

P O W E L L G E N E O L O G Y

BY NANNIE T. LEWIS

1 Benjamin Powell was born March 10, 1812 or 1813, in
2 Marlin County, Tennessee. He married Nellie Crawley about
3 1836 near Marion Tennessee. Their children were Lucinda,
4 who married Elias Barcroft; Elizabeth who married John Irving;
5 Caroline, who married A. B. Myatt; Rhoda Catherine, who
6 married Alfred Lewis, Susan was married to Mr. Cunningham.
7 All these were born in Tennessee. They moved to Mulberry
8 Grove, Illinois. Elisha, the last child was born there. He
9 died the first year of service in the Civil War, having
10 contracted typhoid fever in camp. His body was sent home,
11 buried in Mulberry Grove, Illinois. Grandmother Powell died
12 and was also buried in Mulberry Grove.

13 Grandfather Powell married a second time about 1859 near
14 Greenville, Illinois to Martha Lawler, a young widow with one
15 child named Annie. To this union the following children were
16 born: James, John, Emily and Benjamin.

17 Of the first family of Benjamin and Nellie Powell little
18 information has been secured with the exception of Caroline
19 and Rhoda Catherine.

20 Caroline was born in Tennessee. She was married to A. B.
21 Myatt of Illinois. A part of their home was given for a
22 church and burial ground which was called McKinley Chapel.
23 One of their grandchildren, Ella, married Dale Bunch. They
24 had one child who died while young. They afterwards raised
25 a son of Dale's brother.

1 Lana married Charles Norman. They had three children,
2 Powell of Mulberry Grove, Fannie of Shrievesport, La., who
3 married Mr. Van Carter, and Norman the youngest. Mr. and Mrs.
4 A. B. Myatt spent a winter in California with Mrs. Myatt's
5 sister Catherine. After Mr. Myatt's death his wife came back
6 to California with her nephew, J. B. Lewis and his wife, who
7 had spent a very pleasant two months in Illinois and Indiana
8 in 1899. Caroline came back to California with her grandson
9 Powell for a short time.

10 During the second trip to California, John and wife took
11 Caroline and Catherine to Guadaloupe, to visit a batchelor
12 cousin Robert Hubbard. This trip was made in a similar manner
13 to that of early days by horses and wagon. The meals were
14 cooked on camp fire. The first night out the sisters had a
15 bed in a country home, but they were anxious to sleep outside
16 after that night. The next night all slept in a hay barn
17 with their own covers. All in all the trip was enjoyed,
18 though the road was tough and the beds not as those of today.

19 Catherine Powell Lewis was born August 11, 1837 in
20 Tennessee. While young she sent to Illinois with the family.
21 She often related the story of this change of residence. An
22 uncle Joe or William, the father of Maria Powell, had visited
23 them in Tennessee, and persuaded them to go to Illinois as
24 the soil of Tennessee was poor and they had a hard time
25 making a living.

1 They took what belongings they could on two horses. The
2 mother riding on a feather bed on one horse the most of the
3 time as she was not well. The girls walked with their uncle.
4 It was late in the fall and getting cold, trying to get to
5 their destination before the winter came on, they traveled
6 early and late, camping out at night. They reached Illinois,
7 located at Mulberry Grove, with a capital of 10 cents. The
8 father secured work splitting rails, taking corn for his pay,
9 taking the corn to the mill to be ground into meal, a small
10 amount of money was given as part pay. The mother did weaving
11 for other people and for the children.

12 Schools in those days were few and only for a few months
13 during the year, but the children made the best of this
14 opportunity and were well qualified for their walks of life.

15 Rhoda Catherine was twenty one years of age when she
16 married Alfred Lewis near Mulberry Grove. To this union were
17 born the following children: (1) George Lindsay, born August
18 6, 1857, he married Emma Wood of Kingston, California. Their
19 children were Catherine, Henry, Esther, George, Paul, Perry,
20 and Theda. He died March 28, 1909. (2) James Eaton, born
21 May 15, 1859. He married Kate Tishouser in Illinois. Their
22 children were Stella, Elvin, Ella, Vernie, Mabel and Fred.
23 James died November 24, 1937. (3) William Crittenden, the
24 third son, was born November 16, 1860. He married Alice
25 Barns. Their children were Ralph, Eva, Roy, Harry, Amy, Elmer,

1 Alta, Stanley and Alice. He died July 16, 1929. (4) John
2 Barney, the fourth son, was born November 13, 1862 and was
3 married to Nannie Turner on May 18, 1887. Their children
4 were Alfred Turner, born October 14, 1888 and Tina Zola, born
5 December 15, 1889. (5) Charles Alfred was born April 19, 1865
6 and died December, 9, 1888. (6) Henriette Caroline (Carrie)
7 was born April 9, 1867, married Alfred P. Smith and their
8 children were Lulu, Velma, Myrtle, Mabel, and Eunice. (7) Sarah
9 C. (Sallie) was born August 28, 1869, died February 5, 1876.
10 (8) Elisha Powell, born February 23, 1873, was married to
11 Maude Say of Selma. Their children were Warren and Richard
12 and one son who died when young. (9) Laura, the last born,
13 October 24, 1875, married Charles Nelson, and after his death
14 married Art. P. Shepard of Fresno. She had no children.

15 Most of these children received their education at the
16 Hunter school in Bond County, Illinois. They attended church
17 and Sunday school in the same school house. After the death
18 of the father, the mother came to California with her family
19 of seven. James remained in Illinois, coming the following
20 year. The eldest son George had come to California in 1877
21 and persuaded his mother to go west as he thought conditions
22 for making a living better, this was in 1880.

23 Living four miles from Dudleyville they went to St. Louis
24 by wagon, there took a first class passenger train to Omaha.
25 Here they were transferred to an emigrant train, which had

1 four passenger cars attached to a freight train. Many times
 2 they were sidetracked for hours. Their meals were cooked on
 3 a large stove in a corner of the car. Their beds consisted of
 4 seats turned together with mattresses made of excelsior, or
 5 similar material, purchased for a small sum from the Railroad
 6 Company. They carried their own bedding. They reached Kings-
 7 burg, California after eleven days of travel. From there they
 8 went to Lindsey Lewis, the brother of the father, near River-
 9 dale, Fresno County. They soon bought 80 acres of Railroad
 10 land there from a Mr. Willing, who had built a small house on
 11 the land. They paid the Southern Pacific, or Huntington, the
 12 president of the company, \$1.25 per acre and secured a deed.

13 Picture Rhoda Catherine Lewis, with seven children on an
 14 emigrant train bound for California, a bunch of rollicking
 15 boys on top of the freight cars, on and off the train whenever
 16 it stopped, often they were sidetracked for hours.

17 William and John, thinking they were going to the Wild
 18 West, went to St. Louis and purchased an old pistol. They
 19 enjoyed shooting at prairie dogs and anything else for
 20 amusement. The mother did not worry over them when she saw
 21 them all safely in bed at night.

22 After they located in their new home the older boys went
 23 out to work. The mother and smaller children milked cows
 24 loaned them by a neighbor, Elisha Harlan, and with the willing
 25 help of all they got on and added their own cattle to the

1 herd. Mother Lewis' religion which she had in earlier life
2 never left her through her trials, was rather, a comfort to
3 her. She organized a Sunday school at the Liberty School
4 house. The attendance grew and formed the church, known as
5 the United Brethren denomination. Those of other denominations
6 went over to be in harmony with the church. The church and
7 parsonage was finally established in the town of Riverdale.
8 All this came from the founding of the little Sunday school.

9 In 1888 she sold the ranch to James and John, moved to
10 Selma, as her son George was living there. She and William
11 bought houses and established another home. She afterwards
12 moved with her son Elisha to another part of Selma, building
13 two houses. Elisha lives at this date on the premises. She
14 went to Fowler in 1910 to live with her daughter, Laura. In
15 1928 she went to Clovis to live with her other daughter,
16 Catherine, where she passed away, December 25, 1930 at the
17 age of 93.

18 Rhoda Catherine Lewis was beloved by all that knew her,
19 having an everlasting faith in her religion that gave her
20 courage and strength. She steered her little craft through
21 life and knew she landed it in a haven of rest, eternal.
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