

Who the Heck is Haze E Barton Age 10?

by
Vicki Dean

That question haunted me for years after I found Haze E Barton in the newly released 1920 Tarrant Co. TX Census records with a woman who appeared to match my great Aunt Sarah Ann Elizabeth Dean Simmons Simmons.

And for years I dismissed that the Census record could be my Great Aunt Sarah because in all the contact with my Dean Cousins, no one had mentioned a Haze E Barton. In fact, Sarah was sort of a mystery figure to me. I knew about her early life with her parents and 10 brothers but her adult life after she married brothers Marcus and JC Simmons was more vague. She had only one child, an adopted daughter, Lila Simmons, listed in the 1910 Grand Prairie Dallas Co. TX Census. Lila married Sarah's nephew Frank Dean and lived in OK where her family also knew little of her years with Sarah and JC Simmons in TX. Plus my Sarah would have been in 76 yrs old in 1920. Who would give a 76 yr old widow a 10 yr old orphan to raise?

After years of listless genealogy, a visit to my cousin Virgil brought to light a new piece of information in just one line of his Grandfather JT's 1930 Obit.... and a sister Sally in Mena AR. Mena? Are you sure?? That's where Sarah's brother and my Grandparents, William and Amanda Dean, lived for over 50 yrs. So my online search began in the Mena AR Polk Co. 1930 Census.

BINGO! There was a Sarah AE Simmons living just a few blocks from her now widowed sister-in-law, Amanda! Next couple of steps were easy, look for death record, and order a Death Certificate. The certificate arrived and proved it was my Aunt Sarah and that she died 10 Mar 1934 in Mena AR. Next, where is she buried?

I contacted the Polk Co Gene Society for a look up and no Sarah was listed in the Polk Co. Cemetery Records. Next? Someone suggested calling the Beasley-Wood Funeral Home that is still in business. Eureka! They had her record and she is interred in the Pinecrest Cemetery. But I still didn't have all the info until a special angel at the Polk Co Gene Society e-mailed me a scan of that funeral record.

Lovely, Sarah's brother Jeff Dean filled out the biographical information, adopted daughter, Lila Dean wired the \$125.00 to pay for the funeral and Mrs. Joe Scroggins made the arrangements. Mrs. Joe Scroggins who the heck is she? Her address was listed as Box 108, Corsicana TX so pull up the 1930 Navarro Co. Census.

Joe Scroggins age 25 is a shipping clerk at a wholesale grocery with wife Hazel Scroggins age 20 a nursing student at the hospital. They had been married one year. OMG! Could that be Haze E Barton?

Put her name in my Family Tree Maker, hit the Websearch button and what will it find? Hazel Barton Scroggins pops up in the 1996 Fresno, California Death Index. Really? Hazel Barton Scroggins father was Barton and mother, Cook. Ok, is Joe there...he is in 1990!

In for a penny, in for a pound so let's look up Hazel Barton in the 1910 TX Census...there she is with father JD Barton and mother Belle Barton in Grand Prairie Dallas Co. TX. Also listed are 4 brothers Ell, Robert, Oran, Lee and 1 sister, Ivy. Let's look for JD and Belle in 1920...not there. What happened? Click...James D Barton died 08 Feb 1919 in Dallas Co. TX. But where is Belle? Since I was in the TX Death Records, I began backtracking through the pages till I found Belle Barton 20 Jan 1912 in Dallas Co. TX.

We have the Barton's in Grand Prairie TX in 1910 and Aunt Sarah and JC Simmons are there with Lila in 1910, but how to prove they knew each other? My cousin Deana has access to the Dallas Morning News Archives where she found this tidbit:

Grand Prairie Commercial Club

3 July 1909

The Commercial Club last night elected the following officers: Pres, VP, Sec, Treasurer and trustees JD Barton and JC Simmons.¹

Now the connection is clearer. Barton and Simmons were trustees in 1909, ten years before Barton's death and Simmons died sometime before the 1920 Census. Let's dig a little deeper.

On to the Barton & Scroggins message boards on Rootsweb.com and Ancestry.com. There were no posts for Hazel or JD & Belle's family so I made queries for information about their descendents. A post from a man who photographs headstones in TX Cemeteries then adds them to his website caught my eye. I scanned the list of Dallas Co. and found Shady Grove Cemetery which I knew is a road through Grand Prairie. Click and scroll. JD Barton.jpg...click. A big headstone with JD Barton birth and death dates. Wow all this in less than 4 hrs of computer time. Unfortunately there was no Belle Barton listed.

Another Dean Cousin e-mailed me about that time that she had found Patricia Jo Scroggins in the TX Birth Index as the daughter of Hazel and Joe Scroggins and born in Corsicana Navarro Co. TX. I just love the internet and e-mails, don't you?

A few hours later I looked back at the Shady Grove Cemetery photos to see if there were any other names that were connected to JD. The last photo I opened was the headstone of Mary I. Barton, Wife of JD Barton with Belle's death date. Ok, "I" must stand for Isabelle. So we have all the players accounted for now.

At this point I had exhausted all my Ancestry.com options so I Googled Barton and located the Barton Database site. There was James DW Barton with the correct birthdate, but no other family information. I e-mailed the Webmaster, Gary Barton and he gave me Terry Barton's name. On May 8th I put together some of the data I had collected and sent it to Terry. He forwarded it to another researcher who ultimately had abandoned that line

¹ Dallas Morning News Archives

when it was proved not to be his relatives. But two tidbits imparted to me were that JD was married twice and his first wife might have been Adaline Burlison Barton and he had a brother Moat or Martin.

Back to the Shady Grove Cemetery where I found Adaline Burlison Barton headstone photo with her death date 15 Mar 1899. It is a much newer headstone, and must have been a replacement. So I now know that JD and Adaline were living in Grand Prairie and the older children, Ell, Robert and Ivy were hers.

A new search of James D W Barton in the 1900 Dallas Co. Census has him listed living with the three children and his brother Moat.

All of this information I recently gave to your great webmaster and newsletter editor Gary Barton. He has added it with the photos in the Barton Database. While I was e-mailing Gary I was also adding info about the children of JD and their families. So far I have only found girl children for each of the lines, so no Barton DNA will be reaped in this branch.

There are still a lot of questions to be answered about JD his two wives and six children, but considering I only had one question to begin with, I think I know much about the life of Hazel Barton. A nice Fresno researcher did the final look up about Hazel:

Private services for Hazel Barton Scroggins, 86, of Fresno, will be held under the direction of Whitehurst Funeral Chapel. Mrs. Scroggins, a retired registered nurse, died Monday. Remembrances may be sent to Northwest Church, 5414 N. West Ave., Fresno 93711 or to Fresno Youth for Christ, 1401 Divisadero, Fresno, 93721"²

No family members were mentioned because at age 86 she was the last of all her siblings. I don't know what happened to her daughter Patricia Jo, maybe she had passed as well. I wish I had tried to find Hazel before her death. She could have been a wealth of information about my long deceased aunt.

I still don't know why she was living with my Aunt Sarah or why she traveled to Mena AR to plan her funeral. It appears that all the Barton children were scattered around Texas after 1919 although Oran lived with brothers Ell in the 1920 TX Census and with Robert in the 1930 Census. But does it really make sense that a 76 yr old widow as the guardian to a 10 year old child?

One day the Dallas Co Probate Records will be released online and perhaps there will be more insight from the information in those papers. Or not. I'm writing this article both as a Historical Record for the Barton Newsletter and to send to my Dean Cousins in hopes that they might also have some answers.

² Fresno Bee, 22 May 1996