Daniel Baker & Mary McCreight

Daniel Baker McCreight (02 Mar 1833 - 19 Jun 1868) & Mary Catherine Truesdale (22 Nov 1840 - 26 Jan 1932)



Mary's gravestone in Sion Cemetery; Winnsboro, SC

The mystery started in trying to identify who the Nancy McCreight found in the Sion Presbyterian Cemetery was. Some records assert that her maiden name was "Austin." I believe this is due to her 1880 census enumeration, where her mother is listed as Kate Austin, age 50.¹ There is also a Julia Austin (age 27, listed as step-sister).²

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1880 Census: Winnsboro (Dist. 66), Fairfield, SC; page 11

It's also quite a bit of confusion in figuring out the birth location of Mary's father (which would help us nail down her maiden name) based on the varying identifications of the birth location given for her father in successive census enumerations:

- In 1880 (photo above), it's New York
- In 1900: Massachusetts
- In 1910: Maryland
- In 1920: Ireland
- In 1930: the 90 year old widow's father is listed as being born in South Carolina!³

More convincing evidence of Mary's true maiden name comes from marriage records showing that DB McCreight marrying Nancy Truesdell on 30 Dec 1858.⁴ Finally—and even more compelling—is <u>Mary Catherine's obituary</u> sent to me by Nancy Hoy:

Mrs. Mary Catherine McCreight, well known and much beloved Winnsboro woman, passed away at 3 o'clock Tuesday morning at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. James M. smith, following an illness

¹ Kate's listed age of 50—equating to an 1830 birth year—is almost certainly an error, since Kate would have been about 10 years old when she gave birth to Mary in 1840. The 1860 census listing on the next page shows Catherine at age 45, equating to a much more appropriate and believable birth year of circa 1815.

² Julia Austin's age matches much more closely with the 1860 census data: ages 8 and 27. And is compelling evidence that the Catherine Austin (age 45) in the 1860 census is the same Catherine "Kate" Austin in the 1880 census.

³ I have copies of all these census enumerations. Please email if you'd like a copy.

⁴ From a searchable database on Ancestry.com entitled "South Carolina Marriages, 1641-1965." This database gives the source as: "South Carolina Magazine of Ancestral Research, Vol 10, # 1-2,4"

of some time. Pneumonia was the immediate cause of her death. Mrs. McCreight was Winnsboro's oldest resident. She was in her 92nd year, her last birthday being November 22.

She was born in Charleston, and was the daughter of David Truesdale and Catherine G. Truesdale. She died in the old McCreight home, which is over 150 years old, and was the first frame house built in Winnsboro.

Mrs. McCreight came to Winnsboro when she was 14 years old to attend the well known school for girls conducted by Mrs. Catherine Ladd, a fashionable school for young women, at that time.

At an early age she was married to Daniel Baker McCreight, highly esteemed resident of Winnsboro. For a number of years, Mr. McCreight was the owner and editor of the News and Herald, the only paper published in Fairfield. He also served with distinction during the Confederate war.

Mrs. McCreight is survived by one daughter, Mrs. James M. Smith of Winnsboro; four grandchildren, Mrs. Seaman Sinkler Richardson of Winnsboro, Mrs. E. B. Ginn of Varnville, Miss Gene Smith and James I Smith of Charlotte, and five great-grandchildren.

In 1860, we find the census listing for Daniel Baker McCreight and his wife, Mary, and his daughter, Rachel.⁵

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1860 Census, Williamsburg District [County], SC.; page 12 (Near the Kingstree Post office)



Nearby the gravestones of Daniel and Mary lies a simple stone, which apparently is their daughter, Rachel.

Next we have the 1860 listing for Mary's mother (and the data certainly do match quite nicely):

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1860 Census: Charleston (3rd Ward), Charleston, SC; page 5/247

⁵ Info and census image from email from Nancy Hoy. Since Rachel does not appear in the 1870 census (where Catherine is living with her father in law, James McCreight), we must assume that she died between June of 1860 and 1870. Also, given that her age is listed as 6/12, in the 1860 enumeration (which was taken in June) we can assume that Rachel was born circa January 1860.

An interesting note for this 1860 enumeration: there is a checkmark in Catherine's "married within the year column." *That's the one just to the right of her birth location, Ireland.* That would mean that the Austin children listed are not hers, but from a prior marriage of E. Austin.

It would have been great to find one or more Truesdales in the above 1860 census to give more evidence of an earlier marriage on the part of Mary Catherine's mother, Catherine or "Kate." Again, based on Mary Catherine's obituary, we know her parents were David & Catherine G. Truesdale⁶. Interestingly, I found the following possible listings for a David (or D.) Truesdale in the Christ Church Parish of Charleston, SC in the 1840 and 1850 censuses:

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1840 Census: Christ Church Parish, Charleston, SC; page 633



1850 Census: Christ Church Parish, Charleston, SC; page 4

Although divorces were fairly rare back in those days, this might be Mary Catherine's father. However, as Nancy Hoy says, perhaps it's Mary Catherine's *stepfather* who was born in New York, vice her father.

By 1870, two years after Daniel Baker McCreight's death, we find Mary Catherine (age 26) living with her father-in-law, James McCreight. Along with her, we find her children: Catherine, age 8; and Daniel E, age 5.

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1870 Census, Winnsboro, Fairfield, SC; pages 16-17

I'll try posting this on a Truesdale board at some point to see if someone has any helpful input.

John Cathcart June 23, 2008

⁶ Her maiden name is also given as "Truesdale" in an unattributed online source on Ancestry.com's One World Tree.