

The life of
Fanny M. Wilson
First School Teacher of
South Evergreen School



Fanny's Parents

All documentation indicates that **Robert and Maria (Mariah) Wilson** were born in Ireland and immigrated to New York during the 1830s. It is believed that Robert was born sometime between 1805 and 1810. He married Maria McEwen who was born around 1817. Since Robert Wilson is a common name, it's impossible to determine which ship they sailed on. They settled near the town of Augusta in the County of Oneida, New York. Robert was listed as a farmer on the both the 1840 and 1850 census. His wife Maria is listed as not being able to read or write. All five of their children James, Eliza, John, Fanny and Maria were born in Oneida County. According to their son James' obituary, the family traveled to Spring Lake by steamship during the spring of 1851. Once there, Robert farmed near the Village of Spring Lake. He died July 26, 1887, and Maria on February 7, 1893. They are buried together in the Spring Lake Cemetery.



Wilson Monument in the Spring Lake Cemetery. Robert is on one side and wife Maria on another side.

Fanny and her Siblings

James A. Wilson was born on September 21, 1839, in New York. He married Sarah J. Severance on December 27, 1865, in Mill Point (an early name for Spring Lake). Sarah was born to Nelson Severance and Betsey Waters Severance in 1845 (Canada). According to the Wilson family, James suggested to his father-in-law that his sister Fanny be hired as the first teacher at the new South Evergreen School. She was currently working as a servant in Spring Lake.

James was a long-time employee of the Cutler & Savidge Lumber Yard until they closed in 1891. All other documents list his occupation as that of Lumberman. Their son James Jr. (always called Hile or Hiram) can be seen with them on the 1880 census. Sometime after 1900, James and Sarah moved to East Paris Avenue in Grand Rapids where they both died, Sarah in 1906 and James in 1918. They are buried together in Spring Lake Cemetery. Son James Jr. signed James' death certificate.

25	118	130	Wilson James	31	M	W	Works in saw mill	2 000	1 00	Michigan			
26			Sarah	25	F	W	Keeping house			New York			
27	119	131	Wilson Robert	65	M	W	Laborer	1 000	2 00	Michigan			
28			Mariah	50	F	W	Keeping house			Ireland	1	1	
29			Ross William	30	M	W	Work in Blacksmith			"	1	1	
30			Wilson Minnie	5/2	F	W				Scotland	1	1	
31	120	132	Wilson Minnie	1	F	W				Michigan			

This is the 1870 Federal Census for the Village of Spring Lake. This census was taken August 12, 1870. Family group #130 shows James and his wife Sarah living in one household. James "Works in a Saw Mill". Their property is worth \$2000 and they have \$100 in cash. Listed next are James parents Robert and Mariah. Robert is a laborer with \$1000 in real estate and \$200 in cash. James and Sarah's infant daughter Minnie is listed with her grandparents. She died that year at 5 months of age and is buried in the Spring Lake Cemetery at the feet of her grandparent's tombstone (see above).



Eliza Wilson was born during 1841 and is shown with her family on the Federal Census for 1850 (living in New York). She is next seen on the 1860 Federal Census at age 17 working in Spring Lake as a Domestic. During 1863 Eliza married John McCrie (1834-1889) an immigrant from Scotland. The next year on October 29, 1864, they had their son William McCrie (1864-1892). Daughter Edna D. McCrie was born April 20, 1871. Both children were born in Grand Haven. By the 1880 census the family had moved to Detroit. Eliza died September 25, 1886, and was buried there. John married Bertha Louise Burrows on January 5, 1889. Bertha raised his daughter Edna after John died later that year. Bertha petitioned the courts in 1890 for the \$6,500 that John had left behind. Edna died in 1925 and Bertha in 1930.

John Wilson was born during 1843 in New York. According to the 1860 Federal Census, John is living and working for the William Britton family. Also shown is daughter Ada Annette Britton, age 13. On July 8, 1869, Ada (Nettie) and John were married. John was a Locomotive Engineer who followed his job from Spring Lake to Grand Haven, Muskegon, and then to Allegan. While in Grand Haven they had son William who died young, daughter Kathrine Gertrude (1872) and John Jr. (1874). Daughter Bernice Wilson was born on October 25, 1889, in Allegan and died on July 13, 1961. John died June 1904 in Allegan County, Michigan. According to his death certificate, he was buried in Spring Lake. Wife Nettie is last seen on the 1930 Federal Census living with their daughter Bernice who never married.

Fanny M. Wilson was born 1845-1846 in Oneida County, New York. Fanny, the subject of this book, was reportedly the first teacher for the South Evergreen School.

Maria Wilson youngest child of Robert and Maria was born in New York about 1847. She was living at home with her parents on both the 1850 and 1860 census. On July 13, 1869, Maria married James Thompson. James was born in Buffalo, New York, in 1841. The marriage records indicate that he was a carpenter. Fanny's husband Orson Vanderhoef stood up for them. They are still in Spring Lake as of the 1870 census but after that no other records were found.

Misc. Documents

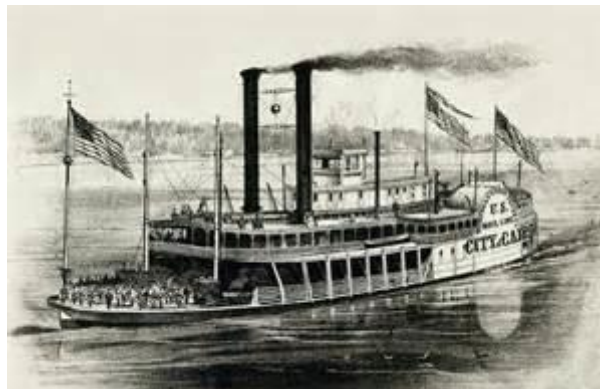
1850 Federal Census: family home town was Augusta, Oneida, New York. Shows parents Robert & Maria, siblings James, Eliza, John, Fanny & Maria. Fanny was listed as being born in about 1845 in New York, age 3. Father was listed as a farmer. Maria or Mariah as she is shown here does not read or write. Four of the five children are attending school. No explanation is given to who Elizabeth Marrow is. Information for this census was as of October 1, 1850.

79	82	Robert Wilson	40	M	Farmer	Ireland		
81		Mariah	33	F		"		1
82		James A.	10	M		New York	1	
83		Eliza	9	F		"	1	
84		John	7	M		"	1	
85		Fanny	5	F		"	1	
86		Mariah	2	F		"		
87		Elizabeth Marrow	69	F		Ireland		
88	83	William	52	M		"		

Robert Wilson	40	M	Farmer	Ireland		
Mariah	33	F		"		1
James A.	10	M		New York	1	
Eliza	9	F		"	1	
John	7	M		"	1	
Fanny	5	F		"	1	
Mariah	2	F		"		
Elizabeth Marrow	69	F		IR Ireland		

1851 migration to Michigan: according to Fanny's brother James obituary, the family arrived in Spring Lake during the spring of 1851 by steamship. The ship's name was either Algoma or Algomah.

Note: The Erie Canal opened in 1825, allowing settlers from New England and New York to reach Michigan by water through Albany and Buffalo. The canal opening and the incorporation of Chicago in 1837, increased Great Lakes steamboat traffic from Detroit through the straits of Mackinaw to Chicago.



Fanny's Marriage

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To the Hon. Secretary of State of Michigan:

Return of Marriages Recorded in the County of Ottawa

No.	DATE OF MARRIAGE.			PLACE OF MARRIAGE.	FULL NAME (AND COLOR) OF BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE.	RESIDENCE OF EACH AT TIME OF MARRIAGE.	Age of Each in Years.
	Month.	Day.	Year.				
106	June	1	1868	Oreland Brown Wright	Sylvester Van... Susanah S...	Tulmadze "	70 68
107	March	2	1868	Spring Lake	Orson Vanderhoeft Fanny Wilson	Grand Haven Spring Lake	30 22

for the year next preceding Monday, April Sixth, 1868

BIRTH-PLACE OF EACH.	OCCUPATION OF BRIDEGROOM.	NAME AND OFFICIAL STATION OF PERSON BY WHOM MARRIED.	WITNESSES TO MARRIAGE.		Date of Rec.
			Names.	Residences.	
State of N.Y. England	Turner	Benj. Lawbach, Justice of the Peace	Salin D. Hildens Rocelia Bishop	Wright "	March
Homer, Ohio Homer, N.Y.	Engineer	David Eagle, Min. of the Gospel	John Wilson Maria "	Spring Lake "	"

The above are pages 151 and 152 from Ottawa County marriages records; Fanny and Orson are the second listing. The records read: Number 107, March 2, 1868, Spring Lake, Orson Vanderhoeft from Grand Haven age 30, Fanny Wilson from Spring Lake, age 22. Orson was born in Homer, Ohio, and worked as an Engineer. Fanny was born in NY. David Eagle, Minister of the Gospel, witnesses were John & Maria Wilson from Spring Lake.

Husband Orson Vanderhoef

Orson Vanderhoef was born January 9, 1838, in Homer, Ohio, to Samuel and Roxy Vanderhoef. He was the fourth of eight children.

Orson entered the military on September 16, 1862, in Ohio. According to the September 7, 1915, issue of the Grand Haven Tribune, he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant having fought in Company B, 124th Regiment, Ohio, Volunteer, during the Civil War. The article went on to say that he was “wounded twice in the front of battle”. It is also mentioned in the “History of Ottawa County” that he fought and was wounded in the Battle of Chickamauga. Other sites give reports for the Battle of Missionary Ridge and the Battle of Pickett’s Mill. Orson mustered out of the military on June 9, 1865, in Nashville, Tennessee.

Orson moved to Grand Haven during 1866. His occupations in Grand Haven included deputy to the sheriff, Engineer at the City Flouring Mill and finally the caretaker of the government building in Grand Haven for 10 years. He was well respected in all that he did.

Orson married twice, first to Fanny Wilson and then to Emma Stock. Orson and Fanny’s daughters are: Francis Louise, Bessie Ruth and Shirley Irene. Fanny died in 1879 and Emma in 1910. Orson died on September 2, 1915, at the University Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is buried with Fanny in Grand Haven. Note that his marriage to Fanny is noted in his obituary.



Comrade Friend of Half Century Pens Paragraphs Upon War Veteran's Life

The death of Orson Vanderhoef has called forth the following paragraphs in memoriam from the pen of Judge C. E. Soule,—his friend, comrade and associate, who knew the deceased perhaps better than any other of Grand Haven's grayhaired veterans who were his fellow citizens for a half century:

Grand Haven, September 4, 1916.
Editor Tribune, City:

My friend and comrade, Orson Vanderhoef, is dead, died at Ann Arbor hospital September 2d. When a good man who has been a part of the life of our community for many years passes away it is meet and proper that something more than the mere announcement of his death should be said of him. He was my intimate friend and comrade many years, I knew him perhaps better than any other of his associates, he had long passed his three score and ten years, but we mourn his death.

Orson Vanderhoef was born on a farm in Medina county, Ohio, 78 years ago. His ancestry was the Knickerbocker Dutch of New York which has given to our country the VanRensselaers, VanBurens and Roosevelts, the same blood of the sterling Dutch people around us here, but coming to America 250 years earlier. He enlisted early in the great war and served to the end, over three years, as sergeant of Co. B, 124th Ohio Infantry. He fought in most of the great battles of the war in the west, Corinth, Chicamauga, Chattanooga, Resaca, Atlanta, Franklin, Nashville. His friends who know his strict attention to duty in civil life may well know that he was a good soldier and always in the front. He was wounded twice in the front of battle. The writer did not know him as a soldier, but saw him in the spring of '64 as he with some thousands of others of the 4th Corps marched by in the mud of East Tennessee to join Sherman's Atlanta drive.

Mr. Vanderhoef came to Grand Haven in 1866 and for nearly fifty years has been a most excellent citizen here. He was a marine engineer by trade, and died the treasurer of the Marine Engineers' Benevolent association. He was marshal of this city a number of years in the late seventies. He was a charter comrade of Weatherwax Post of the G. A. R. and to his services as much, and perhaps more than to those of any other, it is that the Post has been kept in existence with its fast diminishing numbers. The most of the old soldiers as their numbers thinned let the organization go, but Vanderhoef, Dickinson and Boet have faithfully kept it going.

and ten years and living on borrowed time, it is much to lose the friends of many years, and I mourn the death of my friend,—it leaves me lonely, lonely.

Mr. Vanderhoef was married in 1868 to Fannie M. Wilson who died many years ago. He is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Southard of Harbor Springs and Mrs. Shirley Edmonds of this city, also several grandchildren, children of a deceased daughter, also by a brother, Capt. Reuben Vanderhoef, a well known marine man of this city years ago, now of Chicago, also a sister, Mrs. McGrath of Grand Rapids, and a sister on the old homestead in Ohio.

CHAS. E. SOULE.

The funeral of the late Orson Vanderhoef was held from the home at two o'clock Sunday afternoon with the Rev. I. W. Minor officiating. In respect to the memory of the departed comrade the men of Company F accompanied the funeral cortege to Lake Forest cemetery and concluded the last rites to the veteran soldier with their impressive military salute.

Acting pallbearers were comrades of the deceased, Charles N. Dickinson, John Luikens, A. Baker, Robert Finch, Antony Boet and Charles E. Soule.

Fanny's Children

Fanny had three daughters who were only 9, 6, and 4 when she died. One year later they and their dad Orson are living with his older brother Rueben Vanderhoef and his family. Reuben's children were of teen age so he and his wife undoubtedly helped Orson care for the girls. All three girls eventually married and lived in the Petoskey, Michigan, area.

Francis Louise Vanderhoef was born July 21, 1869, in Grand Haven, Michigan. On November 25, 1891, she married **John P. Southard** (1868-1921) in Harbor Springs, Emmet County, Michigan. Their children were Louise A. (1893), Irene F. (1894), Ordella H. (1895), Donna R. (1896) and Janet (1898). John died November 22, 1921 in Harbor Springs. Francis died there in September 7, 1935. Both are buried in that area.

Bessie Ruth Vanderhoef was born February 8, 1873. Bessie married **Arthur A. Wilcox** (1868-1939) in Emmet County, Michigan. Their children are Marion G. (1894), Ruth B (1897), Charles A. (1901), Robert A. (1905) and Martha E. (1909). Bessie died shortly after having Martha on April 1, 1909. A few years later Arthur married Josephine to help raise his children. They had daughter Virginia in 1914. Arthur died in 1939 in Grand Rapids.

Shirley Irene Vanderhoef was born in Grand Haven in January 1875. She was married in Petoskey on June 24, 1896, to **Charles M. Edmunds/Edmonds**. Their children are Caroline R. (1898), Dorothy A. (1901) and Charles O. (1903). Husband Charles died during 1910. By 1930, Shirley was living with her son Charles in Chicago where she died a few years later.

Death and Burial

Fanny M. Wilson Vanderhoef died November 1, 1879, and is buried in the Lake Forest Cemetery in Grand Haven. Cemetery records lists her age at death as 31 years and 21 days. That would make her date of birth about October 11, 1845



All federal census and marriage documents lists her year of birth as 1845 or 1846

This information compiled by
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