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Parents for Cynthia (Parker) Wilcoxon of Ohio and West Virginia

By Shannon Green

Women can be difficult to trace, particularly when they are indicated in pre-1850 censuses only with tick marks. Migrating families leave kin dispersed and disconnected. Source analysis and correlation of information items helps clarify the genealogical value of frequently dubious sources.

ncorrect published family trees led researchers astray in the search for Cynthia (Parker) Wilcoxon's parents. A potentially untrustworthy biographical sketch of a prominent Arizona citizen and a family Bible record provide useful clues, however.

CYNTHIA'S RECORDS

Cynthia's earliest known record documents her marriage to Anthony Wilcoxon on 7 November 1837 in Columbiana County, Ohio.¹ Between 1842 and 1846 they settled in Mason County, Virginia, where they raised a family.²

Censuses suggest Cynthia was born in the early 1820s; the 1850 and 1880 schedules indicate between 1820 and 1821 in New Hampshire.³ Cynthia's family was possibly skipped in 1860.⁴ Inconsistent with the other censuses and Ohio's

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^{1.} FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/004017338), digital film 004017338, image 566, Columbiana Co., Ohio, Marriage Records 3:175, Wilcoxen-Parker, 7 November 1837.

^{2. 1850} U.S census, Mason Co., Va., population schedule, District 38, fol. 409r, dwelling 665, family 675, Anthony Wilcoxen; microfilm M432, roll 959, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

^{3.} Ibid. "Syntha" was age twenty-nine. Also, 1880 U.S. census, Mason Co., W.Va., pop. sch., Cologne District, enumeration district (ED) 92, p. 18, dwell. 155, fam. 160, Anthony Wilcoxen household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 1408. "Cyntha" was age fifty-nine.

^{4. 1860} U.S. census, Mason Co., Va., pop. sch., author's line-by-line reading; NARA microfilm M653. The family did live in Mason Co. at the time. See *West Virginia Culture & History* (http://www.wvculture.org/vrr/va_select.aspx), for digital images of Mason Co., W. Va., Births, 1853–1865, fol. 42, no. 27, B. F. Wilcoxen, 14 December 1859; and fol. 52, no. 25, George Washington Wilcoxen, 29 November 1860.

minimum marriage age, the 1870 enumeration suggests she was born between 1824 and 1825 in Virginia.⁵ Her tombstone gives birth and death years as 1820 and 1889.⁶ The death produced no known obituary, will, or civil death record.⁷

A FAMILY BIBLE

Five pages from a family Bible confirm Cynthia's birth in 1820 and provide other details. The Bible record was submitted to support a 1984 application for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution. The photocopy quality is poor, however, and it omits the Bible's front matter and provenance.⁸

The record content suggests Cynthia's husband began it about 1850 and passed the Bible to his son, John Swearingen Wilcoxon.

- This record documents forty-three births, marriages, and deaths. It specifies no relationships except for marriages.
- Various handwriting and inks indicate that different scribes made entries at separate times.
- Entries referencing "Mason County, Virginia" (instead of West Virginia) likely were made before 1863, when West Virginia became a state.
- The earliest entries, in the same hand and ink, record Anthony Wilcoxon's birth, Cynthia Parker's birth, Anthony and Cynthia's marriage, Anthony's father's birth, and Anthony's mother's birth and death. Anthony's mother died in 1849, but his father apparently was alive when those entries were made. Cynthia was probably not the scribe as her parents were not listed—only Anthony Wilcoxon's parents.
- The "Births" page records Anthony and Cynthia's first six children's births, from 1839 to 1850, in the same hand and ink as the earliest entries.
- Records of Anthony and Cynthia's last eight children's births, between 1852 and 1861, in different hands and inks, imply entries contemporary to the events.
- The Bible includes information about John Swearingen Wilcoxon, his wife, children, and grandchildren.

^{5. 1870} U.S. census, Mason Co., W. Va., pop. sch., Cologne Twp., fol. 159v, dwell./fam. 95, Anthony Wilcoxen; NARA microfilm M593, roll 1692. Cynthia was age forty-five. Also, Maskell E. Curwen, ed., *The Public Statutes at Large, of the State of Ohio . . .*, 3 vols. (Cincinnati, Ohio: privately published, 1853–54), 3:2336–37.

^{6.} Find A Grave (http://findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi), memorial 74877023, digital image of Cynthia Fidelia Parker Wilcoxon gravestone (Cottageville Cemetery, Cottageville, W.Va.) by Colleen Sanders Broyles, 13 August 2011.

^{7.} For Cynthia's obituary, the author searched for Wilcoxon, Wilcoxnin, Wilcoxen, Wilcox, 1889, and West Virginia, at Chronicling America Historic American Newspapers (http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/), GenealogyBank (https://www.genealogybank.com), and Newspapers.com (https://www.newspapers.com). For Cynthia's death record, the author searched Cynthia Wilcoxon about 1889 at West Virginia Culture & History. For Cynthia's will, the author searched "West Virginia Will Books, 1756–1971," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1909099).

^{8.} Wilcoxon family Bible record; supplemental documents for membership application of Eula Geane Yoakum Bougsty, National no. 683102, on John Swearingen (1751–1830, Pa.), approved 10 April 1984; Office of the Registrar General, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C.

The Bible record says "Cinthia F. Parker was born on the 15th Day of October in the year of our Lord 1820 in the state of New hampshire, Lemster Town." Cynthia likely gave the information to the best of her knowledge. "Lemster" apparently refers to "Lempster," New Hampshire.

Most of the record's entries can be corroborated. For selected entries that add credibility, see table 1.

Table 1

Selected Wilcoxon Family Bible Entries

1813 "Brook" County, Virginia, "on the waters of Kings Creek."

Anthony Wayne Wilcoxon married Cynthia 7 November 1837 in Wellsville, Columbiana County, Ohio.

Anthony's parents' information was recorded:

- Anthony Wilcoxon was born on 22 February 1778.
- Rebekah was born on 15 July 1780.
- Rebekah died on 4 September 1849.

Two of Anthony and Cynthia's children's deaths were recorded in the Bible. Mary Wilcoxon died on 25 November 1861, age 4 years, 14 days; Jasper Wilcoxon died on 9 December 1861, age 14 years, 1 month and [?] days.

Anthony Wayne Wilcoxon, born 17 Apr Anthony's father, Anthony, owned Kings Creek land in Brooke County, Virginia, that he later sold to his father-in-law.^a

> Their civil marriage record confirms the date. The Bible record shows they were married in the town of Wellsvilleb

> These dates are recorded in a different family Bible in another lineage society application. The Bible is attributed to Mary Wilcoxon, Anthony's sister. Rebekah's tombstone confirms her death date, but her calculated birth date is six months off.d

> The civil death record for Mary (age 4) and "Joseph" (age 15) indicates they both died on 13 October 1861 of diphtheria.^e More likely the children died on different days, as recorded in the Bible, but the deaths were reported to the county on the same day.

- a. Brooke County, W.Va., Wills, Book 3:40, will of John Swearingen, 1832; Family Search (https:// familysearch.org/search/collection/1909099).
- b. FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/004017338), digital film 004017338, image 566, Columbiana Co., Ohio, Marriage Records, 3:175, Wilcoxen-Parker marriage, 7 November 1837.
- c. Membership application, Sally A. Schiraldi, member 2291, on Rebecca Swearingen; First Families of Ohio, Ohio Genealogical Society, Bellville. The application refers to the Kelly family Bible that was donated to the River Museum in Wellsville, Ohio. The museum, part of the Wellsville Historical Society, is not able to obtain the original. See Wellsville Historical Society, Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/messages/WellsvilleHistoricalSociety), posting 6 July 2016.
- d. Mina Chapel Cemetery (Gallipolis, Ohio), Rebecca Wilcoxon marker, photograph supplied by dallasathome, "Public Member Trees," database, Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com), "Jones Family Tree_Rev 1," entry for Rebecca Swearingen.
- e. Mason County, W.Va., death register, 1861, unpaginated, line 28, Joseph & Mary Wilcox; digital image, West Virginia Culture & History (http://www.wvculture.org/vrr/va_select.aspx).

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A 1901 biographical sketch suggests a family for Cynthia. It profiles George Riley Parker who—like Cynthia—was born in New Hampshire in the 1820s and later lived in "Columbia" (Columbiana) County.⁹ Cynthia and Anthony had a son George Riley Wilcoxon.¹⁰ George Parker, alive when his sketch was published, likely provided the details:¹¹

- George Riley Parker was born on 30 October 1822 in Lempster, New Hampshire.
- His father, also named George Parker, was born in 1796 in Chester, Vermont, and died on 30 January 1863 in Burton, Ohio.
- George Riley Parker's mother was Rockset Hendee, born on 7 March 1795 in Westminster, Vermont. She died on 29 March 1848 in Ohio.
- The family lived in Lempster until 1826 and in Ware, Massachusetts, about 1826–28. They eventually settled in Ohio, living in Geauga, Columbiana, and Stark counties.
- George and Rockset had six children besides George Riley Parker—"Cynthia died in Ohio; Roxana is living in Oregon; Judith Ann died in Ohio; an infant died in Ware, Mass.; William Hendee died at the age of twenty-one; and Charlotte A. died in California."

Census, probate, tax, and vital records corroborate the composition, migration, and timeline for the Parkers in the sketch:

- George Parker, son of Mabel and Obadiah Parker, was born in Chester, Vermont, on 24 February 1796.¹²
- On 28 January 1818 George Parker married "Rochery" Hendee in Westminster, Vermont.¹³

^{9.} Portrait and Biographical Record of Arizona: Commemorating the Achievements of Citizens Who Have Contributed to the Progress of Arizona... (Chicago: Chapman, 1901), 286 and 289.

^{10.} Wilcoxon family Bible record.

^{11.} Portrait and Biographical Record of Arizona, 286-89.

^{12.} FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/005459909), digital film 005459909, image 49, Chester, Vt., Town Records C:83, George Parker birth, 24 February 1796. No probate record for Mabel or Obadiah Parker appears in Windham and Marlboro probate districts. See "Vermont, Wills and Probate Records, 1749–1999," *Ancestry* (https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=9084) > Windham > Card Index, 1781–1962. Also, "Old general alphabetical index to case files, 1781–1964," *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/search/film/007714256), digital film 007714256, images 5–39, Marlboro District.

^{13. &}quot;Vermont, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1732–2005," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1987653), digital film 004032888, image 303, Westminster, Vt., Town Records 2:115. Rockset's parents are not identified, but Windham and Marlboro probate districts have no Hendee probate record. See "Vermont, Wills and Probate Records, 1749–1999," *Ancestry > Windham > Card Index, 1781–1962. Also, "Old general alphabetical index to case files, 1781–1964," *FamilySearch*, digital film, 007714256, images 5–39, Marlboro District.

- In 1820 George lived in Lempster, New Hampshire, with an apparent wife and child.¹⁴
- From 1821 to 1825 George was taxed in Lempster.¹⁵
- George purchased one acre in Lempster in 1825.¹⁶ He sold it in 1826.¹⁷
- In 1830 George lived in Burton, Ohio, with his apparent wife and five children.
- "Roscana E. Parker," identified in the sketch as George Riley Parker's sister, married Myrson Southworth on 21 November 1837 in Columbiana County, Ohio.¹⁹
- In 1840 George Parker lived in Columbiana County with his apparent wife and four children.²⁰
- In 1842 Judith Ann Parker married in Columbiana County. 21 Daughter of Rockset Hendee and George Parker, she died in 1900. 22
- George Parker died on 30 January 1863 and is buried in Geauga County, Ohio.²³
 No obituary is known.²⁴ His will names his widow and son, George Riley Parker, who was to divide property "amongst all my [unnamed] children."²⁵
- 14. 1820 U.S. census, Cheshire Co., N.H., pop. sch., Lempster, p. 136, George Parker; NARA microfilm M33, roll 59. No George Parker was enumerated in Lempster in 1810 and 1830. See 1810 U.S. census, Cheshire Co., N.H., Lemster; NARA microfilm M252, roll 23. Also, 1830 U.S. census, Cheshire Co., N.H.; NARA microfilm M19, roll 74.
- 15. "New Hampshire, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1636–1947," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/005510762), digital film 005510762, image 284, Lempster, N.H., Town Records 3, fol. 114, invoice and taxes for 1821, George Parker. Also, ibid., image 297, p. 569 (between fols. 115 and 116), School House Tax, 1822; image 302, fol. 121, invoice and taxes for 1822; image 311, fol. 128, 1823; image 318, fol. 134, 1824; and image 316, fol. 140, 1825. George drops off the rolls after 1825.
- 16. Cheshire Co., N.H., Deed Book 102:41, Barnard to Parker, 30 August 1825; Registry of Deeds, Keene; FHL microfilm 15,667.
 - 17. Ibid., 108:67, Parker to Graves, 18 July 1826; FHL microfilm 15,669.
- 18. 1830 U.S. census, Geauga Co., Ohio, Burton, p. 230, George Parker; NARA microfilm M19, roll 131.
- 19. "Ohio, County Marriages, 1789–2013," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/004017338), digital film 004017338, image 564, Columbiana Co., Marriage Record 3:171, Southworth-Parker, 21 November 1837.
- 20. 1840 U.S. census, Columbiana Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Hanover, p. 45, George Parker; NARA microfilm M704, roll 386.
- 21. "Ohio, County Marriages, 1789–2013," FamilySearch, digital film 004017338, image 564, Columbiana Co., Marriage Record 3:300, Davis-Parker, 10 April 1842.
- 22. "Ohio, County Death Records, 1840–2001," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/004362886), digital film 004362886, image 564, Cuyahoga Co., Record of Death 12, fol. 210, no. 4719, Judith Davis, 19 March 1900. Also, Cleveland Leader (Cleveland, Ohio), 21 March 1900, page 7, col. 4. The death notice mentions no relative of Judith. No obituary was found.
- 23. "Geauga Co., Ohio, Cemetery Records," Ohio DAR Genealogical Records Committee Report, series 1, vol. 3 (1925): 265.
- 24. The author searched *Jeffersonian Democrat* (Chardon, Ohio), January and February 1863 issues, and *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers* (http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/).
- 25. "Ohio, Wills and Probate Records, 1786–1998," *Ancestry* (http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8801) > Geauga > Probate Files, Patchin, Myron–Pease, Orin S > images 647–49, Geauga Co., probate file P-122, for George Parker, will, 2 January 1863.

Inconsistencies between the 1901 sketch and other sources can be explained:

- The sketch says George Parker moved to Ware, Massachusetts, in the 1820s and an
 infant died there, but no record confirms the death.²⁶ Many infants in the time and
 place, however, left no vital record.
- The sketch mentions no second marriage for George. However, George Parker, widower, married Calista Gay on 25 October 1849 in Geauga County, Ohio.²⁷ The omission is not explained.
- The sketch, published in 1901, says George's daughter Roxana lived in Oregon. She did live there but had died in 1897. Her obituary names her sons but no extended family. George Riley Parker might not have known his sister had died, or he gave the information before her death.
- The sketch says Cynthia died in Ohio, inconsistent with evidence she died in Jackson County, West Virginia.³⁰ Jackson County borders Ohio.

The sketch identifies a family comprising George, Rockset, and seven children, one of whom died as an infant. Censuses support the family depiction and migration path. See table 2.

THE PARKERS IN LEMPSTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Cynthia was born on 15 October 1820 in Lempster. The state's town clerks recorded births, but Lempster records show no entry for Cynthia Parker.³¹

If Cynthia was born in 1820 in Lempster, her parents likely lived there at the time. The town had two Parker households in 1820:³²

^{26.} Ware, Mass., Births, Marriages, Intentions, and Deaths 1 (1735–1829) and 2 (1776–1844); Town Clerk, Ware; FHL microfilm 760,644. No Parker families listed.

^{27. &}quot;Ohio, County Marriages, 1789–2013," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/004260309), digital film 004260309, image 146, Geauga Co., Marriage Record D:278, Parker-Gay, 25 October 1849. George's second wife left no will, but her heirs were children from her first marriage. See "Wills and Probate Records, 1786–1998," Ancestry > Geauga > Probate Files, Patchin, Myron–Pease, Orin S > image 868, Geauga Co., Ohio, probate file P-217 for Calista Parker, application for letters of administration, 7 December 1879. Her obituary does not mention George Parker's children. See "Newbury," The Geauga Republican (Chardon, Ohio), 17 December 1879, page 8, col. 2.

^{28.} Find A Grave, memorial 19821476, digital image of Roxana P. Southworth gravestone (River View Cemetery, Portland, Ore.) by Earl Munday, 10 June 2007.

^{29. &}quot;Mrs. Southworth's Funeral," *Oregonian* (Portland, Ore.), 10 December 1897, page 8, col. 5. Also, "Death of Mrs. M. M. Southworth," *Oregonian*, 8 December 1897, page 8, col. 5.

^{30.} Wilcoxon family Bible record.

^{31. &}quot;New Hampshire, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1636–1947," *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/search/film/005510761), digital film 005510761, image 348, Lempster, Town Records 2:677, index for surnames beginning with *P*.

^{32. &}quot;1820 United States Federal Census," database, *Ancestry* (https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7734), search for "Parker" households in Lempster, N.H.

Table 2 George Parker Census Correlation				
George Parker (father) Rockset Hendee (mother) Roxana (daughter) Cynthia (daughter) George Riley (son) Judith Ann (daughter) William Hendee (son) Charlotte A. (daughter)	male 16–25 female 16–25 female under 10	male 30–39 female 30–39 female 10–14 female 5–9 male 5–9 female 5–9 male under 5	male 30–39 female 40–49 [married in 1837] [married in 1837] male 15–19 female 15–19 male 10–14 female 5–9	

- a. 1820 U.S. census, Cheshire Co., N.H., population schedule, Lempster, p. 136, line 4, George Parker household; microfilm M33, roll 59, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).
- b. 1830 U.S. census, Geauga Co., Ohio, Burton, p. 230, line 5, George Parker household; NARA microfilm M19, roll 131.
- c. 1840 U.S. census, Columbiana Co., Ohio, Hanover, p. 45, line 16, George Parker household; NARA microfilm M704, roll 386.
 - Joseph and Sarah Parker had nine children born in 1792–1812. Town records list their names, birth places, and birth dates. None was Cynthia.³³ Joseph died intestate on 14 March 1825 at Lempster.³⁴ No evidence suggests he moved to Ohio.
 - George Parker's 1820 household consisted of a man and woman ages sixteen to twenty-six and a girl under ten.³⁵ George had Cynthia's surname, lived where she was born, and was of age to be her father. Lempster records show no births in George's family.³⁶ Nevertheless, he is the only candidate in Lempster for Cynthia's father.

THE PARKER FAMILY IN COLUMBIANA COUNTY, OHIO

Cynthia married in 1837 in Columbiana County. The county offers only one Parker of age to be Cynthia's father—George.³⁷

^{33.} Lempster, Town Records 2:685-86.

^{34.} For death date, see ibid. 2:686. For Joseph's intestacy and insolvency, see "New Hampshire, Wills and Probate Records, 1643–1982," *Ancestry* (https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8996) > Cheshire > Estate Files, P188–P259, 1822–1830 > images 558–581, Cheshire Co., estate files, Joseph Parker (1825); image 570, Sarah Parker and Jonas Parker, petition for administration, 4 May 1825; and image 572, Sarah Parker and Jonas Parker, petition for insolvency, 4 May 1825.

^{35. 1820} U.S. census, Cheshire Co., N.H., pop. sch., Lempster, p. 136, George Parker.

^{36.} Lempster, Town Records 2:677.

^{37. &}quot;1830 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry* (https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8058) and "1840 United States Census," *Ancestry* (https://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8057), searches for "Parker" in Columbiana Co., Ohio.

George lived in Hanover, Ohio, in 1840. His household consisted of a man in his thirties, a woman in her forties, and four children ages five to nineteen.³⁸ This is likely a husband, wife, and their four children. The only Parker marriages in Columbiana County in 1835–48, aside from Cynthia's, were for George's daughters Roxana and Judith Ann.³⁹

COMPETING PARENTAL CANDIDATES

Online family trees and memorials identify Cynthia (Parker) Wilcoxon's parents as Vermonters Amos and Ruth (Sargent) Parker. 40 Amos and Ruth were not Cynthia's parents:

- They married ten years after Cynthia's birth.⁴¹
- Remaining in Merrimack County, New Hampshire, they never lived in Ohio.⁴²
- Cynthia is not among their known children.⁴³
- Of Cynthia's fourteen children, none was named Amos or Ruth.⁴⁴

CONCLUSION

Indirect evidence links Cynthia, daughter of Rockset and George Parker, to Cynthia Parker, wife of Anthony Wilcoxon. The Parkers and Cynthia lived in the same places at the same times. A biographical sketch for Cynthia's brother connects oral testimony and documented details, with no plausible conflicts.

Identifying Cynthia's parents required researching her children, parents, and siblings. Evidence corroborating a poorly sourced Bible record and a biographical sketch established her parentage.

- 38. 1840 U.S. census, Columbiana Co., Ohio, pop. sch., Hanover, p. 45, George Parker.
- 39. "Marriage records of Columbiana Co., Ohio book 3, January 1, 1835 through December 31, 1848," *Ohio DAR Genealogical Records Committee Report*, series 1, vol. 489 (1969): 207.
- 40. Find A Grave, memorial 74877023, digital image of Cynthia Fidelia Parker Wilcoxon gravestone. For trees, see, for example, "Lightcap FamilyConection," Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/126963/person/24901199195/facts), and "My Harless/Gardner Family Tree," Ancestry (https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/639174/person/-672793715/facts).
- 41. "New Hampshire Marriage Records, 1637–1947," FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/search/film/004243213), digital film 004243213, image 749, N.H. Registrar of Vital Statistics, Marriages, Parker-Sargent, 28 September 1830.
- 42. 1840 U.S. census, Merrimack Co., N.H., New London, p. 162, Amos Parker; NARA microfilm M704, roll 240. Also, 1850 U.S. census, Merrimack Co., N.H., pop. sch., Wilmot, fol. 132r, dwell. 233, fam. 250, Amos Parker; NARA microfilm M432, roll 436. Also, 1860 U.S. census, Merrimack Co., N.H., pop. sch., Wilmot, p. 963, dwell. 43, fam. 41, Amos Parker; NARA microfilm M653, roll 677.
- 43. Augusta Harvey Worthen, History of Sutton, New Hampshire: Consisting of the Historical Collections of Erastus Wadleigh, Esq. and A. H. Worthen (Concord, N.H.: Republican Press Association, 1890), 854. Also, Edward Oliver Lord, A History of the Town of New London, Merrimack County, New Hampshire, 1779–1899 (Concord, N.H.: Rumford, 1899), 370.
 - 44. Wilcoxon family Bible record.