

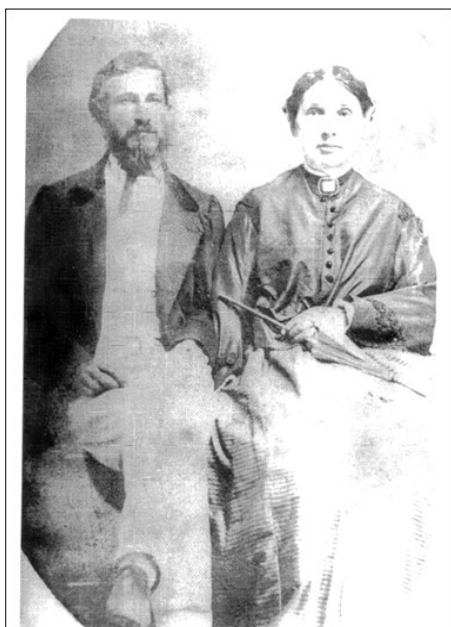
## A Wethersfield (CT) Curtiss Family Migrates to Georgia and Alabama

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Elnathan Curtiss (Sr.) moved from Litchfield County, Connecticut to Berkshire County, Massachusetts in the 1760's. He was the great-grandson of Thomas Curtiss and Elizabeth Salmon of Wethersfield through his grandparents Joseph Curtiss/Mercy Deming and parents Thomas Curtiss/Mary Goodrich. Elnathan's children and descendants continued west into New York, Ohio, Michigan, and onward. One son did not follow the others but went south into the wilderness of central Georgia in the middle 1830's after trying life in south-central New York. Bonnie Dagen of Riverton, Iowa and a descendant of a Wethersfield Curtiss line sent the society a query about Elisha Curtiss of Stockbridge, MA on whom we had little information in the Curtis/s Family Society database. Why? At about the age of 35, Elisha took his family to Georgia around 1834. Following Elisha's trail and those of his descendants led us to a very helpful lady, and descendant of Elisha, working in the McLean County [KY] Historical Society, Judy Rightmyer of Calhoun, KY.

Elisha married Harriet Whitney of Stockbridge, NY in about 1814 and was living in Oswego, Tioga Co, NY when their first son, Silas Whitney Curtis (named after Harriet's father) was born in Jan 1816. A second child, Catherine, was also born in Oswego in 1819. Their next four children were born in Stockbridge, MA between 1823 and 1833 – Mary (1823-1885), George Elnathan (1827-1875), Robert Galhin (1839-?) and Henry Elisha (1833-1903). The last child of Elisha and Harriet, William Brown Curtis, was born in Hamburg, GA in 1836, which established their residence in Georgia. Elisha died in August 1840 in Georgia. Harriet returned to Stockbridge where she died in 1862. It appears the family dropped the double "ss" in their Curtiss surname as all documents reflect only one "s".

The first son of Elisha and Harriet, Silas Whitney Curtis (1816-1892), went to Georgia with his family, then returned to Stockbridge to marry Emma Morgan in 1836, and took his young bride back to Griffin, Georgia where they had five children before returning to Stockbridge before 1849. By 1854, Silas and Emma had moved to Geneva, IL. But it was actually Silas' brother, George Elnathan Curtis who, with his wife and children, settled in Georgia.



George Elnathan Curtis 13 March 1827 - 2 March 1875  
Mary Elizabeth Reaves Curtis 15 April 1839 - 19 September 1913

George Elnathan and Mary  
(Reaves) Curtis

Like his brother Silas, George (1827-1875), at only about 8 years old, accompanied his parents on their move to Georgia. In the 1850 census for Pike County, GA, George was single and a clerk living in his employer's household. (A part of Pike Co. was used to create Spaulding County in 1851 with Griffin as the county seat.) By 1856, George had returned to Stockbridge, MA with Mary Elizabeth Reaves, a Georgia peach, and married her there that year. George and Mary returned to Orrs, Spaulding Co, Georgia where they had seven sons, all born in Spaulding Co; five of whom lived into the 1900's. Mary Reaves was Judy Rightmyer's great-grandmother. Judy's mother, Mary Reaves Curtis Nall, was named in her honor.

George and Mary's first two sons died young – Henry (1859-1860) and Walter (1861-1879). The fourth son, George Hill Curtis (1865-1917), was a railroad conductor and settled in Chicago. The remaining four Curtis brothers stayed in the south and appeared to have been close – William Whitney (1864-1928), Charles Ernest (1870-1958), Edwin Thomas (1872-1943) and Frank Mann (1874-1939). William, who never married, graduated from Van-

derbilt University and was the Southern region representative in New Orleans for Sharp & Doume Co pharmaceuticals. His brother Charles worked in the coal industry. According to Judy Rightmyer, everyone in the family thought Charles was single until his funeral in 1958 when a daughter showed up from Chicago. At one point, it seems Charles was married and had a family there but never told his parents or siblings. Edwin, a manager for Sharp & Doume Co, was married but there were no children.

Frank Mann Curtis married Agnes Blanford in 1907 and lived in Birmingham, Alabama where he was a grocer. Sadly, the Curtis family home in Birmingham no longer stands. The library of the University of Alabama now occupies the site. By 1930, Frank, Agnes and daughter had moved to Madisonville, Hopkins Co, KY where he was a sales manager for Seabrook Coal Co. Frank Mann Curtis was Judy (nee Nall) Rightmyer's grandfather.

This research project resulted in five pages of updates for the society database. Thanks to Bonnie Dagen and Judy Rightmyer for their help and cooperation. And Judy sent us eleven family photos which have been added to the society's website photo album for the Wethersfield family.



Top: Frank M., Charles E and Edwin T. Curtis  
Bottom: George H, Mary E. (Reaves) and William W. Curtis



Curtis Birmingham, AL home about 1910, now site of the University of Alabama - Birmingham library.

Photos courtesy of Judy Rightmyer

Sources:

- Curtis/s Family Society database
- Family history of Judy Rightmyer.
- Family history of Bonnie Dagen
- *Family Memorials - Genealogies of the Families & Descendants of the Early Settlers of Watertown, Massachusetts, Vol. 1*; Henry Boyd 1855
- Historical Record of Kane Co, Illinois 1888
- Ancestry.com (U.S. Census, Find-A-Grave, KY Births-Deaths, GA Births-Deaths, FL Death Index, Dept of Veteran Affairs, SSDI, etc)