

Jay and June Turner Letters

Following are letters exchanged between myself and Jay and June Turner, longtime residents of Grace, Idaho.

Ted Hine – April 2007

August 7, 2006

Jay and June Turner
Grace, ID 83241

Dear Mr. Turner:

By way of introduction..... I am a great-grandson of Edward John Turner and his wife Martha Catherine who settled in 1877 near what is today the town of Grace. While probably unlikely, I'm writing to see if we may be related and to ask if you may have heard anything about my great-grandparents passed on in the community via word of mouth.

Until a couple of years ago I know nothing about my great-grandparents except their names and, from my grandmother's short Seattle obituary, the fact that she was raised on a cattle ranch "near Soda Springs". In the last year I've extensively researched my Turner ancestors on the internet and a few weeks ago I even visited Grace for a couple of days. While in town I spent some time in the library where I learned that Edward John Turner was a substantial contributor to the construction of the Last Chance Canal and the canal company's first president from 1899 till 1904.

Before my visit I had identified the approximate location of the old Turner ranch (and plotted it on a topographic map) from internet homestead records. These show that E.J. Turner accumulated over a period of years at least 1,240 acres at or near the Bear River starting at a point just above today's Grace Power Plant and extending for maybe 2-1/2 to 3 miles down river. (I suppose it possible that he may have obtained more land from non homestead sources but I have no record of this.) While in the Grace library I found a verbal description of exactly where the original E.J. Turner homestead was located which was within the area I'd identified on my topographic map. I also had a good chat on the phone with Don Gilbert who confirmed the location as being just upriver from the power plant. (Don indicated that he now farms some of the land which used to be part of E.J.'s ranch and that he descends from J. Trappett, another early settler of the area and the owner of the old E.J. Turner home immediately after my great grandfather.) Based on all this information I was able to visit the location where my great grandparents settled and my grandmother was raised.

On my visit I learned that Grace is a friendly, closely knit community where a number of area families had been living for generations. Many people I spoke to seemed to think that you would be a good person to contact regarding the Turner family and the history of the area. (I unfortunately didn't have time to call you while I was in town). Howard Johnson, who was working the desk at the Black Canyon Motel when I checked in and indicated that he descends from John Radmore Turner, mentioned you as did the folks at E&D Sports. You may recall that about a year ago Jan Hall chatted with you about me. We had been communicating via e-mail as she was kind enough to try and help me find E.J. Turner gravesite (which is still a mystery).

A little bit about how my ancestors got from the Gentile Valley to me. My grandmother Rose (1875-1967) grew up on her parent's cattle ranch in the Gentile Valley starting at the age of 2 in

1877 and attended a boarding school in Logan UT for a number of years. She married her first husband, Guy B. Higgins, in 1896 in the Gentile Valley according to online records. After Mr. Higgins died of appendicitis while on a hunting trip she married my grandfather, Homer H. Hine, in 1910 and moved to Seattle where they spent the rest of their lives and where my father was raised. He attended college on the east coast where he stayed and spent his career as an aeronautical engineer. I was born in 1945 and raised in New Jersey. In the mid 1960's I came to Colorado to attend college and have been a businessman here ever since. Since I grew up 3,000 miles from my grandparents I never got to know them very well having only traveled to Seattle to visit them twice as a child before they passed away. Thus, I was exposed to almost no oral history regarding my grandmother's parents. I'm now trying to "fill in the blanks" regarding my Turner ancestors.

So, as mentioned above, I'm wondering whether you and I might be related. Based on what I've learned so far I think that this is unlikely, but possible. Here's what I know about my Gentile Valley Turner ancestors (based primarily on census records, the recently discovered obituary of my great grandmother, and two "autograph" books passed down to a cousin from my grandmother Rose):

Edward John Turner (1845-1916) was born in Rock County, Wisconsin. He was apparently the eldest child of John and Margaret Turner (born in England and Wales respectively) who had immigrated to this country probably by way of Canada and who had a total of 8 children (Edward John, b. 1845; Emely A., b. abt. 1850; Sarah, b. abt. 1852; Charles, b. abt. 1854; Frederick H., b. 1855; George, b. abt. 1858; Arabella M., b. abt. 1860; and Walter B. b. abt. 1863). John Turner may have been the son of a "Lord Butler Turner" in England.

Edward John Turner attended Milton College in Wisconsin in the mid 1860's and sometime thereafter headed to the Washington Territory where he met and married Martha Catherine Hillman ("Kitty") sometime prior to 1875 when my grandmother Rose was born there. In 1877 the Turners settled in the Gentile Valley where they raised their 5 children. The children were: Rose Belle Turner (1875-1967, my grandmother), Edward Hugh Turner (1877-1949), Lillian Turner (1883-1963), Percy George Turner (1888-?), and Frederick Hillman Turner (1894-?).

Edward John Turner's brother Frederick Hugh Turner (born in Wisconsin in 1855) also apparently settled in the Gentile Valley, at least for a while, as he is shown as marrying Harriet E. Sanderson there in Oct. of 1881. 1900 and 1910 census data shows this Frederick Turner and his family living in Idaho Falls.

I suspect that Turners currently living in and near Grace don't descend from Edward John Turner because the information I have indicates that all of his kids left the area for other parts of Idaho and Washington. Rose ended up in Seattle and Lillian in Weiser, ID (and they wouldn't have passed on the name anyway.) Sons Edward Hugh Turner and Frederick H. Turner both ended up in and near Jerome, ID (where in later years their mother Martha lived with one or the other of them). Percy stayed in or near Grace at least till the 1920 census but in later years shows everywhere from San Francisco, CA to Spokane, WA.

On the other hand, it occurs to me that the current Turners in and near Grace could be related in a different way. A common phenomenon among settlers in many parts of the country was that extended families tended to settle areas together. I wonder if Edward John Turner could have been perhaps a cousin (shared a common grandfather) of one or more of the other Turners I've learned also settled in the area. I learned in the Grace library that a John Radmore Turner (born in England) and wife Mary Ann were also early settlers of the area. And 1880 census data shows that, in addition to the my Turner family, there was another Turner family in the area, John Turner (b. about 1850 in Wales), wife Jennie (b. abt. 1852 in Wales) with daughters Jane, Polly, and Rose all born in Utah.

That's pretty much everything I have on Gentile Valley Turners. I'm wondering if you can make a connection between us based on your knowledge of your family and the area.

In addition I'd be interested in learning anything you may know about my great grandparents which you may have picked up around town over the years from family and friends. As I mentioned above I only know what I've recently learned from homestead land records (about where the ranch was located) and from the Grace library which discussed E.J. Turner's involvement with the Last Chance Canal. He was also a founder of something called the Gentile Valley Land and Livestock Company which apparently moved cattle back and forth to Gray's Lake for grazing. (My sources of information in the library include the books: "Gems of our Valley", "Gentile Valley, The First 100 Years – A Gem of a Valley", and "The Last Chance Canal Company".)

There are some mysteries I'm still trying to solve and some information which doesn't seem to quite add up. According to his wife's obituary E.J. Turner passed away in 1916 but I have been unable to determine where he died, the exact date, nor where he is buried. I could find no obituary for him in the Soda Springs Chieftain for that year and there is no record of him being buried in any cemetery in the Grace or Soda Springs area. (His wife Martha is buried in Jerome where she passed away in 1935 after living there for a number of years with two of her sons.)

My assumption is that E.J. Turner would have passed away in or near his Grace area home but I don't know this for a fact. Perhaps he sold the ranch and moved elsewhere prior to his death (but homestead records show him continuing to add land to his ranch as late as 1913 and a newspaper article indicates that he spoke at a Last Chance Canal banquet in 1914 in Grace, two years before his reported death).

Recent information has confirmed that Edward and Martha Turner were divorced in 1903 and that Edward subsequently married Marion A. Cole in 1911 in Pocatello. Soon after the divorce Martha and some of the Turner children wound up living in Weiser in the extreme western part of the state.

There is no rush but, at your convenience, I'd really appreciate knowing your thoughts on whether we may be related and any information you may have regarding my great grandparents which may have been passed on via local oral history. (Feel free to pass this or a copy of it on to anyone in the area that may be able to help.) If you are an e-mail user I can most easily be contacted via my e-mail address (below).

Thanks for any help you can provide.

Sincerely,

Edward K. Hine, Jr. ("Ted")
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Louisville, CO 80027

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Dec. 11, 2006

Dear Edward Hine,

I'm afraid we won't be able to help you with your search on Edward John Turner and his wife Martha Catherine.

I've looked in what genealogy of the Turners, ^{we have} and can not find any line that connects - but my line isn't too far back.

Dr Evan Kackley, owner of the farm, that was Edward John Turner, told Jay a story once about how the Kackleys came to own the farm. (it is too bad you didn't get to visit with Evan Kackley, before he died a few years ago), Dr Ellis Kackley's son.

Edward John Turner had a mail order bride come to marry him, and he built this big nice home for her, so when she got here, it would be their home. By the information you wrote in your letter, this was possibly Marion A. Cole he married in Pocatello 1911. She did not like it here, and after a while, she

left.

Dr Ellis Kackley and wife Ida Kackley lived in Soda Springs Idaho, back then. Edward J. Turner must have started having health problems - as the story that Dr Evan Kackley related to Jay - was Ida Kackley was very good to Edward, and helped take care of him, and did a lot for Edward, so when he died, he willed or gave his farm to Ida, (or sold it to her) she was then the owner of the farm.

Jay said Dr Evan never mentioned any more to him about Edwards family or children - but it sounds like, if Martha Catherine had left him, perhaps take their children with her, maybe that is why he ordered a mail order wife. ???

That is about all we can remember, but we will in the future, ^{if we find anything} we may learn more about our genealogy -
Respectfully
Jay + June Turner

When we moved on to the Kackley Farm - (3)

There was a little old log - 2 room building or Cabin, on the farm, they told us that was the first home that was where Turner (Edward) must have lived in with his first wife and family. It looked like the people that lived there before we did, had used it for a horse barn. People living there after we moved must of torn it down.

Maybe that is why Martha Catherine took her family and left, that was a dirt floor, cold and looked like a bad place to raise a family. (just my thoughts, no evidence)



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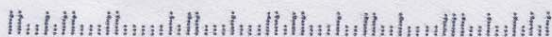


Mr Edward K. Hine

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January 9, 2007

Jay and June Turner
P.O. Box 220
Grace, Idaho 83241

Dear Jay and June:

Thank you so much for responding to my letter of last summer. I considered it a long shot that we would be related but thought it worth checking on anyway. It is interesting to learn that there are still people around Grace that have heard of my great grandfather 90 years after his death.

I wish I had had the opportunity to chat with Evan Kackley before he passed away. It sounds like he may have had other interesting information about my ancestors in addition to that which you included in your letter regarding how his family came to own the former Turner ranch. I have been unable to uncover any hard information as to when and under what circumstances Edward J. Turner sold his ranch so your story could very well have some truth to it.

The information you passed on to me referring to E. J. Turner's second wife being a "mail order bride" and that she "did not like it here" is interesting. Since my last letter to you I've learned that Edward and his first wife Martha (my great grandmother) were in fact divorced in 1903 after 30 years of marriage and 5 children (and I believe I mentioned that she moved to extreme western Idaho shortly after what I now know to be the divorce). I've obtained the county divorce case file and apparently Edward and Martha were just not getting along well. I suspect that Edward lived alone until 1911 when county marriage records show that he, at age 66, married Marion A. Cole who the marriage certificate shows was from Janesville, Wisconsin. My research shows that Marion was a 62 year old widow at the time of her marriage to Edward and that she had lived in Janesville as recently as the 1910 census where she had raised her kids with her first husband before he passed away sometime after the 1900 census.

Janesville, WI was Edward J. Turner's childhood home and family photos and other information passed down to me show that Edward and Martha (along with their kids including my grandmother) traveled to Janesville to visit Edward's family at least several during the years they lived in the Gentile Valley. I strongly suspect that Edward established a relationship with Marion in Janesville while visiting family there in the years after his divorce. In any case, the fact that his new wife in 1911 came from Wisconsin would at least partly explain the "mail order bride" part of your story as she wasn't from the area (though when I hear the term 'mail order bride' I think of a young woman of childbearing age who had never met the husband before the wedding, which was certainly not the case with Edward and Marion).

Your comment regarding the fact that Edward's second wife didn't like it there is interesting as it brings up the possibility, which I had already considered, that perhaps Edward and Marion packed up and moved back to Wisconsin sometime after the marriage (Edward after having lived in the Gentile Valley for at least 35 years). If they moved to Wisconsin and Edward passed away

there it could explain why I've been unable to uncover any record of his death in Idaho or a grave site for him. Homestead records show that Edward J. Turner obtained the last land from this source for his ranch in 1913 and local newspaper records show that he (and his wife, no doubt Marion) spoke at a celebration dinner honoring the Last Chance Canal in Grace in Feb. of 1914 (he had been the corporation's first president from 1899 till 1904). After that I have been unable to find any mention of him so perhaps he did move to Wisconsin (where I have also been unable to find any record of him in his later years).

In your letter you indicated that you moved onto the Kackley farm which you in turn indicated had been obtained by them from E.J. Turner. You didn't specifically say so but do I judge from this that you owned (own) some of the land originally homesteaded by my great grandfather? If so, I have a question. I'm grasping at straws here but just to leave no stone unturned in the search for Edward J. Turner's grave site, did you ever run into a grave stone on the property which might be his final resting place?

I believe I mentioned in my previous letter that when I visited Grace last summer I chatted on the phone with Don Gilbert who indicated that he currently farms at least part of the former E.J. Turner ranch. Don mentioned an old log barn next to the river about a half mile north of the power plant on a dirt road which he believed to be originally built by E.J. Turner. Is this the same barn/cabin you referred to in your letter? Its location is consistent with descriptions in historical books in the Grace library as to where E.J. Turner originally settled in 1877. I visited this barn/cabin (which still stands) and took lots of pictures. This would have been where my grandmother grew up.

Your story about how the Kackley's came to own the former Turner ranch is at least in part plausible based on what I know. I have not been able to uncover information as to when and under what circumstances Edward sold the ranch. It would be logical to assume that it was disposed at the time of his death but I don't know this. 1920 census records do show that, in spite of his first wife and 3 of his kids having moved elsewhere in Idaho shortly after the divorce, one of Edward's sons, Percy G. Turner (and his wife Myrtle Pond-Turner), did stay in the Grace area as a "farmer" till at least 1920 (after Edwards reported 1916 death). This suggests, but does not prove, that Percy may have owned all or part of his father's ranch for a time. (In the 1930's Percy shows up in San Francisco and in the 1940's he was living in Spokane, WA so he may not have stayed in the Grace area for long.) Perhaps the Kackley's obtained part of the ranch from Edward and Percy Turner got the rest (this of course is just speculation). And then historical records indicate that apparently John Trappett at some time purchased at least the Turner house and maybe some of the land (perhaps from Percy?). [My best current information shows that by 1913 E.J. Turner's ranch consisted of at least 1,240 acres of contiguous homestead-obtained land (and perhaps more obtained from non-government sources) along and/or very near the Bear River starting about ½ mile north of today's Grace Power Plant and extending perhaps 2-1/2 to 3 miles down river.]

A book titled "Gentile Valley, The First 100 Years" in your local library contains a picture with the caption "The Ed Turner home – purchased by John & Elizabeth Trappett" (no date given). I've enclosed a copy of the photo and am wondering if you recall ever seeing this home and, if so, if you can tell me where it was located. The construction of this building is much newer than

that of the log barn/cabin and perhaps this is the home your story suggests E.J. Turner build for his "mail-order-bride". Don Gilbert confirmed that his grandfather (John Trappett) had in fact purchased a home from E.J. Turner which is no longer standing but didn't give me a date or specific location.

Finally, I have run into multiple references indicating that E.J. Turner lived in a place called "Cove". Additionally I find references that there was once a school at "Cove" which must have been near the old Turner homestead. On the other hand, I have been unable to find any current or former town or place where people would have settled with the name Cove. I do however find on a current topographic map of the area a feature called "Cove Power Plant" a little over a mile south (down river) from today's Grace Power Plant (and thus about a mile and a half from the E.J. Turner home). Can you tell me whether there may have been a settlement of some sort in the area with this name which probably pre-dated Grace (which I believe was founded in the early 1890's, some 15 or so years after E.J. Turner settled in the area in 1877)?

Again, thanks for responding to my last letter and I look forward to a reply to this one when you have the time.

Sincerely,

Edward K. Hine, Jr. ("Ted")
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Jan 31, 2007

Dear Edward,

I don't know any thing I can tell you, that will help you find any thing about Ed Turner. It is to bad you didn't come here, when Dr Evan Kockley was alive, maybe he could have helped you.

I have searched in some books, made long distant phone calls, but of no help. I'm sorry, but I will continue to keep you in mind, and if I ever hear of any thing that may help you, I will surely send it to you. I even went through the Grace library, but only found what you did.

Good Luck in your research.

Respectfully

June Turner

PO Box 220

Grace, Idaho 83241

I phoned a: Edith (Bill) Hine ^{Soda Springs, Idaho} 208-~~54~~7-2672 and she didn't know any genealogy of the Hine, but she had been ^{married} to a Albert Turner, the son of Raymond Turner - his brother was Theodore Turner, and their relatives lived in Rupert, Idaho.