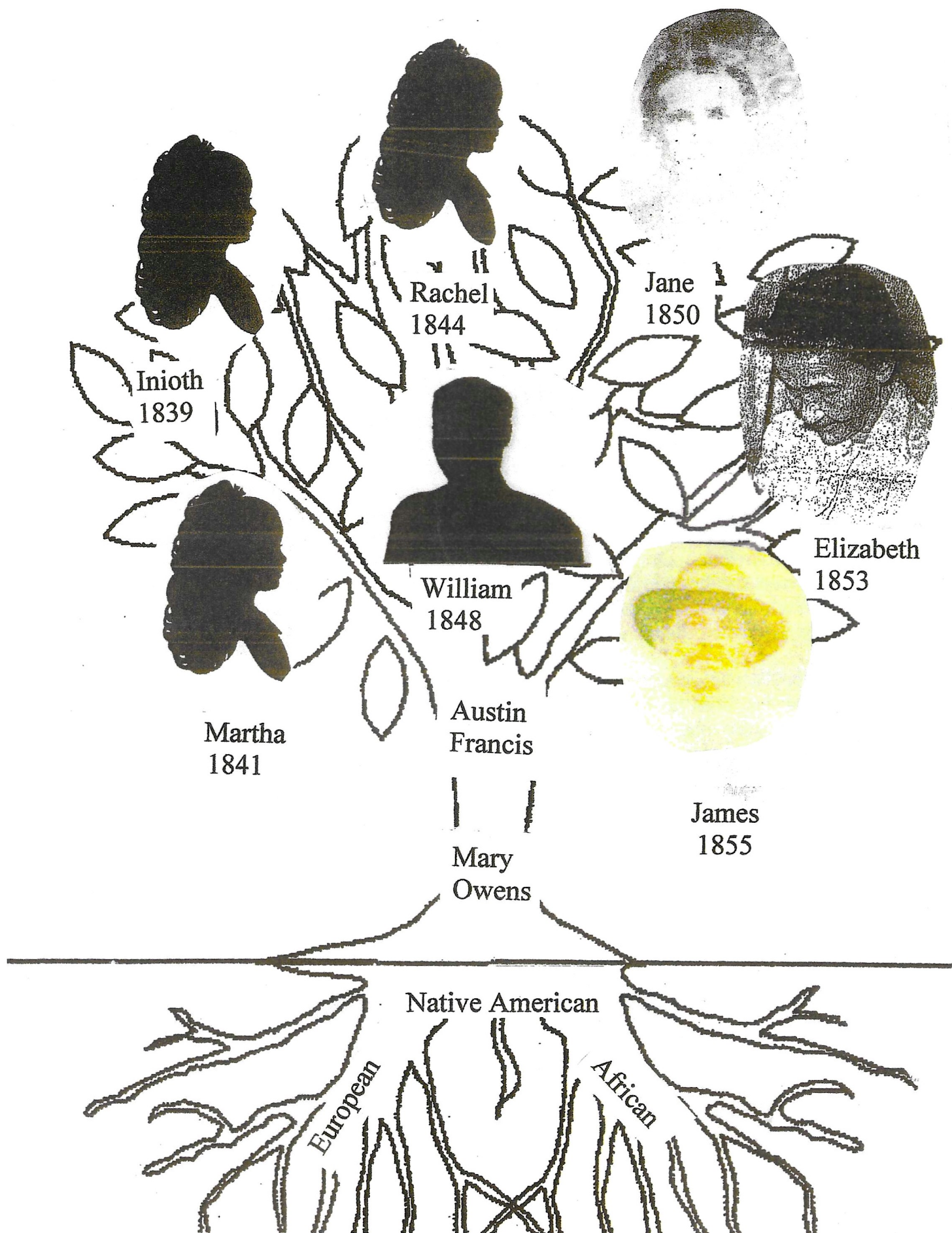


Austin and Mary Owens Francis' Tree



History is defined as the past events of a period in time or in the life and development of a people; the branch of knowledge that records and analyzes past events; a chronological account of past events of a period or in the life or development of a people.

Unfortunately, for descendants of African Americans and/or Native Americans most of our history has been distorted or lost. So, we depended upon stories that ancestors told and stories that we over heard when grown folks were talking. Those stories were enough for me to shed light on the descendants of Austin Francis and Mary Owens Francis.

The federal government began keeping census records in 1790. At that time, 19% of the population was black and 9% of those were free. Most slaves lived in the state of Virginia. The number of slaves owned was the only information recorded on the census until the 1870 census. If you were a free person of color, you were listed as colored. However, if you were of mixed heritage then you were listed as Mulatto. Mulatto existed as an official census category until 1930. Although Mulatto is commonly used to describe individuals of mixed European and African descent, it originally referred to anyone with mixed ethnicities. In the United States, mulatto was also used as a term for those of mixed white and Native American ancestry during the early census years.

Prior to 1900 few Indians are included in the Federal census. Indians are not identified in the 1790-1840 censuses. In 1860, Indians living in the general population are identified for the first time. Beginning with the 1900 census, Indians are enumerated on reservations as well as in the general population. In the 1850 census, this is the first time all family members are listed and information about each person is recorded. People are identified as white, black or mulatto. In the 1860 census, people were identified as white, black, mulatto and in rare instances as Indian (usually in column 6, with the notation "Ind" or "In."). In the 1870 census, Indians in the general population were identified in column 6, Color by "T" or "In". In the 1880 census, Indians in the general population were identified in column 4, Color by "T" or "In".

Now, when you combine all of these facts do we rely on the Federal government for our history or do we rely on stories from family members? I say we can use both. For example, the first time Austin and Mary appear on the census is 1850. He is 40 years old and Mary is 33 years old. The children are Inioth E. 11 years old; Martha 9 years old; Rachel 6 years old; William 2 years old; and Jane 1 month old. Everyone is listed as a mulatto and being born in North Carolina. Austin and Mary could not read or write. This means Austin was born around 1810 and Mary about 1817. The oral story told says that Francis Heathe was born to a family of Indian descent. He lived in Chaven County, North Carolina. However, there has never been a Chaven County. When you look at the document, you can see how the error was made. It is probably Craven County. Francis lived there until he became a young man. He was not happy with the treatment that the Blacks and Indians received from the hands of white people. It was groups like the KKK but not the KKK that were raping and beating the women and children. The Ku Klux Klan was not formed until after the Civil War. Heathe formed a group called the Freedom Riders. They rode through the white communities doing the same. Word got around of Heathe and his activities, forcing him to flee to Rutherford County. Heathe

changed his name to Austin Francis. Part of Rutherford County was given to form McDowell County were Austin and Mary probably lived the rest of their lives. Prior to the 1850 census, Austin can not be found. If he was of Native American descent we know that records were not kept prior to 1900. And changing his name would also explain why there is no information before the 1850 census. During those times it wasn't always safe to be Native American or Black. I believe people did what was necessary to survive. Austin and Mary did the same thing.

In the 1860 census, Austin is 49 years old; Mary is 48 years old; Rachel is 16 years old; William is 12 years old; Jane is 10 years old; and there are two new additions – Elizabeth is 7 years old and James is 5 years old. Living next door is his daughter Martha. She is living with her husband Jefferson Hooper. Austin is now a miner. There are no records or information on Inioth after the 1850 census. In the 1870 census, Rachel and William are no longer living at home. William married Ella Scott. There is no information on Rachel after the 1860 census. Jane is still at home at age 20. Elizabeth's name has disappeared but now there is Bida. So, we assumed it is the same person because the ages coincide. James is 14 years of age. Then there are three additions to the family Edward is 5 years old; Ann is 3 years old and John is 2 years old. Austin is now a farmer. It was believed that the last three children were Austin's and Mary's. It only states that the children are at home. But after further research and oral stories, the last three children were grandchildren. When you look at the 1880 census, Austin is now 70 years old. He is still a farmer. Jane is still at home at age 30. Edward is 16 but is now listed as a grandson along with Ann and John. There is another addition, Alse (hard to make out the name) who is listed as a granddaughter. William and Alfred Hooper are living with Austin. They are listed as grandchildren. They are the sons of Martha Sarah Francis Hooper. What happened to Martha? There are no records of her after the 1870 census. Now there are six grandchildren living with Austin and Jane is the only child still at home. This is the last time Austin appears in census records. There is no recorded information about his death. The 1890 census was destroyed. Mary Owens Francis appears in the 1900 census for the last time. She is 83 years old and is living with her son William. There is no information about her death either.

Remembering stories my father told about his dad being from Jellico, Tennessee and an Aunt Emma being of Native American descent ignited the curiosity I always had about my family and life. Stories my mother told about family helped put it all together. My mother had written down the history of four generations of Francis family members. Stories about my grandfather and his brothers and moonshine and the like, really made me believe that there were more Francis out there somewhere. Through census records, my brother Claude and I found Edward (our great grandfather) being a child of Austin Francis. But it wasn't until a reunion held by descendants of my grandfather's sister, Aunt Pernie that I heard more stories about two sets of children. Upon further research in Campbell County, Tennessee, I found that Jane Francis along with her three children Edward, Ann and John left North Carolina around 1884. Jane married a man named Edward Weaver in 1884. Edward Francis married Dora Weaver and Ann Francis married John Gibson the following year. My mother had also talked about us being related to Weavers. They worked the coal mines and lived in the area for over 30 years.

Some of the family moved to Harlan County, Kentucky continuing to work in the coal mines. In the 1910 census, my grandfather, Charlie Francis is living with his one year old daughter, Maggie. He is a widower. He is living with his grandmother, Jane Francis Weaver. This information helped confirm that Edward, Ann and John were Jane's children (father not known). Edward Francis was Charlie's father. Jane had three more children with Edward Weaver. They were Mathew, John and Emma Jane (the aunt my dad talked about). More probing led me to an obituary for one of Emma's daughters. There was one sister, Emma Patsy possibly still living. I got out the phone book and called. I had found the granddaughter of Jane Francis Weaver. I spent a weekend with her in 2008 and gained lots of information and my most prized possession, a picture of Jane Francis Weaver and her husband Edward Weaver. I also discovered there is another granddaughter of Jane's living in Middlesboro, Kentucky. Her name is Edna Weaver Johnson. She is the only living child of Mathew Weaver. Both ladies remember their grandmother. Unfortunately, no one knows when she died or where. Patsy, Edna and I keep in touch. Patsy remembered that Edward Weaver used to work for Austin Francis and that he was a slave. So we guessed that Jane and Edward left North Carolina together looking for a better life in Tennessee. Jane was the only child of Austin Francis that left North Carolina. Later, one of Biddie's son, Jim Jones lived and died in Jellico, Tennessee. The 1900 census shows a James Francis from North Carolina as a boarder with Jane Weaver. This James was born around 1877. He is 23 years old. Which James is this? I haven't been able to figure out. But it shows that the family was keeping in touch. I also discovered that James Logan and his wife, Ollie owned land in Claiborne County, Tennessee. That is the next county over from Campbell and approximately five miles from Middlesboro, Kentucky. Logan also was living there when he registered for World War I. He worked for the Fork Ridge Coal and Coke Co. in Fork Ridge, Tennessee. James Samuel Francis also owned land with his son in Tennessee. Marie Blye remembers her grandfather, James Samuel traveling to Tennessee and Kentucky working for the government.

Even though family members couldn't read and write they still managed to keep some form of contact. Federal documents prove that Jane relocated to Tennessee and that various family members followed. Oral stories from family members also make the connections. The Jane Francis Weaver branch left North Carolina and eventually lost contact. Her branch is a huge branch of the Austin Francis tree. Now, we have come full circle thanks to the computer. In 2007, I decided to look at James Samuel Francis in the census records and several names appeared. I had found my family. William "Ron" Nabors left a website that I contacted. Here we are today with over 1600 names on the Francis Family Tree, nine generations of Francis folks and it is growing. Now, the descendants of Martha Sarah Francis Hooper, William "Bud" Francis, Jane Francis Weaver, Elizabeth "Biddie" Francis Jones/Jackson and James Samuel Francis are coming together for the first time in approximately 150 years. What must Austin and Mary think? I cannot help but believe they are smiling and excited that the family has been reunited. So, this reunion is special because we are recognizing the five branches of the Austin and Mary Francis descendants. I hope this will be a memorable and proud moment for you as it has been for me.

Martha's Tree

1. Sarah Jane Hooper - July 16, 1892
2. Emily Bessie Hooper - September 8, 1894
3. Annie Travis Hooper - March 31, 1896
4. Noah Roosevelt Hooper - July 19, 1902
5. Elsie Mae Hooper - January 1, 1905
6. Naomi Rebecca Hooper - April 15, 1907
7. Lula Edna Hooper - July 13, 1909
8. Margaret Norvella Hooper - August 29, 1915

Martha
Sarah
Francis

Jefferson
Hooper

married
August 24, 1858

Austin
Francis

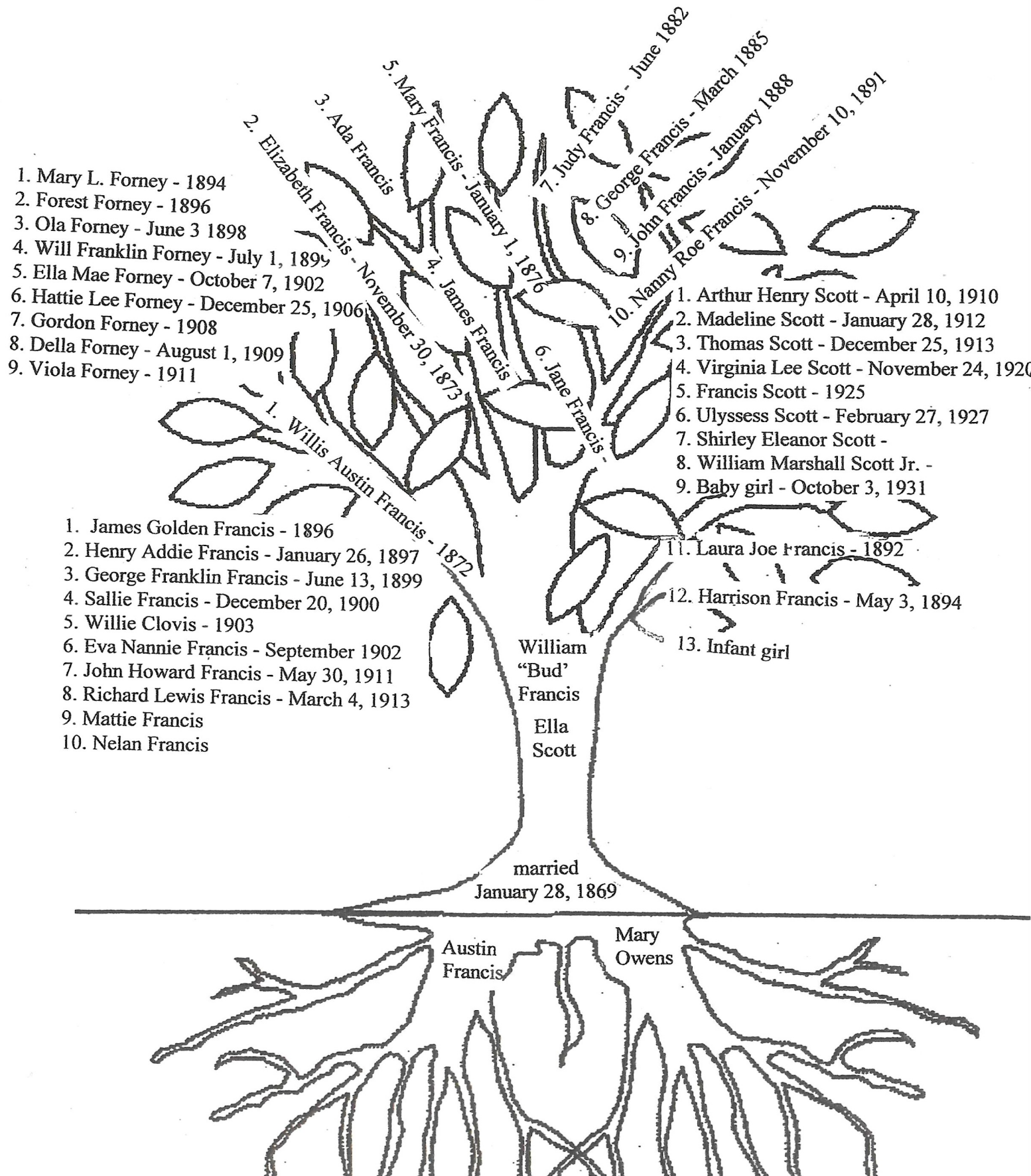
Mary
Owens

2. Alfred Hooper - 1862

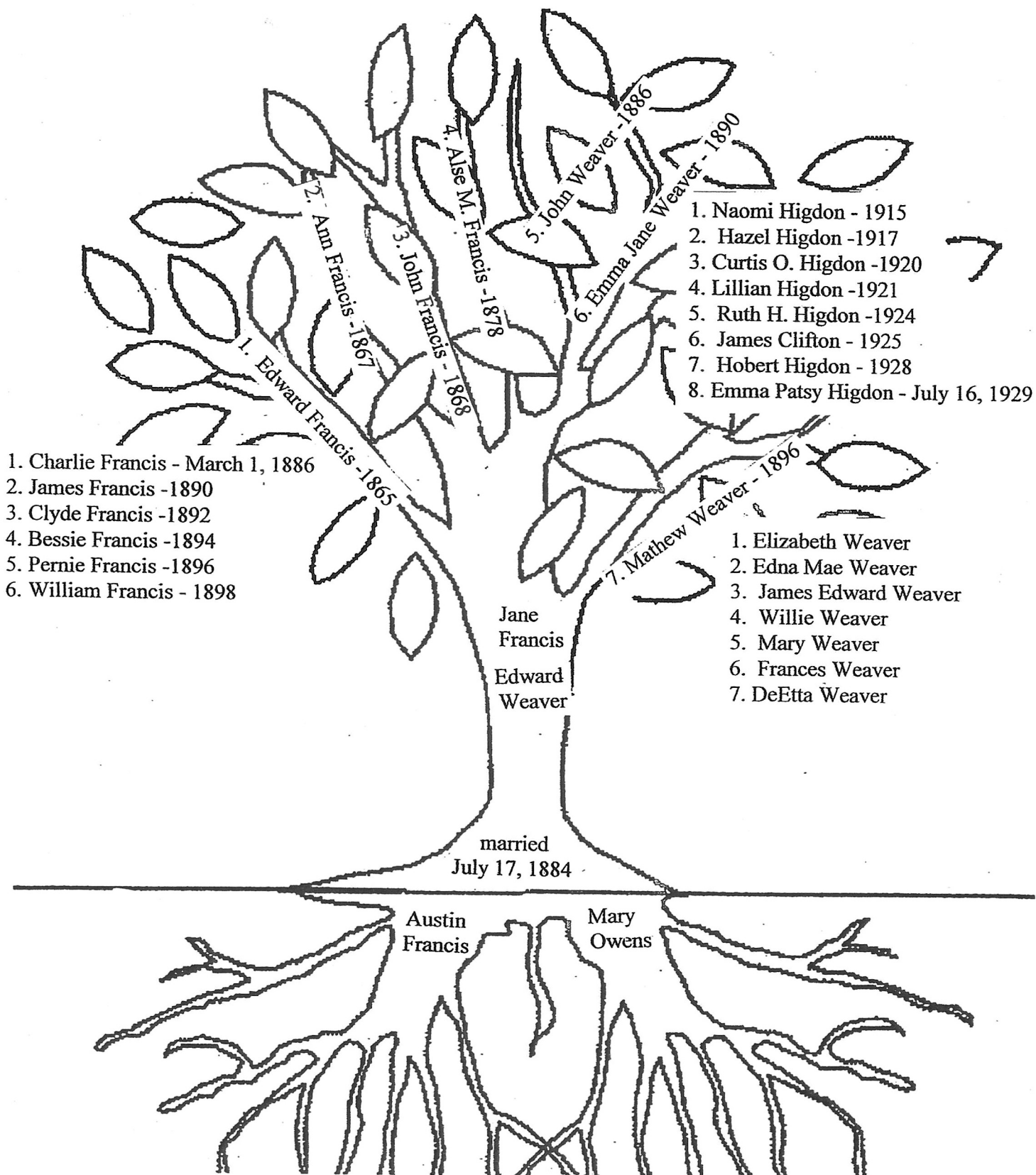
1. William Hooper - 1859

1. Martha L. Hooper - August 27, 1885
2. Charles E. Hooper - March 23, 1887
3. William Govan Hooper - 1890
4. Helon California Hooper - January 27, 1891
5. Annie Alice Hooper - October 7, 1895
6. Bertha J. Hooper - August 19, 1898
7. Harvey Hooper - July 16, 1899
8. Emma H. Hooper - 1902
9. Gertrude M. Hooper - January 2, 1903

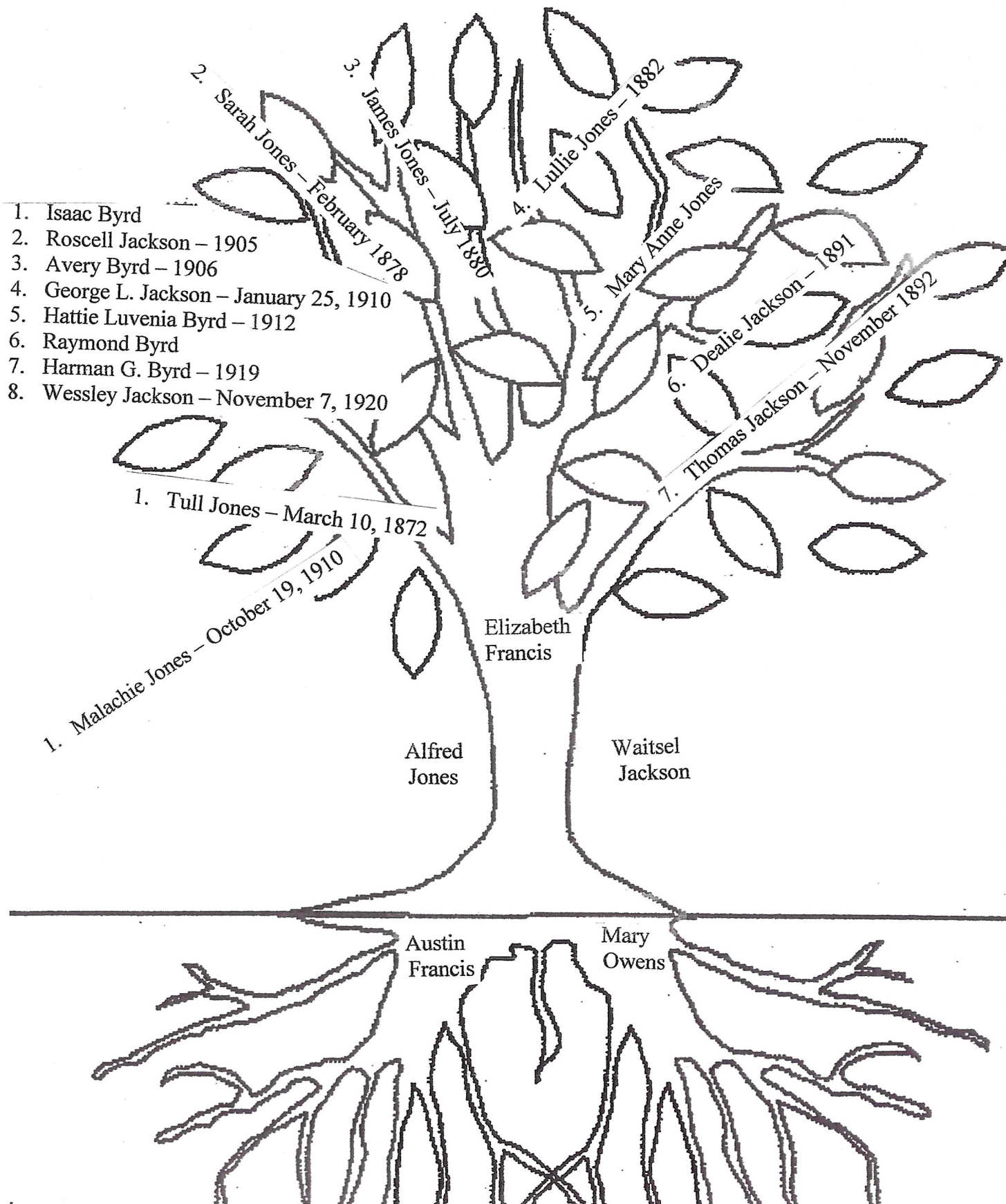
William's Tree



Jane's Tree



Elizabeth's Tree



James' Tree

1. Harry Francis - May 28, 1917
2. Pauline Francis - March 3, 1919
3. Barbara Christine Francis - May 16, 1920
4. Irene Francis - Jul 28, 1921
5. James Francis - June 8, 1923
6. Sylvia Francis - December 28, 1924
7. Helen Francis - May 25, 1926
8. Evelyn Francis - March 26, 1928
9. Joseph Pinkney Francis - March 23, 1930
10. Alvenia Francis - March 9, 1932
11. Ervin Francis - May 9 1934
12. Benjamin Francis Jr - October 13, 1937

1. Harley Francis - March 17, 1916
2. Hillard Francis - June 9, 1919
3. Willis Francis - June 11, 1929
4. Lassie Mae Francis -

1. Francis Smith
2. Theo Grafton Smith
3. Gladys Smith
4. Linnie Smith
5. James Smith

1. Ruby Johnson

1. Emma Rachel Francis

1. Bertha Tate - 1905
2. Jane Viola Tate - 1906
3. Junius Austin Tate - August 10, 1908
4. Wilbert Tate - 1911
5. James A Tate - 1914
6. Mildred Hannie Tate - 1915
7. Sidney Tate - December 9, 1918
8. Lily Mae Tate - April 30, 1923

2. Willis Austin Francis - December 25, 1882
3. James Logan Francis - October 29, 1884
10. Adolphus Francis - February 10, 1900
11. Clarence Francis - December 25, 1902

6. Joseph Pinkney Francis - January 5, 1892

7. Hannie Francis - November 28, 1894

9. John Edgar Francis - March 3, 1898

1. Troy Nekotas Francis - March 21, 1927
2. Reama Odell Francis - November 23, 1929
3. James William Francis - October 14, 1931
4. Willie Marie Francis - May 15, 1934
5. Hazel Francis - November 20, 1935
6. Lester Francis - July 16, 1937

8. Jesse Young Francis - February 7, 1896

James Samuel Francis

Mary Jane Harris

1. Lillian Francis - November 26, 1926
2. Jesse Young Francis Jr - June 13, 1930
3. Maudie Maxine Francis - July 12, 1934
4. Robert Gene Francis - April 8, 1936
5. Otis Franklin Francis - March 9 1938
6. Ola Mae Francis - January 8, 1940
7. Joseph Wilbur Francis - January 12, 1942
8. Charles Lewis Francis - 1943
9. Clarence Jones Francis - March 18, 1945
10. Mary Sue Francis - January 13, 1948
11. Henry Leon Francis - December 31, 1949

married
December 23, 1879

Austin Francis

Mary Owens