

# Willoughby Churchill

Pioneer of 1851

compiled by Stephenie Flora  
oregonpioneers.com  
and  
Bob Wilson  
Oregon Researcher

Willoughby Churchill

b. 19 Feb 1809 Shelby County, KY

d. 18 Jul 1895 Halsey, Linn County, OR

buried Pine Grove Cemetery, Peoria, Linn County, OR

s/o George Churchill and Sarah Arnold

m1. c 1830 Sangamon County, Illinois

Elizabeth Jane Humphreys

b. 1813 KY

d. 27 Jul 1851 Wasco County, Oregon

buried The Dalles, Wasco County, Oregon

"September 24, 1851 To-day we consigned to the earth, the remains of Mrs. E. A. Churchill, wife of Willowby Churchill, formerly of Mechanicsburg, in Sangamon Co., Ill. Here her toilsome journey ended. She died in peace, and in full hope of a blissful immortality, beyond this vale of tears. Peace to her memory." [Newsom, David--**D Newsom #1513**; Letter dated Pleasant Valley, Marion Co., (O. T.) March 14th, 1852, Illinois Daily Journal [Springfield], May 21, 1852, v. 4, #304, p. 2, c. 2; Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield] [contributed by Richard Rieck, Researcher of deaths on the Oregon Trail]

m2. 11 Apr 1852 Roseburg, Douglas County, OR

Matilda A. Price

b. 11 Jan 1828 Danville, Vermillion County, IN

d. 06 Jul 1905 Eugene, Lane County, OR

buried Pine Grove Cemetery, Peoria, Linn County, OR

1834: Oct 15, Illinois Land Deed [#IL0570.157](#), Willoughby Churchill, Sangamon County, IL

1839: Nov 01, Illinois Land Deed [#3400.385](#), Willoughby Churchill, Sangamon County, IL

1840: Sangamon County, Illinois, Willibby Churchill, 2 males (-5), 1 male (20-29), 1 male (30-39), 1 female (5-9), 1 female (20-29),

1849: Jan 01, Illinois Land Deed [#IL3460.032](#), Willoughby Churchill, Sangamon County, IL

1850: Sangamon County, IL, November 20, 1850; Wiloby (sic) Churchill, 41, farmer, \$4000, KY; Elizabeth, 37, KY; George, 13, IL; Owen, 11, IL; David, 7, IL; Mary, 5, IL; Martha, 2, IL  
1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

1851: OHSQ: Sep 1977 p.215 assisted survivors of the Clark train massacre of 1851

1866: June 18, Land Deed [#ORRAA020236](#) Matilda Churchill and Willoughby Churchill, Douglas County

1868: Oregon, Jackson County, [Military Bounty Land Warrant](#) granted to Private Willoughby Churchill, Captain Elkins Company, Illinois Volunteers, Northwestern Indian Disturbances

1870: Peoria, Linn County, OR, August 22, 1870; Willoughby Churchill, 61, farmer, \$9800 \$3956, KY; Matilda, 40, keeping house, IN; Thomas, 19, works on farm, Wash Terr; Oliver, 17, works on farm, OR; Edwin, 16, works on farm, OR; Laura B., 15, at school, OR; Minnie, 11, at school, OR; Willoughby, farmer, 33, IL

1880: Harrisburg, Linn County, Oregon, June 10, 1880; Willoughby Churchill, 72, retired farmer, KY KY KY; Matilda, 50, wife, keeping house, IN VA KY; Thomas, 28, son, farmer, IL KY IL; Olliver, 26, son, farmer, OR KY IN; Edmund, 24, son, invalid-asthma, OR KY IN

## DEATH OF A PIONEER.

At his home in Halsey, Linn county, Or., on July 18, 1895, Willoughby Churchill passed quietly from this to a better life, aged 86 years, 5 months and 4 days. Willoughby Churchill was born in Shelby county, Ky., February 15, 1809. At the age of 18 his father and family moved to Sangamon county, Ill., where in 1834 he married Elizabeth J. Humphreys, who died at The Dalles, Or., on the route to the Willamette valley. By this union six children were born, of whom O. H. Churchill, of Los Angeles, Cal.; Mary J. Roach, of Lyman, Skagit county, Wash., and Thomas A. Churchill, of Callispel, Flathead county, Mont., survive.

Willoughby Churchill married Matilda A. Price, in Linn county, Or., in 1852; by this second union four children were born, all of whom were at the bedside of their beloved father in his last moments. The deceased early in life joined the Christian church, and while yet a young man in Illinois, served as an elder, also filling the same position for many years in Oregon.

He was a consistent Christian gentleman, tender-hearted and true; a kind husband and father; a faithful friend, of whom it could be said he had not an enemy.

Father Churchill is now above the sun,  
above the sky;  
Where people sicken not, nor die;  
Those who are there all want to stay,  
And never wish to go away.

The funeral services were held at the Christian church in Halsey, conducted by Elder P. R. Burnett, attended by a large concourse of friends and neighbors, after which his body was laid to rest in Pine Grove cemetery.

[Oregonian, Portland, Oregon, Sunday, August 4, 1895 p.8]

**AGED PIONEER WOMAN DIES.**



**Mrs. Matilda Anne Churchill.**

EUGENE, Or., July 9.—(Special.)—Mrs. Matilda Anne Churchill, one of the honored pioneer women, died at her home in this city last evening, aged 77 years. Her death came quite suddenly, although she had been ailing for some time. The funeral services will be held tomorrow forenoon, and the remains will be taken to Halsey for interment.

Matilda Anne Price was born in Vincennes, Knox County, Ind., January 11, 1828. In 1830 her parents moved to Danville, Ill., where her childhood and girlhood years were spent. Her father died in 1846, and in 1851 she came with her mother and brothers and sisters across the plains to Oregon. They came with the emigrant train in charge of David Froman, now of Albany.

They first settled in Linn County, four miles east of Albany. On August 11, 1852, she married Willoughby Churchill. They took up a donation land claim and settled in Cole's Valley, Douglas County, being among the first settlers in that part of the country.

Six years later they disposed of their home there and moved to Linn County, seven miles southwest of Halsey, where they lived many years. They then rented their place and moved to Harrisburg, where Mr. Churchill died in 1896. Mrs. Churchill moved to Eugene three years ago.

She was the mother of four children, Oliver F. Churchill, of Marysville, Wash.; J. Edwin Churchill, deceased; Laura Jordan, Eugene, and Minnie D. Nicholas, of Elmira.

She was one of the typical pioneer women of the state, a noble woman and a lifelong member of the Christian Church.

[contributed by Bob Wilson]

Children of Willoughby Churchill and Elizabeth Jane Humphreys:

1. George H. Churchill

b. 13 May 1837 IL

d. 28 May 1887 Wheeler County, OR

buried Richmond Cemetery, Wheeler County, OR

m. c 1866 OR

Sarah C. Reed

b. 24 Nov 1846 IN

d. 17 Dec 1908 Ellensburg, Kittitas County, WA

buried IOOF Cemetery, Ellensburg, Kittitas County, WA

d/o E.A. Reed and Mary E. Barnett

1850: Sangamon County, IL, November 20, 1850; Wiloby (sic) Churchill, 41, farmer, \$4000, KY; Elizabeth, 37, KY; George, 13, IL; Owen, 11, IL; David, 7, IL; Mary, 5, IL; Martha, 2, IL

1870: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, August 25, 1870; Geo H Churchill, 32, saddler, \$1000 \$1800, IL; Sarah C., 25, keeping house, IN; Eva, 5, OR; Loyal L., 4, OR; Henrie Peter, 15, apprentice to saddler, Prussia

1880: Wasco County, OR, June 1880; Geo H Churchill, 32, farmer, IL KY KY; Sarah C., 31, wife, keeping house, IA; Eva, 14, dau, OR; Lincoln, 11, son, OR; Chester, 8, son, OR; Melvin, 5, son, OR; Annie, 3/12, dau, OR

1900: Sarah C. Churchill living with son Chester in Kittitas County, WA

Children of George Churchill and Sarah Reed:

i. Eva Churchill (1866- )

ii. Lincoln Churchill (1869- )

iii. Chester Churchill (1872-1945 WA )

iv. Melvin Churchill (1875- )

v. Elizabeth Ann Churchill (1880- )

2. Owen Humphreys Churchill

b. 16 Jun 1841 IL

d. 29 Apr 1916 Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, CA

buried Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Hollywood, Los Angeles County, CA

m. 1882 Chouteau, Montana

Frances A. Porter

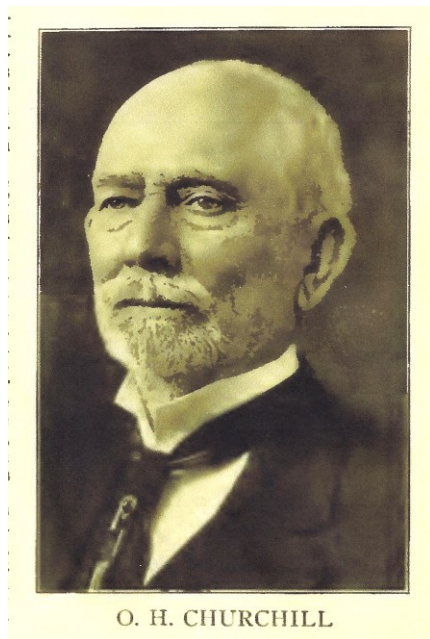
b. 13 Dec 1856 NY

d. 22 Nov 1943 Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, CA  
buried Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Hollywood, Los Angeles County, CA

1850: Sangamon County, IL, November 20, 1850; Wiloby (sic) Churchill, 41, farmer, \$4000, KY; Elizabeth, 37, KY; George, 13, IL; Owen, 11, IL; David, 7, IL; Mary, 5, IL; Martha, 2, IL

1880: Sun River, Choteau County, MT, June 26 & 28, 1880; Owen H. Churchill, 37, stock raiser, IL OH OH

1900: Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, CA, June 13, 1900; Owen H. Churchill, head, Jun 1841, 59, m-18yrs, IL KY KY, capitalist; Frances A., wife, Dec 1856, 43, m-18yrs, 3-3, NY NY NY; Marian E., dau, Mar 1883, 17, s, MT IL NY; Gertrude A., dau, Aug 1886, 13, s, CA IL NY; Owen P., son, Mar 1896, 4, s, CA IL NY; Jean M. Ogden, servant, Dec 1855, 44, div, domestic, KY Ger KY



"CHURCHILL, OWEN HUMPHREYS, Retired Capitalist, Los Angeles, California, was born at Mechanicsburg, Sangamon County, Illinois, June 16, 1841. He is a son of Willoughby Churchill and Martha Elizabeth (Humphreys) Churchill. He married Frances Alberta Porter at Lexington, Kentucky, April 20, 1882, and to them were born three children, Marion (Mrs. David Henry McCartney), Gertrude (Mrs. Francis Pierpont Davis) and Owen Porter Churchill. Mr. Churchill's ancestors on both sides were Southerners, his father and mother having been born in Kentucky and his grandfather, George Churchill, in Virginia. Mr. Churchill is one of the few survivors of that race of men who braved the perils of the Indian-infested Western plains that the present great American empire might be claimed for the white man. In 1851, when he was a lad not quite

ten years of age, his father and mother, in whom the pioneer spirit was strong, took him with their other children across the plains. They used prairie schooners, drawn by oxen, and were part of a wagon train containing 100 wagons and about 400 persons.

An entire summer was consumed in making the journey from Illinois to Oregon, and it was one of the most hazardous trips recorded in that day of dangers. Many Indian tribes were on the warpath and the train had many adventurous and discouraging experiences with the redskins, terminating in skirmishes with loss of life on both sides. On one occasion the caravan became strung out for about three miles and a Mrs. Scott, with her wagons and horses, was detached. As the Scott party was crossing the Raft River, it was attacked by Indians, who killed Mrs. Scott and family, with the exception of her fourteen-year-old son, who escaped by jumping into the river and hiding among the willows that overlapped the water. The Indians escaped with the horses. As soon as the attack became

known to the rest of the train, twenty-five men were sent in pursuit. After traveling twenty-five miles they discovered the Indians camped on a high plateau. Fighting followed and several of the white men were killed and wounded. The survivors, parched with thirst and suffering from wounds, were obliged to give up the effort to punish the marauders, and returned to the train, leaving two mortally wounded men behind. They intended to return for these unfortunates, but the leaders of the train decided they couldn't afford to lose any more men or time in the rescue, and moved onward.

After leaving the Missouri River at Council Bluffs, Iowa, the travelers saw no white face until they reached Fort Laramie. From there until they neared Fort Dalles, Oregon, the only white man they met was, as he recalls, Johnny Grant, living at Fort Hall. One sad recollection of the journey was the death of Mr. Churchill's mother, who became ill and died at The Dalles, just as they were reaching civilization.

The Churchill family located in the Umpqua Valley and remained there for six years. Mr. Churchill finished his education in the schools of Oregon, also mastering the Chinook Indian jargon, which he can still converse in with fluency. At the age of seventeen, having contracted the gold fever, he started out as a prospector.

He first began prospecting in British Columbia and then worked back through Washington and Idaho, continuing in this pursuit for about six years. He had indifferent luck until 1863, when he struck it fairly rich at Boise Basin, Idaho.

During his mining days Mr. Churchill had several thrilling adventures with the Indians and also suffered many hardships. One time, in order to save his own life, he was compelled to knock out one of the redskins, and this incident forms one of the most thrilling anecdotes in his career. While only a boy of seventeen, he was prospecting at Rock Creek, British Columbia, with a Doctor Bell. They determined to go to the deserted camp of Samilkameen, with the intention of securing tools left by stampeding miners.

After riding thirty miles they came to the Okanagan River, where they employed two Indians to carry them across in canoes, and also to cross the Samilkameen River, three miles farther on. It was agreed that the Indians were to cross them on their return, at which time the miners would pay them a pair of twenty-dollar blankets.

When the prospectors returned to the Samilkameen they unpacked their horses and drove them into the water. The beasts swam across and were caught by the Indians on the opposite shore and tied to trees. The Indians then crossed the river and informed the white men that they would not ferry them back unless their pay was doubled. Churchill and Bell balked. The Indians threatened the pair and, under orders of Dr. Bell, Churchill struck one of the redmen with a pick handle. He fell and the other Indian fled, pursued by Bell. He escaped and set up such a wild yelling that the miners feared other members of his tribe might be attracted. An examination proved that Churchill's Indian had been disposed of by the blow from the pick handle, so the miners packed their goods in the canoes and hurriedly crossed.

They made for the Okanagan River, near the Indian village of Tonasket, anticipating trouble because of the absence of the Indians. Fortunately, they fell in with a party of fourteen miners from Caribou who took them in and the entire outfit was crossed by the Indians. While packing, a miner shot an Indian. Confusion followed and Mr. Churchill and his partner, realizing the danger of a massacre, started on a run from the camp. They took a side trail and reached Rock Creek in safety, although they learned later that the Indians had pursued the rest of the party.

An instance displaying Mr. Churchill's endurance and aid to companions occurred when three of them, heading for a new discovery at Salmon River, Idaho, had to cross Commerce Prairie, a bleak plateau of thirty miles, covered with a foot of crusted snow. One of them gave out entirely, and as there were no trees, wood or shelter, they couldn't stop, so Mr. Churchill carried the prostrate man for two miles and the other miner shouldered the three packs until they reached a camp of miners at Whitebird.

One dismal morning, when it was about sixty degrees or more below zero, he was standing on the threshold of his miner's cabin facing starvation. His partner and himself rolled up their blankets, three pounds of salt, a box of matches, a half loaf of bread and a pressed miner's pan and put them on their backs, strapped their snow shoes to their feet, grabbed their guns and started for the Salmon River Mountains, where it was reported there was wild game.

By noon they had covered 100 miles, and Mr. Churchill, having shot a grouse, they made camp at once in a clearing. After their meal they went out to hunt food for the next meal, and while they were away their blankets and most of their provisions were burned. Thus, in a temperature averaging sixty degrees below zero, they were without covering and for twenty-nine days suffered intensely. Leaving there they started back to their mining camp with fifty-eight grouse, and after these were consumed took their gold dust and went to Slate Creek, where they had heard provisions were to be had. However, when they reached there the provisions had not arrived and for one week they were compelled to live at an Indian boarding house, where they were charged three dollars a meal. When the pack train arrived, each bought 105 pounds of provisions and they packed it on their back to their camp, forty miles away.

After following the prospector's life for six years Mr. Churchill engaged in the cattle business in Oregon and continued in the same business through Washington, Idaho and Montana, where he was one of the pioneers.

An interesting coincidence in connection with Mr. Churchill's success as a cattleman occurred in 1864. Fourteen years previously he had known, crossing the plains, a young man named H. H. Snow, but lost track of him afterward. With \$10,500, which he made out of his mining operations at Boise, Mr. Churchill had embarked in the cattle business at Walla Walla, Washington. He had about 650 head of cattle, when he accidentally met Snow and renewed old acquaintance. He offered to sell his cattle to Snow for \$40 a head, but the latter could not take them and instead urged Mr. Churchill to take the stock to Montana, where he assured him he could get \$100 a head. He did so and sold his cattle for more than \$100 a head.

Mr. Churchill never saw his friend again to thank him for his very good counsel and heard nothing of him until 1908, when he was informed by a Washington man that Snow had died twenty years previously.

In 1869 he made a trip to Texas, where he bought a herd of cattle and while driving them to Montana, passing through Utah, near Soda Springs, Mr. Churchill forced three thieving redskins to release a cow, which they had stolen from his herds. He approached them and, although they leveled their guns at him, he continued and by sheer nerve, forced them to flee. Having recovered his cow, he was leisurely heading towards camp when suddenly thirty Indians swarmed up the bank directly on him; three of them, probably the same he had encountered before, pointed their rifles at him, but the others, being friendly, jumped in between. For ten minutes he was held and while they were



disputing over his fate, several opened a gap for him and whispered, "you go," and he fled.

This incident caused Mr. Churchill to regard Indians as more humane than many white desperadoes he met in later life. He finally located at Sun River, where he continued in the cattle business with profitable results.

Still another experience came to him near Sun River, Montana, while he was riding up a gulch on a buffalo trail, gathering cattle. On the hillside above him he saw an Indian leaning on his rifle. Mr. Churchill could have avoided the savage by going far out of his way, but decided to risk riding by him. As he reached the nearest point to the redskin, they both started shooting: four shots apiece were fired. Mr. Churchill, having no more cartridges, ran his horse, bounding and jumping down the crooked canon, not noticing the trail as closely as he should. While glancing back at the Indian, who remained on the same spot, he plunged over a perpendicular bluff of thirty feet, landing in the soft sand. While he was not hurt, he had become separated from his horse and had to continue on foot to camp. The following morning he and his friend, J. R. Cox, returned to the scene to look for his horse and the Indian, but both had disappeared.

He remained at Sun River until the latter part of 1883, when he disposed of his interests to R. B. Harrison, ex-President Benjamin Harrison and associates. During his stay at Sun River Mr. Churchill was also a stockholder and director in two of the pioneer banks of Montana. When he left Montana his departure was the occasion for a commemorative tribute on the part of the Helena (Montana) Herald, the editor of which wrote an article praising the works of Mr. Churchill and thanking him for his part in the development of the country.

In 1881 he moved with his family to Los Angeles and became heavily interested in real estate and other lines of business, which added to his fortune. He was one of the charter members of the organization, in 1889, of the National Bank of California and was the second largest stockholder in that institution. For about ten years he was a Vice President of the bank, and still retains his place on the Board of Directors.

Mr. Churchill has been one of the prominent figures in the development of Los Angeles and Southern California, and, although he is now practically retired from business life, still maintains a deep interest in the welfare of his adopted city. He was one of the organizers of the Chamber of Commerce and still retains membership in it. In 1910 Mr. Churchill incorporated his personal holdings into the O. H. Churchill Company, Incorporated." [Press Reference Library, Notables of the West Volume 1, 1913]  
[contributed by Bob Wilson]

"When Churchill was ten years old, his family gathered their belongings and began the long trek across the country in oxen drawn wagons. Their party consisted of 100 wagons and 400 people. That entire summer was spent going from Illinois to Oregon. All the while the wagon train suffered several hardships including raids from the Indians. Churchill finished his education once they arrived in Oregon and when he was seventeen he began prospecting for gold. He mined in Oregon, British Columbia and Idaho surviving Indian attacks and extreme weather conditions, something the temperatures were as low as 50 degrees below zero. In 1869 Churchill left for Texas where he bought a herd of cattle and headed back for Oregon, through Utah and near Soda Springs, Idaho he had another experience with the Indians however, this time the Indians were friendly and

caused him no harm. Churchill was a stockholder and director for two pioneer banks in Montana and then left Montana for Los Angeles in 1884. While in Los Angeles he worked in real estate and by 1889 was the second largest stockholder of the National Bank of California and served as vice president of the bank for ten years and continued to serve on their Board of Directors. Churchill was one of the organizers of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and was a prominent source in the development of the city."  
[findagrave.com]

"Owen, arranged years later for a stained glass window dedicated to his mother in the Congregational Church in the Dalles. The church burned to the ground and a new church was constructed. It too burned to the ground and the window no longer exists."  
[Roger Paget, Feb 26, 2004, Professor of Political Economy and Asian Studies at Lewis and Clark College. Wife, Tania Lucic is a descendant of Willoughby Churchill]

**ANGEL CITY BANKER DEAD**  
LOS ANGELES, April 30.—Owen H. Churchill, founder of the National Bank of California and formerly heavily interested in cattle in Montana, died at his home here yesterday after a brief illness. He was 75 years old. His fortune was estimated at more than \$2,000,000. He is survived by a widow, two daughters and a son, the latter a student at Stanford University.

[San Diego Union, San Diego, California, Monday, May 1, 1916 p.2]

**BURGLAR LOOTS HOME  
SOON AFTER FUNERAL**  
LOS ANGELES, May 2. — A few hours after the funeral of O. H. Churchill a thief entered the family home and stole jewelry valued at \$2500.

[San Diego Union, San Diego, California, Monday, May 3, 1916 p.5]

Children of Owen Churchill and Frances Porter:

- i. Marian E. Churchill (1883- )
- ii. Gertrude A. Churchill (1886- )
- iii. Owen P. Churchill (1896- )

3. David Harvey Churchill

b. 31 Mar 1843 Sangamon County, IL

d. 15 Jun 1893 Great Falls, Cascade County, MT

buried Benton Avenue Cemetery, Helena, Lewis and Clark County, MT

m. 25 Jul 1875 Helena, Lewis and Clark County, MT  
Mary Shelton Ransdell  
b. 19 Sep 1854 Yamhill County, OR  
d. 15 May 1940 Portland, Multnomah County, OR  
buried Benton Avenue Cemetery, Helena, Lewis and Clark County, MT  
d/o Shelton Ransdell and Mary Elizabeth Brown

1850: Sangamon County, IL, November 20, 1850; Wiloby (sic) Churchill, 41, farmer, \$4000, KY; Elizabeth, 37, KY; George, 13, IL; Owen, 11, IL; David, 7, IL; Mary, 5, IL; Martha, 2, IL

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

"David Harvey (D.H.) Churchill was born in 1843 in Springfield, Illinois, to Willoughby and Elizabeth Jane Humphreys Churchill. He and three other siblings, Mary, George and Owen, traveled with their parents by horseback to Oregon Territory via California in 1851. His brother, Tom, was born on the trail, and his mother died shortly thereafter. His father remarried the next year to Matilda Price, and five more children were born to that union.

D.H. and his brother Owen Humphrey drove cattle from Texas to Montana Territory in the early 1870's. They established a ranch near Sun River. By 1875 D.H. owned a livery and feed store in Helena. That same year he married Mary (Minnie) Shelton Ransdell in Helena.

Mary "Minnie" Shelton Ransdell was born in 1854 near Sheridan, Oregon, to Shelton and Mary Elizabeth Brown. Shelton Ransdell, was born on July 4, 1828, in Warren County, Kentucky. Later his family settled in Illinois. In 1850 Shelton and his brothers immigrated to Oregon Territory and Shelton became the owner of a store in Sheridan, Oregon. On February 17, 1853, Shelton married Mary Elizabeth Brown.

Mary Elizabeth Brown Ransdell, was born in 1836. At the age of 14 she traveled with her parents, James and Sophia Brown, across the plains via the Oregon Trail in 1850. The Browns also had other children including Sarra, Jim, Joe, Nate, Maggie, and Nan who was born on the trail. Mary Elizabeth Brown Ransdell was 18 years old when she gave birth to Minnie. There was only four years difference in age between Minnie and Mrs. Ransdell's sister, Nan Brown (later Mrs. Buell). Minnie and her aunt became close friends and this family connection provided some help to Minnie later in her life in times of financial pressure.

Minnie's father, Shelton, drowned while loading freight from a boat to the dock, shortly after her birth. Mary Elizabeth Brown Ransdell remarried in 1861 to Edwin Harvey Lord and gave birth to six more children: Annetta (Nettie) Lord La Chappelle; Edith Lord Johnson; Charles Lord; Alma Lord Holden; Roswell Lord; and Richard Lord. The Lord family lived in Washington state. After Edwin Harvey Lord died in 1902, Mary lived with her daughter, Nettie LaChappelle, in Chelan, Washington.

Minnie and D.H. Churchill had five children. Their first, Mary, born in 1876, died at

birth. Other children included Harvey Mae, born in 1878; Willoughby Shelton (called Bud or Buzz), born in 1881; David Albert (called Day) born in 1883; Lady Maud (called Lady, Tommie—for tomboy, and Lady Bug), born in 1886; and O.H. (Owen Humphrey) Elizabeth (called Aitchie, Elizabeth or Betty), born in 1888.

The family moved often, but always remained in the ranching or stock-breeding business. D.H. Churchill's particular passion was for harness-racing horses. D.H. traveled widely and spent a considerable amount of money purchasing horses and bringing them back to Montana. In the 1880's his estate was valued at \$25,000. From 1884 to 1886, D.H. served as Sheriff in Lewis and Clark County. Around 1890 the family moved to a ranch site near present-day Ulm, between a bend of the Sun River.

D.H. suffered for many years from stomach problems. He described himself as a "dyspeptic". Records and correspondence confirm that he traveled to southern California, San Francisco, and Seattle for treatments. In spite of a creative array of prescriptions (commonly containing strychnine), D.H. died in 1893 while attempting to return to the ranch from Great Falls.

D.H. left his wife, Minnie, with four children ranging in age from 4 to 14 years of age, a large ranch, and stock. That same year the Panic of 1893 struck, and Montana with its investments in the silver industry, was especially hard hit. Many banks closed without promise of compensation for lost investments. Not only did Minnie lose the funds D.H. had invested, she also could not receive a fair price for stock, real estate or equipment. She was temporarily saved by a life insurance policy with New York Life.

Minnie continued to run the ranch with the help of ranch hands, like Dick Hynds. In 1898 she rented the ranch and moved to Spokane, Washington. While in Spokane, Minnie attempted to run a store, but it failed. Minnie and her children returned to the Ulm Ranch in 1903 and then sold it in 1910. At that time the family moved to Vancouver, Washington, where they remained for many years.

Minnie's son David Albert (Day) did not return with the family to Montana in 1903. He joined the Navy and served aboard the U.S.S. Chicago off the coast of California. In 1908 David became ill. His surgeons feared that he had an appendicitis so they operated. David died as a result of the operation and the surgeons discovered that his illness was not associated with his appendix. David is buried in California.

Willoughby (or Bud), was said to be an architect. Bud lived for a time in Helena, and died in Vancouver, Washington, in 1914, after a recurring illness.

Harvey Mae, Minnie's oldest daughter, was her mother's companion and a musician. She and Minnie ran a boarding house in Vancouver. Lady Maud is listed in the 1930 census as a commercial artist and some of her artwork survives. She also served as a governess and may have provided nursing care during World War I. Minnie Churchill, Harvey Mae, and Lady Maud either lived together or in close proximity in the Portland and Vancouver area from 1910 to 1940, when Minnie died. When Mae died in 1966, Lady returned to Montana where she lived near her youngest sister, O.H. Elizabeth, until Lady's death in 1977.

O.H. "Aitchie" Elizabeth Churchill, Minnie's youngest child, married Glen Kitterman in 1910 in Vancouver. She was the only one of the Churchill siblings to marry. Glen (1882-1959), originally from Kansas, moved to Montana to homestead in 1903, and spent most of his life farming near Cascade. Aitchie and Glen had four children: Mary Elizabeth, David, James and Wilbur (known as Bill). Glen Kitterman died September 21,

1959, and Aitchie died in 1983.

Mary Elizabeth, the Kitterman's oldest daughter, was born September 26, 1911. She was raised on the farm near Great Falls and graduated from Great Falls High School. In 1935 she married Chester Arthur Sullivan. Chet was born on March 27, 1914, in Great Falls. They lived briefly in Ulm and Sun River before settling on the south side of the Sun River in Great Falls. They truck-gardened during World War II before beginning a successful hardwood flooring and finishing business. They had two sons, Gary and Dan. In 1963 Mary and Chet moved to Yellow Bay on Flathead Lake. They raised cherries and apples and operated a custom orchard business. Mary also opened a gift shop where she sold hand-made ceramics made in her studio. In 1988 they moved to Polson. Mary died on September 2, 1993. Her husband, Chester, died on September 30, 1994.

Wilbur (Bill) Kitterman was born on July 13, 1920 in Great Falls. He farmed in the Great Falls area for most of his life. He served as the family historian, and saved many of the Churchill family records, photographs, and artifacts. Bill died on January 14, 1998.

**Content Description** -- The photograph collection contains images of D.H. and Mary Shelton (Minnie) Churchill, and their children Harvey Mae, Willoughby, Lady Maud, and O.H. Elizabeth, as well as other relatives and friends. It includes views of the family ranch and of residences in Spokane, Vancouver and Portland. There are also views of cities and towns in Montana, Oregon, and Washington, such as Great Falls, Montana, Pendleton, Oregon, and Chelan, Washington. Subjects also include shots of harness racing and racing horses, navy boats, ships and sailors, Yellowstone National Park and Glacier National Park, women and children."

[<http://nwda.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv77066>]

## **A WEALTHY STOCKMAN.**

**David H. Churchill, of Montana, Died  
at Great Falls.**

**GREAT FALLS, Mont., June 15.**—David H. Churchill, one of the wealthiest and best known stockmen and owners of fine horses in Montana, died at 9 o'clock this morning at a hotel here. He came to the city yesterday and was doing business about town in his usual health and started to drive to his big ranch 12 miles out of town. He was soon seized by cramps and returned. Physicians found him suffering from muscular contraction of the walls of the abdomen, and worked over him all night, but to no purpose. With a brother, he first drove stock into this state from Texas in 1871, locating in Beaverhead county. Later he moved to Helena and served as sheriff of Lewis and Clark county. He was one of the first stockmen to settle in this section. He is well known to all horsemen of the West who have followed the Montana circuit, and was one of the heaviest stockholders of the North Montana Fair Association. Mr. Churchill was a native of Oregon, aged 47. He leaves a wife and five children. He was a director of the Merchants' National bank of this city, and a leading member of Helena lodge of Workmen.

[Oregonian, Portland, Oregon, Friday, June 16, 1893 p.1]

Children of David Churchill and Mary Ransdell:

- i. Mary B. Churchill (1876-1876)
- ii. Harvey Mae Churchill (1878-1966)
- iii. Willoughby Shelton Churchill (1881-1914)
- iv. David Edwin Churchill (1883-1908)
- v. Lady Maude Churchill (1886-1977)
- vi. Elizabeth J. Churchill (1888-1983)

4. Mary J. Churchill

b. 21 Oct 1845 Sangamon County, IL

d. Clackamas County, OR

m. 1873

John M. Roach

b. 1837

d. 18 Jun 1918 PA???

1850: Sangamon County, IL, November 20, 1850; Wiloby (sic) Churchill, 41, farmer, \$4000, KY; Elizabeth, 37, KY; George, 13, IL; Owen, 11, IL; David, 7, IL; Mary, 5, IL; Martha, 2, IL

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

Children of John Roach and Mary Churchill:

- i. Charles W. Roach (1865- )
- ii. Austin Roach (1871-1891)
- iii. Elva Jane Roach (1873-1949)
- iv. Sylvia Roach (1882- )

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## Obituaries

### Mrs. Mary J. Roach

Mrs. Mary J. Roach died at her home in Springfield, 180 Nineteenth street, Friday morning, at the age of 86 years, following a lingering illness.

Mary Churchill was born in Sangamon county, Ill., Oct. 21, 1845. When six years old she came across the plains with her parents, the family taking the entire summer for the trip. In 1863 she was married to John Roach. In 1881 they moved to Washington to live for 22 years, then to Alberta, Canada, for eight years, then to Pennsylvania for 13 years, and back to Oregon. Mrs. Roach has lived in Springfield for the past four years.

She is survived by two sons, Charles W. Roach, Cal., T. Wiley Roach, Portland; one daughter, Mrs. E. J. Borland, Springfield; one brother, T. A. Churchill, Los Angeles; and two sisters, Mrs. Minnie Nichols, Cottage Grove, and Mrs. Roy Jordan, Eugene; two grandchildren and four great grandchildren. She was a member of the Christian church.

Funeral services are to be held Monday morning at 10 o'clock at the Walker-Poole chapel in Springfield. Interment will be in the Pine Grove cemetery.

[contributed by Bob Wilson]

5. Martha A. Churchill

b. 22 Aug 1848 Sangamon County, IL

d. 18 Apr 1864 Linn County, OR

buried Pine Grove Cemetery, Peoria, Linn County, OR

m. Never Married

1850: Sangamon County, IL, November 20, 1850; Wiloby (sic) Churchill, 41, farmer, \$4000, KY; Elizabeth, 37, KY; George, 13, IL; Owen, 11, IL; David, 7, IL; Mary, 5, IL; Martha, 2, IL

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

6. Thomas Alexander Churchill

b. 27 Jul 1851 Bear River, Utah

d. 1939

m. 13 Feb 1887

Mary Mildred (Merritt) Schoch

b.

d.

d/o Gilbert Merritt and Finetta Shippi

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

1870: Peoria, Linn County, OR, August 22, 1870; Willoughby Churchill, 61, farmer, \$9800 \$3956, KY; Matilda, 40, keeping house, IN; Thomas, 19, works on farm, Wash Terr; Oliver, 17, works on farm, OR; Edwin, 16, works on farm, OR; Laura B., 15, at school, OR; Minnie, 11, at school, OR; Willoughby, farmer, 33, IL

1880: Harrisburg, Linn County, Oregon, June 10, 1880; Willoughby Churchill, 72, retired farmer, KY KY KY; Matilda, 50, wife, keeping house, IN VA KY; Thomas, 28, son, farmer, IL KY IL; Olliver, 26, son, farmer, OR KY IN; Edmund, 24, son, invalid-asthma, OR KY IN



THOMAS ALEXANDER CHURCHILL, one of the representative and prosperous farmers of the Flathead valley, descends from an English family that for generations has held high rank in that country and has been noted for its admirable qualities of intellect and moral character. The first American residence of this branch was in the Old Dominion and from there the immediate ancestors of our subject emigrated to Kentucky and endured the many privations and dangers of the pioneer life, when that state was truly described as the "dark and bloody ground." Mr. Churchill's father, Willoughby Churchill, born and reared in Kentucky, when a young man went to Peoria, Sangamon county, Ill., married Elizabeth Humphreys, settled on a farm and was an agriculturalist until the fame of the Willamette valley in Oregon induced him to take his family over the long road across the continent to that land of promise. The journey was an eventful one, the weary way across the plains being accomplished by ox-wagons, containing the household effects and family. Indian bands were frequently met, and the wild buffalo and the Indians were often the sole denizens of the almost limitless prairies. Through dangers seen and unseen the emigrant train moved slowly on, months passing on the way. During a short stay at a camp at Bear river, Utah, Thomas A. Churchill, the youngest of six children, was born on July 27, 1851, and shortly afterward the frail mother closed her earthly journeyings and her resting place was made at the Dalles, Ore. The bereaved family continued the journey to its original destination and located on a farm in Linn county, Ore., in the Willamette valley. Three years later Willoughby Churchill married Matilda A. Price, of Albany, Ore. The family has been prominently connected with the development and upbuilding of the Willamette region and all of the four children of the last marriage are residing in Oregon. The father died on July 18, 1895, at the venerable age of eighty-six.

An older brother of our subject, O. H. Churchill, resided for years at Sun River, Mont. He was one of the first extensive stockmen of the state and drove a band of cattle from Texas as early as 1870. He was active and influential in the settlement of the Sun River valley. A man of wonderful energy, he was an acknowledged leader in all popular movements. He emigrated to Los Angeles, Cal., in the 'eighties and engaged in banking. Another brother, David H. Churchill, located at Ulm about the same time. He was also a stockman and possessed, at the time of his death, in 1895, a large landed estate now owned by his family. He was a Republican

and was sheriff of Lewis and Clarke county about 1885, having been previously defeated as a candidate for the same office by James Gillpatrick by one vote. He was also well known and prominent in all public matters.

Thomas A. Churchill passed his early life on his father's farm of 960 acres lying in the heart of Albany prairie, the best farming land in Oregon, and the best farm on the prairie. This is in the Willamette valley, 100 miles south of Portland. Here Mr. Churchill remained until 1880, the later portion of his residence managing the farm with his brother. His health failing, he took a horseback trip with a packhorse northeasterly through the Rocky mountains in search of health, fortune and adventure, to the Yellowstone valley. From this valley he drifted into the Judith basin, where he located and engaged in woolraising. His health improved, but after four years he sold out and went to New Mexico, intending to locate there in the same business, but on looking over the ground concluded not to remain. Returning to Montana, he was in the livery business at Helena for five years. Here he embarked in matrimony on February 13, 1887, with Mrs. M. M. Schoch, widow of August Schoch, and daughter of Gilvert and Finetta (Shipp) Merritt; she was born and educated at Dubuque, Iowa. In 1889 Mr. Churchill sold his business in Helena, retaining and still owning his home, and removed to the Flathead valley, there purchasing and locating on his present handsome property, 160 acres, for which he paid \$1,200. He took possession of this on November 22, 1889, the year before the Great Northern reached the valley. He has since added 160 acres to his land by purchase of Nathaniel Scott's pre-emption. He leases 320 acres from the state and cultivates about 450 acres. His staple crop is oats, of which he threshes annually from 14,000 to 16,000 bushels. This ranch lies in one of the loveliest sections of this famous valley and Mr. Churchill has developed here an ideal home. Mr. Churchill is fully identified with the interests of his young county. In the act of the legislature creating Flathead county he was named as one of the county commissioners and held this office until his successor qualified after the first regular election. He ran for the legislature as the Republican candidate in 1900, but shared defeat with the other candidates on the ticket.

Religiously Mr. Churchill was raised by Disciple parents. He is strongly opposed to secret organizations. The family circle is graced by three children, Pearl, born December 26, 1888; Mollie, born May 12, 1891, and Thomas A. Churchill, Jr., born October 10, 1892.

Progressive Men of the State of Montana  
A. W. Bowen & Co.; ncd; pages 1330-1331

[contributed by Bob Wilson]

T. A. Churchill is in Los Angeles visiting Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Churchill at their home, 201 South Figueroa street.

Mr. Churchill has but recently returned from a motor trip to Montana and was accompanied back by Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Lebert, Mr. and Mrs. A. Reed and Dr. and Mrs. Botorf and niece, all of whom will visit San Diego before returning home.

[San Diego Union, San Diego, California, Tuesday, December 1, 1908 p.5]

Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Churchill of Los Angeles, Cal., are guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Brandt, 503 Locust street. They are former residents of Montana, but have been making California their home for a number of years. There is a striking resemblance between Mr. Churchill and "Uncle Joe" Cannon, the famous Illinois congressman, a fact which affords Mr. Churchill much amusement, especially when traveling, when some of the unsophisticated often mistake him for "Uncle Joe."

[Anaconda Standard, Anaconda, Montana, Tuesday, August 24, 1920 p.13]

Children of Thomas Churchill and Mary Merritt:

- i. Pearl Churchill (1888- )
- ii. Mollie Churchill (1891- )
- iii. Thomas A. Churchill Jr. (1892- )

Children of Willoughby Churchill and Matilda A. Price:

1. Oliver F. Churchill
- b. 1853 OR
- d. 22 Jan 1931 Hoquim, Grays Harbor County, WA  
bur Aberdeen, WA

m.

- Alma (Sherrill) Cross
- b. Mar 1863/03 Jun 1863 Saylorville, IA
- d. 17 Oct 1929 Big Timber, Sweet Grass County, Montana

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

1870: Peoria, Linn County, OR, August 22, 1870; Willoughby Churchill, 61, farmer, \$9800 \$3956, KY; Matilda, 40, keeping house, IN; Thomas, 19, works on farm, Wash Terr; Oliver, 17, works on farm, OR; Edwin, 16, works on farm, OR; Laura B., 15, at school, OR; Minnie, 11, at school, OR; Willoughby, farmer, 33, IL

1880: Harrisburg, Linn County, Oregon, June 10, 1880; Willoughby Churchill, 72, retired farmer, KY KY KY; Matilda, 50, wife, keeping house, IN VA KY; Thomas, 28, son, farmer, IL KY IL; Olliver, 26, son, farmer, OR KY IN; Edmund, 24, son, invalid-asthma, OR KY IN

## 2. Edwin James Churchill

b. 18 May 1854 Harrisburg, Linn County, OR

d. 25 Feb 1902 Halsey, Linn County, OR

buried Pine Grove Cemetery, Peoria, Linn County, OR

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

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## 3. Laura B. Churchill

b. 1856 Linn County, OR

d. 28 May 1934 Salem, Marion County, OR OSH

buried Pine Grove Cemetery, Peoria, Linn County, OR

m. 18 Jun 1874 Harrisburg, Linn County, OR

George E.N. Jordan

b. May 1845 MA

d. 15 Aug 1904 Lane County, OR

buried Roseburg National Cemetery, Roseburg, Douglas County, OR

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

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4. Minnie Churchill

b. 06 Jul 1859 Harrisburg, Linn County, OR

d. 17 Oct 1932 Cottage Grove, Lane County, Oregon

m.

Warren Nichols

b.

d. 30 Jan 1920 Lane County, Oregon

1860: Harrisburg, Linn County, OR, June 28, 1860; Willoughby Churchill, 50, farmer, \$8600 \$3866 KY; Matilda, 31, IL; David, 17, IL; Mary, 14, IL; Martha, 9, IL; Thomas, 8, IL; Oliver, 7, OR; Edwin, 6, OR; Laura, 4, OR; Minnie, 1, OR

1870: Peoria, Linn County, OR, August 22, 1870; Willoughby Churchill, 61, farmer, \$9800 \$3956, KY; Matilda, 40, keeping house, IN; Thomas, 19, works on farm, Wash Terr; Oliver, 17, works on farm, OR; Edwin, 16, works on farm, OR; Laura B., 15, at school, OR; Minnie, 11, at school, OR; Willoughby, farmer, 33, IL

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### Obituaries

#### Minnie D. Nichols

Mrs. Minnie D. Nichols died at her home about three and a half miles south of Cottage Grove at midnight Monday. She was born July 6, 1859 at Harrisburg, Oregon. On February 28, 1878, she was married to Warren Nichols, who died in 1920.

Mrs. Nichols was a member of the Christian church of Cottage Grove. She is survived by two sons, Clarence of Scotia, California, and Oliver A. of Cottage Grove; two daughters, Mrs. Winnie Haggerty of Portland and Miss Anna M. Nichols of Cottage Grove; and one sister, Mrs. Laura Jordan of Salem.

She has resided in the Cottage Grove vicinity for the past 19 years and had lived in Oregon all of her life, with the exception of three years spent in Virginia.

Funeral services will be held at the Christian church in Cottage Grove at 2:30 Wednesday afternoon. Rev. I. G. Shaw will officiate. Interment will be in the Odd Fellows cemetery with Mills chapel in charge.

[contributed by Bob Wilson]