

Louis Matt (Matte) part 1

In the Pacific Northwest in 1849

By Chalk Curchane

I have extensive research on the Matt's of the Flathead but don't know who Louis Matt's parents are. After a full search of Quebec church records he does not show up. I said he was born in Albany, New York. There is a Matt (Matte) family of Quebec that had U.S. connections in 1851. He does not show up in Hudson's Bay Company records even though he was supposed to worked for them.

Three and possibly four Mattes (Matt now) came out West in the around 1835 to 1849, they were:

(Our) Louis Matt

Joseph Matte (Matt) son of Jeremie Matt and Marie Louise Beaudin. Came out to the 1849 Gold Rush and eventually settled in Oregon. He has descendants there.

Pierre (Peter) Matt (Matte) son of Theodore Matte and Julia Fortier. Don't know his descendants or if he indeed came west. He is usually confused with Joseph Matt's son, Peter G. Matt.

Cyprian Matt (Matte) son of Cyprian Matte and Margretta Durosece, he married Kills in the Brush , daughter of Kills in the Middle and Wolf Necklace, and settled in Montana. Slippery Ann Bottom in Montana is named after him....it is a corruption of his name Cyprian.

It has been said by many that these three or four Mattes were brothers or half-brothers. But so far it does not seem to be the case in three of them. Louis on the other hand could be to any of them as we do not know his father's name or his mother's name. As all of the Matte (Mat, Matt, or Mate) families descend from one Canadian Matte, Nicolas Matte, so they are surely cousins. Nicolas' father was Charles Matte and his mother was Barbe Harache both of St. Saen, Rouen, Normandy, France.

This newspaper story in The New North-West (Deer Lodge, MT.), Oct. 22, 1869, p 2, makes a good introduction to Louis Matt, if not a bit fanciful:

"Clover" Leaves from a Promissory Note Book. Skirmishing For Position.

A year ago we looked on the pampered Lion of the Lord, the oily, unctious; polygamous Brigham, whose sensuous lips, a recend lady writer has asserted "fine cut." That's too much

"English twist," even with Brigham to-back-her. Brigham has a soft, white hand; wears his shirts buttoned, and his boots polished; combs his hair (or Amelia does it for him) and lives freely. These are all "points" for a lady's man, and B.Y. has had at one time and another, some forty pullets, that mounted the matrimonial roost at his behest. But down on the 'Burnt Fork of the Bitter Root," in Stevensville, Missoula county, Montana, we run across

Louis Matt - Matt - Rimonialist Extraordinary -- the husband of Fifty-Three Wives, and the father of Forty-Three Children. Like Brigham, he is heavy flanked, heavy necked, and stands square on his pastern joints. Like Brigham and the fat-faced curate in Tennyson's "Robert Morris," he believes "God made the woman for the man and for the good and increase of the world." Unlike Brigham, he is poor, blacksmithing not having proved as lucrative as co-operative religion. Then he is rough. His hands are hard with toil; his face smutted with smoke, his flannel shirt collar is flung open, a la Byron, -- although he don't know that's the name of the style -- and the gritty, grizzly beard, six days in the week, waits for the razor in vain. Louis Matt is 64 years old; stands 5 feet 10 1/2; weighs 180 pounds; works day in and day out at the forge and anvil; has a good-natured, neighborly look as his "Brother Brigham," and a deal more frankness and humor. He is of French extraction; was born in Albany, New York; came West in the American Fur Company's service in 1835, and has been in and about Fort Owen since '50. He is doing better than Brigham now, only having had two wives for some time. His present wife, "Charlotte," has been with him twenty years, and borne him eleven children, four of whom are big enough and probably mean enough to punch our editorial head for writing this. Like Brigham, Louis is one of the "has been's." He says there is none of Lord Palmerston's blood in him, and we can fill up his Hymenial certificate at [not "Forty-four, forty or fight," but] Fifty-three, Forty-Three, and out. P. S. -- we forgot to state that his wives were Indian women, which may mollify the Lion's wounded vanity...." (from Bob Bigart) We do not know who the writer is referring to when he calls Louis Matt's wife "Charlotte," we know of no Charlotte unless he means Theresa? And we did never know of more than one marriage for Louis. The writer has his wires crossed or it using poetic justice. On the other hand a letter to David Courchane from Louise Matt Baylor Pierre, January 15, 1982 (St. Ignatius, Montana) states: "Dear Chalky

I got your letter, and I am sorry, I don't know too much of my family tree, and I have corrected some, that I did know.

Our bunch of Matts came from the north, this Louie Matt, and two brothers come from Maine, on the St. Lawrence river, they were headed for the gold rush in California, they stopped, and were in the fur business, buying from the Indians, and others, and in that time Louie married a Blackfoot Indian, Charlotte Monroe, so he stayed there, while his brothers went on their journey. Louie & Charlotte had six children 4 boys & 2 girls. I don't know the ages of any of them, but were all born in Browning, but married into the Flathead & Kootenai tribes. This Louie Matt is my great-grandfather, the grandfather of my father. The names of the offspring, I don't know the ages or where born. So another dilemma!

We know by the above article that Louis Matt was born sometime in 1804/1806 and by at least one account in Albany, New York, most genealogists place his birth in Quebec (that part that became part of Maine). He was of French-Irish extraction. A catholic church called St. Mary's was established in the later 1790s at Albany, I called them and the woman on the other end said that St. Mary's early records up to about the 1830's was burned in a fire! She also checked the registers and no Matt or Matte are evident in that parish. He must be like the Etruscan goddess Minerva and just sprouted out of the head of his father!

At the age of 34 he married to a young full-blood Piegan (Blackfeet) woman named Therese at Fort Benton, Montana. This would be between the years 1838-1840 but no marriage record has surfaced. Some accounts refer to his wife as Charlotte Monroe.

“Therese had lived her life mostly among her people, and that's where she met Louie. They remained at Fort Benton for ten years and during this time, they had four children.” From The Char-Koosta, 15 Oct. 1982 - In the Days of Our Grandfathers, "History of Louie and Therese Matt - by E.M. Felsman. Therese was known usually as Theresa Killed-in-the-Lodge and was born between 1826 and 1835 and was baptized in 1847 by Father Nicolas Point, S.J. when he was a guest at Fort Lewis, Montana. She was also known as Theresa Kills-On-Top, and Therese-Kills-In-The-Water and Therese Sepsenike. Her parents were Lone Speech and Sarvis Berry.

U.S. Census of 1860 Washington Territory, Spokane County, Colville Valley, page 2, dwelling no. 9 and Family no. 9:
August 9, 1860

Louis Matt, age 50, male, White, farmer, personal property value is \$1,000.00, birthplace Canada, can't read or write

Teresee (illegible)	age 40, female, Indian
Mary Matt,	age 14, female
Joseph Matt,	age 13, male
Baptiste Matt,	age 11, male
Alexander Matt,	age 9, male
Esther Matt,	age 7, female
Peter Matt,	age 3, male"

The Spokane & Stevens County Commissioner Journals (Minutes) Book A and Book B 1860 to 1893 transcribed by Sue Richart (2012) are several references to Louis Matt:

The following roads were located by the commissioners as public road.

To wit -

County Road - Commencing at the ferry on the Columbia River opposite the mouth of the Kettle River running from thence to Peter Gurriss at the foot of the hill in as near a straight line as practicable thence following the present wagon road as near as convenient to Pinkney City from thence following the government road to the bridge at the old? (Pearce) leaving the present

wagon road at or near the bridge and following an old Indian trail bearing to the right and intersecting the old road running up the valley near Geo Maes(?)

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Continued

Claims running up the old road as near as practicable to where the old pack trail leaves the wagon road to cross Mill River turning to the right following said pack trail or as near to it as convenient strangest? running from thence along the pack trail to the Spokane.

Branch road - leaving the county road near Louie Matt's house running on the south side of Matt's house down the side of his field to the southeast corner of his fence from thence running through the swamp to old Morses(?) house from thence down the ? from Morses(?) running below Alexander Morses field from thence along the old road to Geo Taylors from thence up the side hill leaving the old road to the right to Margrays from thence following up the old road intersecting the county road when it comes down the hill near Geo Maes claim.

“In 1862 Owen sent him to the St. Ignatius Mission to repair the plows of the Indians. In July of the same year he registered as one of the few voters in Missoula County, Washington Territory.”

From "Men and Trade on the Northwest Frontier as Shown by the Fort Owen Ledger", George G. Weisel, (1955) pp14-15.

From Colville, the family moved east of the Rockies, and stayed with the Piegans for two years, then went to Helena for two years. By 1870 he was already established in the Bitterroot Valley of Montana.

05-88
3879
65

Census District No 8. Montana Territory 1870



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SCHEDULE I.—Inhabitants in Bitter Root Valley, in the County of Missoula State of Montana, enumerated by me on the 29th day of June, 1870.

Post Office: Stephensville, Thos J. Anders, Ass't Marshal.

1	2	3	4			7	8		10	11		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
			Age at last birth	Sex	Color		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate		Place of Birth	Parents of foreign birth								
1	1	Warrior Thomas W	40	m	W	Farmer	2000	1000	Wyo										
2		Lucette	34	F	W	Keeping House			Mich										
3		Thos J	18	m	W	Working Farm			Montana (3)										
4		Lucette	10	F	W	At Home			Montana										
5		Frank	9	m	W				Montana										
6		James	5	m	W				Montana										
7		James H	12	m	W				Montana										
8		Gracell Bryson	16	m	W	Working Farm	500		N.Y.										
9																			
10	10	2	James James	24	m	W	Farmer		Ireland										
11			Ellen	20	F	W	Keeping House		Ireland										
12			Mary	12	F	W			California										
13			James	25	m	W	Farmer	200	Ireland										
14			Stephen	28	m	W	Working Farm	200	Ireland										
15	15	3	Wheatfield John	44	m	W	Farmer	1000	100	Ohio									
16			Paul	18	m	W	Carrying Mail		Ill										
17			James W G	21	m	W	Saloon Keeper	100	100	Ohio									
18			Robbins G W	40	m	W	Keeping House	500	600	Wyo									
19			Louisa	28	F	W	Keeping House			Missouri									
20			Samtha	8	F	W	At Home			Montana									
21			Dufferson	6	m	W			Montana										
22			Dickson	4	m	W			Mont										
23			S. B.	1	m	W			Mont										
24			John A B	27	m	W	Barren Laborer			Wyo									
25	25	4	Giardin F	27	m	W	Subm. to Mission	500	200	Italy									
26			Paola F	11	F	W	Subm. to Mission			Italy									
27			Luella	4	F	W	Subm. to Mission			Italy									
28			Classens W	24	m	W	Subm. to Mission			Belgium									
29			Ferrigno A	22	m	W	Subm. to Mission			Italy									
30	30	5	Wheatfield C	48	m	W	Saloon Keeper	200	400	Pa									
31	31	2	Walt Louis	40	m	W	Blacksmith	500	100	Canada									
32			Theresa	14	F	W	Keeping House			Montana (Wyo)									
33			Luella	22	F	W	Farmer	400		Montana									
34			John	20	m	W	Farmer	200		Montana									
35			Alexander	12	m	W	Working at Shop	500		Oregon									
36			John	14	m	W	At Home			Washington Pa									
37			George	7	m	W				Montana									
38			Julia	5	F	W				Montana									
39			Francis	10	F	W				Montana									
40			Monroe Mary	15	F	W				Montana									

16, B = and David Anderson
C. B. = number

1870 Montana Territory Census, District No. 8, Bitterroot Valley, Missoula County, June 29, 1870 by Thomas J. Anders, Assistant Marshall.

Dwelling No. 7 Numbers 31 to 39.

Louis Matt 64 white blacksmith \$500 in real estate and \$520 in personal estate born in Canada

Cannot read or write none of the family seems to know how to read or write but Peter, Gonzag and Julia were attending school. Both Louis and Joseph could vote in U.S. elections. How did he keep an account book?

Theresa Matt 44 Indian keeping house born in Montana (Oregon?)

Joseph Matt 22 HB (W) farming born in Montana

John Matt 20 HB (W) farming born in Montana

Alexander Matt 18 HB (W) works at Blacksmith shop born in Oregon

Peter Matt 14 HB (W) at home born in Washington territory

Gonzag Matt 7 HB (W) at home born in Montana

Julia Matt 5 HB (W) at home born in Montana

Armine Matt 3 HB (W) at home born in Montana

The account book kept by Louis Matt, as a blacksmith, while he was in Stevensville, Montana, includes accounts for work done by Matt for various individuals and businesses in the Stevensville area. The accounts are arranged by name and there is an index. In the Days of Our Grandfathers, "History of Louie and Therese Matt - by E.M. Felsman, and Ken Robison, Historian, Overholser Historical Research Center, Box 262, Fort Benton, MT 59442. (from Britt Salois, 2013)

The Matt family finally moved to the Flathead Agency in 1878 and settle near Arlee. He died in 1878 at the Jocko Agency east of Arlee.

Louis and Therese had 11 children:

1. Martha "Peltema" Matt
2. Mary Matt
3. Joseph Matt
4. John Baptiste Matt
5. John Matt
6. Alexander Matt
7. Esther Matt
8. Peter Matt
9. Louis "Cuzack" Matt
10. Julia Matt
11. Mary Armone Matt

1. Martha "Peltemta" Matt. "Martha, presumed on the basis of her surname to be a daughter of Louis Matt and Teresa. Her Salish name was Peltemta at her confirmation on June 3, 1875. Her marriage to William [no last name] was not sanctioned by the Catholic Church. Her surname and her given name are conspicuously absent from many church records. "Martha Matt" appears in her son's death record (D-69) and 2 daughters' confirmations." Richard Malouf She and William had five children: Angelica, Joseph, Anna Kalasko Johlkinkoint, Elizabeth and Josephine. She next married Louis (Alexander Louis) Clairmont, Sr. (1836-1904) and they had a daughter named Adelaide Clairmont (1871-1883).

2. Mary Matt born in October, 1847, and she was to marry three times. In about 1863, she married Frank Morigeau, then Louis R. Maillet (a prominent figure in Montana history), and finally Edward Lammeroux, proprietor of the Hot Springs hotel. She died on May 16, 1907.

From The Plainsman, May 17, 1907, page 1: "Called To Her Reward

Another pioneer woman of western Montana has passed into the Great Beyond. News was received in Plains this morning of the death of Mrs. Ed. Lameraux, which occurred during the night at what is known as the Reservation Hot springs. Mrs. Lameraux had been ill but a week and the immediate cause of death was pneumonia. The death is doubly sad from the fact that the husband could not be at the bedside of his dying wife, as he is attending to business matters in Quebec, Canada.

Mrs. Lameraux was born in the Bitter Root valley sixty-two years ago of Blackfoot parentage. Her family was one of the most prominent in the early days of Montana and was always friendly and loyal to the whites, and, in turn, the Matts, the family name, had the respect and confidence of the white settlers.

The deceased was twice married, her first husband being G. M. Mailette to whom she was joined in wedlock forty years ago. To this union one child was born - George Mailette, who a few years ago accidentally met death. In 1886 she was married to Mr. Lameraux, there being no issue, and for the past seventeen years has lived with her husband at the place where the Death Angel called.

Besides the husband, a brother, Alex Matt, a reservation farmer, and other relatives survive.

Mrs. Lameraux was 62 years of age and a life-long member of the Catholic church. She was a consistent Christian in all that the word implies and gained the friendship and esteem of everyone with whom she came in contact. She was a woman of noble purpose, whose daily was characterized by industry, cheerfulness of spirit and universal good will, and the husband and family have sustained an irreparable loss. The heartfelt and sincere condolence of the community is extended to the bereaved ones.

The funeral services will be held tomorrow, Saturday, afternoon at the family home, conducted by Rev. Father Loisseau." (from Bob Bigart)

From The Kalispell Bee, May 24, 1907, page 8:

"Kalispell Briefs

Mrs. Lamoreaux, wife of the aged proprietor of the Hot Springs hotel, Ed Lomereaux, died last week and the old fellow is now all alone at his place on the reservation." (from Bob Bigart)

3. Joseph Matt, who was born in 1848. "He and his wife, Angelic Predum (Prudhomme), were out hunting on the month of June, 1890, at the foot of the Flathead Lake when she heard a gunshot. She found her husband shot, for he had committed suicide by tying a small rope to the gun trigger, placing the gun to his breast, and pulling the trigger with his foot, killing him instantly. Joe had been considered insane for some years, it was reported in the Missoula Gazette." From The Char-Koosta, 15 Oct. 1982 - In the Days of Our Grandfathers, "History of Louie and Therese Matt - by E.M. Felsman

"The gold rush of '49 attracted him toward the fields of California, but he traveled only as far west as Idaho. There he evidently entered Major Owen's service at Cantonment Loring; he was working for him during the first winter and spring in the Bitterroot. In 1853 and '54 he was employed by the Hudson's Bay Company." From "Men and Trade on the Northwest Frontier as Shown by the Fort Owen Ledger", George G. Weisel, (1955) pp14-15.

4. John Baptiste Matt was born in 1849 and was married to Mary Finley in 1868. John Baptiste Matt and his brother Alexander Matt acted as scouts under command of Chief Charlo during the Nez Perce War of 1877. They were in Company 9, Montana Indian Scouts. He was a farmer most of the time. "From The Flathead Courier, Thursday, Oct. 16, 1919, page 1: Died While n Hunting trip. -- Baptiste Matt an old and respected citizen of the Flathead died last Saturday while on a hunting trip with friends in the Swan River country. Mr. Matt who is known by all the old timers of the lower Flathead, had been residing the past few years at Ronan. He had not been feeling well the past month, but for the benefit of his health he was induced last week by some of his friends to take a hunt in the Swan River Country. At their camp on Saturday Mr. Matt took a bucket and brought water from a nearby spring and just as he sat the bucket down he dropped to the ground dead. His friends started home with the body at once, and were supposed to reach Ronan yesterday."

5. John Matt was probably John Baptiste Matt.

6. Alexander Matt was born on April 11, 1852. Alexander was to be married twice, first to Susan Predum (Prudhomme) in 1870 and then to Susan Finley. Alexander and his brother, Baptiste, acted as scouts under the direction of Chief Charlot during the Nez Perce War of 1877." From The Char-Koosta, 15 Oct. 1982 - In the Days of Our Grandfathers, "History of Louie and Therese Matt - by E.M. Felsman and From Char-Koosta - 1 Apr. 1982 - p-13 - Special historical feature "The Nez Perce War of 1877 - by Eugene Mark Felsman. Alexander died December 1, 1922 in Jocko Valley.

7. Esther Matt born at French Prairie in 1854. She was married on July 3, 1867 to Napoleon Dumontier, member of one of the larger families on the Reservation. Esther's children were among the first to be baptized in the Catholic faith at Stevensville. She was to pass on October 14, 1898.

8. Peter Matt "Pete was to be in trouble for some time with horse stealing, and being associated with the notorious Gash Brothers. Finally, the disgruntled citizens of Stevensville got tired of the activities of Pete and they banded together and hung him on a tree near Pine Hollow on March 9, 1878. Peter had married twice to Mary Flannagan from Illinois and to a woman named Rosalie." Gene Felsman

9. Louie (Gonzaga or Cosack) Matt was born in 1860 or 1863 . He was married to Adeline Tellier and then to Angeline Ogden. He was the only one I know of in the family who was allotted on the Blackfeet Reservation at Browning." In the Days of Our Grandfathers, "History of Louie and Therese Matt - by E.M. Felsman. "Louis came to Blackfeet Reservation 13 years ago. Was here at the time of the Treaty of 1895-96 and was recognized here. He is on the rolls here as are his children. He came over from the Flathead thinking this was where he had to establish his rights." Blackfeet Heritage, 1907-1908.Blackfeet Indian Reservation, p 169, Publication: (Browning, Montana: Blackfeet Heritage Program),1980.

During the Nez Perce he was Captain of Company No.9, July 6 to August 6, 1877. He died June 8, 1922 in Browning.

10. Julia Matt , born 1865.

11. Mary Armine Matt, born February 21, 1867.

From the Weekly Missoulian, July 5, 1878 #10 page 3:

"Died. Matte --- At the Flathead Agency, July 2, 1878, Louie Matte, age 72 years."

A letter to David Courchane from Louise Matt Baylor Pierre, January 15, 1982 (St. Ignatius, Montana):

"Dear Chalky

I got your letter, and I am sorry, I don't know too much of my family tree, and I have corrected some, that I did know.

Our bunch of Matts came from the north, this Louie Matt, and two brothers come from Maine, on the St. Lawrence river, they were headed for the gold rush in California, they stopped, and were in the fur business, buying from the Indians, and others, and in that time Louie married a Blackfoot Indian, Charlotte Monroe, so he stayed there, while his brothers went on their journey. Louie & Charlotte had six children 4 boys & 2 girls. I don't know the ages of any of them, but were all born in Browning, but married into the Flathead & Kootenai tribes. This Louie Matt is my great-grandfather, the grandfather of my father. The names of the offspring, I don't know the ages or where born

Louie Cuzack Matt
Baptist Matt
Alex Matt
Pete Matt

Alex Matt the father of my father, and my grandfather. Two girls I don't remember the ones name, but one was Mary and married Napoleon Dumontier, they had 13, or 14, children. I know some of them. Cuzack Matt is my father's uncle, Henry Matt is the nephew of Cuzack.

Some of the Ashleys come from Cuzack, this Josephine Matt Ashley, was Cuzack's daughter. Cuzack himself had a big family married two, three times, from what I was told. I never heard much of Baptist only to know that he was one of the brothers. Pete was the one hung in Lolo, with two white men, stealing horses from the cavalry in Stevensville, the youngest of the brothers.

I hope that I have been of some help, I am writing to my niece in Virginia, to see if she will help us with the Matt family tree, her husband did get a research on our Matts, there [are] three bunches, so we have to know which one we belong too. The Matts I belong to were French and Scotch, their parents come from France, I hope that my niece will be good enough to help us.

Also I want to say that Father Burns in DeSmet, Idaho Mission, does have a tape of my Dad Henry Matt, he said that it was history and Henry would never die, maybe you can get in touch with him, and be able to get a copy of the tape.

The Baylors are from Indiana, Ray was born in a little town Fredericksburg, Indiana, his parents been of German descent, his father David Morris was born in Germany, they came to Kentucky during the First World War, David went to Indiana, where he met his wife Florence, and married her. She's been a German also Florence Stephens, they had 14 children, they covered different states up to Canada, and down into Montana. Mr. Baylor or David was a blacksmith by trade, is about all I know of them.

I hope that you will be able to read my scribbles, I can't write to good anymore, due to arithiritis.

Good luck & God Bless. Louise Pierre."