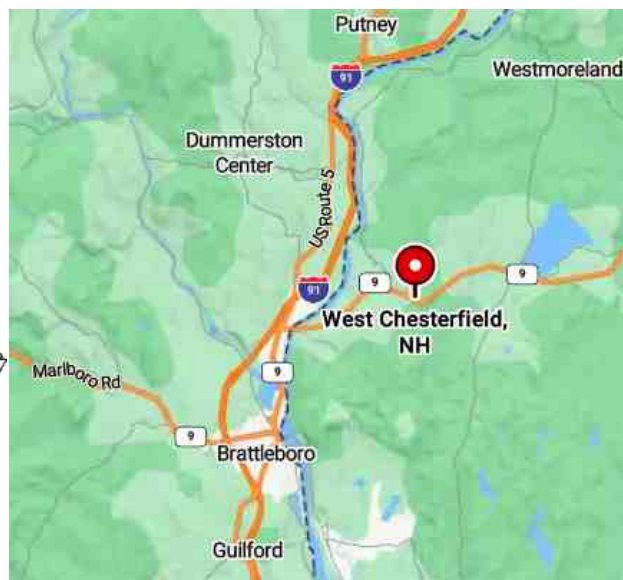
Right: Relative locations of West Chesterfield, New Hampshire and Brattleboro, Vermont

Vermont-born father and Nebraska-born mother; Willis M. Ware (son), age 6, born April 1894 New Hampshire of Vermont-born father and Nebraska-born mother. Alas, daughter Hazel D[ianatha] Ware died on July 8, 1905 in West Chesterfield, Cheshire County, New Hampshire. She had just turned fourteen the previous month.

The 1903 Brattleboro directory (Chesterfield) listed George Ware, farmer, house River Road to Westmoreland, P[ost] O[ffice] West Chesterfield, and Sidney Ware, farmer, West Chesterfield.

Son Willis Morgan Ware (b. Apr. 28, 1894 West Swanzey, New Hampshire, d. Oct. 24, 1957 Killingly, Connecticut) was longer-lived than his sister Hazel. He married Apr. 25, 1917 (Brattleboro, Vermont) Elizabeth Nellie Jackson (b. Feb. 25, 1884 Springfield, Vermont, d. May 20, 1968 Killingly, Connecticut). Willis and his wife lived in Brockton, Massachusetts for the 1920 U.S. census and in Killingly, Connecticut for the 1930 and later censuses. Willis was working as a machinist in both 1920 and 1930. He was retired by 1950. I have not found any children for Willis and Elizabeth.

When the 1910 census was enumerated Sidney and Mary Ware were living on Main Street in Westminster, Winchenden County, Vermont: Sidney L. Ware (head), age 41, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born parents, in first marriage for 19 years, farm laborer; Mary Ware (wife), age 37, born Nebraska of Vermont-born par-



ents, in first marriage for 19 years, 1 child born, 1 child living; Willis Ware (son), age 15, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born father and Nebraska-born mother.

The 1920 U.S. census enumerated Sidney and his wife at 6 Washington Street, Brattleboro, Windham County, Vermont: Sidney L. Ware (head), age 50, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born parents, farm laborer; Mary Ware (wife), age 46, born Nebraska of Vermont-born parents.

The 1930 U.S. census enumerated the following household in Chesterfield, Cheshire County, New Hampshire: Norman G. Colburn (head), age 67, born New Hampshire of New Hampshire-born parents, truck farmer, married at age 25; Alice M. Colburn (wife), age 73, born Vermont of Massachusetts-born father and Vermont-born mother, married at age 48; Sidney M. [sic] Ware (cousin), age 61, born Vermont of New Hampshire-born parents, truck farm laborer, married at age 22; Mary M. Ware (cousin-in-law), age 57, born Nebraska of Vermont-born parents, married at age 18.

Norman G. Colburn (b. Dec. 17, 1862 Chesterfield, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, d. Apr. 12, 1952 Holyoke, Massachusetts) was the son of George Henry Fitch Colburn (1825-1885) and Deborah Cobleigh (1821-1906). He married Dora Archer Morgan on June 13, 1905. Deborah (Cobleigh) Colburn (1821-1906) was the sister of Harriet Elizabeth Cobleigh (1837-1911), the wife of George Erastus Ware (1832-1907). They were both daughters of Jonathan Cobleigh (1795-1859) and Hannah Harriet Hastings (1798-1879), who married on Dec. 11, 1818 in Chesterfield, New Hampshire. Hence, the cousinship relationship between the Colburns and the Wares.

The Cobleighs had also been in New England for some generations. The male ancestors of Harriet and Deborah Cobleigh were Jonathan Cobleigh (1795-1859), John Cobleigh (1753-1825), Jonathan Cobleigh (1708-1781), John Cobleigh (1672-1739), John Cobleigh (b. 1643 Hingham, Massachusetts, d. 1680 Rehoboth, Massachusetts) and James Cobleigh (b. 1622 Exeter, Devonshire, England, d. 1684 Wiltshire, England). From this lineage, I presume that James

Cobleigh (1622-1684) came to the New World but opted to return to England.

The 1913 and 1914 directories for Bellows Falls, Vermont listed Sidney Ware (wife Mary), as a laborer residing at Westminster station.

The 1915 Brattleboro directory listed Sidney L. Ware, employee of George Crowell, with house at 131 Elliot. His son Willis M. Ware was a boarder at the same address. George E. Crowell was president of the Brattleboro Water Works Company located at 2 Western Avenue. Sidney remained in the same employment in 1916, but had moved his household to 49 Prospect Street. His son Willis M. Ware, an employee of W[hite] R[iver] C[hair] Company, was a boarder in his father's household.

The 1918 Brattleboro directory listed Sidney L. Ware as an employee of the C[rystal] Springs Ice Co., with house at 6 Washington Street. In the 1921 and 1922 Brattleboro directories, Sidney still resided at 6 Washington Street. His employer was described as CSI&T [Crystal Springs Ice & Trucking] Company. His employer remained the same in 1923, but he had removed one door to 8 Washington Street. The 1925, 1927 and 1928 Brattleboro directories listed Sidney L. Ware as an employee of CIW&T [Crystal Springs Ice, Wood & Trucking] Co., with house at 8 Washington Street. The 1929 Brattleboro directory listed Sidney L. Ware as employed at Bellows Falls [Vermont], with house at 8 Washington Street.

The 1935 and 1937 Brattleboro directories (Chesterfield section) listed Sidney L. Ware (wife Mary), as superintendent of the West Chesterfield Cemetery, residing with N. G. Colburn.

I did not find Sidney Ware, Mary

Crystal Springs Ice, Wood, and Trucking Company

AUTO TRUCK SERVICE

Moving of Pianos, Safes and Fur-
niture a Specialty.

Office, 57 Main St. Telephones 538-W 538-R

1916 Brattleboro, Vermont directory, p. 37



*Crosby Block, Brattleboro, headquarters of
Crystal Springs Ice, Wood & Trucking Co.*

Ware or Norman G. Colburn in the 1940 U.S. census. (Norman lived in West Chesterfield, New Hampshire in both 1939 and 1941.) Sidney Levi Ware died on Aug. 21, 1940 in Westmoreland, Cheshire County, New Hampshire. He was buried in Chesterfield West Cemetery, where he had been superintendent in 1935 and 1937.

Mary's brother Herbert Morgan, a 59-year-old widower, lived alone in Thomaston, Maine when the 1940 census was enumerated. In 1950, the following household was enumerated at 10 N. Beechwood in Thomaston: Herbert Morgan (head), age 69, widower, born New Hampshire, hired hand (farm); Mary M. Ware (sister), age 77, widow, born Nebraska, no occupation.

The obituary for Mary Morgan Ware appeared in the Bangor (Maine) *Daily News* for July 1, 1957. Presumably she died in late June 1957. Her date of birth was stated as Sept. 24, 1872, and her age as eighty-four. She was buried in Thomaston (Maine) Village Cemetery.

As things stand, I have a barebones account of Mary Morgan Ware's family and of her contributions to amateur journalism. I wish that I might claim to have found "Cuddley Music," but I have not. I will have to leave that discovery to a future researcher. ♦

In Memoriam

Peter Bruce Morgan (1942-2021): the great-grandson of Hiram B. and Alice J. (Whitney) Morgan & a contributor to Find-A-Grave. His grandfather, Herbert Morgan (1880-1961), was the brother of Mary Morgan Ware. (Credit: Find-A-Grave)



A Change in Fossil Officers

by David Goudswaard

2026: A new year and new changes.



President David Goudswaard

Ken Faig has asked to step back from the Fossil Board, and I regretfully agreed, on the condition that he become the Fossil Historian, a role he is eminently qualified for. To fill his vacancy on the Board, let's welcome Monica Wasserman, who is no slouch herself in the Amateur Journalism history department, as her article in this issue will demonstrate.

Former Fossil Sean Donnelly continues to cover fascinating aspects of AJ in his Cabinet Obscura blog (online at <https://cabinetobscura.blog/>).

His December posting, "Amateur Journalism and the Revolution in Fine Printing, 1895-1910," is a fascinating look at the influence of the Arts & Crafts movement on amateur press. But it's also an overview of how a collection develops and some recent scholarship in our field of interest.

As an aside, my latest book, *Adventurous Liberations*, is now out, which is an overview of Lovecraft's three visits to Florida. I am also working with an academic publisher on a sea serpent book that, as we speak, is ballooning into a three-volume series. Bad news for my poor old eyes, but good news for me since sea monsters fall under the baliwick of Charles Fort, as in "Fortean Phenomena." Amateur Journalists from Donald Wandrei to Frank Belknap Long mention Fort's books. Clark Ashton Smith and Lovecraft exchanged newspaper clippings on the Loch Ness monster. Robert Barlow corresponded with Fort himself about a hybrid butterfly he had sent to the Smithsonian. In other words,

there is another Lovecraft book in my immediate future, assuming my ophthalmologist doesn't kill me first. ♦

New Member Profile

Monica Wasserman

OUR newest Fossil, Monica Wasserman, is a writer and independent scholar specializing in the life and work of Sonia H. Davis, the wife of H. P. Lovecraft. She began her research in the fall of 2021 and edited Davis's autobiography, *Two Hearts That Beat as One* (Helios House Press, 2024, 288 pages). She maintains "The Papers of Sonia H. Davis" (<https://soniahdavis.com/>), a website dedicated to ongoing scholarship on Davis, publishing supplementary articles and archival findings that further contextualize her life and literary activity. Monica wrote "Sonia Greene and Amateur Journalism" for the July 2024 issue of THE FOSSIL (available on The Fossils' website).



Monica Wasserman

President Dave Goudswaard recruited Monica into The Fossils and convinced her to replace Ken Faig on the Board of Trustees.

Although Monica has a degree in Computer Science, she has enjoyed writing since childhood. A native of San Diego, California, she currently lives in nearby El Cajon with husband Joel. Her interests include rare literary works, classical paintings, and antiquities. ♦

Earliest Sonia Green Piece Discovered

by Monica Wasserman

WHAT makes amateur journalism superbly unique is the vast number of publications in which discovering new content by a particular writer is highly probable. In this case, new content by Sonia H. Davis, née Greene. The exact date when Sonia joined amateurdom is unclear. James F. Morton, Jr. introduced her to the Sunrise Club in 1917, and Sonia hosted the Blue Pencil Club at her Parkside home in January 1921 because "it

was [Morton's] turn to entertain them, and his room was not large enough." (*Two Hearts That Beat as One*, p. 73).

The earliest writings we've had by Sonia were from her journal, *The Rainbow*. The first issue (Vol. 1, No. 1) was published in October 1921, with many of these editorials written in August and edited in September with the help of H. P. Lovecraft. The second issue (Vol. 2,

No. 2) was published in May 1922.

As of late, however, something new has emerged. "Losted" was published by John Milton Heins in his *American Amateur* in July 1921. It's an account of some adventure gone wrong. Unfortunately, it's an adventure with very little context—was this a Blue Pencil Club meeting or did Sonia meet the two married couples for a night out, and realized she was the lonely third wheel? The latter would confirm why Iva and Della offered their husbands out of pity. (Like Sonia, Otto P. Knack and Ernest A. Dench were UAPA members who lived in Brooklyn.)

Despite the mystery behind the chronicle, "Losted" is, for now, the earliest documented piece of writing by Sonia H. Greene. For the following, I'd like to thank Terence McVicker of Glendale, California, owner of Bats Over Books, for this wonderful discovery.

Losted

by Sonia Greene

'Twas a full moonlight night—how full I never knew, but I'll wager the sly boy knew all about the 'Hazards of the Deserted Hikeawalkers.' The time was nine, the scene a park, a rendezvous—ah, a breath of romance, etc., etc. Poor 'me' being manless and forlorn and poor Della Knack, with blisters to consider, promptly offered the loan of her husband to me, upon reflection of which I immediately suspected there must be something wrong with me. When Iva heard of Della's gracious generosity she would not be outdone, so offered to lend me her own dear Ernest Dench which I consider no compliment at all. Being heretofore manless and having two perfectly good husbands thrust upon me for the whole evening—can you blame me for suspecting their munificence? It was too much. I protested.

I just knew Iva would be jealous if I chose Otto and Della likewise if Ernest had been favored. Providence lent a helping hand—Otto discovered husbandly duties and Ernest—lucky dog—though he mightn't have thought so—was delegated to take me under his wing.

Suddenly we were all Babes Lost in the Woods—and somehow in trying to find our way—I found myself stranded in a wild and woolly park at 'steen p.x. with another woman's husband. Visions of coming dawn and an outraged Iva loomed dark and great above me.

We eventually found our way and 'trolleying' to my domicile—10 and behold there sat Iva, most unconcerned. Once more, I ask you, can you blame me? Made me realize definitely—without a doubt there was something seriously wrong with me.

However, I urged her and her ex-love bird to stay and have a worm with me—which they did. All's well that ends well. ♦

Hawes Endowment Results

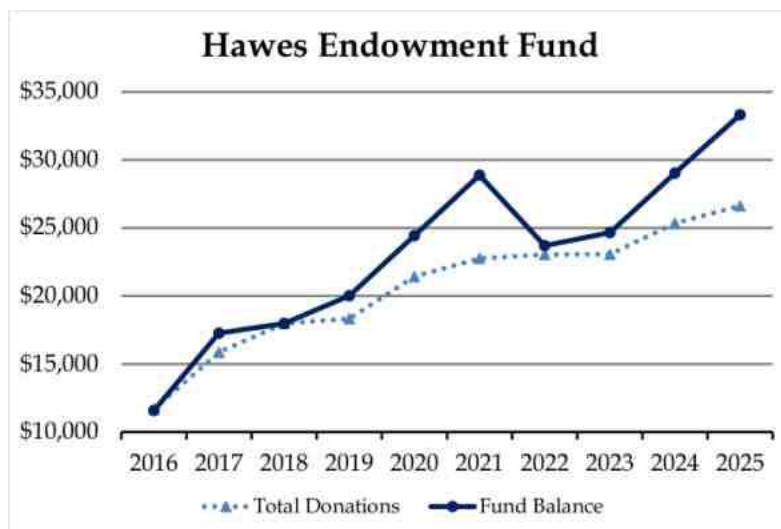
by Dave Tribby

THE Library of Amateur Journalism (LAJ) is the world's largest collection of amateur journals, put together beginning in 1898 and housed in the Special Collections department at the Libraries of the University of Wisconsin-Madison since 2004. After the death of prominent amateur journalist Leland M. Hawes, Jr., his ajay friends honored his memory by creating an Endowment Fund in his name to support the LAJ. In late 2016, funds surpassed the \$10,000 threshold required to make it an official fund managed by the University of Wisconsin Foundation (UWF). The Fund receives a portion of the Foundation's portfolio income, and each year pays about 4.5% of the Fund's balance, on a quarterly basis, to support the cataloging, preserving, and other activities needed to maintain the LAJ collection.

The UWF's 2025 report, covering July 2024 through June 2025, showed a strong 16.2% investment performance for the year, and an 8.2% average annual return over the previous decade. That translated to \$4,663.70 in income being added to the Hawes Endowment balance for the year. An additional \$1,275 was received from donors. Here are the Fiscal Year 2025 numbers for the Hawes Fund:

Value on July 1, 2024	\$29,035.91
Gift additions	\$1,275.00
Investment return	\$4,663.70
Support for LAJ (4.5%)	-\$1,285.24
Administrative fee (0.9%)	-\$365.28
Value on June 30, 2025	\$33,324.09

Over the nearly ten-year life of the fund, it has received a total of \$26,630.27 in donations and provided \$8,438.57 to support the LAJ. ♦



The size of the Leland M. Hawes, Jr. Memorial Endowment Fund for the Library of Amateur Journalism Collection has tripled since it was established in 2016, thanks to both donations (dotted line) and investment income.

Fossil Downloads in 2025

by Dave Tribby

AT THE END of each calendar year I review the log files from our website, learning what parts are the most popular and checking to see if there are any unusual access patterns. As explained in last January's report, I filter the raw logs to remove traffic from "bots" and other automated programs that wander the Internet trying to gather information or exploit weaknesses.

Filters I created to monitor access to issues of THE FOSSIL were a bit too strong, under-counting downloads by about 12%. The revised filter reports 8,032 downloads of all 84 online issues during the year, up 65% from the 4,857 downloads in 2024. Of the 2025 downloads, 898 (11%) came through Google and another 33 from the blog "Deep Cuts in a Lovecraftian Vein," which linked to 8 different issues.

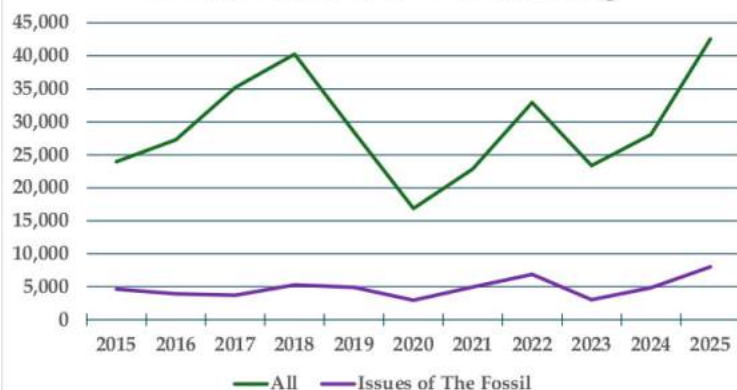
The four 2025 issues averaged 149 accesses each:

January 135	July 122
April 252	October 88

On average, over 20 downloads (14%) of each current issue are due to links the AAPA posts to its Facebook page, and four more come from links I put on my X account (also shared by President Goodsward on his).

Among earlier issues, July 2006 was the most popular, registering 248 downloads. Featured in that issue is Ken Faig's "Lavender Ajay of the Red-Scare Period: 1917-1920," which has attracted links from Wikipedia and from an article on Vice about an LGBTQ historic district. The second-most popular older issue, July 2009, also has a link from Wikipedia, this one to Ken Faig's article about "Poetry and the Gods," a 1920 story co-authored by H. P. Lovecraft and Anna Helen Crofts. The number 3 older issue: July 2012, with 199 accesses. It's harder to pinpoint the content generating the traffic for this issue, but the main article is Ken Faig's "Rev. Charles Randolph Uncles, S.S.J. (1859-1933), A Black Roman Catholic Priest in the Fossil Ranks." Number 4, with 187 downloads, is April 2019, which features John

Annual Accesses to TheFossils.org



Shepherd's article about his father, Wilson Hassell Shepherd, Sr., and his correspondence with H. P. Lovecraft. Rounding out the "Top 5 Classic Issues" with 174 downloads is July 2016, which features a couple of Ken Faig articles about the Library of Amateur Journalism.

Overall traffic to our website, after filtering, totaled 42,567, up 52% over 2024. The home page, with 12,144 hits, was, as expected, the most visited. ♦

The Fossil

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of The Fossils, a non-profit organization for anyone interested in the history of amateur journalism. Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join. Dues are \$15 annually, or \$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to THE FOSSIL without privileges of membership, is \$10. For further information, contact the secretary-treasurer or visit our website:

www.thefossils.org

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Time to Renew?

Many Fossil memberships and subscriptions come due in January. Please check the expiration date on your mailing label, and if you are due before the next issue (April 2026) please send your renewal to Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson — and consider donating a few dollars extra if you want THE FOSSIL to continue to be printed in color. ♦