A Minnehaha County Cemetery Marker

Sometimes resolution of one mystery generates another. This is the story of the mystery of a burial location that is replaced by one about relationships. Seen another way, it is a brief account of the apparently difficult life of a second great grandmother of mine.

The main player in this story is Rhoda Satina Bates, and the initial mystery was the exact location of her burial. Satina, as she is frequently referred to, started life in eastern Pennsylvania in 1827. She moved to northern Illinois in 1840 with her parents and two younger brothers. Satina's father worked as a cobbler, and one of her brothers bought land to establish a farm in 1857. This farm remained with Bates families for over 100 years.[i] In 1849 Satina married Jerome B. Tupper in Winnebago County, IL. She and Jerome had one child (a girl) there and four additional ones (three girls and one boy) in Wisconsin to which they moved some time after the 1850 Federal census. [ii]

In 1860, Jerome is listed as a mason in Elkhart[iii], but in 1861 he entered the 4th WI Cavalry. Due to a disability, he left the Union Army in about 1862[iv] , and by 1870 his family is shown to have moved to Grant County, WI.[v] It is not clear where Satina and the children are during the period from 1860 – 1870. In the 1880s, the family was fragmenting/dispersing. Jerome is living alone in a home in Big Patch, WI, near Platteville in 1885.[vi] Satina and her youngest daughter named Ada are in Osage, IA, with/near another now married daughter (Clara) in 1880.[vii] The two remaining daughters (Mary and Ellen) and son (Charles/Clarence) have also married by the end of 1886[viii], when Jerome is clearly in a Soldiers' Home.[ix] The details of the process of everyone going their own way are not clear. That they did is clear.

Daughter Ada did not remain single for long as she married in 1887.[x] She next can be found in Minnehaha County, SD, in the last month of 1889, where she gives birth to a daughter.[xi] Satina dies and is buried in Bethel Cemetery[xii] in Minnehaha County early in the following month.[xiii] So, it seems that Satina has followed her youngest daughter's family to South Dakota. For what it is worth, by 1895, Ada and her family are back in IA (Cerro Gordo County).[xiv]

Discovery of Satina's burial place was facilitated by the Sioux Valley Genealogical Society, which supplied documentation on Bethel County Cemetery that indicated when and where R. S. Topper (sic) died and was buried. Her death apparently occurred at the farm/house of "Len Eldredge." This information comes from "Grave Records of Minnehaha County Cemeteries" and the WPA Graves Registration Project, both of which post-date Satina's death by a significant amount of time.[xv] This information resolved the mystery of her death and burial, but it also opened a new mystery. – Why was she at the Eldredge residence? Did Satina, Ada, or Ada's husband (Harry Williams) know the Eldredge family?
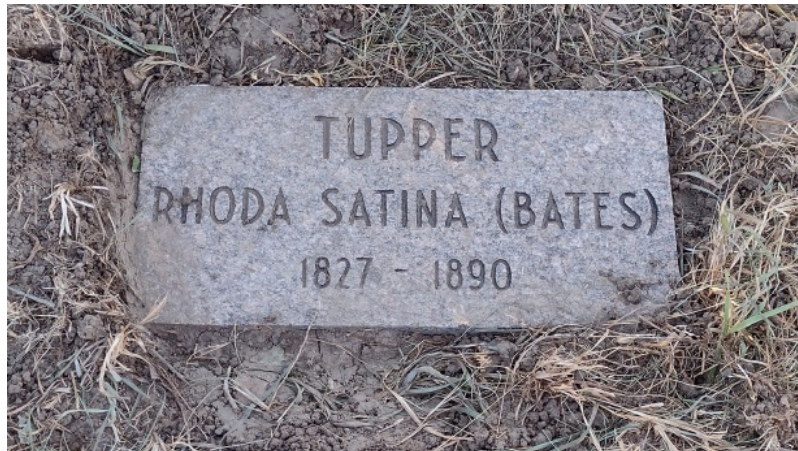
To try to resolve this mystery, I researched the Eldredge/Eldridge families in the Minnehaha County area and found one Julius C. Eldredge, who owned a farm near Bethel Cemetery[xvi] and who had a son named Lynn who took over the farm after Julius moved to Sioux Falls in the 1890s.[xvii] My suspicion is that the Len Eldredge associated with the burial information is actually Lynn Eldredge. Working on that assumption, what might be the relationship between the Eldredge family and Satina (or her daughter's family)? Trying to answer that question has led me to investigate the Eldredge family(ies) and that of Ada's husband.

A Minnehaha County Cemetery Marker

Although the Julius C. Eldredge family can be traced to Rock County, WI, prior to homesteading in Minnehaha County, SD, I can not establish a link between the Tupper family in Walworth and Grant Counties and the Eldredge family in Rock County. Rock and Walworth Counties share a border, but the distance between the two households was about about 50 miles.[xviii] Since Julius Eldredge and Jerome Tupper both served in the Union Army (in different regiments), perhaps their families could have become acquainted through pre-war or post-war events.[xix]

Another possibility comes from the family of Harry Williams, Ada's husband.[xx] This is an immigrant family from England that settled originally in Grant County, WI. Try as I might, I have not been able to establish a link between Harry Williams and his (large) family and the Eldredges. I have found that Harry's sister, Laura, married and lived in Edmunds County, SD, at the time of Satina's death.[xxi] Minnehaha and Edmunds Counties are not close, so it does not seem likely that Ada and her family were in SD to visit her husband's sister. Consequently, the reason for Satina and Ada's presence in Minnehaha County, SD, in the winter of 1889-1890 is a mystery.

In the fall of 2024, since Satina's grave was unmarked, I was able to place a marker on her gave in Bethel Cemetery.[xxii] One mystery laid to rest, but another revealed!

Endnotes: A Minnehaha County Cemetery Marker

i   *The Bates Centennial Farm of Rockton, Illinois (1857-1990's) antecedents-stewards-offshoots*, 2002, Ann Kennedy, editor. See https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1061533 .

ii   For more detailed information about Satina see the section of my website devoted to the family of her son, Charles (a.k.a. Clarence). - https://281connections.us/281connections_Wiki/South_Dakota_Families/Bates-Moodie.html

iii   "United States, Census, 1860", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MW9C-Y47 : Tue Jul 09 00:30:47 UTC 2024), Entry for Jerome Tupper and Settina Tupper, 1860.

iv   For military service, see for example, "Walworth, Wisconsin, United States records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939V-5298-6?view=index : Dec 6, 2024), image 47 of 533; United States. National Archives and Records Administration.

v   "United States, Census, 1870", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MN9F-NZS : Fri Jul 12 05:02:20 UTC 2024), Entry for Jerrome Tupper and Settina R Tupper, 1870.

vi   1885 Wisconsin Census: "Wisconsin, State Census, 1861", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MMSH-FRZ : Fri Dec 06 15:09:01 UTC 2024), Entry for J B Tupper, 1885.

vii   For Satina and Clara see "United States, Census, 1880", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MDLQ-KRK : Sun Mar 10 10:49:09 UTC 2024), Entry for Clinton Cole and Claria Cole, 1880, and for Ada see "United States, Census, 1880", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MDLQ-N2V : Mon Mar 11 01:02:53 UTC 2024), Entry for Guy Stickney and Isabell Stickney, 1880.

viii   Mary's marriage to Ed Burns probably took place in 1870-1871. It was likely his second marriage.: "United States, Census, 1860", , *FamilySearch* (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MW9C-Y47 : Tue Jul 09 00:30:47 UTC 2024), Entry for Jerome Tupper and Settina Tupper, 1860. ; Ellen's marriage: "Wisconsin, County Marriages, 1836-1911", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QK8P-BC1M : Tue Mar 19 11:15:51 UTC 2024), Entry for James Ward and Nellie Tupper, 25 December 1871. ; Charles' marriage: "Wisconsin, Marriages, 1836-1930", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XRRL-TYS : 29 February 2024), Salina E. Tupper in entry for Clarence J. Tupper, 1886.

ix   "United States, National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VH4N-R1T : Thu Mar 07 02:03:12 UTC 2024), Entry for Jerome B Tupper, 1886.

x   "Wisconsin, County Marriages, 1836-1911", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QK8P-1TXX : Wed Mar 20 14:28:24 UTC 2024), Entry for Harry Williams and Ada Evelyn Tupper, 9 March 1887.

xi   "South Dakota, Department of Health, Index to Births 1843-1914 and Marriages 1950-2016," , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QKD8-56ZY : 2 January 2024), Harry Williams in entry for Jessie Williams, 5 Dec 1889; citing Birth, Minnehaha, South Dakota, United States, South Dakota Department of Health, Pierre.

xii   Bethel Cemetery information - https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/96810/bethel-cemetery .

xiii   "South Dakota, Grave Registration Records, 1940-1941", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:CYM2-N8T2 : Sun Mar 10 09:43:31 UTC 2024), Entry for R.s.mrs Topper.

xiv   "Iowa, State Census, 1895", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VTSP-BLG : Sun Mar 10 06:52:01 UTC 2024), Entry for Harry Williams and Ada Williams, 1895.

xv "Grave Records of Minnehaha County Cemeteries", 1982, by the Sioux Valley Genealogical Society, page 249.

xvi   Patent information can be found here - https://glorecords.blm.gov/results/default.aspx?searchCriteria=type=patent%7Cst=SD%7Ccty=%7Cln=eldridge%7Cfn=julius%7Csp=true%7Csw=true%7Csadv=false . An 1893 map of the area can be found here - https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4183m.la000862/?r=-0.264,-0.015,1.688,0.894,0 .

xvii See https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/9K66-PPH .

xviii "United States, Census, 1860", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MW98-J8G : Tue Jul 09 00:21:01 UTC 2024), Entry for T S Eldredge and Carlott Eldredge, 1860.

xix   Eldredge service - "United States, Civil War Soldiers Index, 1861-1865", , FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FSR2-73G : 25 August 2021), Julius C. Eldredge, 1861-1865. For Tupper service, see for example the reference noted above - https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VH4N-R1T .

xx   For William family information see - https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/KZQC-2C5 (the father of Harry Williams).

xxi   Information about Laura Williams - https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/KF5Y-K6G .

xxii Rhoda Satina Bates Tupper - Find a Grave, database and images
(https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/173386347/rhoda_satina-tupper: accessed December 6, 2024), memorial page
for Rhoda Satina Bates Tupper (1827–4 Jan 1890), Find a Grave Memorial ID 173386347, citing Bethel Cemetery,
Minnehaha County, South Dakota, USA; Maintained by Thanks For The Memories (contributor 48809896). And
https://281connections.us/281connections_Wiki/South_Dakota_Families/Bates-Moodie/BethelCemeteryOverview-
new.pdf .