

IN SEARCH OF WILLIAM VANCE

by Tom Moffatt

In 1718 a group of Ulster Presbyterian clergy organized a migration from their parishes to the New World. About 550 landed in Boston in 1718 and were encouraged to take land in what is now Londonderry, NH. Hundreds more migrated over the next generation, one being the family of John Vance in 1738.

These Irish Protestants were looked on with a measure of suspicion by their English New England neighbors. They were clannish. I call them the "oat-cake culture".

Bill Acheson says:

"On a more certain note, the Irish settlers practiced a different agriculture from that of the New Englanders among whom they settled. The Irish farmers grew potatoes, oats large scale flax production, made potato whiskey, oatmeal and oat bread, loved fast horses and maintained large herds of cattle and sheep. They introduced the potato to New England. The apocryphal story was told that when Irish settlers gave gifts of potatoes to the New Englanders, the latter disposed of the roots and cooked the stock. Successful linen and woolen industries emerged at Londonderry, where flax was grown both for local use and for export to the linen makers of Ireland. On the other hand the Irish did not eat pork and had no experience with pigs, the animals most common and most easily raised in New England. As late as 1742 only one Londonderry farmer in five kept a pig — and none kept more than one — while the typical farm had five cattle, two oxen, and a horse. Similarly, the Irish had no knowledge of corn (maize) cultivation and grew oats and wheat instead

The Irish New Hampshire communities had the habit of swarming - starting entirely new communities when land was needed. A couple of examples are New Boston in Hillsborough Co., and Londonderry in Nova Scotia.

During the Revolutionary War they were less enthusiastic about a violent change of government. Their concerns were more related to making their economy work. Many disapproved, but the majority kept their heads down, and kept on with life. But a much higher proportion did not sign NH's Association Test in 1775. Many of the younger generation did serve in the Revolutionary War on the Patriot side, and that brings us to William Vance.

Then again, William Vance's father became more radicalized in the opposite direction through a series of accusations and increasingly harsh treatment.

William Vance Sr. - Radicalized Farmer

THE AGES OF WILLIAM VANCE

First Age - 1759 to 1785 (25 years) - Blazing Youth

Second Age - 1785 to 1797 (12 years) - The New Start & Finding his Stride (age 25 to 37) **Third Age** - 1797 to 1810 (13 years) - The Imaginative Charismatic Man (age 37 to 50) **Fourth Age** - 1810 to 1831 (21 years) - The Peak of Power (age 50 to 71)

Fifth Age - 1831 to 1841 (10 years) - Decline and Bankruptcy (ages 71 to 81)

The legacy of children - onward to 1885

THE FIRST AGE OF WILLIAM VANCE (1759 TO 1785)

Born in late 1759 or early 1760 to a very substantial farmer, William Vance Sr., living east of the present town of Derry. These Irish Presbyterians believed in scholarship, so he was reasonably well educated in the local school, well above basic literacy

When the Revolutionary War begins, his older brother John Vance signs up in Nixon's Regiment, and is soon wounded at Bunker Hill. William Vance, age 15 or just 16, becomes a child soldier.

From his pension application form, in 1832:

"Joined Captain Moses McFarland's Co. in Colonel Nixon's Regiment in June 1775 as a substitute for his brother who had been wounded at Bunker Hill, and fulfilled his eight-month engagement. Subsequently, in March 1776 he enlisted as a Private for one year in Capt. Rice's Company in Colonel Phinney's Regiment. Capt. Rice died of smallpox, and the company was then led by Capt. York, and William Vance was discharged in Dec. 1776 at Fort George."

Enough muster documents confirm this - he was a private in 1775 and 1776 his army time.

William Vance was at Winter Hill, helping surround Boston, then he marched for Fort Ticonderoga in 1776. In the ensuing months many around William Vance died from disease, especially smallpox. The work of bringing supplies to Fort Independence plus the adverse weather and comparative lack of shelter made this a tough life for all, including this 16-year-old. The weather was stormy, there were insufficient entrenching tools, the food was bad. Yet eventually the British retired in November, and William Vance was one of the many shuffling south. When he was discharged in Dec. 1776 at Fort George, he was ill, according to the muster document, yet he made it home, more than many did.

In 1777 William Vance, at 17, became a fifer. There was generally one fifer per company.

Music regulated the soldier's life in that army. A series of beats and signals performed by fifes (and drums) governed the soldier's every move. They told him when to get up, when to eat, and when to go to bed, and they also directed his movements in battle or in military ceremonies.

Twenty-one beats and signals for the Continental Army were standardized and adapted by Washington's talented helper the Prussian-born Baron Friedrich Von Steuben. Von Steuben's regulations listed nine beats: The General, The Assembly, The March, The Reveille, The Troop, The Retreat, The Tattoo, To Arms, and The Parley.

They also prescribed the following twelve signals: Adjutant's Call, First Sergeant's Call, Noncommissioned Officers' Call, Go for Wood, Go for Water, Go for Provisions, Front Halt, Front Advance Quicker, Front March Slower, Drummers Call, Fatigue Call, and Church Call.

The instrument used was a fife about 17 inches long, although some British military fifes about 15 inches long with a pitch of C were also used. Because of lack of standardization and differences in the quality of craftsmanship, fifes were produced in such varying keys and pitches that George Washington ordered that they be sorted according to pitch so the musicians in the Continental Army could play together in tune.

From his 1832 Pension file, corroborated by muster documents:

"In the Spring of 1777 he enlisted as a Private in Capt. Daniel Lane's Company in Col. Alden's Regiment for three years. He joined the Regiment as a musician (fifer), and continued as such until March 1778. He then transferred as a Musician from Capt.

Lane's Co. to Capt. Coburn's Co. in the same regiment, in which he continued to serve until May or June 1780. At that time he was discharged at West Point, NY. Alden was killed at Cherry Valley, and Col. Stacey taken prisoner, and his discharge was signed by Major Derby."

Breaking this down:

He was at Bemis Heights and Saratoga. In the second battle on Bemis Heights on Oct. 7 1777, Ichabod Alden's regiment was part of the attack on Breymann's Redoubt - the attack where Benedict Arnold led the charge, and 17 soldiers in William Vance's regiment died - but the attack made the entire British position untenable.

Subsequently, he was one of the thousands of American troops standing silently while General Burgoyne's surrendering soldiers marched out.

Cherry Valley

William Vance was 18 years old at Cherry Valley on 11 Nov. 1778 when Col. Ichabod Alden showed how poor a colonel he was, and was killed by a tomahawk for his pains.

Details -

- Alden's Regiment arrives in July 1778, and general demands all residents leave the fort, and return to their houses, taking all their goods with them - despite pleading from the residents.
- Alden and other officers billet in the houses, outside the fort
- In early Nov. Seneca Indians warn that an attack by Indians and Butler's Rangers is imminent. Alden scoffs and ignores warning
- Does send out some parties - easily captured by the Senecas, who extract full information on deployments outside the fort
- In attack Alden runs to fort, but stops and tries to shoot with wet powder. Joseph Brant throws tomahawk and that is it for Alden. Second in command captured
- 23 residents killed in six of the 25 or so houses in the community

In 1779 at age 19 Vance learned what retribution was all about as his regiment joined Sullivan's expedition to wipe out the way of life of the Iroquois in western New York.

After that lengthy march through western New York and Pennsylvania, William Vance returned to West Point, where after a period garrison duty on the Hudson, he was mustered out - age 20 on April 28, 1780 - and hemade his way along back to Londonderry, NH.

Was he brutalized by all he had experienced? Like many in most wars since, did he have nightmares about what he had seen, and was he to some degree unstable? Perhaps.

At some break in his war service, likely the winter of 1776/77 he had already fathered a son, John Vance with Nancy Stewart, daughter of John Stewart on a neighboring farm near what is still called Humphrey's Hill in Londonderry.

He married Nancy Stewart in Dec. 1781, and proceeded to have two more children. One survived, and one, William Jr., died at 18 months.

He may have been living on his parents farm - because his father had been first jailed in Exeter and then exiled, without trial, for possibly having helped a Loyalist escape. It was yet one more example of how the war would tear families apart.

That farm was sold by William Vance Sr. 11 Mar. 1785.

Our William Vance Jr. was in trouble - but whether it was a marriage gone sour, economic ills, or conflicted family ties, he literally picks up and leaves, without his wife and children, on May 18 1785.

SECOND AGE OF WILLIAM VANCE - 1785 to 1797

At age 25 William Vance is making a new start. Recruiters were sent into the Presbyterian Irish communities to suggest settling on lands in New Brunswick, not far from the Maine border. This grouping was called the Cape Ann Association, since recruiters were also active around Gloucester, MA.

With the instability of the American economy, and political uncertainty, many did sign up, and even after sober reflection, some followed through with the move. For most of these Irish families it is a case of sending a younger son or daughter into British lands, to have a connection there in case everything falls apart for the newly created American republic.

William Vance has a grant on St. David Ridge he is working by 1786. With the profile of his father, and the fact there are few "known" settlers in the southern part of St. David, he is named a "Justice of the Peace".

He sets to with a will, not only carving out his own farm, but regularly buying lots from others,

and receiving other grants of vacant land, clearing them, and selling them to other new and existing settlers. He is in a community where many kept close ties with their family still in New Hampshire, but it appears William Vance did not do so.

He remarried, and there is no sign that the Anglican minister or anyone else knew he was already married. His second wife is Jane Parker, daughter of a Dublin merchant who was a young widow. Her husband Robert Malcolm had recently died, and she had one son from that marriage Robert Malcom Jr.

William Vance is single-minded in his work - clearing and lumbering. Sometimes he bent rules, perhaps. There is suspicion that he may have been one of the many settlers who collectively poached giant white pines in the Oak Bay Admiralty Reserve.

He has six children with Jane Parker, and there are no whispers that it was anything but a normal marriage.

In 1796 and 1797 a turning point comes for William Vance - now about 36 years of age. William Vance has an energy that is out of the ordinary, but it is focused on developing his own particular projects.

Like all males under 60, he is liable for Militia duty. But he fails to attend musters, and encourages those working for him to do the same.

A newly appointed Lieutenant, with a very black-and-white attitude, comes into the equation. It changes the fortunes of William Vance forever.

Zebedee Liniken Petition

That shortly after his appointment to the Command of said Company he found himself involved in much trouble and vexation in consequence of **Mr. William Vance** who was enrolled by him agreeable to the existing law of the Province instigating the Militia Men not to take the arms offered by the Government, and not to turn out unless they pleased so to do - and said **Vance** being a leading Character in the Parish succeeded in causing a great deal of Confusion.

That said **William Vance** then repaired to Saint Andrews and enrolled himself in the Independent Company commanded by Captain Hatch who was soon obliged to erase his name from his Muster Roll for similar conduct.

That your petitioner stated the case to Colonel Pagan and Colonel McKay who successively commanded the Regiment and received repeatedly verbal orders from those Gentlemen about the Law in force against Vance. That after said **Vance** persisted two or three times in absenting himself from all musters, your Petitioner proceeded against him according to Law as he supposed, and took property by Execution amounting to between five and six pounds. - That the suit was removed by ... or otherwise to the Supreme Court and after a long contest and difference of opinion between the Judge and the Jury, your petitioner and his property to amount of nearly one hundred pounds seized and sacrificed to pay the Damages and Costs.

Now comes the great change - being successful in such a high profile court case, William Vance sets himself up as a lawyer in St. Andrews. He is a popular and charismatic individual, well spoken but with the common touch.

It is the beginning of the upward surge of this 37-year-old to prominence.

THE THIRD AGE - The Charismatic, Brilliant William Vance fages 37 to 1810) - Transforms his life

On 29 Mar 1800 William Vance's wife Jane Parker dies giving birth to James Parker Vance. The child would later graduate with a Master's degree from Bowdoin College, be a member of the Maine Legislature, then give up a law career to to become a Methodist minister in Illinois. Back to 1800, and William Vance. His new career was putting him in contact with many individuals with money to support a zealous, energetic, bright entrepreneur. Vance now regularly travels to and from Boston and Exeter.

In Boston that year on business, he meets Mary Sarah Bell, a 32-year-old spinster, and sister of the deputy sheriff of Suffolk County, Shubael Bell - an influential man seen as a progressive force with a wide circle of acquaintances in Boston.

William Vance weds Mary Bell 2 Dec 1800, undoubtedly without saying a word about marriage number one - with Nancy Stewart quite alive.

He has two children with her, and meanwhile he continues developing his law practice, and his lumbering and land-clearing efforts expand rapidly, especially with financial backing from others, including Ward Chipman.

By 1805 he moves the centre of his operations up the St. Croix River to St. Stephen, and about this time, at age 45, his next scandal hits.

Nancy Stewart, his first wife, files for divorce in New Hampshire Superior Court in Exeter. At this point his third marriage rapidly falls apart, and Mary Bell brings divorce proceedings in Suffolk Co. Supreme Judicial Court in Boston.

In the documents for Nancy's divorce it notes he owns a \$5,000 house in Boston, and has a successful life up in the Passamaquoddy region. William Vance does not contest this divorce.

By Nov. 1806 that divorce is final. But that same month both William and Mary fail to show in Suffolk court. Did they patch things up? Or did Mary get advice that since William Vance was a bigamist when he married her, the marriage was void anyway.

William Vance throws even more energy into his projects.

He had Clement Lane and Daniel Rhodes build him a mill in what is now Baring in the winter of 1805/06, and constructs also a large boarding house for his workers.

He builds a bridge across the St. Croix at this point. This was the only bridge until the mid-1820s, when one was built at Milltown, and then about 1827 the Ferry Point covered bridge was constructed.

He has first a large house built for himself in Upper Mills, and then by 1811 on the Baring side of the river has a large 3-story house built.

At this point we enter the fourth age of William Vance, from age 51 onwards to 70
THE FOURTH AGE of WILLIAM VANCE - The Peak of Power -1810 to 1831

Age 50 to 71

With the development of his Baring mills, and not being married (that we know of)

William Vance both redoubles his business efforts, and begins a wilder lifestyle.

He continues to travel extensively for business and family reasons.

He also became increasingly ardent on issues of American vs. British interest, supporting strongly the American viewpoint. He remains both calculating and rather cynical

concerning human motives.

Letter - Plantation No. 6, February 16th 1813.

To the Hon. William King Esqr.

Dear Sir,

"I have just got home from my visit to my children in Andover...No doubt you have received various accounts of Col. Ulmer's expedition to the English ship that was cast away at Mispesky Reach. I am sorry to find that his business has given rise to so much talk and false clamor among the enemies of our cause and country, but talk and lie they will. Though I am sorry to say I feel there was not all that prudence and good conduct made use of that was necessary on such an occasion. On Col. Ulmer's orders reaching St. Andrews forbidding all communication on these lines, the British commander at Fredericktown sent from one to two hundred troops to St. Andrews, but they are all called off, and the regiment is ordered to Canada. This regiment is all the British troops that is in the Prov. of New Brunswick. It is said some strange troops will come from Nova Scotia to take their place.

"There is strong talk on the British side of their calling out the militia or of drafting a party of them for to go to St. Andrews, but as the House of Assembly is setting at Fredericktown or as yet have not got home, therefore I cannot say what laws they have made concerning drafting or calling out the militia, but shall know as soon as they return. I am sure that the English government have no thoughts of having any troops in

this quarter only sufficient to prevent small parties or pickaroons from plundering the inhabitants. Therefore I am assured all things considered that five hundred good strange troops is sufficient to guard these lines this summer, but again I repeat and say these soldiers raised on the lines will never answer to remain here to prevent smuggling as they and their officers have mostly been concerned in that trade. There can be no call for any troops above Robinstown, where I think the principle works and military stores out to be.

"The Calais, or Down's company has about 29 men and boys, some about 60 years old and some under fifteen years. Such troops can do government but little service for one year, but eat the government provisions and stay by the fireside. However, I must say that Down's and Brewer's self-created companies as I am informed that they have reported that I was gone to Washington as a British agent or spy, and that I had offered to clear the soldiers from them. So much for envy, which seldom fails to punish itself. With due respect, etc."

While previously leasing lands from the Bingham estate, he enters into a purchase on 1 Jan. 1819, Vance buying lot #2 of Plt. 6. It contained 700 acres and embraced the entire village of Baring.

William Vance entered into Maine politics, although it appears he never gave up his British citizenship. This was not much of an issue at the time as far as most were concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION - comments from Jeff Brown

William Vance was elected to be a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1819 which voted in favour of separation from Massachusetts.

There was a question as to whether or not he should be able to take his seat as a member from Calais, as he did not live in the city. Judge Thatcher thought it was important and should be decided by the whole body. A vote was taken and he was accepted.

Vance was a member of the Committee on the Style and Title of the New State. They struck the word Commonwealth, and added State. Mr. Tucker of Standish moved to change the name from Maine to Columbus. Mr. Vance officially state he hoped this would not prevail - and that Maine was the "name by which we were known in this country and Europe, all maps and records have the name, and it would take half a century before a new name was as well known." He also stated it was the main state of the Union.

Vance spoke against increasing the number of representatives, and against a lower age limit for elected officials, pointing out that Pitt was in his 20s when prime minister of Great Britain

The convention considered qualifications for electors - it was decided to have three month residency prior to election. Students would not have the right to vote by residence in any seminary of learning. Also denied were paupers, persons under

guardianship and Indians not taxed. William Vance moved to add Negroes to the list, but it was not passed.

In 1820 he was named Land Agent on the St. Croix River. He was also appointed agent to construct the Baring to Houlton Road. Both jobs surrounded him in controversy.

In 1821 he petitioned to have the passage for salmon and alewives cleared, with too many barriers and fixed nets for the populations to survive and prosper. In 1816, a full time fishery officer on the St. Stephen side of the river had monitored and measured that 16,000 salmon had been harvested at Schoodic Falls, but it was rapidly declining by 1821

After Maine became a state, he was elected to the legislature several times. He was a representative from Plt. 6 in 1823, from Calais in 1825 and 1827, and from Baring in 1828-29.

In 1825, Plt. #3 petitioned the legislature to be named Charlotte in honor of Queen Charlotte , the wife of George III. There were still too many memories from the wars for the legislature to name it that. Soon after a move was made to name it Adams (the 2nd choice). Prior to the final vote, William Vance of Baring asked the privilege of changing the name to Charlotte in honor of his wife. there was less opposition then and Plt. #3 became Charlotte on Jan. 19, 1825.

This was Charlotte Holland, daughter of William Holland, a millwright he worked the entire coast from Saint John to Cobscook, and whose family was equally spread out, although most were on one side or the other of Passamaquoddy Bay.

Charlotte's mother was Charlotte Dusten, a daughter of Paul Dusten, who was married into one of the Presbyterian Irish families from New Hampshire. The family was descended from Hannah Dusten of Haverhill.

Whether Vance was free and clear of the marriage with Mary Bell remains unclear - although he likely was.

He married Charlotte in 1823, but meanwhile his love life had certainly not suffered throughout this period. He had taken in a couple of his illegitimate children, and the stories go that he would have his mistresses and Charlotte living under the same roof even after he married her.

She left him in 1831, and William Vance was vindictive in the extreme. He claimed adultery, and later had a lawsuit against her chosen male companion, William Dewey, for \$5,000 that Dewey did not have the resources to fight.

She likely had five children with William Vance - and these would be the most well known children of William, including Charlotte Holland Vance who married Lot Morrill who became Governor of Maine, Senator, and Secretary of the Treasury, and Robert H. Vance, the father of California photography.

She left, first to live with her family on the NB side - where her mother and two brothers lived on islands in Passamaquoddy Bay, and where her mother was in charge of the quarantine hospital

(and would be until after 1850).

She then married William Dewey in St. Andrews in 1832, and they moved to Crawford, where she had three children with him. One, Susan, was the mother of George Magoon, the folk hero and super-poacher - who would thus have been a close relative of the wife of the Governor of Maine.

Meanwhile, the 1820s was the economic zenith of William Vance, when he was between 60 and 70 years of age.

He purchased one township from Harvard College, and a second from another Massachusetts college, both in Washington County. One was Vanceboro, named for him.

In politics he continued to be active. In 1827 the disagreement over the site of the capital of Maine was still going on. Wiscasset, Thomaston, Waterville and Portland all wanted the honor. In 1827 Co. Joshua Carpenter suggested Bangor. Vance said "No, in both wars the enemy scoured the Penobscot". He was in favor of Waterville, but the winner was Augusta, of course.

He was a violent partisan of Andrew Jackson in 1824 and 1828, and in this we have the overwhelmingly most popular story, the collision with editor Benjamin Folsom of the Eastport Sentinel.

William Vance wanted the Customs appointment for Passamaquoddy, but there were too many against him to allow Jackson to give this plum to William Vance.

THE FIFTH AGE OF WILLIAM VANCE -1831 to 1841 (ages 71 to 81)

All came undone, beginning in 1831. The last mention of William Vance in Baring records is Sept. 9, 1831, and certainly by early 1832 he had moved to Readfield in Kennebec County.

He married for the fifth time and regretted it almost immediately. The bride was Charity Stafford, and she was as eccentric as William Vance. Within six months they were fighting. He had demanded her promise never to smoke before he agreed to the marriage - and she proceeded to smoke in the house. She would take wine by the bucket to her parents house nearby, and would take her own bucket to her bedroom, if the depositions under oath of the servants is to be believed.

He bought several houses, beginning with the Bartlett house at the corner of the Old Kents Hill Road and Thunder Castle Road in 1832, but the best was the 1833 purchase of the Cornforth House on the Old Kents Hill Road, created of brick that had been brought from England. When built it was supposedly the first brick house built north of Portland.

By 1835 he was launching divorce proceedings, accusing her of adultery with many, including General Peavey of Eastport. Also of turning his house into a cattery. The accusations and counter-accusations escalated all through the 1830s, and by 1839 he was appealing directly to the Legislature to arrange a divorce. They turned the motion back, defeated.

In Readfield the younger children were educated - but whether at Kents Hill School or not, I am uncertain. But the home life became increasingly chaotic, and the younger children were placed under the guardianship of Lot Myrick Morrill who had set up practice in Readfield in 1837.

He would eventually marry one of his charges, the youngest daughter, Charlotte Vance in 1844 when she was 18 and he was 31. She lived to be 91.

On 4 May 1841 William Vance died, at age 81. He is buried in a large above-ground vault structure in the Readfield Corner Cemetery.

THE LEGACY -THE WILL

When the will was examined, and the three executors began working to probate it, they quickly discovered the estate of William Vance wasn't what it was supposed to be. The debts, including very large liabilities for guarantees gone sour, were everywhere.

The executors were reduced to suing everyone that had received any gifts, in order to recover assets to pay creditors. In the last half of the 1830s William Vance had transferred considerable real estate to his children, and all of this was clawed back.

In addition, Charity Stafford sued to regain her 1/3 dower portion. In the end creditors had to be content with a fractional payment, and the bequests William Vance made were nullified.

It took a very active three years for the executors to sort out this financial quagmire.

THE LEGACY - THE CHILDREN

With 17 known children, it perhaps is not a good idea to go through the lives of each one.

The earliest, John, joined his father in the St. Croix area. Born about 1777 he was 50 years older than his youngest sibling, Charlotte. He lived to be about 100, and for decades was known never to be very far from his fiddle. Loved music. In old age became a pauper, and was at times found living in the forest in a shelter of his own construction. Yet quite content.

The early children, mostly girls, all made good marriages to Washington Co. men, including Rufus Lane, Enoch Chase, Joseph Whitney and Robert Pike. But several died by early middle age in childbirth.

William Vance Jr. had an unenviable fate. He graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1819, and for a few years practiced medicine in Calais. But he went to the West Indies, and in Barbados was seeking a ship to be surgeon on. He was offered a position on a British ship. In this period piracy was rampant, marine insurance rates were higher than they ever were in the War of 1812, and many, like this ship, were armed.

What he did not suspect was that he had actually signed on to a pirate ship, and soon after leaving port it was taken by a British frigate. All officers and crew were hung, and that included William Vance - having made the error of choosing bad company.

Mary Bell's children remained in Massachusetts or southern Maine. Shubael Vance was exposed to Shaker religion and was attracted to it for the rest of his life. He placed his five year old son with the Shakers, and he became an elder of the movement in Alfred, ME. His brother Joseph went into business, living mostly in Somerville, MA.

David Vance, who farmed in Cooper is something of a mystery. He appears to be one of the illegitimate children of William Vance. There was a second William Vance living in Cooper in that period, but one solid piece of evidence that David is a son of our William Vance is an 1834 mortgage document registered at the Land Registry in Machias (Vol. 27 p. 167) where our William Vance is the other party. We know from the 1900 Census that his mother was from New Brunswick, but little else is known. He died in Wesley in 1904 and had 11 children.

Of the later children of William Vance, still all born in Baring, and to Charlotte Holland, both before and after their 1823 marriage, most had lives out of the ordinary.

George Clifford Vance in the 1830s went to sea - first on a whaler, successful with sperm whale oil, and then both whalers and merchant ship that took him to every corner of the Pacific from Tahiti to China, Japan and New Zealand, plus the Antarctic seas. He worked his way up in rank as well. Later, in the Civil War he was a Captain in the Quartermaster Corps. He returned to Readfield, but soon moved with his family to Nebraska. There is a wonderful article written when he was nearly 90 that mentioned that as a child he had all the benefits of a stable New England home life.

Robert H. Vance - Born in Baring, like all the other later children of William. In a quiet way, he helped make the world we live in today. His financial legacy was lost, but in 1844, at age 19 he took training as a daguerrotype photographer, and in 1845 set himself up as an early photographer, first in Dover, NH and that same year in Boston. By 1847 he had left Boston, travelling around Cape Horn and to Valparaiso, Chile. He was active there and in Santiago, Chile until 1850, then travelled north to San Francisco.

His work was exquisite, and of the highest quality. He always appealed to the top end of the market. He had a set of 300 views including the very first taken in the gold fields, that he brought back to NY in 1851 to exhibit. The critics were in raptures at his work, which was mostly at full plate size (7 x 9 and larger) but he failed to gain the public's imagination. This set of 300 plates would eventually be sold and moved to St. Louis, where they disappeared without a trace.

He returned by 1852 to continue his work. He trained dozens of others, of which one worth noting was Carleton Watkins, who would take the first great images of Yosemite in 1861. These would convince both Lincoln and Congress to set aside Yosemite Valley as a State Park - that would eventually result in it becoming a National Park.

Besides a "line of connection" to setting aside Yosemite National Park, there is the fact William Vance was integral to the first use of forensic photography in California, in 1856. In that case an individual claimed large parts of the San Francisco area based on Mexican-era deeds and grants.

Robert H. Vance was commissioned to take about 4,000 photographs of documents, real and forged seals, etc. that showed the seals were forgeries, and with other forensic discrepancies, that the documents were false.

By 1860 Robert Vance was worth \$40,000, equivalent in buying power to about \$1.1M today, but in terms of wages, of about \$10M.

He had studios in SF, Sacramento and elsewhere, and owned a share of one of the first studios in Hong Kong. He trained the first to photograph in China.

Incidentally he actively went after Chinese clients in San Francisco, as shown by ads.

Robert Vance's fortunes declines after 1860, and he moved to Nevada in 1863, since that was where the money was - and less competition than in SF and Sacramento.

By the 1870s he was involved more in mining and property deals than in photography, and was involved with this in New York when he died unexpectedly on July 4 1876. He was buried three days later in the plot of his sister Charlotte Holland Vance and her husband Lot Morrill in Augusta's Forest Grove Cemetery.

William Vance - (Third child of William Vance be named this). Signed up in Army 1 Feb. 1847 at age 22, enlisted as 2nd Sergeant, Co. K., First Mass. Volunteer Infantry, in Boston. He was off to Mexico, first on garrison duty along the Rio Grande, and then marched as part of Winfield Scott's occupation force from Veracruz to Mexico City. His health was hit by tropical diseases and by July 30, 1848 he mustered out. His doctor suggested a long sea voyage might help his recovery, so he left for California in July 1849, and joined his brother Robert as a daguerrotype photographer, but specializing in the lower end of the market (as opposed to Robert). The brothers remained on very good terms, so there must have been a bit of tongue in cheek humor when he called his business the Opposition Daguerrean Rooms. When Robert Vance's studio burned in 1858, he let him use his own studio.

He remained ill from his Mexican service, and left photography for the period 1863 to 1870 to be a conductor on the North Beach and Mission Railroad, but returned to imaging until about 1885.

Finally there was **Charlotte Holland Vance** - first a ward of lawyer Lot Morrill, then marrying him at 18, and then providing the full support of a political wife throughout his life, and being mother to four girls and two boys. Both those boys died under the age of five. All the girls married, one died age 35, and the rest lived to very old age.

Charlotte was 50 years younger than her oldest sibling John.

The Real William Vance

1. Charismatic, very persuasive and very bright

2. Very strong set of bonds towards his "flesh and blood"
3. Very high energy level (in all ways)
4. Well read, and thoughtful
5. After the Rev. War was "stressed out" and a soured marriage didn't help - he opted for a new start
6. Extremely vindictive when something was being taken away from him he considered his
7. Could be quite "clever like a fox" and saw nothing wrong with that