

HADLEY NEWSLETTER

(Hadley, Headley, Hadlee, Hadly, Hadleigh, etc and their related kin)

Vol. CXLIV

Feb 2019

The Dowager & Spinster Hadleys

Before we get into trouble with the title of this brief biographical story, we thought a definition might be in order.

We are using this term *dowager* to refer to an elderly widow who owns property and had financial resources sufficient to cover her living expenses in a comfortable fashion. It was a term principally used during the Victorian era and is not commonly used today in the US.

Statically, women live about three years longer than men and that also goes for the species of chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans and gibbons. This extended life is not fully understood although it is thought to be the lack of testosterone in females. In the past, men often married women younger than themselves. Wars took a greater toll in the lives of the North America men than women. Men often were subjected to a greater degree of danger through work than women, although child birth in women certainly took its toll.

Unmarried older women were often considered *spinsters*. Many of these women did not marry due to the devastating toll war took on available men. After many wars, there often were not as many men available for marriage to fill the role of husbands for the availability women.

The terms *Dowager* and *Spinster* initially were not considered derogatory. However, by today's standards, it might be best not to reference any woman as either a dowager or spinster, even though they might have qualified for that title in a bygone era.

We are going to reference three Hadley sisters as example of "dowagers and spinsters." These three sisters, children of Lucien N Hadley <http://www.hadleygenealogy.net/ghtout/grpf278.html> and his wife Jeanette Bourn, were Lizzie (1865-1951), Mary (1871-1954), and Lucy (1873-1940) and all were born in or around Templeton, MA. There were also four brothers in this family and all the seven siblings were well educated and all the men had wives. The three sisters were all Normal School graduates (Teacher Colleges/Universities of today) and all served as school teachers in various towns in eastern Massachusetts for the better part of their lives. Upon retirement, they all moved back to Templeton, MA and with the help of their family, and money from the estate of their parents, the three sisters jointly purchased a home so as to live together. Even though they were all retired temperance, frugal school teachers, their combined jointly saved income



L-R Lucy, Lizzie, & Mary Hadley



Jeanette & Lucien Hadley

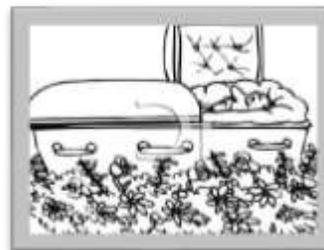
was not sufficient for them to comfortably support themselves. They were forced to rely upon some financial assistance from their brothers.

In reading their dairies, it is clear a husband would have been a preferred option for at least two of the sisters. We have heard that some folks in the town of Templeton, MA referred to the sisters as both spinsters and dowagers, although by the definitions we have used in this story, the term dowager would not have been a correct term, since all the sisters remained unmarried and, do we dare say, likely not of their own choice.

Hadleys Marrying a Dead Person:

In the Dec 2018 issue of the *Hadley Newsletter* we talked about a tri-marriage and also about Sologamy where a person marries him/herself. We wondered how these activities will affect future Hadleys and their genealogy research/record keeping.

We now ask about the practice in France where it is now legal for a living person to marry a dead person <http://mentalfloss.com/article/53829/can-you-legally-marry-dead-person>. How do the French courts deal with transfer of propriety and wealth from the living person to the dead person?



We also understand a dead individual may, by proxy, be baptized into the Mormon church which we understand is an essential requirement for LDS members to enter the *Kingdom of God* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism_for_the_dead

Here we ask the question: If, in the future, a Hadley who is a member of the LDS church seeks to have a deceased non-LDS Hadley relative baptized into the LDS church, how do should we record the religion of this deceased Hadley being baptized into a religion that was not reflective of their religious choice during their life?

This is Your Newsletter:

We encourage you to notify the *Hadley Newsletter* of any important happenings, especially **BMD** (Births, Marriages and Deaths). This newsletter is devoted exclusively to individuals who are related to descendants and those related to them, of our Patriarch **George Hadley** (ca.1612-1686).

‘The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings. The inherent virtue of Socialism is the equal sharing of miseries.’ -Winston Churchill, *House of Commons*, 22 October 1945

James R. Hadley 65 Rondout Harbor, Port Ewen, NY 12466 (845) 339-5363
Email: Jim@HadleyGenealogy.net or Jags@hvc.rr.com
Website: www.HadleyGenealogy.net or www.HadleyGenealogy.com