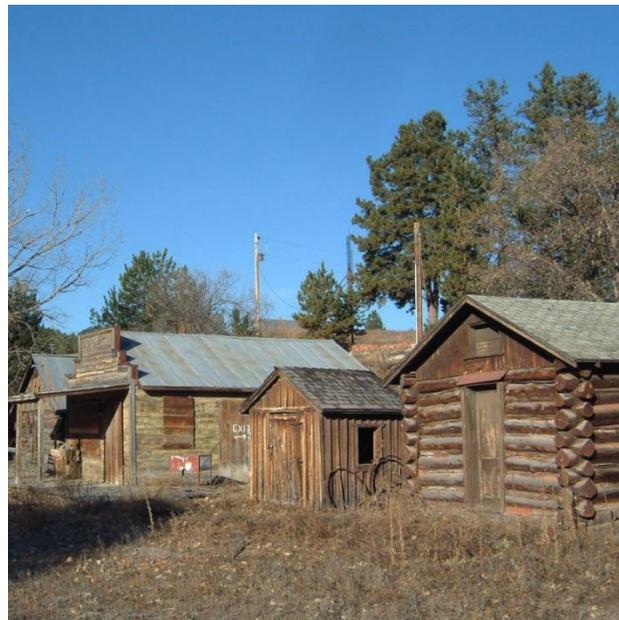


## **Bio: Cornelius Hurley Shoemaker and Ellen Winne Shoemaker Kerber**

Pamela Hutchison Garrett, 2019

Cornelius Hurley Shoemaker was born on the 20th of August 1852 on the family farm in Keokuk county Iowa. He was the fifth child of Jesse Shoemaker and Henrietta Hurley, and was greeted by four siblings - Eliza Jane, Lucinda, Elisha and Alex Shoemaker. When Neil was a young boy the Shoemaker family moved three hundred and fifty miles to the west, and made their home near Grand Island Nebraska. Four more children were added to the Shoemaker family - John, Henrietta, Della and Amanda Shoemaker - making a total of nine children. Jesse Shoemaker was an industrious man, noted for farming, ranching, and horse-doctoring. He established a "camp" on one of the Platte River islands, and it was eventually referred to as Shoemaker Island. This is probably the place that Cornelius remembered as his childhood home.

Ever looking for a better future, Jesse Shoemaker again (about 1875) uprooted his large family, and took them another four hundred miles north and west to Rockerville South Dakota - a brand new community, set to serve the influx of gold miners in the region. It was in Rockerville that Jesse Shoemaker set up a livery stable. The mining "boom" was short-lived, and by the late 1870's the Shoemaker Livery Stables were operating in the nearby and growing town of Rapid City. As his sons came of age several of them joined him in the livery business, suggesting that they may have run a fairly large concern.



About the Photo – see below

In the year 1879, when Neil Shoemaker was about age twenty-seven, he married Ellen Frances Winne. Ellen, or "Ella" was the daughter of Abram Winne and his wife Sarah Jane Woolsey. She was born in Missouri, but lived her childhood primarily in Kansas. Not long before her marriage she had moved with her large Winne family to the Dakota Territory. The 1880 census shows the "Winnie" family living in Custer county South Dakota, which adjoins Rapid City's Pennington county.

The 1880 census of Pennington county South Dakota gives us a "picture" of the young Shoemaker family - Cornelius Shoemaker, age 29, born Ohio, keeps livery stable; Ella Shoemaker, age 18, born Missouri; and Alice Shoemaker, age 6 months, born Dakota. Alice Maude Shoemaker was to be their only child.

It is not clear whether the Cornelius Shoemaker family lived inside or outside the town of Rapid City. It seems likely that Neil did some farming, but the census gives his occupation as "keeps a livery stable". Rapid City was doing some rapid growing during the 1880's and 90s, becoming a hub for several railroads and "establishing itself as an important regional trade center for the upper midwest."

The extended Shoemaker family was settled and noted in Pennington county South Dakota during these years. Several of Neil Shoemaker's siblings married and raised families near Rapid City, and his parents lived out their lives in the area, Henrietta Hurley Shoemaker dying in 1889, and Jesse Shoemaker in 1895. Neil's brother, Alex (AA) Shoemaker was particularly prominent in the affairs of Pennington county, and his brother John H Shoemaker also appears in a number of records. Today there may be descendants of the Shoemakers still living around Rapid City.



Unable to find a photo of the Shoemaker Livery in Rapid City – Here's a photo of the Sheridan Inn Livery Stable from the Downtown Sheridan (Wyoming) website. Description - . . . *the original site of W.F. Cody Transportation Company, Buffalo Bill's own stagecoach line to the Black Hills. The first building was built in 1894 for the business, which ran from 1894 until 1901. It was also used for a long period of time as the Sheridan Inn's livery stables. In 1923 the old stables were torn down and today's building, with its stone exterior, was built just down the block to house a garage.*

Sadly, in the prime of his life, Neil Shoemaker was killed in a tragic accident. The Sturgis Advertiser of 2 July 1891 reports:

Neil Shoemaker and wife were taking a pleasure ride Saturday in a small boat on the new lake above Rapid City. The vessel capsized and Mr Shoemaker was drowned and the life of Mrs Shoemaker was saved with great difficulty. The body was not recovered until Tuesday. Deceased was an old resident of the Hills, and a man who had many good friends that will read of his sad death with sorrow.

[source] Sturgis Advertiser (Sturgis South Dakota); 2 July 1891.

Ellen Winne Shoemaker was just past the age of thirty when her husband died in 1891, and she had her ten-year-old daughter, Alice still to raise. Ellen's Winne family may have been nearby during this time, but they eventually removed to Colorado. It is likely that the Shoemaker

family pitched in to help Ellen during her widowhood. About the year 1895 Ellen Winne Shoemaker was secondly married to John Kerber. The Kerbers removed to Carbon county Montana, and probably worked together supporting Alice through her teen years. The Kerbers did not have children of their own. The 1900 Montana census places them near the communitiy of Bowler (Bowler Flats), in the area of the Pryor mountains. Carbon county rests near the Montana - Wyoming border, above the Yellowstone Park area. In 1903 John Kerber took out several patents for property in Carbon county.

In 1897, at the age of seventeen, Alice Shoemaker married Walter Reno - recorded at Red Lodge, the seat of Carbon county Montana. The Kerbers and Renos continue to appear in Carbon county Montana in the 1900 and 1910 census records. In the 1910 census Alice Shoemaker Reno's oldest daughter, Edith Frances Reno, is living in the home of her Kerber grandparents.

Sometime after 1910, John Kerber and his wife Ellen removed to Santa Monica, California - perhaps to live out their later years in a warmer climate. Ellen Winne Shoemaker Kerber, aged sixty-seven, died in 1929 in Santa Monica, and her death certificate places her burial in the Woodlawn Cemetery of Santa Monica, Los Angeles county California. No record of this burial appears at the FindAGrave website. John Kerber outlived his wife by a number of years, dying in Santa Monica in 1945.

Do you want to know more?

[Link to Cornelius Hurley Shoemaker in the database](#)

[Link to Ellen Frances Winne in the database](#)

About the photo –

Rockerville South Dakota “Ghost Town”; This photo comes from Black Hills Motorcycle Rides, by Paul Mitchell (“motorcycle journalist”), 2013. Thanks Paul!

Just for fun -

[South Dakota's 1880 Town](#), in Murdo South Dakota, looks like a fun family attraction. It might give some "feeling" to life in late 19th century South Dakota.

"South Dakota's Original 1880 TOWN has more than 30 buildings from the 1880 to 1920 era, authentically furnished with thousands of relics, historical accounts and photographs, a Casey Tibbs exhibit, Dances with Wolves movie props, and fun activities for kids."

**Bio of Cornelius Hurley Shoemaker compiled by Pamela Hutchison Garrett for the Family Stories website; 2019.**