

Descendants of William F. Libby

Generation No. 1

1. WILLIAM F.¹ LIBBY was born 07 Dec 1850. He married JULIA COLLINS. She was born 1847 in Boston, Suffolk, MA.

Children of WILLIAM LIBBY and JULIA COLLINS are:

- i. WILLIAM H.² LIBBY, b. 1871; m. SARAH JANE TOOMEY.

Notes for WILLIAM H. LIBBY:

William and Sarah died before my personal memory. My mother says that when she met them before her marriage, they were the oldest looking couple she had ever seen. William and Sarah were said, at one time, to be living in the Weber Duck Inn. This was a property near Hudson MA of Historic renown which might have some connection to Richard Webber, husband of Mary Libby.

- ii. LENA LIBBY, b. Abt. 1874; m. THOMAS BARRY.

Notes for LENA LIBBY:

Knowing them as a child I have Lena and Alice scrambled. One was a bit taller, both were slender. That description would fit Flossie (Florence) also. But for me, she was a separate identity and very special. They were the core of the clickety-clack club. I'll explain. The two sisters (sometimes three) had a tendency to sit in a line with a few of the next generation along the traffic path of any family gathering. They all had dentures. In those days, the dentures fitted badly. The older ladies of the family were Tea Totalers (look it up...they wanted Total Prohibition, including beer and wine) Any adult that had a drink, any child that ran, any human being that shouted or laughed loudly, they tutted...and the teeth clicked and clacked. So the Triple "C's" ...the Clickety Clack Club got it's name (unfortunately from me, and I made the mistake of using the name to my waggish Uncle Libby , Frederick, and the rest was history...) They were feisty, independent, and very firm in their own dignity. But the whole family had a marvelous sense of humor, so I am sure their stern demeanor was the impression of a child. I am also certain they knew the name I gave them and were, in part, "putting me on" so they could live up to the image I gave them. (we actually reserved a separate room at my wedding for the bar so that the rest of the family could get a drink without them knowing what was in the glass. Everyone kept stopping and saying " ladies, can I get you a soda ?" You'd think there was a real run on ginger ale. No one was fooled, but there was no proof as long as they didn't enter the bar...they didn't, but did line up along the path out !)

One funny story sums them up. My grandmother, Eleanor, got a call from the nursing home that a neighbor of the home had a complaint that Lena and Alice were thieves and had robbed her. Eleanor and Ted (Jack to his family...I suspect it was actually Jacques, a nickname the Yankee Libbys would have applied to any denizen of French Hill in Marlborough...which Theodore Charron certainly qualified as.) raced to the home . The director told her the neighbor's flower garden had been wiped out and her flowers cut. She blamed the two old ladies who daily walked by her yard and examined her plants. Eleanor questioned the two ladies at length. They swore to ignorance of the deed, the flowers, the neighbor. Eleanor went out and lambasted the director for irresponsibly accusing two upright octogenarians on such flimsey evidence. Indignantly, she went back to their room to tell them the matter was settled. "Good", said one, the flowers weren't all that good anyway, and certainly not worth the fuss." The "younger" couple left immediately. They came straight to us to tell the tale. They were both laughing so hard it's a wonder they got there without an accident. Eleanor, with traces of the same dignity the old ladies had, commented that she could never go near the home again and have to look the director in the eye. Ted told her of course she could, she was a Libby.

Notes for THOMAS BARRY:

When I think of Tom Barry, the first word that comes to mind is gentleman. ...deep voice ...inclined to listen more than talk...and he looked like John L. Sullivan (look him up). He had white hair which I suspect came to him very early, but his brows were black and bushy, and great coloring. The Libby's tended to be very pale. A handsome man to the end. They had no children. Tom roomed with John Libby in the Marlboro Nursing home while his wife Lena and her sister Alice roomed together. I suspect that in their late eighties, this was a financially practical arrangement. John was annoyed...but everything annoyed John in his last decade. Ellen wasn't there to cater to him. I believe Tom predeceased Lena. I was living in Missouri when they all went, so I

have lost track of the order of their going.

- iii. JOHN LIBBY, b. 31 Mar 1876, Marlborough, Middlesex Co., MA; d. Dec 1969, Marlborough, Middlesex Co., MA; m. ELLEN FITZGIBBONS; b. 1880, Marlborough, Middlesex Co., MA; d. Aft. 1954.

Notes for JOHN LIBBY:

He looked like an Indian...the one on the nickel...he had arrow straight posture until his 90's. His eyes were royal blue. He was close to 6 feet in height...tall for a man of the 19th century. He had a hooked nose that thankfully, rarely appears in his descendants. Of a ruddy complexion, his skin maintained the fine-leather sheen and crackle of a lifelong farmer. His mind far outlasted his body. His children in their 70's practically saluted when he spoke. No matter how big the gathering, he was the only person in the room you saw. I was a child of painful quiet (truly) He yelled at me once. Uncharacteristically, instead of crying, I yelled back. He said he had waited all his life for a child with spunk.(Bunk...he'd have killed any child that spoke back...he must have been aging or desperate to escape the women) He became my friend. I think he didn't like crowds and used me as an excuse to walk. I didn't talk much. He probably liked that too. He told me a lot about plants and people who planted and why some combo's worked and some didn't. I wish I had been older on those walks. My tomatoes might not be such a sorry sight.

Notes for ELLEN FITZGIBBONS:

Listed at six months in the 1880 census. I know her parents died young and Ellen was left to be raised by a minister and his wife. There was later an official lawsuit inquiry into the handling of her money which the minister had control of. There was no settlement forthcoming so the courts must have upheld the ministers responsibility.

She was the Ideal picture of a grandmother. I adored her. A great storyteller and entertainer of children. She was all soft and pink...beautiful skin of a creamy texture. When I knew her, her hair was a soft snowy white worn up in a "gay Gibson" fashion of the former century. My father told me she rose at 4:00 AM to bake a row of pies that extended the length of a serving board mounted along one side of the farmhouse kitchen. Her bread was a memory he held strongly all his life. She would cut slabs from a warm loaf and smear it with butter and sprinkled sugar, a treat outstanding to my father. He was the child of her oldest surviving child. He was only a year younger than her youngest son. Because my father's parents were practicing Catholics, getting to Sunday Church had to be accomplished in this very sometimes non-practicing household. My greatgrandmother would hitch a gray farmhorse named Nellie to a two person conveyance (Dad used the term buggy/sulkey , black leather hood that popped up or down) and take him to early Mass so he could still play with his cousins while his parents went later. They had a special bond that just glowed and spilled over onto me as his child. Her warmth was a special spot in my childhood.

Over her bed hung a portrait of HER grandmother who was a full blooded Indian. This is a source of much controversy in the family. When Ellen died, she and her husband John were living with their daughter Ethel and her husband Harold. Harold and John Libby were volatile housemates and many a storm erupted. John left the house after Ellen's death, and the whereabouts of the portrait has never been satisfied.

- iv. CHARLES LIBBY, b. Abt. 1880.

Notes for CHARLES LIBBY:

I don't know if Charlie ever married. He lived with his brother Bill, who kept himself in their parent's home. Charlie died at about age 75, a very young age for this generation. They maintained an age average of 97. Okay, I have decided to include the following note. My Dad, John Charron, remembered Charlie well. As a bachelor he lived with his brother William in the house that had belonged to William and Charlie's parents.(Dad said it was the attic...probably the only privacy offered) Charlie died "young" at 75...the sisters, when mentioning this fact, always paused and then added...of course, Charlie drank. You have to read the notes under the sisters to understand this remark. According to my Dad...all poor Charlie was ever known to have was an occasional glass of beer,sigh.

- v. ALICE LIBBY, b. Abt. 1881; m. THOMAS BRIGHAM.

Notes for ALICE LIBBY:

See the notes for Lena.

Notes for THOMAS BRIGHAM:

I don't remember Tom Brigham. All three ladies married Toms and they get mixed in my mind. Remember, this was the age when men hung together socially and women and children stayed , for the most part, out of their way. I know he predeceased her, thus she roomed with her sister in the Marlborough nursing home when she, Lena, John and Lena's Tom Barry went to the home more or less together...actually, John, the oldest, was the last to go there.

- vi. FLORENCE LIBBY, b. Abt. 1887; m. THOMAS CONNORS.

Notes for FLORENCE LIBBY:

I never knew Tom Connors. He was gone from the scene before I was cognizant. Flossie was Eleanor's (my grandmother's) closest friend. When Flossie died of cancer in her mid 90's, all the remaining fun in life went out from Eleanor. Ted/Jack, Eleanor's husband had already lost his battle with cancer and Flossie really kept her niece up and about. Flossie was younger than her sisters and thus closer to her brother's oldest surviving child.

There are many Florence's in this family....this is the ONLY one ever called Flossie. She twinkled. she was impeccably groomed, she was always correctly dressed for whatever occasion up or down and always ready for fun. She had a musical laugh. Well into her late 80's I remember her sailing into our home in a fire-engine red , black piped Channel style suit with matching shoes and bag. I can't ever remember her with a negative thought about anyone no matter how caddish a character. But, I remember many stories told of her adventures, most with Eleanor. One example:

The two ladies, Eleanor and Flossie were traveling around Boston via the subway (streetcar to them). They were at a busy subterranean section under the city's heart. They were not able to get a seat and so held onto large porcelain covered metal hand rings that hung from a bar across the ceiling of the cars for standing passengers. Not wanting to soil their white gloves (this was 1960's Boston) they each removed one glove and held on bare handed. A man seated in front of Eleanor was deeply asleep. Her loose glove dropped onto the abdomen of the somnambulant gentleman. Before she could retrieve the glove (How indeed !) the car jerked around a corner, the sleeper awoke, looked down at his trousers, saw white, unzipped, tucked the white glove inside his trousers , reziped, and went back to sleep.. Bewildered, Eleanor looked around at the others sitting passengers next to the man. " Don't look at me" one man shrugged. No one said another word. Eleanor soon got off...short one glove. Flossie's question after telling this tale was " What do you suppose he'll tell his wife tonight when Eleanor's glove falls out as they ready for bed?" You have to see two sober faced sincerely old fashioned ladies tell this tragic tale of loss and embarrassment without a hint of a smile ...then cackling like happy hens once they had delivered Flossie's punchline question. The two of them would have made a successful stand-up comedy team. I can't tell if they had more silly adventures than anyone else I knew, or had a keener sense of observation and humor. I think the latter.

- vii. ELLEN LIBBY, b. 1878.

Notes for ELLEN LIBBY:

Supposedly listed as 1 in the 1880 census, I have not seen the listing. If there is not an error in the book "The Libby Family" then I believe she died as a child.

- viii. FRANK LIBBY, b. 1879.

Notes for FRANK LIBBY:

Supposedly listed as 5 mths in the 1880 census, I believe Frank must have died as a child, or there is an error in " The Libby Family" book... Never heard the name