Genealogy Storytelling

Walt Howe and Hope Tillman
Charlestown Genealogy Club
March 14, 2025

Memorial Day Parade in Cohasset, Massachusetts 1914

1930’s Weekend Outing

Walt’s Mom in the rumbleseat of a 1930’s DeSoto convertible in Beverly, Massachusetts.

Digital Storytelling

What stories will get your relatives excited and/or interested?

What stories do you want to share and why?

How can photos help you tell your stories?

How can the genealogy databases help you? (Ancestry, MyHeritage, FamilySearch, WikiTree)

What memorabilia/family archives have you accumulated? (1)

Artifacts - Samplers, Trays, Commemorative memorabilia

Family Photographs and Albums

Be sure to think of any film and digital media

1940s audio recording

What memorabilia/family archives have you accumulated? (2)

Diaries, Journals, Correspondence, and Other Writings

Frances Nelson Tillman was a prolific writer which included her autobiography

Francis Raymond Sturtevant a minister - sermons.

Oliver Hunt Howe (1860-1948) - kept journal with notes about events from 1857 to 1946.

Selected Notes from OHH Journal, 1918

Mar. 31 - Broke my right wrist cranking Ford.

May 2 - With Paul, heard speech of Col. Roosevelt

May 15 - Paul enters U.S. Shipping Board

May 30 - Julian left for Camp Lee, - called into active service

July 11 - Richard enters active service with Naval Reserve, Camp Hingham

July 18 - Bastille Day. I flew French flag

Sept, 1 - Sunday auto travel suspended until Oct. 20.

Oct. 11 - Epidemic of influenza severe

Oct, 27 - Churches, schools closed for 4 weeks for influenza are now open again.

Four Sons of Benjamin Howe of Townshend, Vermont

Leland, Oscar, Benjamin, and Alphonso were born in Townshend between 1821 and 1832.

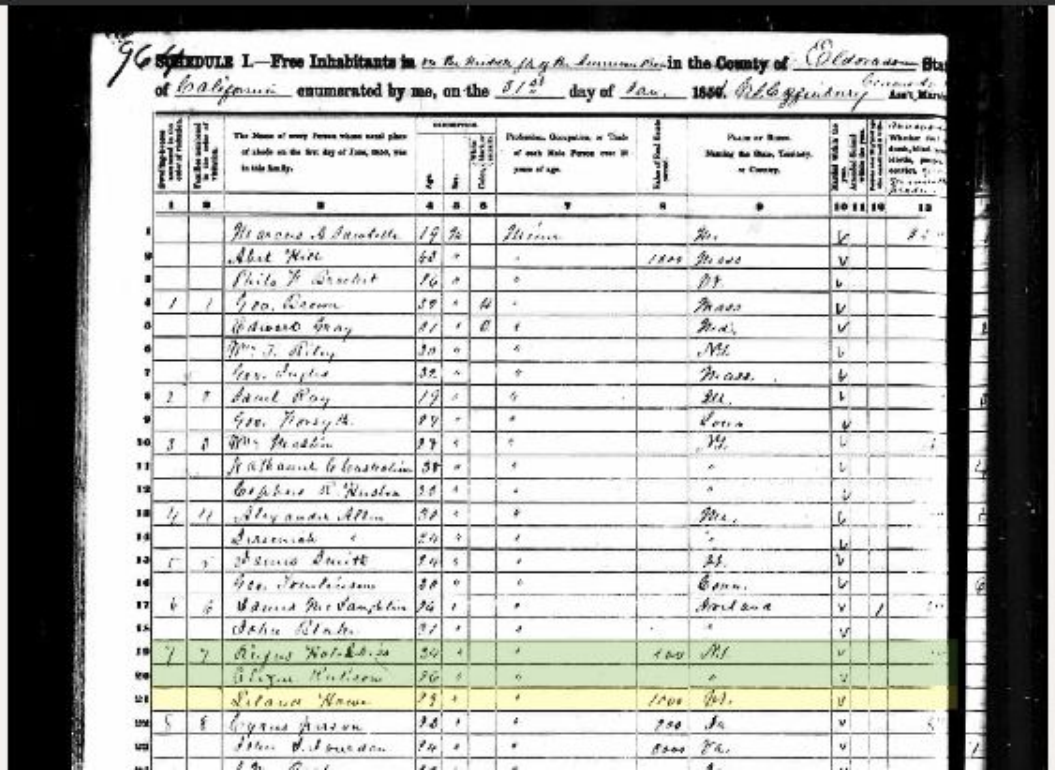
Howe Genealogies: “Leland, b. about 1821; m. and lived in Townshend in 1870; later he went to California.”

1850 census shows Leland in Middlefork of the American River, El Dorado, California as a miner.

Leland Howe 1850 Census entry

1850 United States Federal Census for Leland Howe

California › El Dorado › Middle Fork of The American River

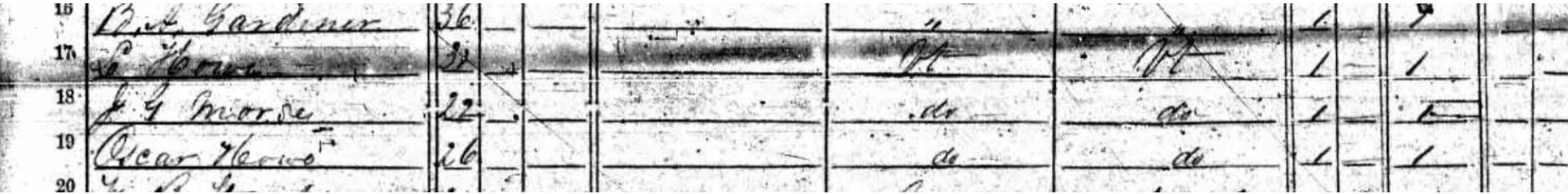


96 SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in ... in the County of El Dorado State of California enumerated by me, on the 31st day of Jan. 1850. ... Assist. Marshal

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1			Marcena B Sandelle	19	F	Farmer		Me	V			
2			Abel Hill	48	M	"	1800	Mass	V			
3			Philo P Sandell	16	M	"		Pa	V			
4	1	1	Geo. Bacon	39	M	"		Mass	V			
5			Edward Gray	21	M	Farmer		Ind	V			
6			Mrs J. Riley	30	F	"		Me	V			
7			Geo. Sayles	32	M	"		Mass	V			
8	2	2	Saml Ray	19	M	"		Me	V			
9			Geo. Forsyth	29	M	"		Iowa	V			
10	3	3	Mrs Franklin	29	F	"		Me	V			
11			Nathaniel Chesholm	38	M	"		"	V			
12			Stephen W Hinkley	28	M	"		"	V			
13	4	4	Alexander Allen	20	M	"		Me	V			
14			Jeremiah "	24	M	"		"	V			
15	5	5	Daniel Truett	19	M	"		Pa	V			
16			Geo. Pendleton	28	M	"		Conn	V			
17	6	6	Adams McLaughlin	26	M	"		Indiana	V		1	
18			John Black	27	M	"		"	V			
19	7	7	Reyns Northrop	24	M	"	1800	NY	V			
20			Elijah Hudson	26	M	"		"	V			
21			Leland Howe	29	M	"	1800	Vt	V			
22	8	8	Cyrus Parker	28	M	"	1800	Pa	V			
23			John A Smeadon	24	M	"	1800	Pa	V			

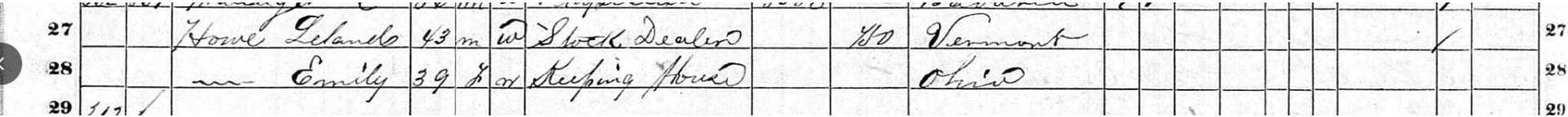
1852 California State Census

California State Library; Sacramento, California; 1852 California State Census; Roll #: 3; Repository Collection #: C144:3; Page: 241; Line: 17 (Leland) Line 19 (Oscar)



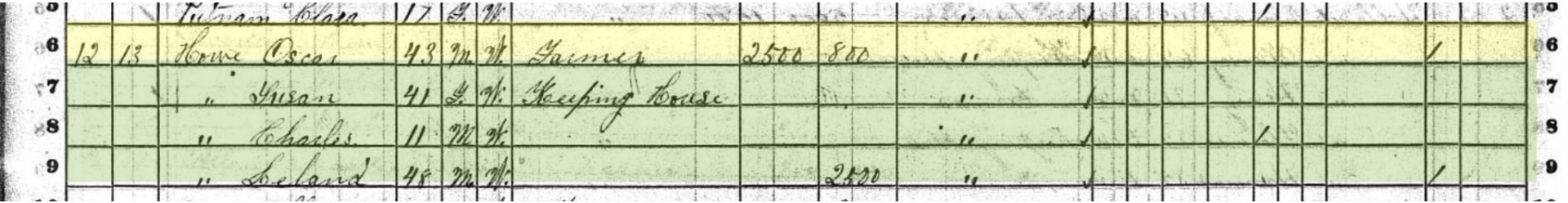
1870 Census - Leland Howe

Leland appears in the 1870 Sacramento census with a wife Emily, born in Ohio about 1829.[6] .He also appears back in Townshend, Vermont for the 1870 census in his brother Oscar Howe's household, apparently just visiting not long after his father’s death.



27			Howe Leland	43	m	w	Stock Dealer		Vt	Vermont
28			" Emily	39	f	w	Keeping House			Ohio
29										

Townshend, Vermont 1870 Census - 29 June 1870



		Tillam Clara	17	S	W					
6	12	13	Howe Oscar	43	M	W	Farmer	2500	800	"
7			" Susan	41	F	W	Keeping House			"
8			" Charles	11	M	W				"
9			" Leland	48	M	W			2500	"

My WikiTree entry for Leland Howe

Leland Howe

Questions to consider as you look at what stories to share

How did your ancestors travel?

How did they communicate?

What did they do for entertainment?

What kind of clothing did they wear?

What did they eat and drink?

Did they have running water, electricity, telephone, radio, etc.?

Pretend I’m one of your descendants doing a genealogy of you in 2025

What would you want them to capture to get to know you beyond your birth, marriage, death. Consider these:

- Education
- Occupation
- Military Service
- Interests and Passions
- Travel and Migration

What major historical events have happened during your life?

Major historical events have happened during your life?

[Wikipedia Timelines]

Major events to consider

- Economy:
- Wars:
- Science and Technology
- Transportation
- Health

Pew Study of 2016

Generations experience recent history through the lens of their lifetimes

Silent Generation - coming of age 1928-1945

Boomers - coming of age 1946-1964

Gen X - coming of age 1965-1980

Millennials - coming of age 1981-1996

Gen Z - coming of age 1997-2013

Gen Alpha - coming of age 2014-2024 (Gen Beta - of age 2025 -)

	Silent Generation	
1	Sept. 11	59%
2	WWII	44
3	JFK assassination	41
4	Vietnam War	37
5	Moon landing	29
6	Obama election	28
7	The tech revolution	27
8	Civil rights movement	18
9	Korean War	18
10	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	14

	Baby Boomers	
1	Sept. 11	70 %
2	JFK assassination	45
3	Vietnam War	41
4	Obama election	38
5	Moon landing	35
6	The tech revolution	26
7	Civil rights movement	18
8	Fall of Berlin Wall/end of Cold War	16
9	MLK assassination	15
10	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	11

	Generation X	
1	Sept. 11	79%
2	Obama election	40
3	Fall of Berlin Wall/end of Cold War	21
4	The tech revolution	20
5	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	18
6	Gulf War	15
7	Challenger disaster	14
8	Gay marriage	10
9	Hurricane Katrina	10
10	Columbine shooting	9
11	Orlando shooting	9
12	Oklahoma City bombing	9

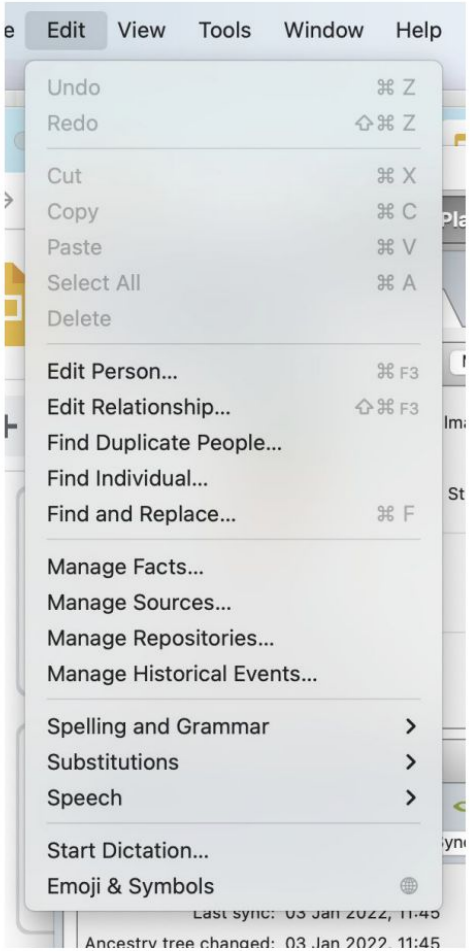
	Millennials	
1	Sept. 11	86%
2	Obama election	47
3	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	24
4	Gay marriage	19
5	The tech revolution	18
6	Orlando shooting	17
7	Hurricane Katrina	11
8	Columbine shooting	10
9	Bin Laden	10
10	Sandy Hook	7
11	Boston Marathon bombing	7
12	Great Recession	7

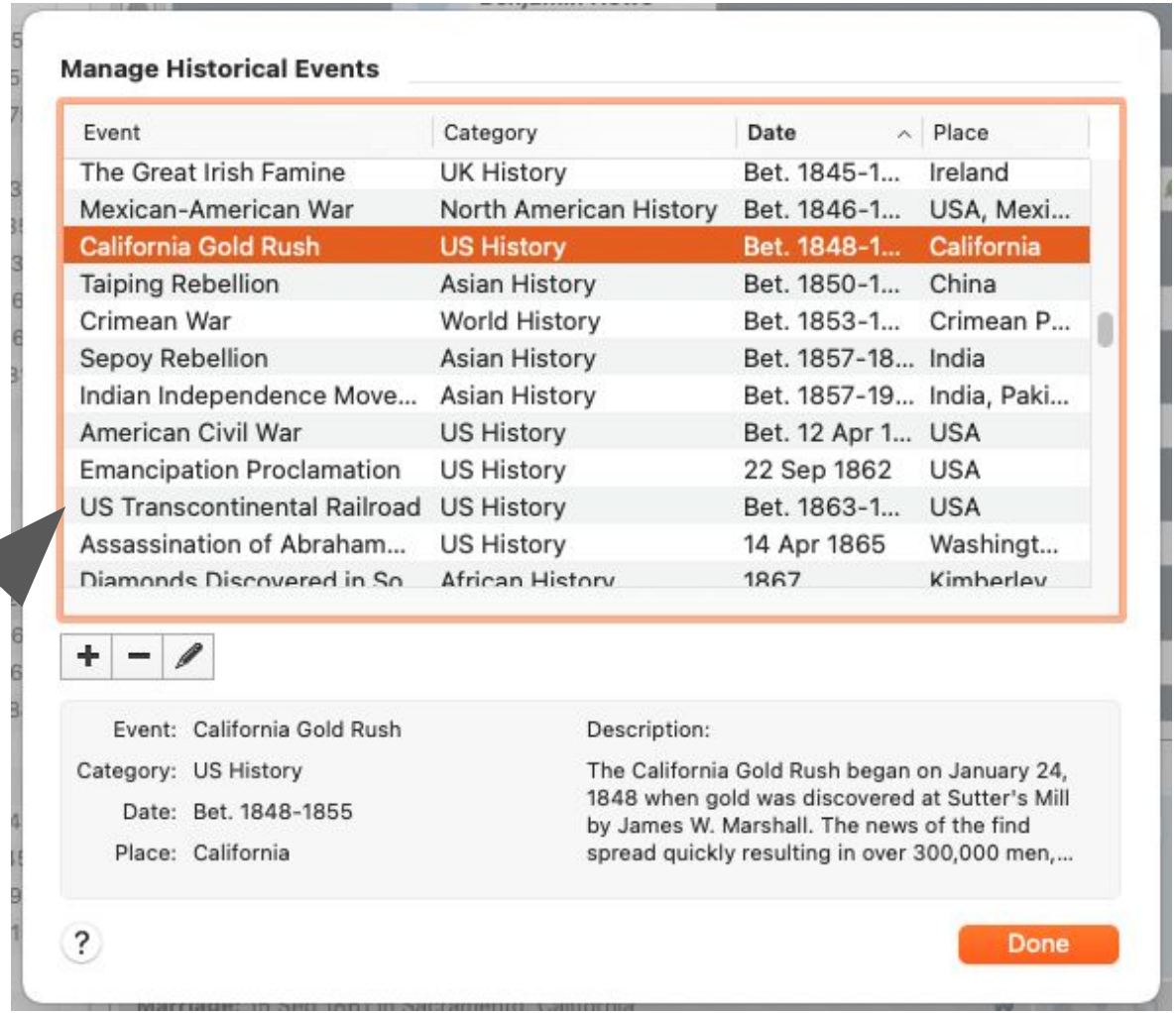
How can we use Ancestry and other databases to embellish our stories

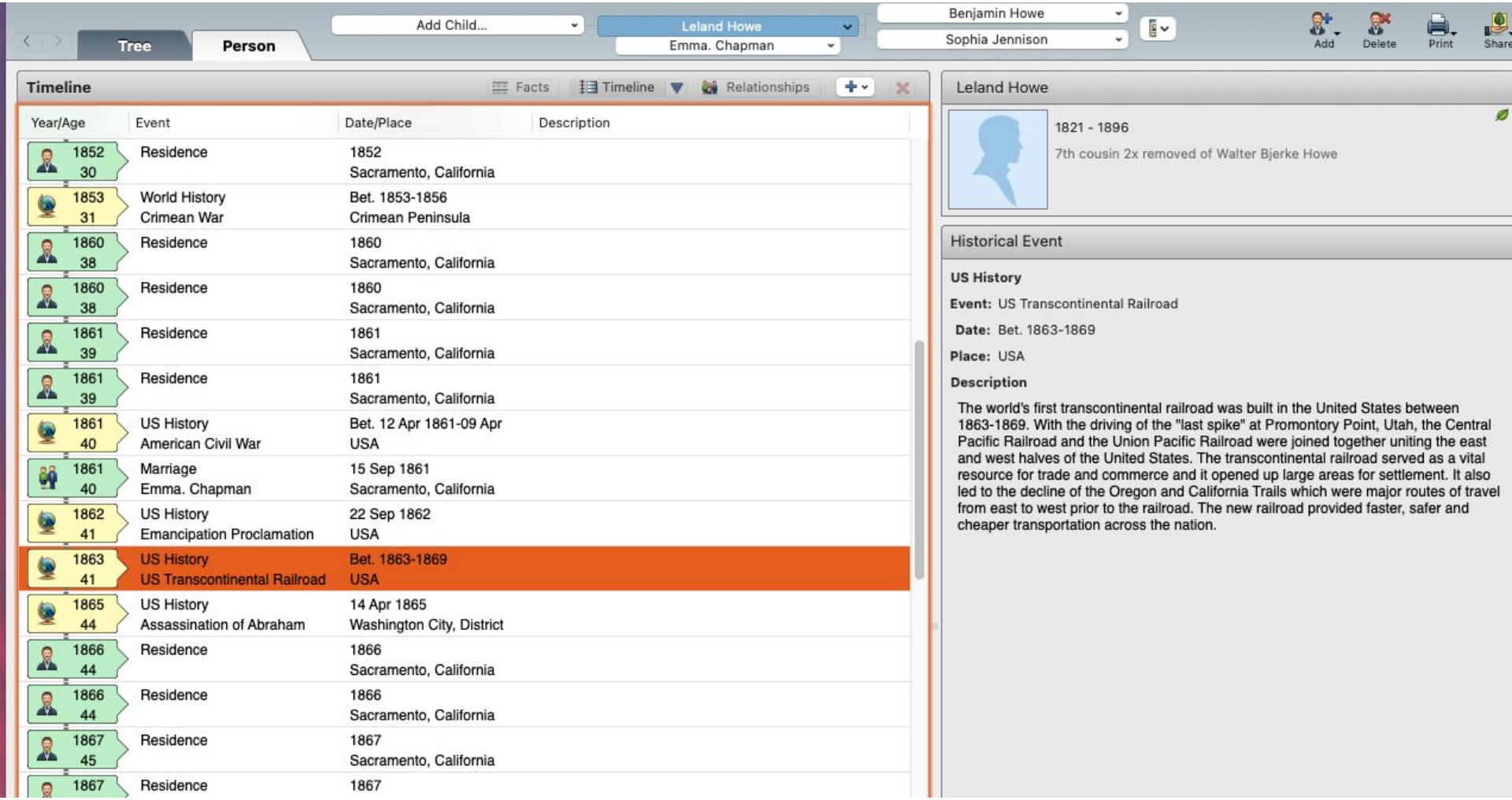
- Timeline
- Censuses
- Military service records - Draft, Enlistment, Service, Pensions, Casualties, Disciplines, Awards
  - Where did he/she serve?
- Newspapers - especially local to your ancestor
  - What was happening during major historic event time periods?
- Historical Maps

Using Chronological Timelines

Family Tree Maker - turn on timeline by selecting ‘Edit > Manage Historical Events’ for one person. You can sort by date or place by clicking on the appropriate column head.


Edit
View
Tools
Window
Help
Undo ⌘ Z
Redo ⇧⌘ Z
Cut ⌘ X
Copy ⌘ C
Paste ⌘ V
Select All ⌘ A
Delete
Edit Person... ⌘ F3
Edit Relationship... ⇧⌘ F3
Find Duplicate People...
Find Individual...
Find and Replace... ⌘ F
Manage Facts...
Manage Sources...
Manage Repositories...
Manage Historical Events...
Spelling and Grammar
Substitutions
Speech
Start Dictation...
Emoji & Symbols
Last sync: 03 Jan 2022, 11:45
Ancestry tree changed: 03 Jan 2022, 11:45


Manage Historical Events
Event
Category
Date
Place
The Great Irish Famine
UK History
Bet. 1845-1...
Ireland
Mexican-American War
North American History
Bet. 1846-1...
USA, Mexi...
California Gold Rush
US History
Bet. 1848-1...
California
Taiping Rebellion
Asian History
Bet. 1850-1...
China
Crimean War
World History
Bet. 1853-1...
Crimean P...
Sepoy Rebellion
Asian History
Bet. 1857-18...
India
Indian Independence Move...
Asian History
Bet. 1857-19...
India, Paki...
American Civil War
US History
Bet. 12 Apr 1...
USA
Emancipation Proclamation
US History
22 Sep 1862
USA
US Transcontinental Railroad
US History
Bet. 1863-1...
USA
Assassination of Abraham...
US History
14 Apr 1865
Washingt...
Diamonds Discovered in So
African History
1867
Kimberley
Event: California Gold Rush
Category: US History
Date: Bet. 1848-1855
Place: California
Description:
The California Gold Rush began on January 24, 1848 when gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill by James W. Marshall. The news of the find spread quickly resulting in over 300,000 men,...
Done


Tree
Person
Add Child...
Leland Howe
Emma. Chapman
Benjamin Howe
Sophia Jennison
Add
Delete
Print
Share
Timeline
Facts
Timeline
Relationships
Year/Age
Event
Date/Place
Description
1852 30
Residence
1852
Sacramento, California
1853 31
World History
Crimean War
Bet. 1853-1856
Crimean Peninsula
1860 38
Residence
1860
Sacramento, California
1860 38
Residence
1860
Sacramento, California
1861 39
Residence
1861
Sacramento, California
1861 39
Residence
1861
Sacramento, California
1861 40
US History
American Civil War
Bet. 12 Apr 1861-09 Apr
USA
1861 40
Marriage
Emma. Chapman
15 Sep 1861
Sacramento, California
1862 41
US History
Emancipation Proclamation
22 Sep 1862
USA
1863 41
US History
US Transcontinental Railroad
Bet. 1863-1869
USA
1865 44
US History
Assassination of Abraham
14 Apr 1865
Washington City, District
1866 44
Residence
1866
Sacramento, California
1866 44
Residence
1866
Sacramento, California
1867 45
Residence
1867
Sacramento, California
1867
Residence
1867
Leland Howe
1821 - 1896
7th cousin 2x removed of Walter Bjerke Howe
Historical Event
US History
Event: US Transcontinental Railroad
Date: Bet. 1863-1869
Place: USA
Description
The world's first transcontinental railroad was built in the United States between 1863-1869. With the driving of the "last spike" at Promontory Point, Utah, the Central Pacific Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad were joined together uniting the east and west halves of the United States. The transcontinental railroad served as a vital resource for trade and commerce and it opened up large areas for settlement. It also led to the decline of the Oregon and California Trails which were major routes of travel from east to west prior to the railroad. The new railroad provided faster, safer and cheaper transportation across the nation.

Using Timelines on FamilySearch Record

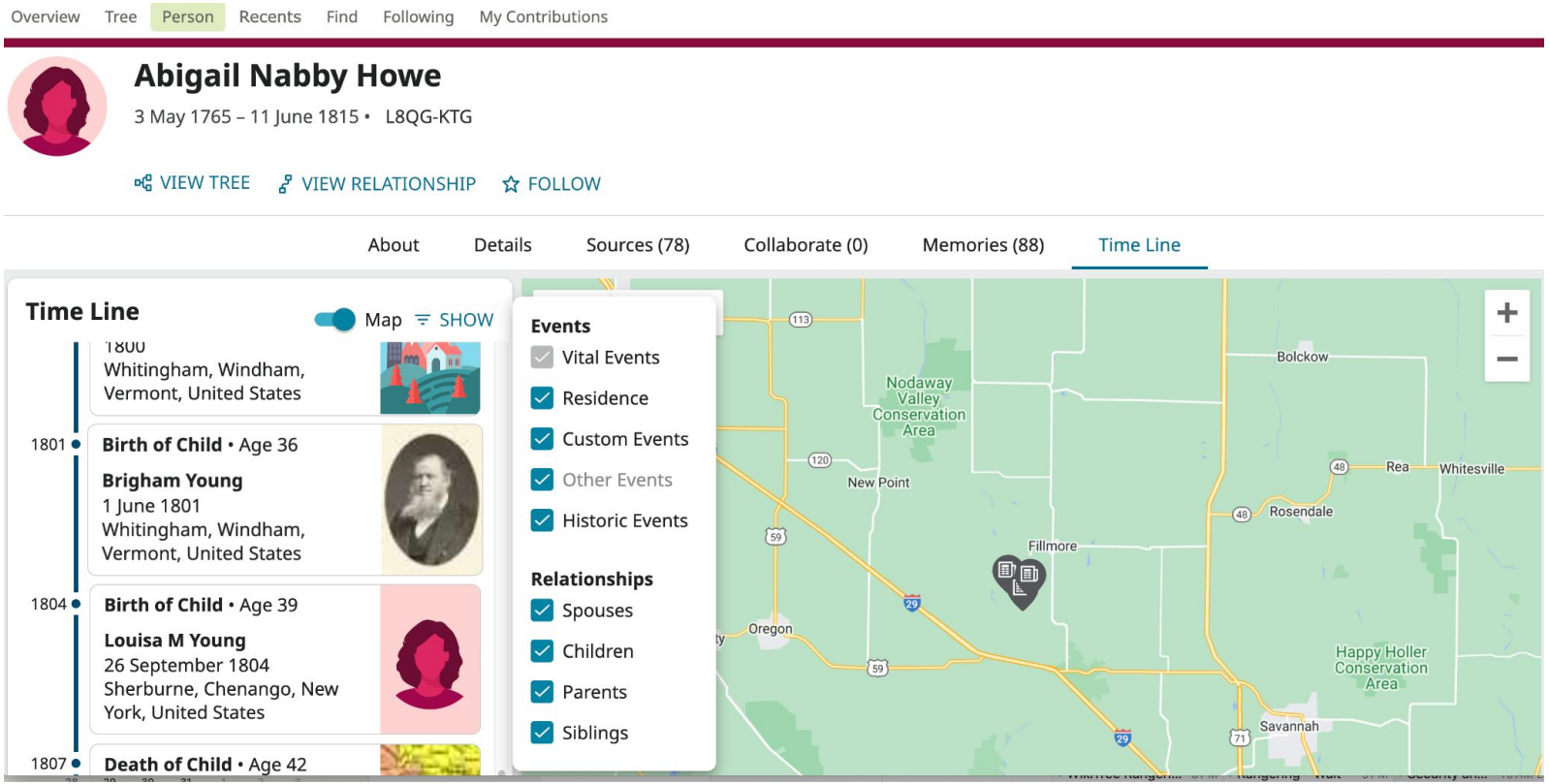
To access an ancestor’s Timeline, log into your FamilySearch account and select the person on your tree.

Navigate to their person page and click on the “Timeline” option right below their name.

Make sure the “Map” button is toggled on, then click “Show” and select the events you would like to view on your timeline.

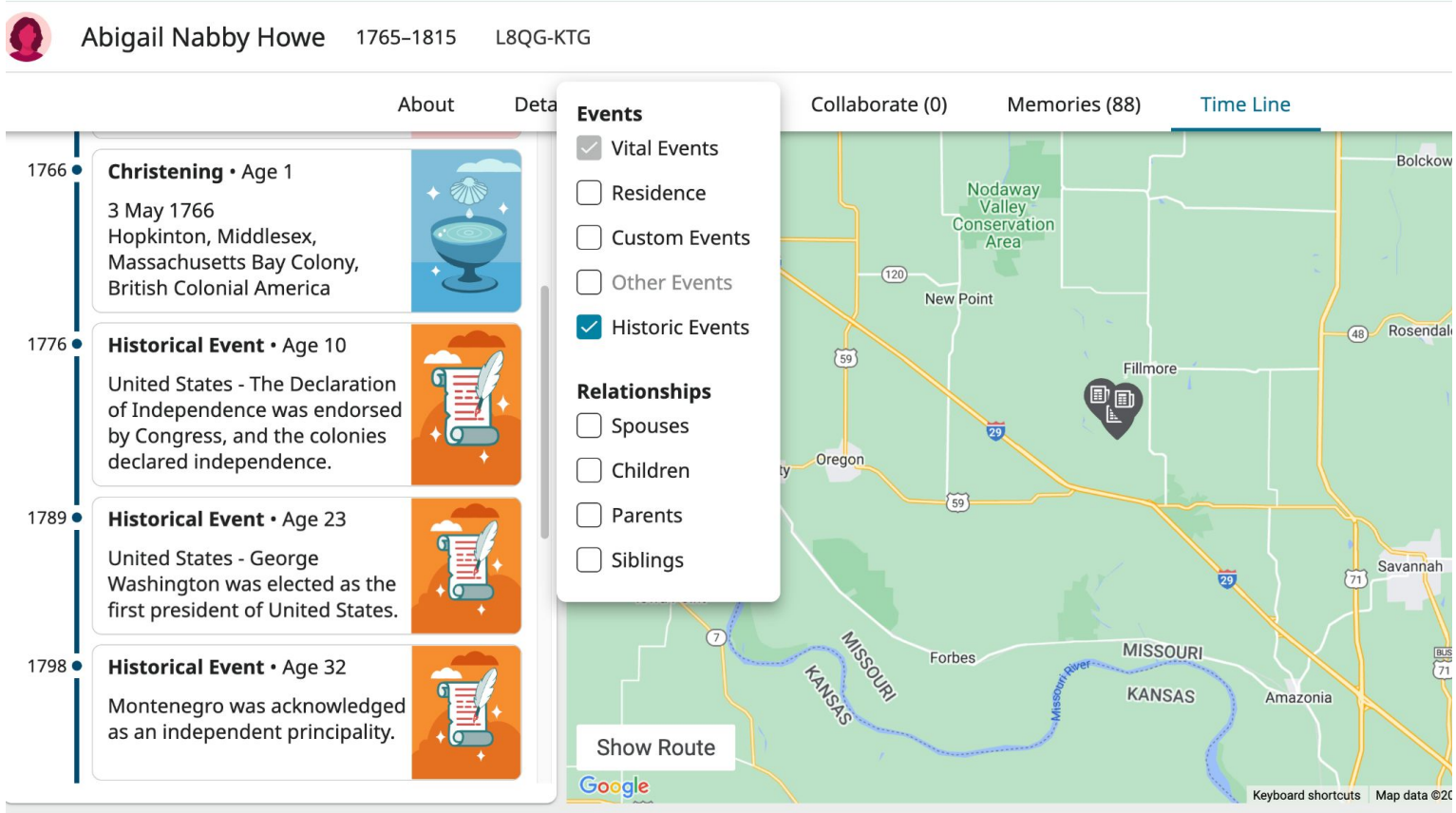
Using Timelines on FamilySearch Record

[Abigail Nabby Howe]



Using Timelines on FamilySearch Record

[Abigail Nabby Howe]



Using Chronological Timelines in WikiTree

WikiTree - you can manually add timeline elements to your own ancestor’s profile. See example: https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Haywood-44

Food Timeline

https://www.foodtimeline.org

See this great site on food and drink history recommended by Bart Cobert

Originally developed by librarian Lynne Olver, it is now maintained by Virginia Tech Special Collections and University Archives

Census Information

Look at this index of questions from Censuses:
https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/index_of_questions/

Occupations - 1850-2000

Plumbing facilities and kitchen facilities originated with the 1940 Census, while telephone service originated with the 1960 Census. They were transferred to the American Community Survey in 2005 when it replaced the decennial census long form. The telephone service question was added to the ACS in 2008. The telephone question was then modified in 2019. Research about this modification and copies of previous questionnaires are available on the ACS website.

For instance, in 1930 and 1940 the census asked if you owned a radio.

American Community Survey

Links from this Session

Pew Research Center, “Modern Historic Events by Generation,” December 14, 2016, https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2016/12/15/americans-name-the-10-most-significant-historic-events-of-their-lifetimes/

“Wikipedia Timelines”, Wikipedia, 18 January 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timelines_of_modern_history

Samuel Murch Haywood, WikiTree, last modified 21 December 2022, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Haywood-44

Leland Howe, WikiTree, last modified 23 January 2024, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Howe-9482

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Index of Questions. 14 December 2023. 202https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/index_of_questions/

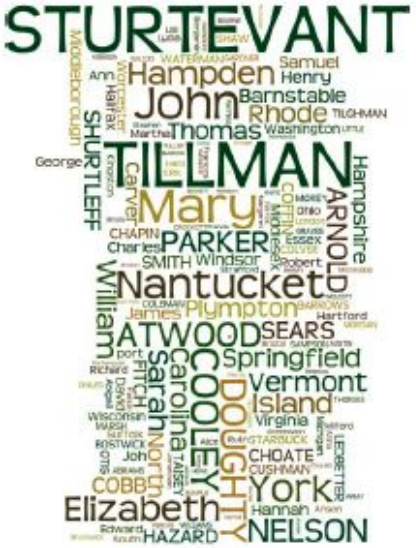
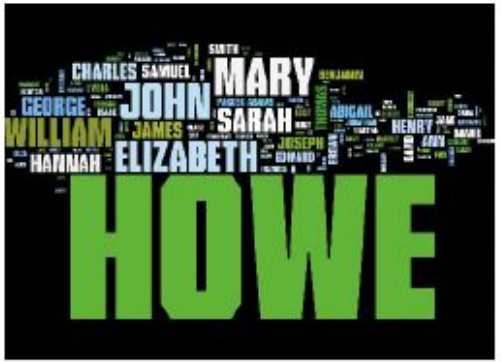
U.S. Bureau of the Census. American Community Survey, August 16, 2023 https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data.html

Food Timeline. https://foodtimeline.org, 4 February 2022.

Virginia Tech Special Collections and University Archives, n.d., https://spec.lib.vt.edu/#gsc

Q&A

Hope N. Tillman
https://tillmangenealogy.org
https://hopetillman.com
hope@hopetillman.com

Walt Howe
https://howegenealogy.org
https://walthowe.com
walt@walthowe.com

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https://ccigenclub.com