

The Two Calvin Reeds of 1850

compiled by Erica Hanson

I am related to one of the 2 Calvin Reeds who came across the Oregon Trail in 1850—the one without much documentation--and have noticed that they are getting mixed up in genealogy websites.

Since “my” Calvin Reed is the one without much documentation I wanted to provide some dates and sources, especially since I recently found confirmation of his date of death in the Oregon Archives, which is wrong in many on-line records.

My Calvin Reed:

*14: REED, Calvin (1811-1863): m'd. 04 Oct 1834 FULLER, Laura Minerva; Calvin Reed Jr. was born on 23 Mar 1811 in Canandaigua, Ontario, NY. He died on 11 Feb 1856 in Troutdale, Multnomah, OR.; he m. Laura Minerva Fuller daughter of Fuller on 4 Oct 1834 in Olmsted, Cuyahoga, OH. Laura was born on 17 Dec 1815 in Cuyahoga, OH. She died in 1850 near Julesburg, Sedgwick, CO. along the Oregon Trail and was buried on it; Calvin was the father of six children (Robert Bruce, Julia/Juliet, Harriet Ann, Benjamin Calvin, Rupert and Sylvanus).

It might seem hard to believe that there were 2 men with the same name born in the same month and year, who came across the Oregon Trail the same year and established Donation Land Claims in western Oregon, and then died within one year of each other-but it's true. As far as I know they are not related—there are a lot of Reeds in the country. The Reed researcher in my family knew the names of Calvin's and previous generations well and didn't know about the other Calvin Reed. I think one of the reasons for the confusion is that Calvin Reed of Troutdale never had a middle name or initial.

I'm calling them Calvin Reed-DLC Troutdale and Calvin Reed-DLC Wilbur in this chart.

These are identical for the 2 men:

	Calvin Reed- DLC Troutdale	Calvin Reed-DLC Wilbur
Birth month and year	March (23) 1811	March (2) 1811
Year on Oregon Trail	1850	1850
In same Wagon Train	Maybe?	Maybe?
Head of family on Oregon Trail	Yes	Yes
State Donation Land Claim was in	Oregon	Oregon

Second marriage?	No	No
State died in	Oregon	Oregon

These are different:

	Calvin Reed-DLC Troutdale	Calvin Reed-DLC Wilbur
Full name	Calvin Reed (no middle name or initial)	Dr. Calvin C. Reed
Birth State	New York, 23 March 1811	Vermont, 2 March 1811
Place/year of marriage	Ohio 1834	Michigan 1831
Wife's name	Laura (not Lavinia) Minerva Fuller	Alvira (sometimes written Elvira or Almira) Brown
# of children	6	9
Children's names	Robert Bruce, Julia (or Juliet/Juliette, married William Harn), Harriet Ann (married John Marden), Rupert (really Rubart), Benjamin Calvin, Sylvanus	Delinda, Calvin Mattison, George, Oscar, Sarah, Decater, Bianca, Dwight, Hortense
DLC # in U.S. records	#1537	#966
County of DLC	Multnomah/Washington	Douglas
Town nearest DLC	Troutdale Ore.	Wilbur Ore.
Acres in DLC	320.04	639.22
Family traveled with OT	McClellan	
Wagon Train master?	No	Yes
Medical doctor?	No	Yes
Date of death	Feb. 11 1856	Feb. 2 1855
Place of death: nearest town	Troutdale Ore.	Wilbur Ore.
Place of burial	Unknown	Wilbur, Ore.

My sources for above info:

Calvin Reed-Troutdale:

Full name: Genealogical info compiled by family researcher Haynes: she was descended from this Calvin's brother so collected records about them. Lack of middle name or initial: I have

never seen a middle name in family records, or the few letters I have seen that were signed by him, or censuses. In fact he was a Jr. since his father was also named Calvin Reed (yes there were 3 of them! 4 counting Dr. Calvin C. Reed's son Calvin Mattison) but I've never seen the Jr. used by him or others.

Year of birth, birth state: from courthouse records, censuses, DAR applications and family history compiled by researcher Haynes.

Date & place of marriage, wife's name: Xerox of marriage record

Children's' names: family history, 1850 census, guardianship document filed with court after Calvin Reed-Troutdale's death. This document and another have the name Rupert crossed out and Rubart written over. This unusual name was a last name in Illinois in the early 1800's, maybe he was named for one of them. Sylvanus was 1 year old in 1850 census and doesn't appear in any other records, or as one of the survivors of Calvin Reed-Troutdale in 1856.

DLC (Donation Land Claim) info: "Genealogical Materials in Donation Land Claims, Supplement to Volume 1, Lottie Gurley 1975", compiled from National Archives. The 2 Reed DLCs are 200+ miles apart.

Wagon train: I don't know which wagon train he was in, however in "Covered Wagon Women Vol 2" by Holmes, in Sarah Davis' diary of 1850, she mentions a Reed, captain of party, that joins another train. This must be Calvin Reed-Wilbur. Later she mentions a "McIelen" shooting a buffalo. Calvin Reed-Troutdale was traveling with his sister and brother-in-law John and Amanda Reed McClellan (according to an old newspaper article). May not be the same McClellan, need more wagon train research.

Place & date of death: Records in the Oregon Archives in sworn affidavits about settling his estate definitely state that he died Feb. 11, 1856, in several different documents right after this date and later involving sale of his land. This has gotten into some genealogy write-ups as 1863, I think because of a smudged copy. I haven't found any records about how he died or exactly where, but he seemed to be actively farming his land and the 5 surviving children were apparently living with him, so the assumption is that he died at home on his farm near Troutdale.

Burial info: Have found no records. In the 1980's my Dad contacted 14 pioneer cemeteries including Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery, and the Troutdale Historical Society, with no luck.

Calvin Reed-Wilbur:

My info on Dr. Calvin C. Reed-Wilbur is from on-line family trees, library books: I don't know how accurate it is.

Birth date, place, wife & children's names, death date and place: website, <http://mckownfamily.com/p6062.htm>. This seems to have the most complete data. Some of it is

in books: “Calvin B. West of the Umpqua”, Stuart, 1961, and “Umpqua Valley Oregon and It’s Pioneers”, Minter, 1967.

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