THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS

Dave Forrest

DAVE FORREST The Story of Our Leonards

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First edition

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Preface

I was only seven when I met my dad. Jim Leonard was just what I needed. He taught me to throw a baseball and ride a bike. He told me that when he was courting my mom his biggest fear was that if Fran wouldn't have him, he'd lose me and my sister. Dad showed me that being a father wasn't about blood or biology, but love and kindness. He loved us from the start, and he kept on loving us until his final days in 2004.

When I was twelve, Dad suggested that I might change my name from Forrest to Leonard. My mom nixed the idea, but he let us know in a thousand small ways that we were his; we were Leonards.

Every winter and summer we traveled to Oregon to visit our Leonard grandparents who lived in Coquille. Grandma baked lemon meringue pies for me because they were my favorite. Granddad took me fishing.

By middle school, my parents left me for several weeks of summer vacation in Oregon with Aunt Hilma, my dad's sister. I had a great time on Bandon beaches in bare feet. I was up each morning early, traveling the green countryside and learning about livestock from Uncle Sam, as he sold cars to locals. In the evenings, Aunt Hilma and I would settle into a discussion of books.

We became Leonards, raised on my dad's stories of growing up on a wheat ranch in a tiny town in eastern Oregon. We knew the details of Lostine: Crow's store owned by his best friend's family, the church and the small school house where he and his sisters attended and where his father taught. His family's history became ours.

On a visit, back to eastern Oregon to see those sites with Dad, then in his 70s, we met an old friend from Wallowa county. He commented how much I looked like my dad. We both smiled, never correcting the record. I think we were both proud of the mistake; I know I was.

My dad made us Leonards. He did it with his hugs and homespun humor. He did it by sharing his stories. He did it with his daily acts of kindness. I know my brother, Jamie, and sister, Lisa, would agree: no one had a better father.

This is the story of our Leonards. In these pages, you'll meet your ancestors: A Puritan from Plymouth, a Civil War soldier, an Oregon homesteader, and many more memorable characters. So, read on.

Dave Forrest



The Leonards circa 1960s. Back row: James H. Leonard Jr., Christy Schultz, Sam Schultz. Middle Row: Frances Leonard, Hilma Schultz, Amelia Leonard, James H. Leonard Sr., Helen Nugent, Lisa Forrest, Dave Forrest. Leonards not shown: Jamie Leonard, Jimmy Schultz, and Kenny Lorenz.

The Leonard Name and the First Leonards

he Leonard name originates in France. The Latin root "Leo" means lion. The surname signifies hardy, brave and strong like a lion. The Normans brought the name to England during their invasion and occupation of the British Isles in the 11th century. There are lots of Leonards in Ireland, but our Leonard name comes from England, as do our first Leonards. One ancestry family tree traced a Leonard ancestor back to 14th century.

It appears our first English ancestor to cross the Atlantic was John Solomon Leonard (1609-1671) He arrived about a decade after the first Puritans founded the Plymouth Colony. He settled in Duxbury, Massachusetts, among some of very prominent Pilgrims. The seaside town is just 35 miles southeast of Boston. In North American Histories, we learn that John S. Leonard was:

The earliest settler in this country bearing the family name, to whom we have a record, and the ancestor which has long been known as the 'Bridgewater Branch of the Leonard Family,' must have been born in Monmouthshire, or vicinity in the southwesterly part of England.

He emigrated first to Leyden in Holland, probably with his father whose name it is believed to be Samuel. There is some probability they came together. If so the father must have died soon after. The exact period Solomon emigrated to this country, and the place from which he embarked, it has been impossible to ascertain. Judge Mitchell, in his History of Bridgewater, says, 'In 1629, thirty-five of the Leyden people arrived in Plymouth, and in 1630, sixty more came. Many of the Bridgewater proprietors were among these.¹

The "Leyden people" referred to in this history were Englishmen who sought religious refuge in Holland for their beliefs. They were Separatists, calling for a complete separation from the Church of England. Other Puritans didn't want to leave the church entirely, but called for its reform or purification. According to the North American Histories, John Solomon Leonard:

... was engaged in the service of the Colony Company of Plymouth for a time, but became one of the early settlers of Duxbury. Mr. Justin Winsor, in his history of this town, says it was settled by people of Plymouth, and they were, many of them, of the highest respectability, and in the colony affairs took a prominent and active part. Of the twenty survivors of the Civil Compact, signed by the Mayflower in November 1620, who survived the fatal first winter, seven – Elder Brewster, Capt. Standish, Mr. Alden, Mr. Howland, Francis Eaton, Peter Brown, and George Soule – became inhabitants of Duxbury...

The exact date of Solomon Leonard's settlement in Duxbury cannot be fixed. Mr. Winsor says the records show he was there when the town was incorporated in 1637. He had land in 'Blue Fish,' in what is now the northerly part of the Village of Duxbury, near the bay.

Associated with the renowned Miles Standish, John Alden, Constant Southworth, William Bradford and others, 54 in all, Solomon Leonard became one of the original proprietors of Bridgewater, and one of the earliest settlers there;²

John Solomon Leonard married Sarah Chandler, a direct descendant of the Mayflower passengers. Sarah's dad, Roger Chandler, was born on April 4, 1580 in Colchester, England. He married Isabella Chilton on July 21, 1615 in Leyden, Holland. The Chiltons were also Separatists. Isabella was the daughter of Mayflower passenger James Chilton.

John Solomon Leonard and Sarah Chandler married in 1640. The couple had five children, including Isaac Leonard (b. 1649), who is our earliest ancestor with the Leonard name born on American soil. The Leonards of the 17th and 18th centuries were New Englanders before the founding of the nation. They resided in Plymouth, Worcester and Rutland.

Stephen Leonard (1818-1891) was the first Leonard to venture out. He was born in Oakham, Massachusetts but moved to Berrien, Michigan, then a new state. He married Sarah Ann Irwin on June 29, 1844. Two years later the couple had a son, James Irwin Leonard (1846-1893).

James Irwin grew up in Berrien where he met Elizabeth "Lizzie" Burns (1850-1922). They married on November 26, 1876. The couple left Michigan for Bourbon, Kansas, where their son Floyd was born in 1880. The young family traveled west, joining other homesteaders with "Oregon Fever." They made their home in eastern Oregon's beautiful Wallowa Valley. There, James and Lizzie had two more sons, Cole Leonard and my grandfather, James Horace Leonard Sr.

I know, there are lots of Jim Leonards to keep track of and it can be confusing. However, there are only four you must know: My dad was James H. Leonard Jr. (1918-2004) and his father James H. Leonard Sr. (1889-1973). My dad's grandfather, James Irwin Leonard, we just met. He settled in eastern Oregon in the late 19th century. Dad didn't like his middle name, Horace, and spared my brother Jamie by naming him James Robert Leonard (b. 1963). OK, now you know your Jim Leonards and we can proceed by meeting the Burns family, its legends and legacy.



Three of the four James Leonards: James H. Leonard Jr., James Robert Leonard, and James H. Leonard Sr. Missing is James Irwin Leonard, the first of the four generations of JL's.

THE LEONARD NAME AND THE FIRST LEONARDS

The Leonard Lineage			
1609-1671	John Solomon Leonard		
1645-1717	Issac Leonard		
1688 - 1775	Moses Leonard		
1719 - 1805	Andrew Leonard		
1774 - 1822	Ezekiel Leonard		
1818 - 1891	Stephen Leonard		
1846 - 1893	James Invin Leonard		
1889 - 1973	James Horace Leonard Sr.		
1918 - 2004	James Horace Leonard Jr.		
Born 1963	James Robert Leonard		

The Burns' Legacy

y dad's grandmother was Elizabeth "Lizzie" Burns (1850 -1922). Dad always said she was a relative of Scottish poet and lyricist Robert Burns (1759-1796). My brother Jamie recalls him explaining that Lizzie's dad's great uncle was in the family of the most celebrated poet of Scotland.

Robert Burns was the oldest of seven children. He grew up poor on his parents' farm. You may have sung one of his poems on New Year's Eve, "Auld Lang Syne." If you've read *Of Mice and Men by Steinbeck*, the title comes from Burns' poem, "To a Mouse."³ Here are a few lines:

> ...The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men Gang aft agley, An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain, For promis'd joy!

The BBC Bitesize website explains,

To A Mouse" depicts Burns' remorse at having destroyed the nest of a tiny field mouse with his plough. He apologizes to the mouse for his mishap, for the general tyranny of man in nature and reflects mournfully on the role of fate in the life of every creature, including himself.⁴

My brother Jamie also remembers our dad saying that not everyone would rush to be related "Robbie" Burns. He thumbed his nose at the mores and political conventions of his time. Yet, he is still popular among much of the Scottish public, who voted Burns the greatest Scot in 2009.

Lizzie Burns was the daughter of Joseph George Washington Burns who fought in the Civil War. "G.W." was born in 1825 in Williamsburg, Pennsylvania. He was a farmer. Joseph married Margaret "Mary" Harris, and the couple had nine kids, including Elizabeth in 1853.

Lizzie's dad enlisted in the Union Army on July 13, 1864. In a *Civil War Profiles* document Joseph is described as having a fair complexion, grey eyes and dark hair. He is listed as 5 foot 8 inches. He mustered at age 38 with McKeage's infantry, serving for almost a year with the Pennsylvania Regiment 87 Company A. Joseph was discharged at the end of the war on June 29, 1865.

In the summer of 1864 the 87th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, and we presume Private Burns, fought Lee's Army in the Shenandoah Valley. Union General Ulysses Grant sought to destroy the Confederate's supply lines – railroads, depots and hospitals — at Lynchburg, Virginia. The 87th Pennsylvania Infantry was attached to Union commander Sheridan between August 7th and December 1st of 1864.

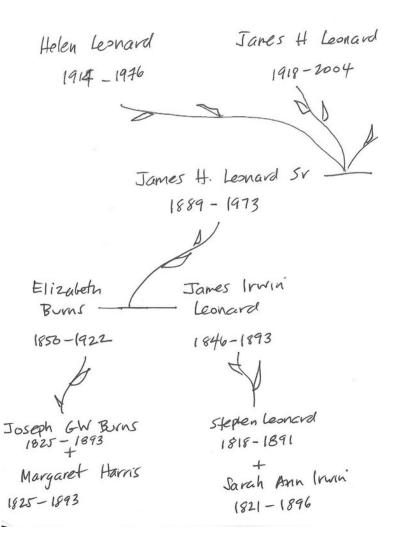
In 1865, The 87th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment fought in the Siege of Petersburg, Virginia and the final Appomattox Campaign in March and April. One wonders if Private Burns saw the surrender of the Lee to Grant at the Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865. He was most certainly close by.

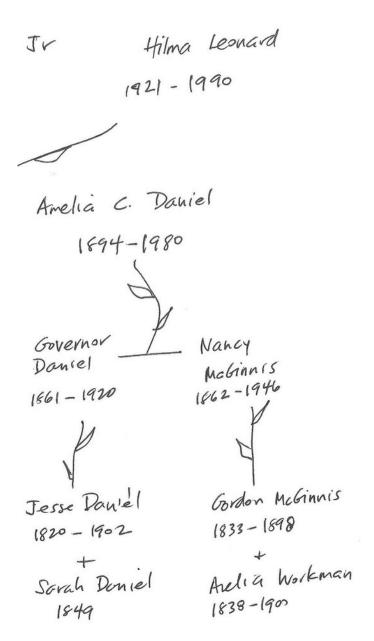
When we were growing up, Dad had a copy of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address in his study. I'd sneak in to read and memorize it. On his shelves, he had books on many facets of the Civil War. I learned as a young man, if I had questions about the American Revolution, I went to my mom. But if I wanted to know more about the Civil War, I'd ask Dad. No wonder he had such an interest and expertise on the Civil War; his great grandfather was a participant.

Joseph George Washington Burns died on March 18, 1893. Less than a month later, his wife Margaret Harris Burns passed away, too. The couple are buried together under a Burns headstone in Duncansville, Pennsylvania.



The Civil War Draft Registration list for Joseph G.W. Burns on line 17. Lizzie Burns' father served in the 87th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment in the final year of the Civil War, 1864-1865.





Oregon Fever and the Daniels Family

E lizabeth and James Irwin Leonard traveled to Oregon in the mid 1880s. My dad explained why his forebears came west in a short piece of writing he dubbed, "Oregon Fever":

Luring them west was the federal government's decision during the McKinley administration to open public domains lands in Oregon to homesteading under the Homestead Act of 1862. Under this act, a family head at least 21 years of age could obtain 160 acres of public domain and retain ownership after paying a registration fee ranging from \$26 to \$34, and living on the land for five continuous years. ⁵

The Leonards had their third son in 1889 in eastern Oregon's Wallowa Valley. Sadly, James H. Leonard Sr. was only four years old when his father, James Irwin Leonard, passed away in 1893.

Lizzie Leonard remarried a decade later in 1903. Her second husband was Grenberry Shields Templeton (1849-1918). It was Grenberry's second marriage, too. He had been born and raised in Illinois, marrying Hattie Munson in 1884. The couple migrated to Wallowa County and had a son, Jay, born in 1894. In 1900, Hattie Munson Templeton passed away. She was buried in the Wallowa Cemetery.

My grandfather grew up with his older brothers, Floyd and Cole, and as a teenager inherited a younger brother, Jay. His step-dad, Grenville Templeton, died in 1918 a few months before my dad was born. Lizzie Burns Leonard Templeton passed away in Lostine in 1922. My dad was just a little boy of four. In discussions, he referred to her as Grandma Templeton.

The Leonards were not the only family struck by an itch to move west. The Daniel family, which included my grandfather's future wife, left West Virginia for the Oregon land rush. My dad explained:

"Oregon Fever" struck some sections of the East during the late 1800s, and was particularly contagious in West Virginia. Governor "Gov" Daniel and his wife Nancy Clementine McGinnis Daniel, lived in that state's Cove Creek area, located about 15 miles west of Beckley. They and several relatives and friends were to become Wallowa county pioneers.

Governor Daniel and his wife Nancy Clementine were 39 and 38 years of age at the time. They left their Cove Creek ranch with seven children in the spring of 1900. They traveled by train from Surveyor, West Virginia, to La Grande, Oregon, then by wagon to Wallowa (where railroad service didn't commence until 1908). Their first and fourth sons died before the family moved. Two other children died in infancy in Oregon. Their youngest surviving daughter, was born in Oregon in 1901. She died in 1951.⁶

Arriving at the turn of the century with the Daniel family was

our grandmother, Amelia Clieda Daniel (1894-1980). She was only six years old. Dad explained:

The Daniel family lived on Middle Point, north of Wallowa and between Wallupa and Wildcat Canyons... Governor D. Daniel built a house for his family there then, helped build a school, and called it "Utopia." He was a very small man, wiry and tough. Small wonder... Gov served as postmaster at Utopia from 1908 until 1911, setting aside a room in his home for the purpose.⁷

I remember Dad saying that many West Virginians came to Oregon to escape condemning their sons to the coal mines. Oregon provided the lure of land and a better future. My dad pointed out that:

They were not alone in the remote area near the Grand Ronde River. Other immigrants from West Virginia also selected this country for their homes... Albert Pendleton Daniel, Gov's brother, was also an Oregon Fever victim. These two were among nice children of Jess and Sarah Daniel, and descendants of Nehemiah Daniel, a Virginia soldier during the Revolutionary War, and his wife Annie... Monroe Roop had been a school teacher in West Virginia, became the teacher at the new Middle Point School...⁸

My sister, Lisa, reminded me that Mom and Dad made a couple of trips to see Daniel descendants still living in West Virginia. Our dad reestablished a connection with these relatives. Mom quipped how much these West Virginians sounded just like Grandma.

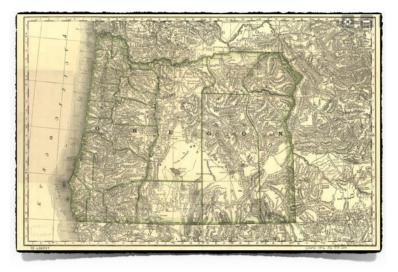
Two versions of one humorous family story demonstrated the pioneer toughness of the Daniel clan. Our cousin Kenny

remembered hearing from Grandma that her Aunt Brooke caught an eagle or hawk (no one was sure which) that was after her chickens. The bird chased a chicken into the house and Brooke went after the raptor with a broom.

Proving that family yarns change over time, our brother Jamie recalled a second version of the tale from our dad: one day Aunt Brooke was in the kitchen when she heard a racket. She looked outside the window to see a huge eagle had landed on one of her chickens in the yard. Without hesitation she headed outside tripping over the steps and banister, landing on the eagle and its prey. The fight was a short one, Aunt Brooke strangled the interloper. When her husband returned, he was amazed and called the local newspaper. However, when the reporter came out to photograph Aunt Brooke with her kill, she refused "all the fuss and bother" heading back in to do her chores. Whichever version of the story is more accurate, the moral is clear: don't cross Aunt Brooke or mess with her chickens.

Eastern Oregon's Leonard and Daniel family were united on December 23, 1912 with the wedding of James Leonard Sr. and Amelia Daniel. My grandmother was just eighteen and my grandfather barely twenty-three.

OREGON FEVER AND THE DANIELS FAMILY



In the nineteenth century, many Easterners and Midwesterners got "Oregon Fever." The Leonards moved from Michigan in the 1880s. The Daniel family relocated from West Virginia in 1900.

Wallowa's Tragic History

allowa County is Oregon's most northeastern county. It is bordered Washington State to the north and Idaho to the east. It is one of the least populated counties in Oregon and even today only has a little over 7,000 people. The county is still primarily agricultural. It's biggest town, and the county seat, is Enterprise with a population of about 2000. My dad lived in Lostine, a small town north of Enterprise in the Wallowa Valley.

South of Enterprise is the county's crown jewel: Wallowa Lake. The lake, at an elevation of over 4000 feet, is surrounded by the majestic snow-capped Wallowa Mountains. I've visited several times with my dad, and it is beautiful. It is easy to understand why this region of southern Wallowa County is sometime referred to as the "Switzerland of Oregon."

Two miles north of Wallowa Lake is the tiny town of Joseph. It is named after Wallowa County's most famous son, Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce tribe. I learned the tragic story of Chief Joseph's people from my dad, and I taught it to my US History students for over three decades. It is an all too familiar American tale: a tribe who inhabited a land for centuries, settlers greedy for gold and land, government treaties broken, and a native people hunted, killed, the survivors forced onto reservations.

The Nez Perce tribe inhabited the northeast region of the United States for centuries, including what are now the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. The Wallowa band of the larger Nez Perce tribe lived in the Wallowa Valley – a name which meant winding waters. The Wallowa Lake and the surrounding land was guaranteed to the Nez Perce in a treaty signed in 1855.

"Chief Joseph's true name was Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekt (Thunder Rolling Down the Mountains)", according to an article, "The Story of the Wallowa Valley Tied to Chief Joseph" appearing in the *Wallowa County Chieftain* in 2018:

He was the son of a Wallowa Nez Perce chief named Tu-eka-kas, who converted to Christianity in 1839 and received the name Joseph at his baptism - commonly known as Old Chief Joseph. Young Joseph was born in the Wallowa Valley in 1840. Old Chief Joseph supported peace with white settlers of the Northwest and signed the Treaty of 1855, under which the Nez Perce retained lands extending from the Wallowa Valley into what is now Washington and Idaho. In a turn of events familiar across the West, however, gold was discovered in 1861 on the Nez Perce reservation and thousands of miners invaded the region.

In 1863, the U.S. Government negotiated a new treaty with the Nez Perce in an attempt to pacify white miners and settlers. The Nez Perce were left with a reservation in the Idaho Territory one-tenth the size of the 1855 lands. The Wallowa Valley had been taken. Old Chief Joseph, long a proponent of peace, now took a stand: he refused to sign the 1863 Treaty or move his band from the Wallowa Valley. He remained in the Wallowa Valley until his death in 1871.⁹

In 1877, US Army General O. O. Howard gave the remaining Nez Perce in Wallowa an ultimatum: leave Wallowa County or to be driven out. Chief Joseph recognized that his band could not fight the US Army. He had 400 people, but only 60 warriors. So, he led his people to the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. The *Chieftain* article explains the terrible turn of events:

In Idaho, the band joined with other non-treaty Nez Perce for a last gathering before moving to the reservation. Sudden violence changed everything: a few young warriors staged a raid on nearby settlements in anger at the forced move, and several whites were killed. General Howard's troops moved in to punish the bands. The combined non-treaty Nez Perce now numbered about 750, with fewer than 200 warriors. A decision was made to flee to Montana and seek aid from the Crow tribe, a decision some historians believe Joseph opposed. Joseph did not want war. Even within his own band, it was his brother Ollokot who led the warriors. Over the following three and a half months - and over some 1,400 miles -the Nez Perce fought a defensive war against U.S. Army forces in skirmishes and battles memorialized today on the modern Nez Perce Trail, including Big Hole, Camas Meadows and Canyon Creek.

From Idaho, the bands crossed the Lolo Pass into Montana, then moved south and east into the Yellowstone country of the Crow. The Crow offered no assistance; they even served as scouts for the U.S. Army against the Nez Perce. Finally, the Nez Perce turned north, hoping to join Sioux chief Sitting Bull in Canada. The end came on October 5, 1877, when Chief Joseph surrendered to Colonel Nelson Miles at what is now Bear Paw Battlefield in northern Montana -

40 miles from the Canadian border.¹⁰

On that day, the Young Chief Joseph explained his surrender in his famous speech, "I Will Fight No More Forever":

I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking Glass is dead. Toohoolhoolzote is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who say, 'Yes' or 'No.' He who led the young men [Olikut] is dead. It is cold, and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are – perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs! I am tired. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.¹¹

Chief Joseph and the captured Nez Perce were first moved to eastern Kansas, then to a reservation in Oklahoma. Many of them died there of disease. The *Wallowa Chieftain* article chronicled the final days of the Wallowa Nez Perce:

Only in 1885 were Joseph and his remaining people returned to the Northwest - some to Idaho, but Joseph and others to the Colville Reservation in northern Washington. Chief Joseph died on the Colville Reservation on Sept. 21, 1904, at the age of 64. There Young Joseph is buried. It is Young Chief Joseph's father, Old Joseph, who is interred beneath the monument at the north end of Wallowa Lake at a site that is now part of the Nez Perce National Historical Park and visited by thousands who pay their respects every year.¹² The Leonards moved to the Wallowa Valley only a decade after the Nez Perce were driven out. The Daniel family arrived twenty-five years later. By that time, small groups of the Wallowa Nez Perce visited from their Idaho reservation to camp and fish for Sockeye salmon on the Wallowa River. Our cousin Kenny, Aunt Helen's son, remembers hearing our grandma talk about the Nez Perce when she was a little girl:

Some of my earliest memories are the stories about the dealings with the Nez Perce. One memory which stands out was about grandma and her sister being hidden under a large cast iron boiler for their protection when Indians were seen approaching. It turned out that the Indians were begging for food and were not a threat. Both grandad and grandma grew up witnessing the treatment of the native people. I don't remember granddad saying much, just bantering what Grandma would bring up. During these discussions I developed my sense of empathy.¹³

Recently, Kenny sent an article from August 1, 2021, printed in the *Redding Searchlight*, entitled, "Nez Perce Celebrate Reclaimed Land." The article told of the recent return of the Nez Perce to their historic homeland:

Joseph, Ore. - Chairman Shannon Wheeler has been dreaming about this day for years. On Thursday, more than 150 Nez Perce (Niimiipuu) people returned and blessed part of their homeland, more than a hundred years after the U.S Army drove them from the Wallowa Valley in eastern Oregon. In violation of the 1855 Treaty of Walla Walla, the Nez Perce in 1877 were forced from their 7.5 million-acre homeland to a 750,000-acre reservation in Idaho. For years, the tribe has worked to keep a connection to the ancestral land from which it was driven. Last year, it successfully reclaimed part of that land. The Nez Perce tribe purchased a 148-acre property in Joseph, known as Am'sáaxpa, or Place of Boulders, in December but could not formally perform a blessing ceremony until Thursday because of COVID-19 concerns.¹⁴

The reclaimed land is located near the edge of the city's rodeo grounds and included property on the Wallowa River where the tribe fished and a ridge where Chief Joseph once held council. Shannon Wheeler, a descendant of Chief Joseph, who had fought to buy the land explained, "Our people know we sprang from this land and we're tied to the land in that manner and the land is also tied to us in the same way." He said in the blessing at the ceremony, "We would hope that our ancestors would feel the tears of joy and their tears will turn to joy because they see our people coming back to the land we belong to."

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS



The US government forced the Wallowa Nez Perce from their land in 1877. Chief Joseph and his people were captured near the Canadian border and put onto reservations. In 2021, the Nez Perce purchased property in Joseph, Oregon, part of their historic homeland in the Wallowa Valley.

Growing Up in Lostine

The story of our dad's immediate family begins early in the 20th century, almost four decades after the shameful treatment of Wallowa's Nez Perce. His parents, James and Amelia Leonard, were wed in 1912. Their three children were born during the same decade that many of the pioneer generation passed away, including Grenville Templeton, Lizzie Burns Leonard Templeton, and Governor Daniel. The loss of one generation ushered in the birth of a new.

The Leonard's first child was Helen Marynet Leonard born on September 5, 1914. Their second was our dad, James Horace Leonard Jr. born August 23, 1918. The third child was a baby girl, Hilma Clementine Leonard, born on September 25, 1920. The Leonard family lived in the little town of Lostine in the Wallowa Valley.

We were raised on Dad's tales of eastern Oregon, and thankfully he wrote them down in the 1980's and 1990's. My sister preserved *Granddad's Stories* after his death, and I put them into a glossier book with a few photos. It is a must read for any descendant of the Leonards. In one story, "Teaching My Mother A Lesson", Dad described the Leonard ranch:

My family which included a younger sister and an older one lived on a fairly large wheat ranch about seven miles from the small town of Wallowa in northeast Oregon. There was no such thing as next door neighbors.¹⁵

In another tale, "A Place With Everything," he lovingly described Lostine and his family home:

This place had everything a boy needed It was along the river, the Lostine River, the best fishing stream in the world...

There were 176 people in the little town in the mountains of northeast Oregon so every house was important, particularly to me, because they were all on my daily Oregonian delivery route. But our house was special, and probably the busiest in town...

It was always a treat to approach the house. The lawn was always green and my mother's flowers were cared for meticulously. You could smell them a block away. There was something about coming to the house that told you great things happened here....

The house was a large two-story affair that resembled a box with windows. An architectural beauty it was not: but it was a home with incomparable beauty...¹⁶

It was not the outside but the inside of Dad's home that held the magic. Here resided the loving Leonards and all their family and friends:

The crown jewel in the living room was the upright Schiller piano that my older sister taught how to speak melodiously. Music was big in Lostine, and it was a tradition for us to consider the small town the top of the line in the state for singing groups. Helen, the princess of the piano, had an outstanding selection of sheet music...

Every evening our friends started drifting in. There was no advanced notice, probably because there were only three or four telephones in the entire town. Sometimes they came before dinner. Sometimes they even brought food. Everyone came, and they were welcome. My sister and I had no illusions that it was strictly our sterling popularity. Our friends loved our mother and father, and nearly all of them had gone to school to our father, the teacher...

That wonderful house was just part of the joy of living...¹⁷

In another story, "The Post Office," Dad described the town of Lostine, especially its post office:

There were no addresses in my hometown. No one in Lostine had an address. The houses had no numbers. Actually they were not needed. There were not even any street signs.

But Lostine was a proud Oregon community, a real incorporated city ever since 1903, I understand, and the population when I lived there was 176. I hear that it has now swelled to 265...

There was no problem getting your mail. You walked to the post office, and when Earl Allen, the postmaster, saw you coming he would probably hand you your mail, even if you had a rented box. You might have to trade a bit of conversation for it, but that was all right...

The post office was made for the town. It was an institution that served the community well. You can't imagine how often you heard: "You can't guess what I heard at the post office this morning."

The post office could generate excitement. One night two men got drunk in the nearby pool hall, were thrown out, and somehow ended up fighting in the post office...

Then there was the night Vic Crow's pet burros, town characters, walked in and messed it up...

In late spring the chirping of baby chicks often turned it into bedlam because it was then that many people ordered their chicks from Montgomery Ward. ¹⁸

And so it went, one funny small-town vignette after another, lovingly narrated by our dad. On a trip to Wallowa with his Uncle Jim, our cousin Kenny said Dad told him of,"flirting with the girls in Sunday school, the Saturday night dances at the lodge and his plane being shot at by a zero while on a photography mission." He also divulged setting the outhouse afire at the original ranch house. Kenny wrote:

As I remember it Uncle Jim was teaching himself to smoke in the outhouse and somehow a fire started. He ran to the house and alerted Mom and Aunt Hilma. They all rushed out and extinguished the fire. According to grandma it was a very close thing because it was so dry and the wheat was just ready to be harvested.

Not all Dad's stories were humorous. We knew that the Leonards faced tough times, too. The Great Depression of the 1930s hit my dad's family hard. They lost their wheat ranch and their beloved home. But as Dad wrote in one short story, "Things have a way of working out."¹⁹ The small-town boy was heading for big things: The University of Oregon, World War II and the San Francisco Bay Area.

GROWING UP IN LOSTINE



Jimmie Leonard (front-far right), James Leonard Sr. (back 4th from left), sister Helen back-middle with glasses)

Whistle Punk and College Student

6

ad was a good student in high school. He was accepted into the University of Oregon in Eugene. Despite his excellent grades, the problem was the family didn't have the money to pay the tuition. In his short story, "Dreams Come True", Dad admitted:

... I believed my dreams of going to college appeared to be heading for a disaster. After high school I figured I could earn enough money in the hay fields of Eastern Oregon and 'jigging sacks' and tending header on combines during the wheat harvest to pay for my freshman year at the University of Oregon in Eugene. worked hard toward this dream. There was no money for movies and things like that. I loved dancing, and the Friday night dances in the church saved my neck in this respect.

I squeaked through the first year in Eugene, working every job I could find, just like many others in the same dire straits. We understood the problems because we shared them. After all these were the depression years.

When my family moved to Southwestern Oregon in the late

summer my doom was sealed. I knew the second year of college was out of the question. I was a ranch boy and there were no ranches in Coos County down near the coast. But there were the logging camps, and that's where I pinned my hopes. The chances were slim.²⁰

The Leonards moved from eastern Oregon to Coos County in the west. The 1940 Census shows the Leonards living in Bullards, a small community just north of the coastal town of Bandon on the Coquille River. Lisa recalls Dad explaining that he'd take a small ferry, a raft really, to cross the river. Living with the Leonard family was Nancy Daniel. Amelia's mother was the last remaining relative of her generation. She passed away in 1946 at 84 years old. The Leonards moved from Bullards to Coquille, about eighteen miles inland from the coast. For several decades, Aunt Hilma and her family lived just a few streets away from my grandparents in Coquille. The Schultzs moved to Bandon in the 1960s.

Although my father looked fondly on his life in eastern Oregon, his sisters didn't necessarily share his nostalgic view of Lostine. Our cousin Kenny remembers Aunt Hilma saying she was glad to get out of Wallowa County. Luckily, our granddad was not just a wheat rancher, but a school teacher, too. He eventually landed a job working with the Coos juvenile authority, supporting young people who had difficult family situations. Dad said he was really good at it.

That summer between his freshman and sophomore year, our dad landed a job in a nearby logging camp. As the youngest person on the crew, his role was as a "whistle punk". He explained:

The logs made the trip down the skyline on a carriage with a pair of

2-foot sheaves. A signalman, or "whistle punk" signaled the machine at the foot of the hill with loud blasts of an air horn which then in a clever operation lifted the logs and moved them down the skyline to the loading deck.

It was an important job because it involved alerting loggers with the horn should something go wrong. He described one near disaster in which he had the presence of mind to alert the loggers:

A sheave on the carriage high on the able at the spar of the tree broke, sending cables and pieces of equipment to the ground. Workmen, including the whistle punk, scattered. The carriage paused for a second and then headed screaming down the hill on the skyline.

I didn't run, probably because I didn't know where to go.

But I did know that people at the foot of the hill would be killed unless they got out of the way. But they would have to be warned.

I picked up the signal control and started sending a series of sounds of wild enough to attact attention. A trail of blue smoke followed the carriage down the skyline. Eventually it crashed in a cloud of smoke and dust.²¹

Luckily no one was hurt in the incident. Dad was credited with saving lives and was offered a job in the lumber camp. He worked two summers while in college, using the money to pay for tuition, books, and lodging. Our dad felt a fraternity with the loggers and their families. We heard lots of funny stories about Morris Ray and the rough and tumble Lakey brothers.

At the University of Oregon Dad majored in journalism. In addition to his classes, he began to take pictures and write stories for the local Eugene newspaper. His editor at the paper eventually helped him land a newspaper job as a reporter in San Francisco. However, like so many men of his generation, first he would serve four years in the Pacific during World War II as a Navy photographer.



Jim Leonard at University of Oregon in Eugene. He studied journalism and worked in the logging camps of western Oregon to help pay for his college.

WW II Navy Photographer

hen I was growing up, Dad told us humorous stories about his World War II experiences. My favorite was his tale of training in San Diego before he shipped out to the Pacific. His airplane took off from the naval base. He was to practice shooting the tail gun. When it was his turn, he lowered himself into the gun turret, grabbed the machine gun and pulled on the trigger. Nothing happened. He tried several times before realizing he hadn't released the safety on the gun. When he finally fired, he received a frantic radio message from the pilot to stop shooting because he was strafing a local San Diego beach. He looked down to see beach combers ducking for cover and running to safety. Luckily, no one was hurt. When the crew landed, his commanding officer declared he should never again shoot a gun but stick to shooting pictures with a camera. He'd grin after telling the story, saying this incident was the reason he became an aerial photographer in the Navy.

As I got older, Dad shared the dangerous side of his WW II experiences as a Navy photographer. His scout plane would

fly over enemy bases. He'd take photographs for Navy bomber pilots. If spotted by the Japanese, reconnaissance planes and their crews were prime targets. His plane was shot at more than once. Back on base the photographers processed their film, handing their pictures off to the plane crews who used the photographic information for their bombing runs.

Dad was stationed at Guadalcanal in the southern Solomon Islands. He arrived after the US took control of the islands in February of 1943. The Allies fought the Japanese in a series of land and sea clashes beginning in August of 1942. The hard fought victory at Guadalcanal ensured that nearby Allied bases on New Caledonia and New Guinea were safe. The success also helped offensive operations against the Japanese, including General MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Campaign and Admiral Nimitz's South Pacific Island Hopping campaign. Both were designed to push the Japanese out of the Pacific back toward their home islands for a final showdown.

Dad's plane regularly flew over the New Georgia Sound, dubbed "The Slot", to find and photograph enemy bases. In his short story, "It's All in Your Point of View," Dad described their assignment:

... we had frequently been detailed to get early morning aerial photos of Munda airfield to see how it was being used by the enemy. Navy dive bombers clobbered it daily, leaving it in shambles, according to our photos. But at night the Japanese hustled out and repaired it; and by early morning were launching raids at us down the slot.

On the day before the Marines and the Army invaded the island at Munda Point and miracle working Navy Seabees moved in and repaired the airfield. It was the beginning of the end for the Japanese when the Seabees showed up. Our dive bombers and fighters were using it the next day. Ours was the first big plane to land there, shortly after we had photographed enemy operations up country from Munda. We left the film for an Army photo interpretation unit."²²

In the same short story, Dad recounted putting wounded soldiers onto his plane so they could be ferried to a mobile hospital on base:

In seconds two ambulances rolled up. We couldn't believe our eyes when our passengers appeared. They were dirty beyond description, and their uniforms were torn and blood stained. Why, we wondered, did everyone have head wounds.

"Mostly shrapnel," the colonel said. "Never saw so many mortars." ...So many things about war are best forgotten, but I never want to forget that flight home to Guadalcanal — nor could I. We used our first aid and equipment to change a few dirty bandages and washed their faces with water from our canteen; but there was little else we could do for them. If you offered a comforting touch they would grasp your hand so tightly it was difficult to get it back.²³

The short story illustrates the carnage of the ground fighting. In an ironic twist, Dad wrote that the wounded soldiers feared flying more than the combat below:

"I wouldn't trade places with you guys," one of the soldiers said. "Why?" we asked.

"You're flying around up there all the time, and anything can happen," he explained.

"It can happen to anyone," I told him.

"But if it happens to you," the soldier said, "you can't take cover.

There's no place for you to hide."

Yet they were the ones wearing the bandages. I figured it was all in your point of view.²⁴

Dad always felt that the ground soldiers and Marines had it a lot worse. He admitted in his account of seeing the wounded that day:

We felt guilty for being so clean, and ashamed for having slept on clean, safe cots the night before, and for having eaten good Navy food that morning. We even felt sheepish for having worried for our safety while flying earlier in the day. I felt that I would never complain again. ²⁵

Our brother Jamie said that in his final months of life, our dad confided that he was wounded during the war, something we had never heard from him. He recalled being shot in the backside by a Japanese airplane strafing a beach. The wound was not a mortal one and he took several weeks to recover. As Jamie said, perhaps it was not an incident he thought particularly significant as compared with the fellow combatants who lost limbs or life. And our brother also conjectured that it may not have been something he wanted to worry the folks back home with. It was Dad's final story from WW II.

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS



Jim Leonard served in the War of the Pacific against Japan from 1942-1945. He was a Navy photographer, taking pictures of enemy bases near Guadalcanal.

Small Town Boy to Big City Reporter

fter World War II, Dad landed a job as a news reporter in San Francisco. His Eugene editor from his college days moved to the Bay Area. He hired our dad, who first worked for the *Call-Bulletin*, then the *News-Call Bulletin* and finally the *Examiner*.

Dad was a natural when it came to reporting. He genuinely liked people and was interested in their stories. He asked good questions and was a patient listener. Our dad always credited his small town roots for his journalistic success. In his short story "The Urge to Say 'Hello', he writes:

I have finally figured what gave me a talent for pursuing a reportorial career, an undertaking I loved and at which I excelled.

An ability to write became casually evident when I was a grammar school student, and it was sharpened somewhat in high school. And the real super training for the newspaper world came in the School of Journalism at the University of Oregon.

Be generous and accept the fact that I became a good reporter. It takes more than an ability to write to be a good one.

The source of my success was a compelling urge we country folk had to say "hello." These were people who had a hunger for company. We never overlooked an opportunity to at least say "hello".²⁶

Dad admitted that his small town habits of greeting and socializing with his sources gave him a reputation for being slow. But his patience paid off. His first assignment was covering the state and federal offices and the federal courts for the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin*. In 1960, he broke the story of a riot at Alcatraz Prison before any other city reporter. His scoop came from the launderer in the prison, whom he met one day chatting in a coffee shop.

Dad also covered the San Francisco police. He reported on crimes, big and small. He got to know everyone from the beat cop to the city police chief. One of his colleagues wrote an obituary of our dad, describing his days as a reporter and some of the antics in the newsroom, too:

"He was quiet and professional," said his friend, retired San Francisco newsman Jerry Flamm. "You never heard any foul language out of Jimmy. He dressed plain, like he was going into an accounting office."

At the old Hall of Justice in Chinatown, however, Mr. Leonard worked among flamboyant colleagues with felt hats and wild ways. Somehow, Mr. Leonard fit in. Friends recall how he helped lead his colleagues in a good-natured water fight with police inspectors who had been dropping firecrackers down a light well into the press room. Armed with a fire hose, Mr. Leonard squirted more than his share of the enemy.²⁷

Dad was also assigned to San Francisco's City Hall, where he

reported on policy and events of local government. He covered the mayor, supervisors, and city commissioners. Dad would tell dinner table stories about the political figures of the day: Jess Unruh, the Burton brothers, and the San Francisco mayors: George Christopher, John Shelley, Joseph Alioto, and George Moscone. His favorite city official was supervisor and mayor, Diane Feinstein, or "Diane" as he would call his friend. His most treasured interview was with Eleanor Roosevelt, one of Dad's personal heroes.

As part of a pool of reporters, in 1960 our dad accompanied San Francisco Mayor George Christopher on a goodwill tour of Moscow during the years of detente with the Soviet Union. His entourage was entertained by Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

In the 1960s, Dad left journalism to become the public information officer for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. He was the spokesman for the San Francisco Water Department and the Municipal Railway. In this capacity, his former colleagues from the newspapers interviewed him when they wanted information on city utilities. His big retirement celebration in 1980 included former colleagues from the newspaper and a who's who of local San Francisco government officials. Dad posed for photos with the VIPs and sat with his former secretaries, too. He was a popular and esteemed figure.

Dad had a study at 75 Mirabel in Mill Valley where we grew up. If you'd walk by the door, many nights you'd hear the familiar tap, tap, tapping of his fingers on the keys of the typewriter as he prepared for his next day's deadline.

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS



As a reporter for several San Francisco newspapers, Jim Leonard covered the police and City Hall. In the photo above, he interviewed San Francisco Supervisor Diane Feinstein, who would go on to become The City's mayor and a US Senator.

The Leonards of Mill Valley

hen I first met my dad he lived in a house in South San Francisco. It was spacious and clean but without a lot of warmth. His was the home of a bachelor, save his one constant companion: a little black mutt named Midge.

Despite all of his professional success as a big city reporter in San Francisco, Dad's first marriage had been very difficult. I didn't know many details. However, as I grew older sad facts leaked out. His former wife suffered from severe mental illness, and when things got really bad — she and her family unfairly blamed my dad. The marriage ended in the mid 50s with divorce.

We also learned the story of our mom and dad's first meeting. Mutual friends invited them to a party in Mill Valley. Dad explained that he stood outside the house and almost didn't go into the party because he was discouraged with the prospects of finding love. When he finally did enter the gathering, our dad always described it as that Hollywood moment when he set eyes on our mom, everyone else disappeared. He was smitten.

Not sure Mom would tell the story the same way, but it was easy to see why they hit it off. They both had former marriages with troubled spouses, and Dad wasn't put off dating someone with kids. We were a plus. Our dad didn't waste any time letting our mom know he was serious. He pulled up stakes in South San Francisco and moved into a small Mill Valley apartment so he could be close by.

On June 23, 1962, Fran and Jim Leonard married in a private civil ceremony. They honeymooned at Hetch Hetchy in the Sierra near Yosemite. We moved from the 37 Ethel house to our new home at 75 Mirabel. The following year Mom and Dad had our brother Jamie. James Robert Leonard was born August 30, 1963. The era of the Leonards of Mill Valley had begun.

THE LEONARDS OF MILL VALLEY



The Leonards of Mill Valley

Afterword

hen my mom passed away in 1995, Dad came to live with us. I was grateful. He provided solace when the missing was immense. It also made me happy that my daughters would get to know their granddad better.

Jamie and Miya moved into the family room so Grandad could have his own bedroom. On school mornings, Dad observed Marilyn in awe as she made breakfast, lunches, and whisked kids out the door. He would stop her for a moment to exclaim, "You are so beautiful. You're a peach." Sometimes, I'd catch him giving Tamiko a kiss, holding her cheeks with his freckled hands or wrapping Nicole in the famous Leonard hug, which ended with small pats on the back.

At Dad's memorial service in 2004, Nicole rose to say what a loving person Grandad was. Nicole added that she was so glad that I had learned to be a dad from him. I cried. Grandad was my stepfather, as I was hers. In saying that I learned from the best, she was paying me a compliment as well.

In 2010, a few months before Nate, my first grandchild, was

AFTERWORD

born I would have to decide what I wanted my grand kids to call me. I already had the answer in my heart. But because Grandad was so beloved to my daughters, I asked each of them if it was OK to use his name. I was pleased that I got four out of four yeses.

I wasn't quite sure how Dad spelled his moniker. Jamie Lynn answered the question by producing a handwritten note he had scribbled when he lived with us. He signed it "Grandad" dropping out one of the d's in the middle. And so it was decided, I was "Grandad" for Nate and the six little ones that followed.

More recently, my granddaughter Abby asked me if I was her mom's stepdad. Before I could answer, Nicole intervened. "I was so lucky to have two Dads," she told Abby. That seemed to satisfy our seven-year old.

When my grandkids are older, we can explain all the distinctions society makes: stepparents, stepchildren, half siblings, etc., the various ways we explain our familial relationships to people outside our circle. But within our family, I wanted to follow the unspoken Leonard rule – there are only brothers and sisters, moms and dads, and grandparents and grandchildren.

I learned over a lifetime with my dad that being a parent or grandparent isn't about a surname or blood. I didn't share any DNA with my dad, but he was the best father a son could have. He had six granddaughters; he shared no biological connection to any of them. Yet, he loved all of them with all his heart. And they knew it.

DNA has its place. It can be used to capture criminals or identify medical problems in the future. However, it can't tell you anything about the loving relationships between family members. There is no gene for being a caring, hardworking, mom for a boisterous house full girls, as my Marilyn was to all four of our daughters.

Happily, our modern era families come in a broader array of shapes, sizes, colors and arrangements. We have more blended families, more family members who may not appear to look related. Now, more than ever, we need to heed the old Leonard wisdom: families are forged in caring, kindness, and love. Period.

Dad learned his special gifts from his parents in his loving Lostine home. He passed the Leonard magic to my sister, brother, and me, to the Forrests and the Tremblays. Grandad's great grandchildren, with surnames Geoghegan, Spells, O'Berg and Ramirez, should know the feel of a Leonard hug. For it will be their job to pass along their great grandfather's loving legacy.

Acknowledgment

The story of our Leonards was told to us first and regulary by our dear dad, James H. Leonard Jr. We were so lucky he was as good a storyteller on paper as he was in person.

Thanks to my sister, Lisa Tremblay, his vignettes were preserved as *Granddad's Stories*. She understood their importance to Dad's legacy. Wherever possible, I've relied on his words from this treasure trove of family history. Lisa also helped edit my first draft.

In addition to my sister, my brother, Jamie Leonard, is always a fount of family information, especially since his memory is so much better than mine. Many of the details chronicled in this short volume are based on his remembrances.

We are so blessed for our cousin Kenny Lorenz. He talked regularly to his Uncle Jim about all things Leonard and has shared his recollections. He also sent me the article about the recent return of the Nez Perce to Wallowa County referenced in the book.

I hope we will consider this first edition of *The Story of Our Leonards* as just a preliminary draft. In addition to correcting any errors I've made, let's add more Leonard stories and photos in a second edition.

Appendix: "The Great Leonard"



The beautiful Wallowa Lake surrounded by the Wallowa Mountains. James Leonard grew up several miles north in the Wallowa Valley.

APPENDIX: "THE GREAT LEONARD"



Baby Jimmie. James H. Leonard Jr. was born August 23, 1918 in Wallowa County, Oregon

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS



Jimmie Leonard of Lostine, Oregon. Circa 1920's



Jim Leonard graduate of University of Oregon school of journalism. Circa 1940.

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS

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Draft card for James H. Leonard Jr.

APPENDIX: "THE GREAT LEONARD"



Jim Leonard served in World War II from 1942-1945. He was stationed in the Solomon Islands.

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS



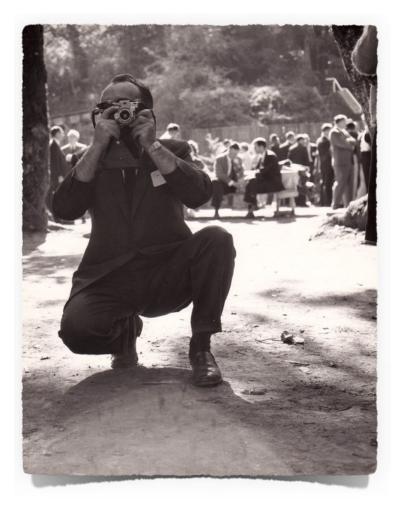
Navy photographer in the War of the Pacific

APPENDIX: "THE GREAT LEONARD"



1960 trip to Soviet Union. Left to right: Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, reporters Jim Leonard and Mel Wax, and San Francisco Mayor George Christopher

THE STORY OF OUR LEONARDS



Photographer

APPENDIX: "THE GREAT LEONARD"



Jim and Fran Leonard were married June 23, 1962.



The Two James Leonards - circa 1963

APPENDIX: "THE GREAT LEONARD"



Jim and Fran Leonard

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About the Author

When he is not writing about family history, Dave Forrest enjoys visiting his grand kids on two continents. He spends his favorite days walking in the trees with his loved ones.

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• https://www.daveforrest.net/ancestors