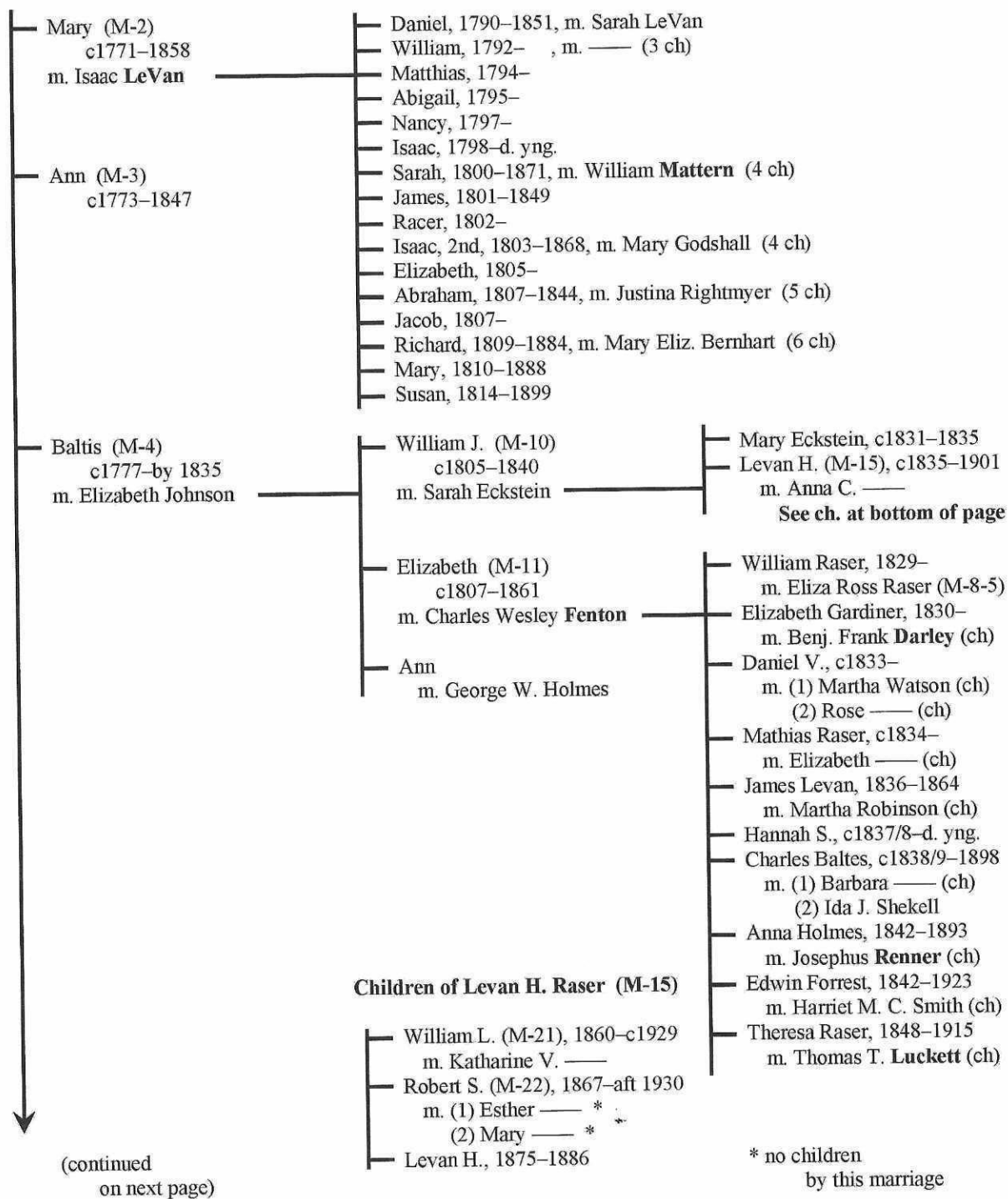


Our Raser Family

Descendants of Matthias Raser (M-1)

c1744-c1803

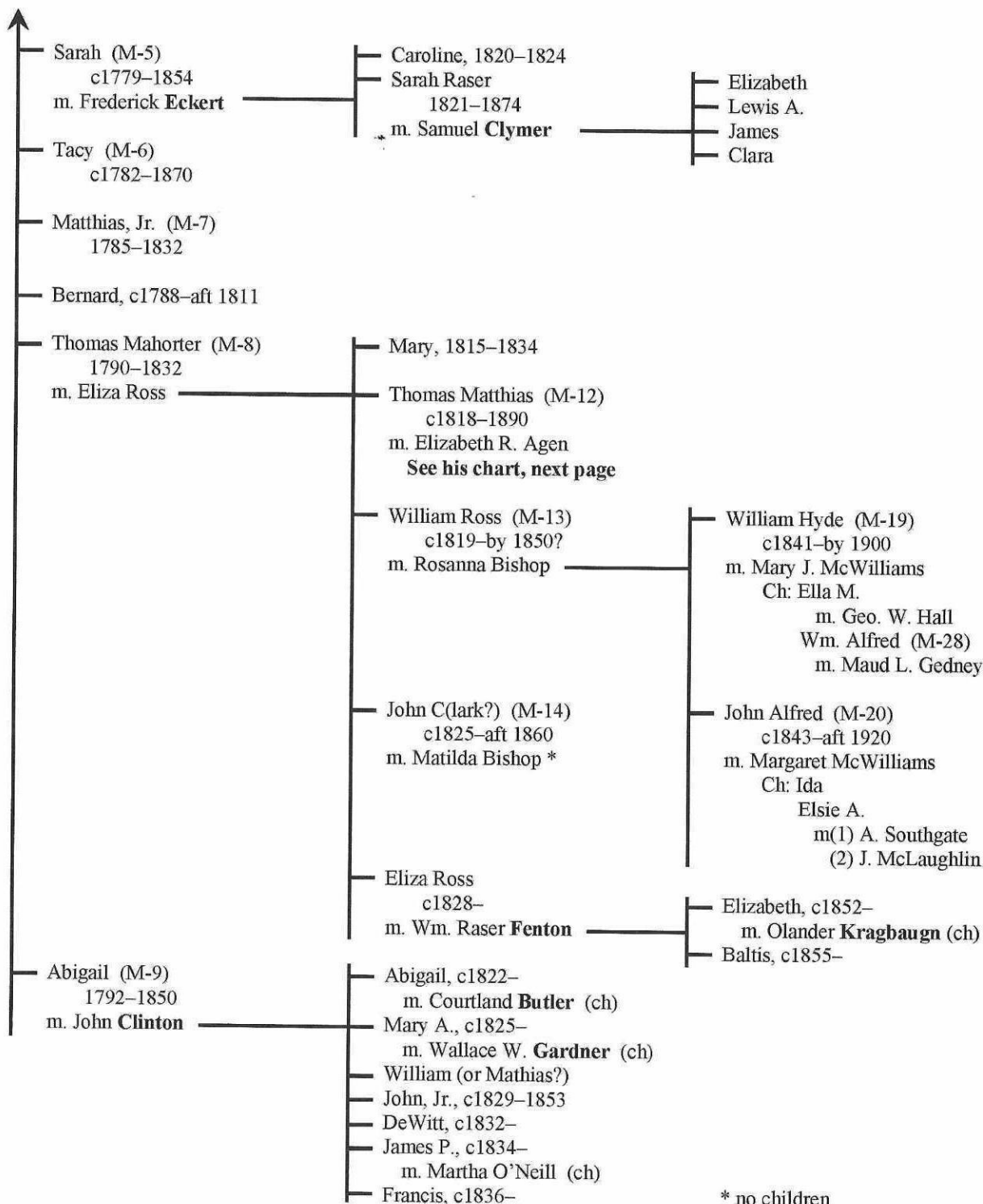
m. c1771 Abigail —



(continued  
on next page)

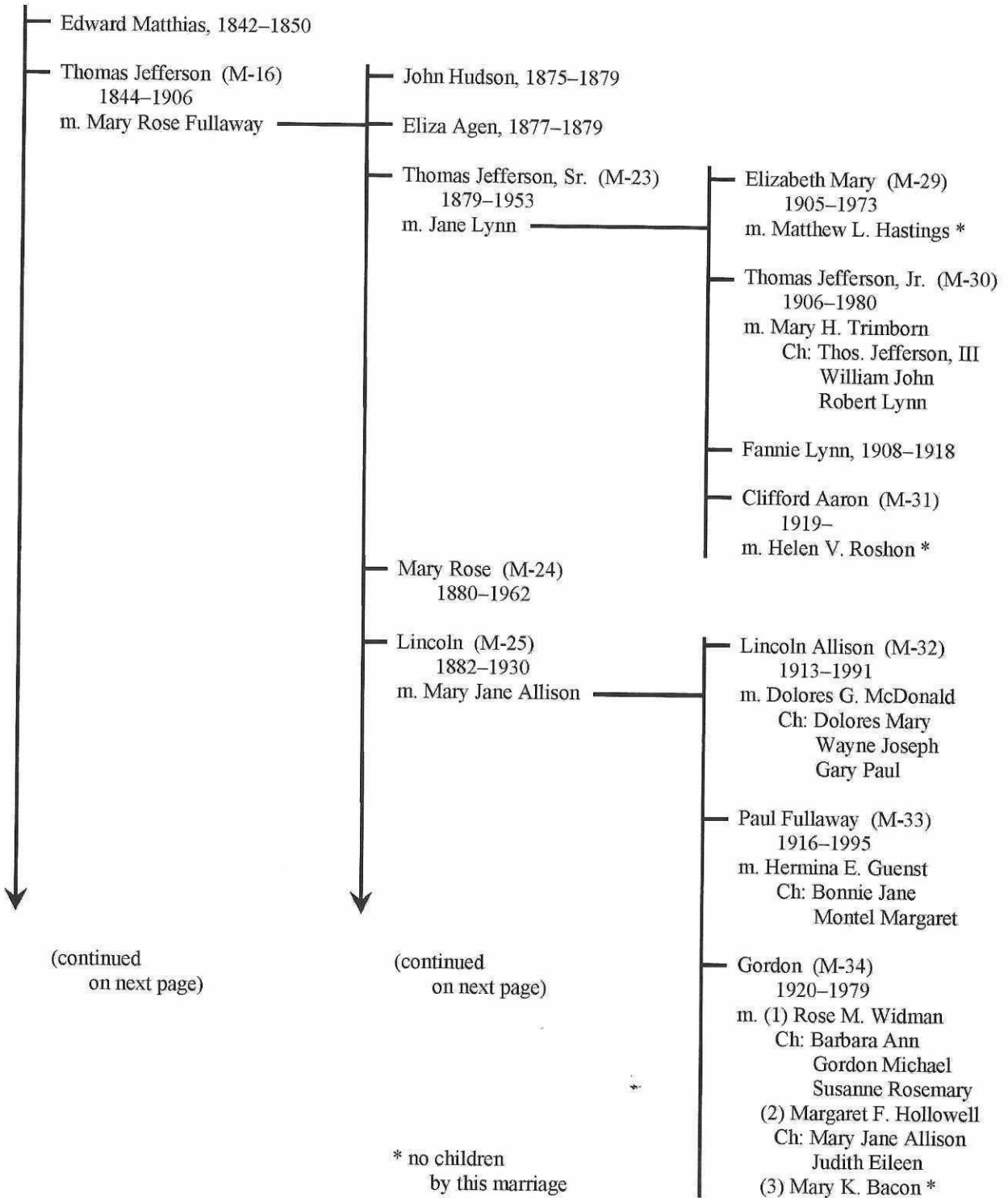
The Matthias Raser Branch

Descendants of Matthias Raser (M-1)  
(continued)



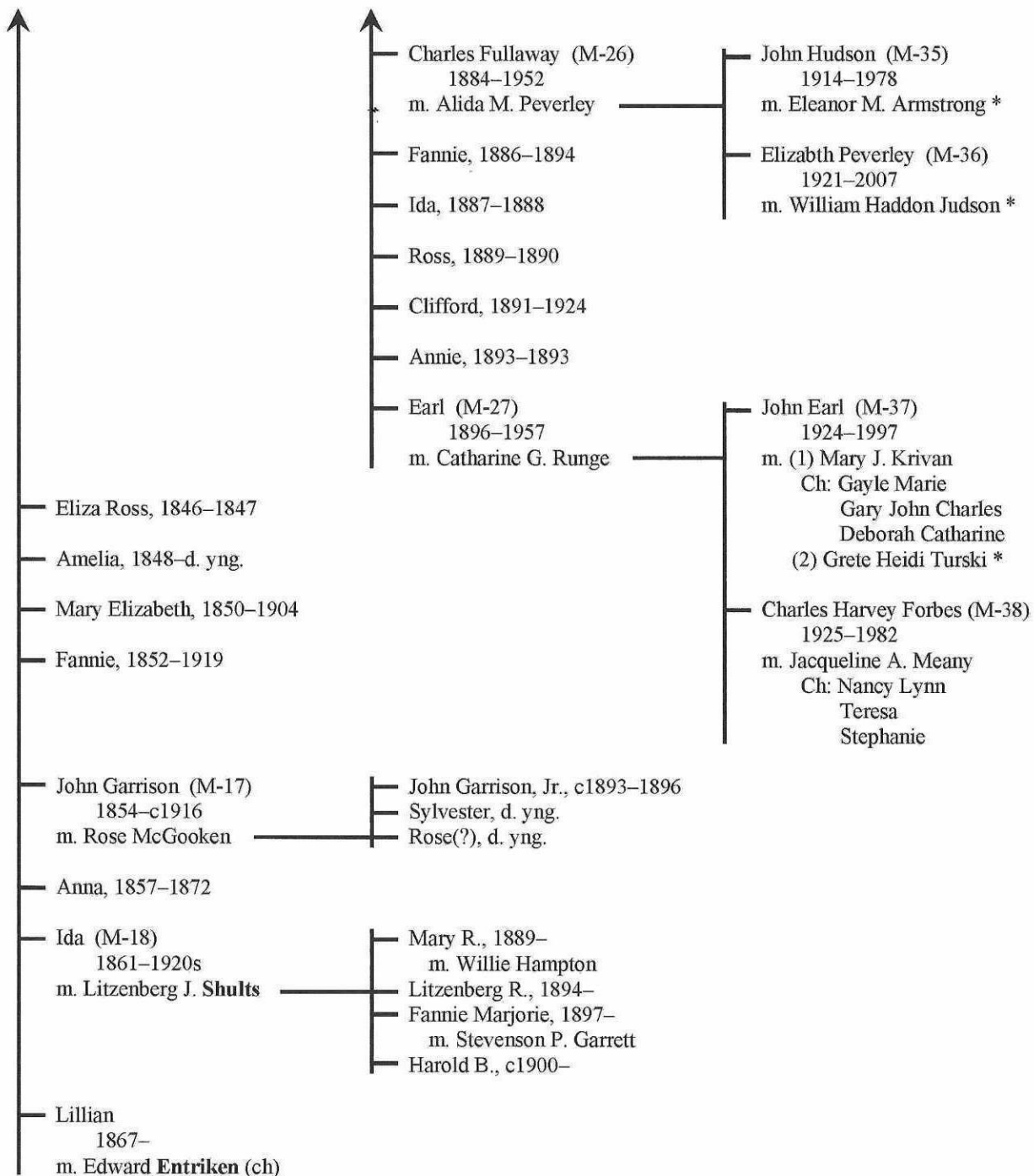
\* no children  
by this marriage

**Descendants of Thomas Matthias Raser (M-12)**  
c1818-1890  
m. c1841 Elizabeth Ross Agen



The Matthias Raser Branch

Descendants of Thomas Matthias Raser (M-12)  
(continued)



\* no children  
by this marriage

## *The Matthias Raser Branch*

M-1. **MATTHIAS RASER**, son of Baltes Reser (A-3) and Mary Luckens, was born about 1744 in Germantown, Pa. Named for his grandfather Luckens, he probably was the eldest child of Baltes by his first marriage. Matthias was raised in the family home at the lower end of Germantown Avenue, where his father taught him the trade of a tanner.

Matthias Raser was associated with the Abington Monthly Meeting of Friends (Quakers), where he witnessed a marriage as early as 1761 (1). He was married before 25 November 1771 to **ABIGAIL** ("Abby") — (whose surname has still to be discovered), when complaints were filed against him by Germantown Friends "for marriage by a Priest, to one not a member." "Priest" probably was a reference to a Protestant minister. The marriage was the subject of a church committee investigation for many months, during which it was reported that Matthias Raser was "in some measure sensible of [his] transgressions ..." It was not until 25 May 1772 that he was received back into the meeting (2). His name last appears in the Abington Friends records in October 1793.

Matthias's mother died in 1762, leaving four young children. His father remarried the next year, but died in late-1773 leaving four more youngsters. This large family undoubtedly presented a burden to Matthias's step-mother, for within the next two years she had sold the family residence in Germantown and moved close to her relatives in the waterfront area of Philadelphia. During the same period, Matthias and his wife moved into their own house in Germantown, probably taking with them his brother Daniel and sister Elizabeth.

In March 1775 Matthias Raser purchased from Jacob Keyser, yeoman of Germantown, and his son John Keyser, a tanner (whose wife was Rebecca Lucken, sister of Matthias Raser's mother), a half-acre house lot fronting on the southwest side of Germantown Main Street, as well as a three-acre lot on the northwest side of the road leading from Germantown to Abington (3). The £537.10 price was financed in part by a £300 mortgage from the estate of Derick Johnson, which represented part of the share held by the executors for Derick's daughter Ann (Johnson-Lucken) Nedrow—who was Matthias's grandmother (4). The mortgage was satisfied in 1791.

Matthias settled on the first lot, which contained a house and tanyard and was located "nearly opposite the 7 mile stone in Germantown"—just southeast of present-day Washington Lane. Here he operated a tanyard for almost twenty-five years, and was reputed to have been a skilled workman and to have done a good business (5). He appears in various Germantown tax lists from 1774 to 1783, in which he is shown as owner of a horse and cattle, as well as of acreage (6). During this period, and particularly in 1780, the new nation experienced runaway inflation. Matthias's tax of £20 in 1779 escalated to £95.17.6 in 1780.

In the early part of the Revolutionary War, during 1778–79, Matthias Raser was initially assigned to Capt. Christian Snyder's Company, and later to Capt. Joseph Keyser's Company, of the 2nd Battalion of the Philadelphia County Militia—composed of Germantown men. For reasons now unknown, he frequently was absent on muster days and thereby incurred substantial fines (7). In 1780, as Matthias Raser, he served as a private in Capt. Jacob Hall's 5th Company, 7th Battalion, Philadelphia County Militia (8).

About 1780 Matthias was listed among the contributors to establish the Concord School in upper Germantown, and from 1788 through 1798 he was a trustee of that school—the school building is still maintained as a historic site in upper Germantown (9). He was educated at least to the extent that he could write (always signing his name Matthias Raser); his wife signed her name Abigael Raser. It will be noted from

further reading that the Matthias branch of the Raser family continued actively in education (a tradition established by Baltes Reser in 1759) until recent years.

In July 1781 Matthias purchased the half-acre-plus tract, with its two-story stone house, which bordered on the northwest side of his home lot (10). Seven years later, in September 1788, he mortgaged this property to Anthony Johnson, a Germantown saddler—in 1793 he paid off this mortgage (11). In 1789 the tax assessor indicated that, in addition to his four acres and dwelling, Mathias Raser then owned a horse, a cow, and a riding chair (12).

Following the intestate death of his grandmother Ann (Johnson–Lucken) Nedrow in late-1786, Matthias was appointed one of the two administrators of her estate. In 1767 Ann's brother, Richard Johnson, had willed her his remainders of the extensive Jansen ancestral land holdings. Finding Ann's personal estate insufficient to pay off her debts, the Orphans Court allowed the administrators to sell any remaining property. On 31 January 1789 a somewhat over 26-acre tract bordering the Germantown Great Road, having been sold at public auction to establish its value, was repurchased by Matthias for £569, only to be sold by him three months later for £725—for a net gain of £156. (13)

In early 1792 Matthias received £300 in the will of Thomas Nedrow (14), who had married his grandmother Luckens in later life. Since the executors were instructed to “discount for that Sum,” quite possibly this was the money which had partially financed Matthias's 1775 purchase of two Germantown lots. In May 1792 Matthias again mortgaged his Germantown home-lot property, this time to Thomas Forrest, gentleman of Philadelphia (15); on the same day he also sold to Forrest his three-acre tract alongside the road to Abington (16). This provided him with cash and credits which may have enabled him, the next year, to satisfy the 1788 mortgage on the tract bordering his home lot.

For some years Matthias and Abigail seem to have led a relatively uneventful life while they raised their large family of children. Their last child, Abigail, was born early in 1792. But Matthias Raser's financial condition had begun to deteriorate by May 1798, when he was forced again to mortgage his adjoining side-lot, this time to John Johnson, Jr., saddler of Germantown (17).

Matters continued to worsen, and in newspapers of December 1798 Matthias advertised to sell his family household goods, and to consider offers for the purchase of his two adjoining Germantown Main Street lots. The properties did not sell, and in June 1799 he advertised again, this time to sell his home lot at public vendue. The advertisements described this property as a two-story stone house with two rooms and an entry on the first floor and three rooms on the second; a tanyard with twenty vats, stone barn, stone bark house, mill house, currying shop and beam house with a stone wheel, with a stream of water running through the place (18).

Possibly the encumbrances on his properties delayed finalizing a sale, for it was not until April 1800 that the deed to his home lot was written. At that time, in return for Joseph Baish, cooper of Germantown, paying off Thomas Forrest's mortgage of 1792, “Matthias Raser, late of Germantown ... Tanner, now of the City of Philadelphia, Flour Dealer, and Abigail his Wife,” transferred title of this tract to Baish (19).

By June 1799 Matthias and his family had moved to 102 Race (sometimes called Sassafras) Street, in the waterfront section of Philadelphia. In 1800 he was called a flour dealer, in the 1801 city directory a feed store operator, and in 1802–03 a mealman. He died about 1803, as in the city directory for 1804 “widow Raser” is listed operating a meal and flour store at the same address. The exact date of Matthias's death, and his burial place, have not been discovered.

By 1806 Abigail Raser had moved to 122 North 4th Street along with seven of her children. Here she commenced operating a boarding house, probably serving meals to local laborers but not providing rooms.

Like all of the family's Philadelphia residences, this was another rented property. By the time of the 1810 census Abigail had relocated her business to 17 South Second Street; a year later she was listed in the city directory as operating a boarding house at 34 Pewterplatter Alley.

During these years in Philadelphia, Matthias's estate was still the legal owner of the half-acre house tract on Germantown Main Street which bordered the northwest side of his original home lot. Unfortunately, Matthias had left his widow with a mortgage on this property, and it would appear that by 1811 she no longer was able to meet its terms. In May she was appointed administrator of Matthias's estate, but the personal property was estimated to be worth only about \$40 (20). In June, John Johnson, Jr., brought a suit against the estate; the Germantown property was seized by the county sheriff and subsequently sold at public sale. On 10 July 1812 the sheriff issued a deed to this property to Conrad Gould, storekeeper of Germantown, who was high bidder for the property at \$925 (21).

Beginning in the 1813 city directory Abigail Raser is listed as a widow living at 94 Sassafras (Race) Street; from 1814–18 both she and her son Matthias, a printer, are listed there. By now Abigail was about 65 years old—too old to work to support her children—and had retired under their care. In 1819 Matthias and his mother appear at 41 Cherry Street; she is last listed there in 1822. Abigail Raser died in Philadelphia in late January 1823, aged 74 years (22). Her burial place is not known.

Matthias and Abigail had a large family. All of their children possibly have not been identified, but no evidence has been found that any unidentified child lived long or left descendants. In addition to the parents, the 1790 census lists six other males and five females in the household (23); in 1800 there were five younger males and four females (24). It is currently not possible to reconcile these figures, or ones for Abigail's household in 1810 (25) and 1820 (26), by which time married and orphaned children—and possibly unrelated roomers—may have resided with her. But if we can believe one account, she had among her children “a worthless son who killed himself” (5). This may have been Bernard, or a still unidentified son.

Children (RASER), all born in Germantown, Pa.:

- + 1. Mary (M-2), b. abt. Mar. 1771, d. 26 Mar. 1858, m. 3 May 1790 Isaac LeVan.
- + 2. Ann (M-3), b. abt. 1773, d. 6 May 1847, never mrd.
- + 3. Baltis (M-4), b. abt. 1777, d. by 1835, m. 16 Sep. 1804 Elizabeth Johnson.
- + 4. Sarah (M-5), b. abt. 1779, d. 6 Sep. 1854, m. bef. 1820 Frederick Eckert.
- + 5. Tacy (M-6), b. abt. 1782, d. 27 Oct. 1870, never mrd.
- + 6. Matthias, Jr. (M-7), b. 1785, d. 30 Dec. 1832, unmrd.
- 7. Bernard, b. abt. 1788. He was a crewman aboard the ship *Amiable* in Oct. 1804, when he was described as a citizen of the US, b. in Pa., age 16, res. of Phila., 5 ft. 9 in., fair complexion, sandy hair, blue eyes, smooth faced, with two scars on his left thigh (27). It should be noted that his features were very similar to those of Capt. Bernard Raser (A-9), b. 1764. He was at sea at least during 1804–11. No further record.
- + 8. Thomas Mahorter (M-8), b. 1790, d. 29 Apr. 1832, m. 13 Apr. 1814 Eliza Ross.
- + 9. Abigail (M-9), b. 30 Jan. 1792, d. 21 Dec. 1850, m. abt. 1820–25 John Clinton.

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M-2. **MARY RASER**, daughter of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail—, was born about March 1771 (1) in Germantown, Pa. She grew up in Germantown; her parents were still residing there when she was married at age twenty in Philadelphia.

Mary Raser married **ISAAC LEVAN** on 3 May 1790 in Swedes Church, Philadelphia (2). Isaac was born in February 1769 in Maxatawny Township, Berks County, Pa. A LeVan/Levan family historian believes he was the son of Peter and Sarah LeVan of that place, and grandson of Daniel and Susanna (Siegfried) LeVan (1). Three LeVan brothers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, came to America about 1715 (their brother Joseph, who

accompanied them, died at sea on the way over); their youngest brother Daniel came in 1727—all four brothers settled in Berks County, Pa. Abraham and Isaac Levand [*sic*] were naturalized in February 1730/1, along with Blasius Daniel Mackinet, Mathias Adams Hogermod and Johannes Dewalt Ent, all of whom were later to become connected with the Raser family through marriage (3).

The Raser and Levan families were associated with each other at least as early as January 1767, when Baltes Reser (A-3) borrowed £500 from Abraham Levan, farmer of Oley Township in Berks County; collateral was a third mortgage on 18 1/2 acres of Baltes's land fronting on Germantown Avenue (4). The mortgage was satisfied in 1780, shortly after Abraham Levan's death. Just how Mary Raser and Isaac Levan came to meet is unknown, but the families may have maintained a long-distance friendship for a generation or more. No Levans appear anywhere near Philadelphia County in the 1790 census, or in the Philadelphia city directories before 1818.

Soon after their marriage, Isaac and Mary Levan settled in Reading Borough, Berks County, where they appear in the 1790 census with a son—their first child arrived early and the first US census started and ended late (5). Isaac is called Junr. in the census; the Isaac Levan listed next to him was probably his bachelor uncle. The Levans, with three sons and three daughters, were still there in 1800 (6). But by 1810 Isaac and his family of thirteen children had relocated to neighboring Maxatawny Township; the census indicates he owned four horses, nine cattle, 15 sheep, and three spinning wheels which the family used in making linen, linsey and woolen cloth (7).

Isaac Levan died 4 February 1819 (1), possibly in Maxatawny Township, leaving his widow with a large family. The previous year their son William had moved to Philadelphia, where he resided at his grandmother Raser's house at 94 Race Street. William continued to live with her and his uncle Matthias Raser after they relocated to 41 Cherry Street about 1819; William's occupation is given as grocer. By 1825 he had a dwelling at 217 North Sixth Street; his grocery was at 195 North Third. Where Isaac Levan's widow was living during this time is not known.

Mary Levan is mentioned in the 1842 will of her sister Ann Raser (M-3) as the widow of Isaac Levan and having a daughter Susan. In 1850 a Mary Levan, age 33, and a Susan Levan, age 20, were living in Tacy Raser's boarding house at 156 Cherry Street, Philadelphia (8). Some have thought this Mary was Isaac's widow, with an incorrect age given—more likely Mary and Susan were Mary (Raser) Levan's two youngest daughters. But at some point Mary did return to Philadelphia, where she died on 26 March 1858 (9\*). She was buried in Woodlands Cemetery, Philadelphia. The LeVan Genealogy calls her "an English Quakeress."

Children (LEVAN); older ones born in Reading Borough, later ones in Maxatawny Township, Berks County, Pa. (1):

1. Daniel, b. 14 Oct. 1790, d. 28 Nov. 1851, m. abt. 1825 Sarah LeVan; res. Maxatawny Twp., where he is bur. in Zion's Union Churchyard.
2. William, b. 13 Sep. 1792, m. ——— and had three chn. He res. in Phila. by 1818; bur. in Woodlands Cem. William and his brother James affirmed the unwitnessed will of Ann Raser (M-3) in 1847.
3. Matthias, b. 1 Sep. 1794, res. Boyertown, Pa.
4. Abigail, b. 4 Nov. 1795.
5. Nancy, b. 26 Sep. 1797.
6. Isaac, b. 4 Dec. 1798, d. yng.
7. Sarah, b. 5 Mar. 1800, d. 1871, m. abt. 1820 William Mattern of Maxatawny Twp.; four chn. She is bur. Unionville Cem., near Neff, Lehigh Co., Pa.; he is bur. in Kutztown, Pa.
8. James, b. 9 Apr. 1801, d. 18 Aug. 1849. He was residing with Tacy Raser in 1847. Elizabeth (Raser) Fenton (M-11) apparently named one of her sons after him.
9. Racer, b. 22 June 1802. Poss. the Raser Levan res. in Avon, Livingston Co., N.Y., in 1830 (10), who purchased land in Michigan in 1831 (11).

*The Matthias Raser Branch*

10. Isaac (2nd), b. 4 Oct. 1803, d. 8 Feb. 1868 in Weissport, Pa., m. Mary Godshall; four chn.
11. Elizabeth, b. 11 July 1805.
12. Abraham, b. 7 Mar. 1807 (twin) in Maxatawny Twp, d. 14 Apr. 1844 in Reading, Pa., m. abt. 1832 Justina Rightmyer; five chn. Res. Maxatawny Twp.
13. Jacob, b. 7 Mar. 1807 (twin).
14. Richard, b. 7 Feb. 1809, d. 30 Aug. 1884, m. abt. 1832 Mary Elizabeth Bernhart of Reading, Pa. They moved from Maxatawny Twp. to Reading; she d. 1 Oct. 1901. Six chn., incl. Aaron Raser LeVan, b. 30 Oct. 1833 in Reading, Pa.
15. Mary, b. 30 Dec. 1810, d. 18 Apr. 1888 of pneumonia at the Presby. Home, Phila.; bur. Woodlands Cem., Phila.; never mrd. (12)
16. Susan, b. 22 Apr. 1814, d. 28 Jan. 1899 at the Presby. Home, Phila.; never mrd.

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M-3. **ANN RASER**, daughter of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail ———, was born in Germantown, Pa., about 1773, based on her reported age at death. She already was an adult when her parents moved to Philadelphia about 1799. When Ann's father died about 1803, her mother Abigail was left with at least half-a-dozen underage or unmarried children who continued to live in the family household. By 1806 the widow Abigail had commenced operating their residence places as boarding houses, and probably continued to do so with her children's help until her death at 41 Cherry Street in 1823.

During these years Ann, as the oldest unmarried daughter, had assumed increasing care of family members, and after her mother's death became the family matriarch. The 1829 city directory first notes her operating the 41 Cherry Street residence as a boarding house. The 1830 census, listed under her brother Matthias's name, shows seven persons in the house; they included at least Ann, Matthias and Tacy, and possibly children of Baltis (1). In 1833 she was an administrator of her deceased brother Matthias's estate, and also of her brother Thomas's estate in 1834.

By 1838 the family had moved to 156 Cherry Street; in 1840 the household consisted of seven males and five females (2). It was here that Ann Raser died of fever, unmarried, on 6 May 1847, aged 74 years; she was buried in the cemetery of the First Reformed Dutch Church, Philadelphia (3).

On 8 August 1842 Ann wrote a holographic will in which she named her parents, brothers Thomas and Baltis (deceased), sisters Tacy, Mary Levan, Sarah Eckert and Abigail Clinton, and four nieces (4). She failed to name an executor, and the will was never witnessed. Soon after her death her nephews William and James Levan testified that the will was indeed in her handwriting, and the court appointed Tacy Raser to be the administrator (5).

Ann Raser's estate consisted of a \$1,000 County Loan Certificate and \$82 in household items. In her will she bequeathed sister Tacy the income from her savings for life; after Tacy's decease her nieces were to receive monetary bequests and her three sisters were bequeathed the remainder in equal shares. Tacy far outlived all of her sisters and died a pauper—whether the nieces ever received anything appears not to be recorded.

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M-4. **BALTIS RASER**, son of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail ———, was born in Germantown, Pa., about 1777; he likely was named for his grandfather Reser. He was raised in Germantown and may have remained there, working in tanning, when his parents moved to Philadelphia about 1799. On 16 September 1804 he married **ELIZABETH JOHNSON**, whose parents are currently unknown (1).

Baltus Razier appears as a currier, at 103 North Second Street, in the 1805 Philadelphia city directory. No other references to him have been found in records, suggesting he was very poor. The author's study of Matthias-branch census data makes it seem possible that Baltis was residing with his mother at 41 Cherry Street in 1820. The general obscurity of Baltis and his wife also make it likely they both died relatively young, leaving their children to be raised by others. Baltis left neither a will nor sufficient estate to warrant its administration.

Fortunately, his brother Matthias left a large enough estate for Baltis's children (who jointly received a one-seventh share) to be identified in an account dated 28 August 1835: "the heirs of Baltas Raser deceased Vs William J. Raser, Charles Fenton and Ann Raser" (2). His sister Ann's will of 8 August 1842 also mentions his daughters Elizabeth Fenton and Ann; by then son William J. was deceased.

Children (RASER), all born in Philadelphia, Pa. (2):

- + 1. William J. (M-10), b. abt. 1805, d. abt. 28 Aug. 1840, m. 5 Apr. 1831 Sarah Eckstein.
- + 2. Elizabeth (M-11), b. abt. 1807, d. late July 1861, m. abt. 1828 Charles Wesley Fenton.
- 3. Ann, mentioned in aunt Ann Raser's will of 1842. She prob. is the Ann Razor, adult, who became a communicant in the Phila. Ref. Dutch Ch. and was bpt. there 10 Dec. 1831 (3). Also the Ann Raser, m. 11 Feb. 1843 George W. Holmes (4).

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M-5. **SARAH RASER**, daughter of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail —, was born in Germantown, Pa., about 1779, based on her reported age at death (1).

Sarah Raser married **FREDERICK ECKERT**; she is mentioned as his widow in her sister Ann's will of 1842. In 1824 the Eckerts were living at 2nd below Green Street when their daughter Caroline died (2). Her husband was probably the Frederick Eckhardt, turner, who appears in the 1822 city directory, but had died before 14 March 1829 when Sarah Raizer, his widow, was baptized in the First Reformed Dutch Church in Philadelphia (3).

Sarah Eckert died of diarrhea on 6 September 1854, aged 75 years, and was buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia (1).

Children (ECKERT), all born in Philadelphia, Pa.:

- 1. Caroline, b. abt. 1820, d. 23 Nov. 1824, aged 4 yrs., bur. German Luth. Cem. (2).
- 2. Sarah Raser, b. abt. Dec. 1821, bp. 10 June 1843 (4), d. 20 Jan. 1874, aged 52 yrs. & 11 mos. (5), m. 9 May 1847 Samuel Clymer (6). He was a house carpenter; they had chn.: Elizabeth, Lewis A., James and Clara (7). They were buried in the First Ref. Church section (section 13 south) of Laurel Hill Cem.
- 3. Child, d. Sep. 1824, stillborn, bur. German Luth. Cem. (2).

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M-6. **TACY RASER**, daughter of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail —, was born in Germantown, Pa., about 1782, based on her age at death. She probably lived with her parents during their lives, and with her sister Ann until Ann died in 1847. Afterwards, she continued to operate the family residence at 156 Cherry Street as a boarding house, until about 1852—when she reached age seventy.

On 9 October 1816 Tacy Raser was the first member of the family to become a communicant in the First Reformed Dutch Church of Philadelphia; three days later she was baptized there as an adult (1). But in later years she was reputed to be an ardent Episcopalian, and was referred to as "The Walking Bible" (2). Tacy is not an uncommon Quaker name, which may be a clue to her mother's identity. A Matthias-branch descendant has said that Tacy is a nickname for Theresa (for which Tracy is a known nickname). She never married.

### *The Matthias Raser Branch*

In 1847 Tacy was appointed administrator of her sister Ann's estate, from which she was to receive for life the interest from its only significant asset—a \$1,000 certificate. In 1850 Tacy was operating the family boarding house at 156 Cherry Street; residents consisted of Mary and Susan Levan, and ten other women aged 22 to 40 years—but none of them with familiar names (3). By 1860 she had gone to live with 80 other women in the home of the Indigent Widows & Single Womens Society of Philadelphia (4). In 1870 she was living in the house of Abbie Scull (which may have been serving as a pauper's home) at 2008 Winter Street, Philadelphia, with eight other widows 64 to 83 years old (5). On 27 October 1870 Tacy Raser, aged 88 years, died in the "widow's asylum," ward 10, of acute softening of the brain, and was buried two days later in Monument Cemetery, Philadelphia (6). Thomas J. Raser (M-16) is said to have often taken his children to see her grave (2).

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M-7. **MATTHIAS RASER, Jr.**, son of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail —, was born in Germantown, Pa., in 1785. He probably was raised in Germantown, and accompanied his parents when they moved to downtown Philadelphia in 1799. Nothing is known of his early life.

During the War of 1812–14, Matthias Raser actively served as a private in the infantry from mid-April to mid-August 1813. He was a member of Capt. Henry Meyers's 2nd Company, in the 4th Detachment of Philadelphia City Militia (1).

Matthias Raser first appears in the Philadelphia city directories in 1814 when, as a printer, he was listed as residing at 94 Sassafras (now Race) Street with his mother and younger brother Thomas. He and his mother continued living there until 1819, when they relocated to 41 Cherry Street. In the 1830 census he is listed as the head of family, with six others in the household; they probably included his sisters Ann and Tacy, and some children of brother Baltis (2). Matthias was still residing at the latter address at the time of his death in 1832.

In 1817 Matthias formed a partnership with John C. Clark, also a printer. They traded as Clark & Raser, Philadelphia, Printers and Booksellers, up until the time of his death. They appear in city directories at various business addresses: in 1817 at "N 4th near O[ld?] Rotterdam hotel"; 1818–22 at the southwest corner Fifth and Cherry; and 1823–31 at 33 Carter's Alley. They were printers of many titles over the years; some books bearing their imprint in 1832 show them then located at 60 Dock Street. Fourteen volumes of business records of Clark & Raser, 1817–40, can be found in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (3).

Matthias had the dubious distinction of being one of the earliest (and possibly the first) victims of the railroad in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia to Germantown railway was inaugurated in June 1832, using horses to draw cars which resembled large stagecoaches. On 24 November 1832 Matthias W. Baldwin's first commercial steam locomotive was placed in use on this line. A little over a month later widespread newspapers published notices of Matthias Raser's untimely death. "Matthew Raser was killed Dec. 30, 1832, when his coat became caught in the wheel of a car at Philadelphia" (4). Another paper stated that "Matthais Raser of the firm of Clark & Raser, Booksellers, Phila., [died] Sun[day] P.M. [in] Germantown, run over by a Railroad train" (5). Philadelphia papers indicated that he died "in his 48th year" and the funeral services were to take place from his "late residence, 41 Cherry St., [and] proceed to Germantown" (6). Matthias Baldwin's locomotive business boomed, and by 1838, 45 percent of all domestically-manufactured engines in use on American railroads came from his Baldwin Locomotive Works (7).

Matthias Raser died intestate; his sister Ann and George W. Mentz administered his estate (8). Other than \$50 in clothing, his personal estate consisted of his half interest in the partnership's printing office (\$2447.97) and book store (\$1601.87). Apparently Matthias was unmarried and childless at the time of his death, as the proceeds of his estate were distributed in one-seventh shares to his brothers and sisters or their descendants.

A financial account related to this distributed, dated 28 August 1835, provides invaluable clues on the composition of the Matthias-branch family at this time.

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M-8. **THOMAS MAHORTER RASER**, youngest son of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail —, was born in Germantown, Pa., in 1790. He probably was named after the husband of his aunt Elizabeth Raser (A-8), who is called Elizabeth Mahorter in the will of Thomas Nedrow in 1791 (1), but whose husband's full name has so far not been seen.

In 1799 Thomas Raser's parents moved to 102 Sassafras (now Race) Street in downtown Philadelphia. His father died about 1803, after which, beginning about 1806, his mother made a succession of moves, ending them at 94 Sassafras Street in 1813. It seems likely that Thomas was living with his mother during all these moves—he appears at that last address in 1814 (2).

Thomas Raser is listed in city directories from 1813 through 1831 as a teacher. Despite the fact that the 1823 directory gives his work address as "seminary NW corner Fifth and Cherry," a study of the street addresses over the years suggests he worked at or near the *southwest* corner of North Fifth and Cherry Streets. It is to be noted that during 1818–1822, his brother Matthias operated a printing and bookselling business at this same corner. Possibly Thomas conducted classes on an upper floor of the same building.

Thomas Rasser [*sic*] was married in St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, on 13 April 1814 to **ELIZA ROSS**, daughter of William Ross (3). William Ross was a "late printer," living at 87 Locust Street, Philadelphia, in 1816–23, but was of 83 Locust when he made his will in 1824. By this will and a codicil, proved in 1829, Thomas M. Raser, teacher, was given the property at 87 Locust Street in trust for his children by William Ross's deceased daughter Eliza, namely: Mary, William, Thomas, John and Eliza Raser. He also was named one of the executors of the will (4).

Thomas M. Raser, teacher, also is mentioned in the 1821 deathbed will of George Hyde, book seller and stationer (5). Hyde gave Thomas, as well as John C. Clark, printer of Philadelphia (who was a brother of Hyde's wife Mary), some of his property in joint trust for his wife Mary and their daughters Susan and Elizabeth. Records indicate clearly that this was Hyde's Locust Street properties. The 1823 city directory shows Mary Hyde, widow, residing at 85 Locust Street—the same address she was bequeathed in William Ross's 1824 will. During 1816–22, Thomas Raser is listed in directories as residing at 89 Locust Street—except for 1818, when he unexpectedly appears at his mother's address. During 1823–24 he appears at 83 Locust, and during 1825–31 at 87 Locust—the address he was bequeathed in William Ross's will, which took effect after Ross's death in 1829. The 1830 census lists John C. Clarke, Mary Hyde and Thomas M. Raser in adjacent Locust Street properties. The close relationship between the Clark, Ross and Hyde families has yet to be fully studied. It should also be noted that John C. Clark, business partner of Thomas M. Raser's brother, was living at 87 Locust Street in 1818, and at 83 Locust in 1823.

By 1820 the Raser household included two males and two females 10 years of age and under (6). Eliza (Ross) Raser died on 20 July 1824 (7); she was buried, age 31 years, in the First Presbyterian Churchyard (8). Thomas was left with a family of young children. The 1830 census indicates a household with Thomas, an older woman, five boys 15 and under, two girls 20 and under, and a woman 20–30 years old (9). The older woman may have been a sister or sister-in-law, living with Thomas to help him raise their children.

Thomas Raser died on 29 April 1832, in his 42nd year; the funeral took place from his residence at 87 Locust Street (10). A descendant was of the belief that Thomas was buried either in Fernwood or Mt. Moriah Cemetery (11). Thomas died intestate leaving a small estate consisting mostly of household furnishings and

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clothing; his sister Ann was appointed administrator (12). His sister Tacy was appointed guardian of his children in January 1834, probably to care for their interest in the estate of their uncle Matthias Raser (13).

Children (RASER), all born in Philadelphia, Pa. (4):

1. Mary, b. 14 Jan. 1815, d. 29 Apr. 1834, bur. Ronaldson's Cem., Phila. (14); funeral was from the res. of her aunt Mary Hyde, 85 Locust St. (15).
- + 2. Thomas Matthias (M-12), b. abt. 1818, d. 17 Mar. 1890, m. abt. 1841 Elizabeth Ross Agen [*sic*].
- + 3. William Ross (M-13), b. abt. 1819, d. betw. 1845–50, m. abt. 1841 Rosanna Bishop.
- + 4. John C. [Clark?] (M-14), b. abt. 1825, d. aft. 1860, m. 5 June 1848 Matilda Bishop.
5. Eliza Ross, "youngest" child, b. abt. 1828, m. 22 July 1850 in Washington, D.C., William Raser Fenton, son of Elizabeth Raser (M-11) and Charles W. Fenton. In 1860 they res. in Wadesboro, N.C., with chn. Elizabeth, age 8, and Baltis, age 5 (16); William, a printer, was working there with the Fenton family on the *North Carolina Argus*. Possibly William had died by 1870, when Eliza and son Baltis were living in Phila. with her brother Thomas (17). In 1948, Mary Rose Raser said of Eliza: "I knew her as a Widow, a fine needle woman, who made her living sewing for Wealthy families in Phila., Chestnut Hill, etc. She came from the South. She had a son Balltus, and a daughter Elizabeth married to a man named Krigbaum—that was around 1900" (18). In 1880 dau. Elizabeth was the wife of Orlander Kragbaugn and living with the family of Frank Darley in Washington, D.C. (19).

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M-9. **ABIGAIL** ("Abby") **RASER**, daughter of Matthias Raser (M-1) and Abigail —, was born 30 January 1792 in Germantown, Pa. (1). She was married about 1820 to **JOHN CLINTON**, who was born in Ireland about 1788 (2).

John Clinton was working as a printer in Philadelphia as early as 1816. City directories show him at various work locations over the years. In 1850 the family was living in the Spring Garden section of Philadelphia; both John Clinton and son John are listed in the census as printers (2).

Abigail (Raser) Clinton died of tuberculosis in Philadelphia on 21 December 1850, aged 58 years, and was buried in Odd Fellows Cemetery (3). By 1860 John Clinton was living with his widowed daughter Abigail Butler and her family (4); he was still with them in 1870 (5).

Children (CLINTON), probably all born in Philadelphia, Pa. (1):

1. Abigail ("Abby"), b. abt. 1822, m. abt. 1842 Courtland Butler, and had Emma, Clinton, Charles, Clara, James (4).
2. Mary A., b. abt. 1825, m. Wallace W. Gardner, and had Kathryn; Annie, m. Dr. Shaner; Abby, m. — Berlin.
3. William (or Mathias?).
4. John, Jr., b. abt. 1829, d. 27 Dec. 1853, aged 25 yrs., bur. Odd Fellows Cem. (6). Described as a printer in the 1850 census.
5. DeWitt, b. abt. 1832, described as a machinist in the 1850 census.
6. James P., b. abt. 1834, m. Martha O'Neill, and had Jennie, m. Alonzo Kitchen, who were parents of Ethel C. (Kitchen) Breth.
7. Francis (male), b. abt. 1836.

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M-10. **WILLIAM J. RASER**, son of Baltis Raser (M-4) and Elizabeth Johnson, was born in Philadelphia, Pa., about 1805. He probably was raised in the Raser family residences at 94 Sassafras and 41 Cherry Streets, Philadelphia.

William J. Raser was married on 5 April 1831 in St. George's M.E. Church, Philadelphia, to **SARAH ECKSTEIN**, by [Rev.?] M. Force (1). Her parentage remains undiscovered. St. George's Church is reputed to be "the oldest [American] church in continuous service in Methodism, and is called 'The Cradle of American Methodism'" (2).

William Raser first appears in Philadelphia city directories in 1835/6, as an accountant residing at 16 Kunkle Street. In 1838 he is listed as a stationer at 80 North Third Street, while in 1839 and 1840 he is listed as operating a paper and rag warehouse at 82 North Third Street, trading as Raser & Rimby. His residence in both years is given as Marshall near Parrish—probably the 221 Marshall Street, above Brown, from which his funeral was conducted on 30 August 1840 (3). William, age 34 years, died of brain fever on 23 August 1840; he was buried in the First Reformed Dutch Churchyard, Philadelphia (4).

William J. Raser appears in the 1840 census in the Spring Garden district of Philadelphia with a boy and a girl, both under five years, and three females 15 to 20 (5). The author has assumed that the boy was son Levan H. Raser. William died intestate soon after the census; his widow was appointed administrator of the estate (6). The John Eckstein of Philadelphia, who was one of her bondsmen, may have been her father or brother. William's personal estate, consisting mostly of household furniture (including three beds and a child's crib) and clothing, totaled only \$288.67.

Children (RASER), all born in Philadelphia, Pa.:

1. Mary Eckstein, b. abt. 1831, d. 26 Oct. 1835, age 4 yrs. Funeral from father's residence, 16 Kunkle St. (7).
- + 2. Probably Levan H. (M-15), b. abt. 1835, d. 28 Feb. 1901, m. abt. 1859 Anna C. —.
3. Female, b. 1835–40 (5).

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M-11. **ELIZABETH RASER**, daughter of Baltis Raser (M-4) and Elizabeth Johnson, was born about 1807 in Philadelphia, Pa. She probably was raised for most of her youth in Raser family residences at 94 Sassafras and 41 Cherry Streets. On 5 October 1825, on confession of faith, she became a communicant in the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in Philadelphia; she was baptized there three days later (1). She was married in Philadelphia about 1828 to **CHARLES WESLEY FENTON**, born 13 December 1804 in Trenton, N.J., the son of Daniel V. Fenton and Elizabeth Gardiner. Daniel Fenton was a pioneer bookseller and publisher in Trenton, where in 1811 he founded the Christian Circulating Library; he and his wife are buried there in Mercer Cemetery. (2)

Nothing is known of Charles Fenton's early life, but his subsequent career makes it likely that he was early involved in some aspect of his father's publishing activities. Possibly this work took him to Philadelphia, where he eventually met and married Elizabeth Raser. In late 1829 Charles and his wife temporarily relocated to Lancaster, Pa., where Charles was co-editor of the *Anti-Masonic Herald* until 1831. It appears that the Fentons then moved to New Jersey—probably Trenton—where Daniel may have again worked with his father.

Around 1835, Charles and Elizabeth returned to Philadelphia, where they remained for at least a decade while Charles continued his newspaper and printing activities. Having by then removed to Washington, D.C., in April 1847 Charles commenced publication of *The National Whig*, in which he became one of the most ardent and outspoken supporters of the candidacy of Zachary Taylor for President, playing a key editorial role in his ultimate election. His efforts were rewarded by his appointment in July 1849 as US Consul in Southampton and Cowes, England. Elizabeth and their children remained in Washington until he resigned his position and returned home the following April. In mid-year the entire family was listed in the 1850 census (3). After several years with the Government Printing Office, Charles began publication in July 1857 of yet another politically-oriented newspaper, *The American*, espousing the philosophies of the American Party.

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Following the paper's demise in June 1858, the Fentons moved to Wadesboro, N.C., where Charles and his son-in-law, Frank Darley, began publication of the *North Carolina Argus* in September 1858. The Fentons were accompanied by their eldest son, William R. (who also worked on the paper) and daughter Elizabeth Darley, each with their families, as well as the three youngest Fenton children. The four other Fenton sons remained in Washington (4, 5).

The *Argus* actively supported the Whig Party, even though by then the party had become a waning factor in American politics. As the nation came closer to secession by the Southern states and the outbreak of the Civil War, it was not surprising in view of his Northern origins that Charles Fenton spoke out eloquently in his editorials against secession. At the same time, as a true Whig, he was equally strong in his support of States Rights, so that when Lincoln called the North to arms, Charles quickly threw his support to secession by North Carolina and its entry into the Confederacy.

Frank Darley, born and raised in Alexandria, Va., immediately enlisted in a local North Carolina unit together with his brother-in-law Edwin Fenton, then 19 years old. The four Fenton sons left behind in Washington all joined various Northern units. But the most striking event was that Elizabeth Raser Fenton seems to have abandoned Charles and returned to Washington, where she died sometime in late July 1861, soon after the outbreak of war. On 1 August 1861 her remains were placed temporarily in the public vault in Congressional Cemetery in Washington; on 5 March 1862 they were removed to a permanent grave site in the cemetery. It is not known whether her two younger daughters stayed with their father in North Carolina, or accompanied their mother to Washington.

In January 1869 the *Argus* was sold. The Darleys with their children, together with Charles Fenton, then returned to Washington where they lived out their lives. Charles W. Fenton died in Washington in February 1882 and was buried alongside Elizabeth in Congressional Cemetery.

Children (FENTON), born in places as shown:

1. William Raser, b. 5 Feb. 1829 in Philadelphia, m. 22 July 1850 Eliza Ross Raser in Washington, D.C. She was the youngest child of Thomas M. Raser (M-8) and Eliza Ross.
2. Elizabeth Gardiner, b. 6 Nov. 1830 in Lancaster, Pa., m. 23 Aug. 1851 Benjamin Franklin ("Frank") Darley in Washington, D.C. During the period 1858-69 they lived in Wadesboro, N.C. They had six chn., four b. in Washington and the last two in Wadesboro. In 1869 they returned to Washington, where Frank Darley d. in Oct. 1884 and Elizabeth d. in Oct. 1890. Both bur. in Congressional Cemetery, not far from her parents, with several of their chn.
3. Daniel V., named for his Fenton grandfather, was b. abt. 1833 in N.J., m. (1) 18 Jan. 1854 Martha J. Watson in Washington, D.C.; three chn. In 1860 brothers Mathias and Charles were living with them (4). Daniel m. (2) Rose —, who is shown in the 1870 D.C. census as some 14 yrs. his junior, with their four yr. old child. It is not known what happened to Martha and her three chn. Like his father, Daniel was a printer.
4. Mathias Raser, b. abt. 1834 in N.J. Mathias became a carpenter; he is listed in the 1868 Washington, D.C., directory as a partner in Fenton and Martin, carpenters and builders. He appears in the 1870 D.C. census with wife Elizabeth and three chn.
5. James Levan, b. 1836 in Philadelphia, m. 12 July 1858 Martha Robinson in Washington, D.C.; two chn. For a time his family lived in West Hebron, N.Y. James also was a printer; he d. in 1864.
6. Hannah S., prob. b. abt. 1837-38 in Phila., prob. d. young. Mentioned in grandfather Fenton's will in 1845, but not listed in the 1850 census.
7. Charles Baltus, b. abt. 1838-39 in Phila., d. 17 Jan. 1898 in Washington, D.C. His tombstone in Arlington National Cem. gives his birth as 12 Nov. 1841; this is believed to be in error. He m. (1) Barbara — and had at least three chn.; m. (2) Ida Jeanette Shekell (6), who is bur. with him. Charles also was a printer and press man.
8. Anna ("Annie") Holmes, twin, b. 11 Mar. 1842 in Phila., d. 16 Mar. 1893 in Washington, m. 14 Jan. 1869 Josephus Renner; three daus. She and her husband are bur. together in Congressional Cem. At one time they lived in Sharpsburg, Md.

9. Edwin Forrest, twin, b. 11 Mar. 1842 in Phila., d. and bur. 1923 in Wadesboro, N.C., m. Harriet Maria Camilla Smith; four chn. He was named for the famous stage actor of the time, who is said to have been a near relative. Having accompanied his parents to Wadesboro, he worked for his father as a typesetter. Although a Northerner by birth, in Apr. 1861 he enlisted in Co. C, 14th N.C. Inf.; he was wounded at Malvern Hill, Va., in July 1862, and lost his left arm in the battle of Chancellorsville in July 1863. He remained in Wadesboro, where descendants still reside.
10. Theresa Raser, b. 6 Nov. 1848 in Washington, d. there 11 Jan. 1915, m. 1873 Thomas T. Luckett; five chn. She was named for a maiden aunt (M-6) of her mother, both of whom were commonly called "Tacy." Bur. with her husband in Congressional Cem.
11. Unnamed ch., prob. b. aft. mid-1850 (not in census), bur. 15 July 1852 in the family plot in Congressional Cem.

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M-12. **THOMAS MATTHIAS RASER**, son of Thomas Mahorter Raser (M-8) and Eliza Ross, was born about 1818 in Philadelphia, Pa. He was raised on Locust Street—after the death of his mother in 1824 at 87 Locust, in a townhouse which his maternal grandfather, William Ross, later gave to his father in trust until Eliza's children reached maturity. In April 1832 his father died leaving an insignificant estate, but his uncle Matthias Raser, Jr. (M-7) died the following December leaving Thomas Matthias and his siblings each a one-seventh share in an estate exceeding \$8,800. In early 1834 aunt Tacy Raser was appointed guardian of the children, to watch out for their financial interests. About this time the children probably went to live with aunts Tacy and Ann Raser in the family boarding house at nearby 156 Cherry Street.

About 1841 Thomas Raser married **ELIZABETH ROSS** ("Eliza") **AGEN**. Eliza Agen was born in Delaware about 1826; her parents names are not known. [In 1951 Mary Rose Raser (M-24) told this writer that she was uncertain about the spelling of Eliza's surname, but that it was pronounced eh'jin (1). It was twice spelled Agen in a family Bible; see Appendix X-10. Recent information leads me to believe that Eliza was descended from the colonial Edgin family of Kent County, Delaware. However, until proven, I have retained the Agen spelling in this work. EJR]

In 1843, when about 25 years old, Thomas M. Raser begins appearing in Philadelphia city directories as a printer. How soon he started this career, and with whom, is not known. However, it is possible that his grandfather Ross, who was of an old family of Philadelphia printers, had prior to his death in 1829 begun to teach young Thomas the printer's trade. After Ross's death Thomas may have gone to work for his uncle Matthias Raser, Jr., who was a printer and book publisher until his untimely death in 1832. Subsequently, Thomas may have worked for Charles Wesley Fenton, noted printer and book publisher, who earlier had married Thomas's older first cousin, Elizabeth Raser (M-11). Fenton conducted his business in Philadelphia approximately during the 1835-45 era. From 1846 through 1854 Thomas Raser, printer, is listed in directories at 420 South 4th Street, Philadelphia. His family was enumerated in the Southwark district in the 1850 census (2). At least in 1855 Thomas was working for Kite & Walton, book and job printers at 3 Ranstead Place. In the late 1850s the family resided at 32 Lafayette Street.

Thomas disappears from Philadelphia directories for 1860-1863. Interestingly, he appears in the 1860 Delaware census in Farmington P.O., Mispillion Hundred, Kent County. He is listed as Thomas M. Reaser, farmer, with wife Eliza (born in Delaware about 1825) and five children (3)—their names leave no doubt this is our family. The appearance of the Benjamin Edgin family in the Mispillion Hundred census records 1820-40 suggests that Eliza may in some way have been related to Benjamin.

In 1864 Thomas reappears in Philadelphia on Layette Street, then for a dozen or so years at 932 South 4th Street. According to family tradition, during the Civil War Thomas worked as a printer/lithographer for the Government Printing Office in Washington, D.C.—possibly he was induced to work there by Charles Wesley

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Fenton, who was actively involved as a printer in Washington at that time (1, 4, 5). However, no evidence of his residence in Washington has so far been found.

In the 1870 census the family appears on 4th Street with all seven of their surviving children, as well as sister Eliza Fenton and her son Baltis (6). On 5 January 1874 Eliza Razer, aged 47 years, died of a pulmonary hemorrhage; she was buried two days later in Mount Moriah Cemetery (7). Between 1878–87 Thomas resided at 426 Redwood Street; he appears there in the 1880 census as Thomas M. Roser, printer, with his five youngest surviving children, and sister Eliza and her son Baltis (8). In 1889 he went to live with his son Thomas J. in West Philadelphia. He died there of pneumonia on 17 March 1890, aged 71 years, and was buried in Mount Moriah Cemetery (9, 10)—without a gravestone according to Mary Rose Raser.

Family tradition says that Thomas was mechanically inclined and a developer of machinery, possibly for printing (3). A descendant has in his possession a large printed sheet giving, in elaborate type fonts, the birth dates of all of his children; it is very likely that Thomas composed and printed this record (11\*).

Children (RASER), all born in Philadelphia, Pa., except Ida (11):

1. Edward Matthias, b. 9 July 1842, d. bef. 1850 (2).
- + 2. Thomas Jefferson (M-16), b. 22 Mar. 1844, d. 26 May 1906, m. abt. 1874 Mary Rose Fullaway.
3. Eliza Ross, b. 9 July 1846, bap. 20 Nov. 1847 (12), d. 22 Nov. 1847 of chronic laryngitis, bur. Union Cem. (13).
4. Amelia, b. 13 Aug. 1848. In the 1850 census but not 1860; prob. d. young. Poss. named for Amelia Bland, b. abt. 1822 in Del., who with Joseph Bland, seaman, b. abt. 1820 in Del., was living in Thomas Raser's house in 1850 (2).
5. Mary Elizabeth, b. 12 Nov. 1850, d. 30 Mar. 1904 in Phila., unm. She was very capable with needle and thread, and worked in the alteration department of Wanamaker's and other Phila. stores. In the 1900 census she was identified as a coat fitter, residing in her sister Ida's house. She was a Sunday School teacher, and lived happily for many years with sisters Fannie and Ida. (1)
6. Fannie, b. 25 Sep. 1852, d. Nov. 1919 in Phila., unm. She was a beautiful woman, but was burdened throughout her life with the care of various family members, including Mary, Ida and her father. In 1900 and 1910 she was residing in her sister Ida's house. Bur. in Fernwood (1) *or* Mount Moriah (10) Cem.
- + 7. John Garrison (M-17), b. 7 Sep. 1854, d. abt. 1916, m. abt. 1881 Rose McGookin.
8. Anna ("Annie"), b. 12 Feb. 1857, d. 31 Jan. 1872 of spinal meningitis, bur. Union 6th St. Cem. (14).
- + 9. Ida (M-18), b. 30 Mar. 1861 in Delaware, d. in the 1920s, m. abt. 1887 Litzenberg Shults.
10. Lillian ("Lilly," "Lil"), b. 30 May 1867, m. Edward Entriken. She had several children before dying in childbirth (1). No further record.



M-13. **WILLIAM ROSS RASER**, son of Thomas Mahorter Raser (M-8) and Eliza Ross, was born about 1819 in Philadelphia, Pa.; he was named after his maternal grandfather. His parents died young, leaving him orphaned at about age 13, after which he was raised by his aunts Ann and Tacy Raser in downtown Philadelphia.

It would seem that William and his younger brother John were both trained in industrial arts, as they are listed as stair rod makers (or dealers) whenever they appear in city directories. William R. Raser is first listed in 1840, residing at 460 North 2nd Street; in 1842 his work address was given as 20 Library Street. His brother John C. (erroneously identified as James) is listed as a stair rod maker at the same Library Street address during 1843–44.

This William is undoubtedly the one said by the widow of a descendant to have married in Philadelphia about 1841 to **ROSANNA BISHOP** (1). According to the 1900 census she was born in July 1827 (2), but she probably was older. Rosanna Bishop's sister Matilda married William's brother John; the Bishop parents

were both natives of Pennsylvania. According to our informant, William “was considered the 2nd best Spencerian writer in the United States at [one] time”; his two sons were born in Philadelphia.

In April 1841 William sold his interest in the Locust Street property that had been held in trust for him and his siblings since 1829 (3). Within the next several years he had moved to New York City, where he appears as a stair rods dealer at 105 Eldridge Street in the city directories from 1844–45 through 1847–48, and at 100 Eldridge Street in 1850–51. Possibly he had died by 1850, the 1850–51 location being just a business address used by his younger brother. In any event, he is missing when Rosanna and her sons William and John appear in the 1850 census, living in the 10th Ward of New York City with John and Matilda Raser (4).

By 1860 Rosanna had married Daniel E. Acker, a stair rod maker, and was living next to her sister (5); they were still living next to each other in 1870, when Daniel was called a brass moulder (6). By 1880 the Ackers had moved to Westchester County, N.Y., in the “vicinity of Harrison Depot”, and were living with her son William’s family; Daniel was again called a stair rod maker (7). They last appear in the 1900 census, living in the same house on Harrison Avenue, in Harrison, with son William’s family; Daniel was then employed as a janitor (2). The Acker’s whereabouts after 1900 has not been discovered.

Children (RASER), born in Philadelphia, Pa. (1, 4):

- + 1. William Hyde (M-19), b. abt. 1841, d. betw. 1880–1900, m. 22 July 1862 Mary J. McWilliams.
- + 2. John Alfred (M-20), b. abt. Oct. 1843, d. aft. 1920, m. 29 Dec. 1866 Margaret McWilliams.

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M-14. **JOHN C. RASER**, son of Thomas Mahorter Raser (M-8) and Eliza Ross, was born about 1825 in Philadelphia, Pa. His parents died young, leaving him orphaned as a young boy, after which he was raised by his aunts Ann and Tacy Raser in downtown Philadelphia.

In some way John Raser and his elder brother William became involved in the stair rod business, first as stair rod makers but probably later more as dealers. John C. Raser is undoubtedly the *James C. Raser* who is listed in Philadelphia city directories in 1843–44 at 20 Library Street as a stair rod manufacturer. This was the same address that his brother William, stair rod maker, listed as his own work location in 1842. John then disappears from the Philadelphia directories for a decade.

On 5 June 1848 John C. Raser married **MATILDA BISHOP** in the Asbury M.E. Church, on Norfolk Street, in New York City (1). According to the 1900 census, she was born in November 1834 in Pennsylvania; her parents were natives of the same state (2). Other census records suggest she was born about five years earlier. A descendant has identified her as the sister of Rosanna Bishop, who had earlier married William Raser, John’s brother (3). In the 1850 census Rosanna and her two sons were living in the same house, in the 10th ward of New York City, along with Matilda and her husband; John Raser was listed as a brass founder (4). He is likely the John Raser, laborer, listed in the 1849–50 city directory as residing at 3 Mangin Street.

John C. Raser reappears in Philadelphia directories in 1854, when he is listed as residing with his brother Thomas M. at 420 South 4th Street. During 1855–56 they are both listed residing at 9th Street below Prime, and doing business at 3 Ranstead Place—John in stair rods and Thomas as a printer. John disappears again after 1856, but shows up in the 1858–59 New York City directory doing business in stair rods at 84 Beekman Street. He initially resided on Delancy Street, but by 1859 had moved to Forsyth Street. The 1860 census identified him as John Raser, brass worker, residing with his wife in a four-family dwelling next door to his brother’s remarried widow (5). He last appears doing business at the Beekman Street address in the 1860–61 directory.

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John's whereabouts after 1861 have not been discovered. Neither he nor Matilda have been found in the census records for 1870. In all likelihood John had died long before 1880, when Matilda Raser, widow, age 50, appears residing with the August Doerflinger family at 62 Fort Green Place in Brooklyn (6). By 1900 August had died and Matilda, working as a servant, was still living with the widow Doerflinger, who now resided in her owned house at 85 Lafayette Avenue in Brooklyn (2). The census indicates that Matilda never had children.

By 1910 Matilda had gone to live in the home of George and Ella (Raser) Hall, her brother-in-law's granddaughter; she was still with them in 1920 (7, 8). The 1910 census confirms that she and John Raser never had any children. Her whereabouts after 1920 remains undiscovered.

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M-15. **LEVAN H. RASER**, presumed son of William J. Raser (M-10) and Sarah Eckstein, was born in Philadelphia, Pa., about 1835. He was only about five years old when his father died; nothing is known of his early years.

Levan H. Raser first appears in Philadelphia city directories in 1855 as a clerk, residing at 22 South Third Street. From 1859 through 1864 his residence is listed as 226 North Fourth Street. Over the years he appears involved in various financial clerical activities, usually being listed as clerk, broker, teller or cashier. During 1866–72 he was a teller with the 4th National Bank, 723 Arch Street—during much of this period he resided at 1434 Camac Street. He is listed in the 1870 census as a teller in a bank (1).

In 1873–75 he joined in partnership with I. Heston Todd in a coal retail business at 967 North Ninth Street. They traded as Todd & Raser, with Levan serving as treasurer of the business. In 1878–79, and possibly much later, he was again a cashier at 723 Arch Street. By 1891 Levan had obtained a job as cashier in City Hall, a job which he held until his death. In 1897 he was listed there as chief deputy of the delinquent taxes department.

About 1859 Levan married **ANNA C.** —, who was born in Pennsylvania about 1843. At the time of the 1880 census they were living with their three sons at 1609 North 13th Street (2). They resided in the same general area until about 1894, when they moved to the East Oak Lane section of Philadelphia. Levan and wife were there in 1900, with son William L. and his wife residing with them (3). Levan H. Raser died of pneumonia on 28 February 1901, aged 63 years, at his residence on Lawnton Avenue (4)—on a part of John Bernhard Reser's (A-2) Milestown tract of 140 years earlier. Levan was buried in Mount Vernon Cemetery, Philadelphia.

Levan's widow resided with her son William until 1906 and possibly later. In 1910 she was living in her own house at 1321 Oak Lane Avenue (5); as late as 1912 she appeared in directories in East Oak Lane. In 1920 she appears as a lodger residing at 4900 Thirteenth Street (6). Anna C. Raser died at 4900 North 13th Street, Philadelphia, on 18 April 1922, leaving a will dated 1 September 1915 with several codicils (7\*). Her estate primarily consisted of a \$10,000 mortgage, securities and cash.

Children (RASER), all born in Philadelphia, Pa. (1):

- + 1. William H./L. (M-21), b. 14 July 1860, d. abt. 1929, m. abt. 1885 Katharine V. —.
- + 2. Robert S. (M-22), b. 26 Sep. 1867, d. post-1930, m. (1) abt. 1888 Esther —, m. (2) abt. 1906 Mary —.
3. Levan H., b. abt. 1875, d. 25 Sep. 1886, aged 11 yrs., of empyema; bur. Mount Peace Cem. (8).

M-16. **THOMAS JEFFERSON RASER**, son of Thomas Matthias Raser (M-12) and Elizabeth Ross Agen, was born in Philadelphia, Pa., on 22 March 1844. He grew to be a very handsome man—during all of his adult life he wore a beard. He was very tall (6 feet, 3 inches) and raised a family of tall children. The Rasers of this branch are characteristically heavy and tall. All present-day Matthias-branch Rasers descend from him. (1\*)

Thomas Raser worked for more than thirty years for the Adams Express Company (which later became American Express and eventually Railway Express), handling the waybillings of packages and serving as accountant; he was heavily bonded. He also worked off the job as a certified public account, and worked on weekends as auditor at Freeman's Auctions in Philadelphia.

About 1874 he married **MARY ROSE FULLAWAY**, born 1 September 1852 (2), daughter of Enoch Fullaway and Sarah T. Rose (3). Her father was born in England, while Sarah T. Rose, according to family tradition, was descended from Alexander Hamilton through her mother's family. The Rose family had legally changed its name a generation or so before Sarah's birth from Rosengrandt (Rosencrans?) or a similar-sounding German name. Mary Rose Fullaway was a Baptist; her brother Enoch was a Baptist minister. She had always hoped that her husband, who early in life was a Quaker, might adopt the Baptist faith. But near the end of his life Thomas turned to the Episcopal church and was baptized by an Episcopalian minister—much to the sorrow of his wife.

The Rasers lived at many places in and about Philadelphia—city directories indicate more places than are mentioned in the following traditional account. In 1880 they were of 1319 Lentz Street, when Thomas was called a bookkeeper (4). Mary Rose's mother, and her brother Chas. H. Fullaway, were living with them at that time. Their first six children were all born in the Southwark district (1875–84). In 1888 they were of Media and North 58 1/2 Street, corner of Media Street, West Philadelphia, when their daughter Ida died (5), and were of 1319 Tasker St., South Philadelphia, in 1890 when Thomas Raser's father was buried from their house (6). They subsequently owned a large house with an orchard in Germantown, on Allen's Lane at Lincoln Drive. Thomas Raser died there on 26 May 1906, aged 62 years, leaving his wife with several young children.

The widow Raser soon sold the Allen's Lane property and moved to Mt. Pleasant Avenue. By 1910 she had moved to her daughter Mary Rose's house at 7825 Germantown Avenue, where she raised her younger children and lived for over 20 years (7, 8, 9). Mrs. Raser was a good-looking woman in her younger years, but the strains of her married life caused her to age prematurely. She died in her son Thomas's home on the Andorra Nurseries Farm in Spring Mill on 18 June 1935 (10). She and her husband, along with a number of their children, are buried with gravestones in section L of Ivy Hill Cemetery, north of Germantown.

The Rasers had twelve children. The earlier ones received family names, but the later ones were named by the older children, who gave them popular names of the time (1). Of the twelve children, six died young and two never married.

Children (RASER), all born in Philadelphia, Pa. (11\*):

1. John Hudson, b. 25 July 1875, d. 12 July 1879 of diphtheria, a day after his sister's death; bur. Mount Moriah Cem. (12, 13). He was named for an uncle.
2. Elizabeth Agen, b. 30 Mar. 1877, d. 11 July 1879 of diphtheria; bur. Mount Moriah Cem. (12, 13). She is listed twice in the family Bible as Eliza Agen.
- + 3. Thomas Jefferson Raser, Sr. (M-23), b. 9 Jan. 1879, d. 28 Aug. 1953, m. abt. 1904 Jane Lynn.
- + 4. Mary Rose (M-24), b. 4 Nov. 1880, d. 3 Feb. 1962, unmrd.
- + 5. Lincoln (M-25), b. 24 Aug. 1882, d. 21 Oct. 1930, m. 15 Nov. 1911 Mary J. Allison.
- + 6. Charles Fullaway (M-26), b. 15 Oct. 1884, d. 6 Aug. 1952, m. 27 Nov. 1912 Alida M. Peverley.
7. Fannie, b. 28 Aug. 1886, d. 29 May 1894 of diphtheria; bur. Ivy Hill Cem. (14).
8. Ida, b. 16 Nov. 1887, d. 24 July 1888 of cholera infantum; bur. Mount Moriah Cem. (5, 13).

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9. Ross, b. 1 June 1889, d. 29 May 1890. He was severely burned when he upset an oil lamp on a table and set himself on fire; he died about 16 hours later. Bur. Ivy Hill Cem. (15).
10. Clifford ("Cliff"), b. 2 July 1891. He was raised in the Chestnut Hill section of Phila. During World War I he enlisted in the cavalry and saw service as a sergeant in several major battles. He returned home, ill from the effects of the war, and lived with his brother Thomas for over a year while working for Lee Tire & Rubber Co. (16). Due to poor health he left this work, returned to his aunt Mary Rose Raser's house on Gtn. Ave., and took a job as manager of the store of Archie Crombie, a prominent Irish grocer in Chestnut Hill. He commenced studying pharmacy, and eventually became engaged to Mr. Crombie's daughter, but his health worsened and he died on 23 Sep. 1924 in Jewish Hospital, Phila. He was a devout Episcopalian and very active in the church. Buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, Ft. Washington, Pa. (1)
11. Annie, b. 9 Jan. 1893, d. 31 July 1893 of cholera infantum; bur Ivy Hill Cem. (17).
- + 12. Earl (M-27), b. 14 Sep. 1896, d. 27 Aug. 1957, m. abt. 1921 Catharine G. Runge.

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M-17. **JOHN GARRISON RASER**, son of Thomas Matthias Raser (M-12) and Elizabeth Ross Agen, was born 7 September 1854 in Philadelphia, Pa. A relative has stated that he was a life-long resident of West Philadelphia, spending most of his life as an employee of the Adams Express Co. (1).

Philadelphia city directories indicate that in early adult life he resided with his widowed father at 932 South 4th Street, and from 1877-84 at 426 Redwood Street. After his marriage he resided in 1886-98 at 1319 Tasker Street, 1899-1900 at 2134 Morris Street, 1902-08 at 1435 South 29th Street, and from 1910 to his death at 2327 Dickinson Street.

From 1882 he is listed as working in various capacities in the railway express business, initially in 1882 as a foreman. He subsequently appears as express agent, clerk, manager, terminal agent, etc., and finally as inspector. According to a relative, he was artistically inclined, and was a prolific painter of sailing ships and animals—his paintings were said to be beautiful (1). City directories 1877-80 indicate he was a japanner, in 1881 and 1901 a painter, and in 1905 an artist. Many of his paintings were thought to be done on commission for local shipping companies, and many were hung in Post Office buildings. "He was an expert on ships, was inventive and developed a coupling for ships that came into wharves" (1).

John Garrison was married about 1881 to **ROSE MCGOOKEN**, who was born in Pennsylvania in September 1863; her parents were born in Ireland (2). McGookan may be a phonetic for a differently-spelled Irish name (1). A relative has stated that, while they had children, all of them died young (3). The 1900 census indicates that Rose by then had two children, both still alive, while the 1910 census indicates Rose was the mother of three children, by then all dead (4).

John G. Raser probably died in late winter 1916, as he was buried 18 March 1916 in his father's burial lot in Mount Moriah Cemetery (5). His widow subsequently relocated, and in 1920 was residing with Girard A. Lopez in his house at 2701 South 18th Street; she was called his aunt (6). Rose Raser died on 19 March 1921, at 1229 South 20th Street in Philadelphia, and was buried with her husband in Mount Moriah Cemetery (5). She left a will in which she bequeathed all of her small personal estate to a niece, Mrs. Maria Moran, wife of James J. Moran of Philadelphia (7). She probably was the Marie Lopez, born June 1887 in Cuba, who was residing with the Rasers in 1900 and 1910.

Children (RASER), probably all born in Philadelphia (3):

1. John Garrison, Jr., b. abt. Sep. 1893, d. 16 Dec. 1896 of pneumonia, age 3 yrs. & 10 mos., bur. New Cathedral Cem. (8)
2. Sylvester, d. young.
3. Possibly Rose (1), d. young.

M-18. **IDA RASER**, daughter of Thomas Matthias Raser (M-12) and Elizabeth Ross Agen, was born 30 March 1861 (1), probably in Mispillion Hundred, Kent County, Delaware, during the brief time that her parents resided there. She was described as a saleslady when living with her parents in Philadelphia in 1880.

Ida was married about 1887 to **LITZENBERG J. ("Litz") SHULTS**. He was born in December 1861 (1), the son of John and Maggie N. Shults. In 1880 he was residing with his parents at 922 Wharton Street in Philadelphia; his father was listed as a conductor, and he as working in a dry goods store (2). He subsequently became the long-time manager of the men's clothing department of N. Snellenberg & Son, at 11th and Market Streets, Philadelphia. Litz was a short, quiet and cultured gentleman, always remembered as a good-looking man with beautiful gray hair, a thin moustache and very-well dressed. (3)

In 1900 the Shultses were living at 949 Wolf Street in South Philadelphia; Ida's sisters Mary and Fannie both were living with them at the time (1). Sometime before 1910 Litz purchased a large house at 5344 Larchwood Avenue, where his family and Ida's sister Fannie Raser appear in both the 1910 census (4) and 1920 census (5). Ida had become severely afflicted with arthritis and was bedridden for many years; sister Fannie lived with her and cared for both her and the house. Ida died in the 1920s, after which Litz went to live with his daughter Mary Hampton on Ithan Street in Philadelphia (6). He died about 1940 (3).

Children (SHULTS), probably all born in Philadelphia (1, 3):

1. Mary R. ("Ray" in 1900 census), b. Oct. 1889, m. abt. 1910 Willie Hampton. Living in their owned house at 1011(?) Ithan Street in 1930 (6).
2. Child, b. and d. by 1900.
3. Child, b. and d. by 1900.
4. Litzenberg R. ("Litz"), b. Nov. 1894. Both he and his brother Harold worked for Gatchell & Mariney [sp.?] and lived in New Jersey.
5. Fannie Marjorie, b. Oct. 1897; m. Stevenson P. Garrett, of a well-known Quaker family. In 1951 she was living at 52 North Maplewood Ave., Lansdowne, Pa.; Mary Rose Raser thought she might have Thomas Mahorter Raser's Bible.
6. Harold B., b. abt. 1900, an engraver employed by a photograph business in 1920 (5).

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M-19. **WILLIAM HYDE RASER**, son of William Ross Raser (M-13) and Rosanna Bishop, was born about 1841 in Philadelphia, Pa. By the time of the 1850 census his father had died, and his mother, with her two small sons, was residing in the 10th ward of New York City with her sister Matilda and brother-in-law, John C. Raser (1).

William H. Raser was married 22 July 1862, in the Forsyth Street Methodist Church, New York City, to **MARY J. McWILLIAMS** (2). The census records are inconsistent as to her birth date and place, but later records suggest she was born in Scotland about 1844, and emigrated about 1860. Her younger sister, Margaret, who married John Raser—William's brother—came at a later date.

William H. Raser appears in various New York City directories, first in 1865/6 as a clerk, living at 147 Forsyth Street. In 1868 he is listed as an engrosser, living with John A. Raser (his brother) at 41 Henry Street. According to his daughter-in-law, he "was an ornamental writer—he was very fine with a pen" (3). In the 1870 census William Raser, bookkeeper, is shown living with his family, brother and mother in a dwelling in the 10th ward of New York City (4). The 1869 through 1871 directories show him living at 146 Forsyth Street, initially as a clerk, but in 1871 engaged in the feed business of J. A. Raser & Brother at 168 1/2 Allen Street. He is probably the William H. Raser, "paint, 13 Platt [Street]," listed in the 1875/6 directory.

### *The Matthias Raser Branch*

In the 1880 census William H. Raser, bookkeeper, resided in the vicinity of Harrison Depot, in the Town of Harrison, Westchester Co., N.Y. (5). But he had died by 1900, when Mary Raser, his widow, appears in that census living with her mother-in-law, Rosanna (Raser) Acker, on Harrison Avenue, in Harrison, N.Y.; her two married children were living with her (6). Mary's sister, and brother-in-law John A. Raser, lived next door.

In 1910 Mary Raser owned her house on Harrison Avenue; living with her were her aunt Matilda Raser, daughter Ella (Raser) Hall and family, and her son's mother-in-law (7). She probably died between 1910–20, as she no longer appears in the census records.

Children (RASER), probably born in New York City (6):

1. Ella M., b. Oct. 1865, m. abt. 1881 George W. Hall, b. Feb. 1858 in N.Y.; he was a house carpenter. Their one surviving child, son E. Clifton, b. July 1884, was a dentist by 1910 (7, 8).
- + 2. William Alfred (M-28), b. Oct. 1867, d. aft. 1937, m. abt. 1887 Maude L. Gedney.

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M-20. **JOHN ALFRED RASER**, son of William Ross Raser (M-13) and Rosanna Bishop, was born about October 1843 in Philadelphia, Pa. By the time of the 1850 census his father had died, and his mother, with her two small sons, was residing in the 10th ward of New York City with her sister Matilda and brother-in-law, John Raser (1).

John A. Raser was married on 29 December 1866 in the Forsyth Street Methodist Church, New York City, to **MARGARET** ("Maggie") **McWILLIAMS** (2). She is possibly the Margaret McWilliams, spinster, age 20, who arrived in New York on 1 November 1866 aboard *The City of London* (3). If so, she may have been encouraged to emigrate here by her sister Mary, who had married John Raser's brother William in the same church in 1862.

John A. Raser appears in various New York City directories, first in 1867/8 as a dealer in frames at 42 John Street, Manhattan, and residing at 146 Forsyth Street. Since he is later called a professional gilder, the frames probably were picture frames, which were commonly gilded at that time. His business addresses vary over the years: at 98 Nassau Street in 1868 and 1870, but at 42 John Street in 1869 and 1871 (when he was in partnership with George Ball, as Raser & Ball, frames). His residence, although most commonly given as 146 Forsyth Street, is shown as 41 Henry Street in 1868 and 114 Essex Street in 1869. John Raser, gilder, appears in the 1870 census residing in his brother's household, but without his wife and daughter Ida (4). In 1871, in partnership with his brother William, he also operated a feed business, as J. A. Raser & Brother, at 168 1/2 Allen Street.

John A. Raser is not listed in the Manhattan directories in the 1872-76 time period; he appears again in 1877 as an agent at 69 Gold Street, residence Rye, NY—indicating his removal from the city. In his last appearance in 1878 he is again shown as a frame dealer at 69 Gold Street, now residing in Westchester.

In the 1880 census John Raser, professional gilder, resided in the vicinity of Harrison Depot, Town of Harrison, Westchester Co., N.Y. (5). He soon became active in the community; in 1891 as Assistant Chief of the recently formed Harrison Fire Department (6), and in 1898 as Fourth Class Postmaster (7). In the 1900 census he appears as John A. Raser, grocer and homeowner, residing on Harrison Avenue (8); a directory for that year calls him Postmaster as well as operating a grocery and feed business on Halstead Avenue (9). The 1910 census indicates John was still Postmaster (10), but by 1920 he had retired to easier work—as janitor in the county court house (11). The later whereabouts of John and Margaret has not been discovered.

Children (RASER), all probably born in New York City (5, 8):

1. Ida, b. abt. 1868, poss. reached adulthood and married (8).
2. Elsie Alfretta(?), b. abt. Mar. 1871, bp. 30 Apr. 1872, age 13 mos. (12); m. (1) abt. 1892 Albert W. Southgate, b. Apr. 1870 in N.Y., a R.R. freight clerk in 1900 (8); m. (2) by 1920 James P. McLaughlin, b. abt. 1880 in Mass., a bricklayer (11).

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M-21. **WILLIAM L. RASER**, son of Levan H. Raser (M-15) and Anna C. —, was born 14 July 1860 at North 4th Street, Philadelphia (1). He first appears in city directories in 1880, listed as a clerk residing at 1125 Arch Street. Strangely, he appears in records through 1881 as William H., but as William L. thereafter. Between 1881–1901 he is listed at various other addresses which leave little doubt that he was living during these years with his parents. He usually is listed as a clerk, but occasionally appears as a salesman (in 1897 “hardware” appears after his name). He appears in the 1900 census, along with his wife, living with his parents in Oak Lane; he was identified then as a hardware salesman (2).

William married about 1885 **KATHARINE V.** —, who was born in New Jersey about 1866. Following his father’s death, they continued to live with his mother in the Oak Lane area until 1907, when William appears on his own at 117 North 11th Street through 1918. He is shown at that address in the 1910 census, as renter of the house and employed as a clerk in a hat factory; living with him and his wife were four lodgers. Kathryn was listed as the mother of one child, then living (3), but the 1900 census indicated the child had died. They were still at that address in 1920, with three boarders; William was listed as an order clerk in a hat store (4). Between 1921–36 William appears residing at 2317 North 19th Street, being identified as a clerk through 1929. Apparently he died about 1929, as Catherine Raser, widow, appears there in the 1930 census with her widowed younger sister, Margaret Adams(?); Catherine was owner of the house (5). Her later whereabouts remains undiscovered.

Child (RASER), born in Philadelphia:

1. Unidentified, and poss. died young (2, 3).

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M-22. **ROBERT S. RASER**, son of Levan H. Raser (M-15) and Anna C. —, was born 26 September 1867 at 1434 Camac Street, Philadelphia (1). He first appears in the city directories in 1887 as a printer, but as a clerk from 1892 to 1903. The 1900 census lists him as a clerk in a publishing company, where he worked all year; he was literate and rented his house (2). During 1903–05 he is again called a printer, but in 1907 a paper cutter. The 1910 census lists him as a foreman in a printing house (3), and Philadelphia directories through 1930 continue him as a foreman.

According to the 1900 census, Robert Raser married first, about 1888, **ESTHER** —, who was born in November 1872 in Pennsylvania, of Pennsylvania natives; they had no children (2). Robert married second, about 1906, **MARY** —. She was born about 1878 in Pennsylvania, of Irish parents (3, 4). As of 1920 they had no children.

After his first marriage Robert resided at 2220 North Bancroft Street until about 1902, after which he lived for shorter periods on North Sartain, North Warnock and North Hemberger Streets. Between 1916–25 he lived at 4847 North Sydenham Street, and during 1926–30 at 6628 North Bouvier Street. He seems not to appear in the 1930 census, and nothing more is known of him.

M-23. **THOMAS JEFFERSON RASER, Sr.**, son of Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16) and Mary Rose Fullaway, was born in the Southwark section of Philadelphia, Pa., on 9 January 1879. He spent his early days in Philadelphia, where he was educated in a manual training school on Girard Avenue. (1)

Thomas Raser was extremely interested in plants and trees, and on his own became an authority on horticulture. Early in his adult life he undertook landscape gardening work for various Chestnut Hill estates. For a while he lived near Reading, Pa., where he had a contract to do landscaping for, and subsequently the maintenance of, the grounds of the George W. Horst estate, "Sherlund." In the 1910 census he was listed as a manager, private estate, living with his family in Grill Village, Cumru Township, Berks County, Pa., just outside of Reading (2).

He subsequently returned to the Germantown area where he became superintendent for the Andorra Nurseries (3). When he registered for the World War I draft in September 1918 he was described as foreman, Andorra Nurseries, Chestnut Hill, with gray eyes and brown hair (4). Because of his reputation for managing men, sometime before 1930 he was induced to join W. A. Case & Son Manufacturing Company, manufacturers of electric-weld boilers, located near Norristown, Pa. Although he never liked this kind of work, he remained with that company for 15-20 years, until his retirement about 1943, at which time he was their production manager. While working for W. A. Case he continued to live for some years on a farm owned by Andorra Nurseries in Spring Mill, near Conshohocken. A grandson remembered it as having a beautiful old farm house, complete with fireplaces and a lovely front porch. In addition to a greenhouse, there was a large barn, out-buildings and even a windmill (5). There Thomas operated the greenhouse as a hobby, developing various new flowers. About 1935 he bought a house at Ridge Pike and Park Avenue, Barren Hill (now Lafayette Hill), where he and his wife spent their remaining days.

Thomas Raser married, about 1904, in The Little Church Around the Corner, New York City, **JANE** ("Jennie") **LYNN**. She was born about 1883 on Tobermore Island, County Derry, Ireland, the daughter of Robert and Mariah (—) Lynn; she had immigrated to the United States about 1893 (2, 3, 6). Her father was a tradesman and neither he nor his wife ever left Ireland. Mrs. Raser had known brothers and sisters: Lizzie, James, Robert and Mariah, who lived in eastern Pennsylvania and in Chicago. She was a long-standing member of the Conshohocken Presbyterian Church and taught a Bible class there for several years (7). She died in Bryn Mawr (Pa.) Hospital after a long illness, on 7 October 1941, and was buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery (1, 8).

Following his wife's death, Thomas Raser remodeled their Barren Hill home into apartments and continued to live there. In April 1942 he was required to register for the World War II draft, at which time he was described as 5 feet 7 ½ inches tall, 150 pounds, with hazel eyes, brown hair and ruddy complexion; it was also noted that he had lost the index finger of his right hand (9). After retiring he became a salesman of industrial brushes to businesses of the area. His knowledge of manufacturing and the local business men contributed to his success in this work. However, he deeply felt the loss of his wife and gradually lost interest in himself and local activities (10). In January 1953 he suffered a heart attack and was confined for a time in Sacred Heart Hospital, Norristown. In July he suffered a second attack and was confined in Montgomery Hospital, Norristown, where he died on 28 August 1953; he was buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery (11).

Thomas Raser had been active in the community. He served as elder in the Conshohocken Presbyterian Church for over 30 years, and was its Clerk of the Sessions when that church observed its centennial in 1947 (12). He also taught Sunday school at the church for many years. A resident of Whitmarsh Township for forty years, he was a member of its School Board for 25 years, having served both as secretary and president of the Board.

Children (RASER), born in Philadelphia (Chestnut Hill), except last born Spring Mill, Pa.:

- + 1. Elizabeth Mary (M-29), b. 18 Mar. 1905, d. 28 May 1973, m. 24 July 1943 Matthew L. Hastings.
- + 2. Thomas Jefferson, Jr. (M-30), b. 6 Oct. 1906, d. 19 June 1980, m. 21 June 1930 Mary H. Trimborn.
- 3. Fannie Lynn, b. late 1908 (2), d. aged 9 yrs., bur. 17 May 1918 in Ivy Hill Cem. (13).
- + 4. Clifford Aaron (M-31), b. 1919, m. Helen V. Roshon.

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M-24. **MARY ROSE RASER**, daughter of Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16) and Mary Rose Fullaway, was born on 4 November 1880 in the Southwark section of Philadelphia, Pa. She trained as a Practical Nurse in the Jewish Hospital of Philadelphia, where she graduated in June 1908 with the highest average in Practical Nursing (1). She briefly worked there as a supervisor, while residing at 122 West Gravers Lane, Chestnut Hill (2).

Subsequently, Mary Rose worked nine years at a hospital in Northampton, Mass., and later at New York Graduate Hospital, but she longed for Philadelphia and about 1921 returned to Jewish Hospital (3). She worked for decades as an anesthetist and a Registered Nurse, and was still working at Jewish Hospital in 1951. She assisted in bringing a tremendous number of babies into the world, and was particularly favored by the Jewish doctors of Philadelphia. About 1915 she rented, essentially “perpetually,” the house at 7825 Germantown Avenue, where she remained the rest of her life (4, 5).

Mary Rose was the family good Samaritan, taking care of family members because it was expected of the children in those days—receiving only room and board. She took care of her aunt Ida for about a year, until the need to earn income forced her to turn care over to aunt Fannie. She later took care of her own mother, who lived with her for many years, and still later her sister-in-law Jennie (Lynn) Raser (4). She never married.

Miss Raser had a great interest in the family and owned the family Bible and a large collection of family papers, photographs and antiques. She was interviewed twice by the author in 1951 (3), and supplied much biographical information on members of the Matthias-branch of the Raser family. Mary Rose Raser died in Philadelphia on 3 February 1962 and was buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery (6).

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M-25. **LINCOLN (“Link”) RASER**, son of Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16) and Mary Rose Fullaway, was born 24 August 1882 in the Southwark section of Philadelphia, Pa. He received his formal education in Thomas Gilbert Elementary School, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. (1)

In 1898 he started work with Adams Express Company (which eventually became Railway Express Agency) in a minor position. He was identified in the 1900 census as an express clerk living with his parents in Chestnut Hill (2); city directories and the 1910 census show he continued to live with his parents or widowed mother until he married. When he registered for the World War I draft in 1918 he was described as a claim agent, with grey eyes and brown hair (3). Over the years he steadily advanced to messenger, no-mark agent, assistant claim agent and chief correspondent in the company’s district accounting bureau at 18th and Market Streets in Philadelphia.

About 1922 he was promoted to Supervisor of Transportation in the company’s New York City office, where he commuted weekly from Philadelphia. In 1927 he was transferred back to Philadelphia to take charge of vehicle operations. He was still serving in this job when, in September 1930, he became ill from a tumor at the base of his brain. After falling and striking his head on the desk in his home, a blood clot formed and

forced his hospitalization. He died six weeks later, on 21 October 1930, in Jewish Hospital (now Einstein Medical Northern Division) in Philadelphia; he was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, Ambler, Pa. Following his death, Philadelphia City Manager L. R. Parry said: "His service was characterized by industry, intelligence, integrity and unswerving loyalty." He was largely self taught, being an avid reader; some of his books still remain in the family.

Lincoln Raser was married in Germantown, Pa., on 15 November 1911 to **MARY JANE ALLISON**; the ceremony was performed by his uncle Enoch Fullaway (a Baptist minister) in her home at 323 Church Lane (4). Mary Allison was born 29 February 1876 in Ballynacross, County Londonderry, Ireland, the daughter of James Allison/Ellison, a farmer of Ballynacross, and his first wife, Catherine Anne Morrow (5); they were Presbyterians. After Catherine's death, James was left with six children. He subsequently married Sydney Irons and had one more child. Certificates indicate that in Ireland the family spelled the name Ellison.

Mary Allison did not get along well with her step-mother, prompting her to emigrate to the United States about 1898 (6). Her brother Harry and sister Annie followed her some years later, while her brother William emigrated to Australia. For several years Mary Allison worked at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf on Germantown Avenue. After her marriage to Lincoln Raser, who was a Baptist, she converted to his church. They were both baptized at the Chestnut Hill Baptist Church on Germantown Avenue.

In their early married years the Rasers lived on Pleasant Avenue in Wyndmoor, Montgomery Co., Pa. (7); but in the mid-1920s they moved to Ft. Washington Avenue in Ft. Washington, Pa. (6). Some months after Lincoln's death in late 1930 the banks failed, virtually wiping out the family's substantial savings. Mary Raser then moved with her children to nearby Ambler, living at 316 Randolph Avenue; her eldest son quit high school to become a truck driver to support the family. In 1950 Mary moved to the Bowell Convalescent Home in Ft. Washington, and in 1953 to the Rock Hill Mennonite Home, West Rockhill Township, Bucks Co., Pa. She died there on 19 January 1957 of arteriosclerosis and diabetes (8) and was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery.

Children (RASER), first born in Philadelphia (Chestnut Hill), the others in Wyndmoor, Pa. (1):

- + 1. Lincoln Allison (M-32), b. 19 Feb. 1913, d. 23 Mar. 1991, m. 6 Feb. 1937 Dolores G. McDonald.
- + 2. Paul Fullaway (M-33), b. 19 Feb. 1916, d. 27 May 1995, m. 7 Oct. 1944 Hermina E. Guent.
- + 3. Gordon (M-34), b. 10 July 1920, d. 12 Feb. 1979; m. (1) 25 July 1942 Rose M. Widman, m. (2) 5 June 1951 Margaret F. H. Hollowell, m. (3) 20 Nov. 1976 Mary (Kelly) Bacon.

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M-26. **CHARLES FULLAWAY** ("Chick") **RASER**, son of Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16) and Mary Rose Fullaway, was born 15 October 1884 in the Southwark section of Philadelphia, Pa. He was educated in Germantown-area grammar schools through 8th grade, after which his father forced him to go to work—he never forgave his father for so limiting his education (1). He was living with his parents in Chestnut Hill in 1900 when identified as a teamster (2); the 1910 census and city directories show he continued to live with his parents, or widowed mother, until shortly after he married.

Charles Raser went to work for the Adams Express Company (which later became the Railway Express Agency) at least by 1905. He was working for them as a claim clerk when he registered for the World War I draft in September 1918 (3); he was about to be called to active duty when the war ended. It is said that during some of World War I he worked for the Sun Shipbuilding Co. (1). If so, he soon returned to Railway Express and continued to work for that company at various locations in the Philadelphia area for the rest of his life. Sometime after the war he worked as route agent for traffic destined for the York and Lancaster, Pa., areas. During the Depression he was agent at the Bryn Mawr Station; he then resided in Narberth, Pa. He ultimately

became claim agent in the main office at 18th and Market Streets in Philadelphia. He also served as a "trouble shooter," and often was called to New York City, Chicago and San Francisco to straighten out problems at those main offices.

Charles Raser was a very shy, retiring person. During his twenties he was victimized by a California investment scheme, and went to California in an unsuccessful attempt to retrieve his money. To help support himself he worked digging irrigation ditches in California and "punching cows" on Montana ranches; he was forced to "ride the rails" to get back home. The experience probably spurred his interest in America, for he became an avid reader of western stories, historical novels, biographies and poetry. He also loved to garden and to experiment with different varieties of flowers, and for a while he played minor league baseball. In April 1942 he was required to register for the World War II draft, at which time he was described as five feet, four inches tall, 170 pounds, with blue eyes, gray hair and ruddy complexion (4). He was still working for Railway Express when he suffered a coronary and died on 6 August 1952 in Bryn Mawr (Pa.) Hospital. He was buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery, Mt. Airy.

In 1912 Charles Raser eloped with **ALIDA MAUD PEVERLEY**, daughter of Walter and Elizabeth Louise (Holleran) Peverley. Although Charles was an Episcopalian and Maud a Catholic, they were married by one of his cousins who was a Baptist minister. Her mother did not take to such a marriage, so they were remarried on 27 November 1912 in the rectory of St. Margaret's R.C. Church, Narberth, Pa. Shortly after their marriage the Rasers took up residence at 1536 North Frazier Street, Philadelphia, but by 1920 they were living at 5612 Hunter Avenue, Philadelphia, when Charles was identified as a messenger with the express company (5). By 1930 they had purchased a house at 30 Woodside Avenue in Narberth Borough, Montgomery County, Pa.; in that year Charles was identified as a traveling auditor for the express company (6).

Maud Peverley was born in Glens Falls, N.Y., on 7 April 1887. She later lived in Rutland and Fair Haven, Vermont, before moving to the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia. Her father and his brother, Harry L. Peverley, originally were marble cutters in Vermont, but subsequently opened a business, Peverley Bros., in Philadelphia as sales representatives for Young Bros., Vermont granite quarriers. For a while Maud worked for Peverley Bros., but eventually settled down to being a homemaker. She loved music and had an excellent second-soprano voice; she raised her children in the Roman Catholic church. Maud Raser died 22 June 1946 in the family home at 30 Woodside Avenue; she was buried in the Peverley family plot in Castleton, Vt.

Children (RASER), born in Philadelphia, Pa. (1):

- + 1. John Hudson (M-35), b. 8 Oct. 1914, d. 2 Nov. 1978, m. 28 Nov. 1946 Eleanor Marie Armstrong.
- + 2. Elizabeth Peverley (M-36), b. 8 Jan. 1921, d. 4 May 2007, m. 16 May 1953 W. Haddon Judson.

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M-27 **EARL RASER**, son of Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16) and Mary Rose Fullaway, was born 14 September 1896 in Germantown, Pa. He was only ten when his father died, leaving his mother with several unmarried children. By 1910, with four sons, she was renting the house at 7825 Germantown Avenue. Earl was raised there until 1918. (1)

Earl's earliest known employment was as a truck driver for Archie Crombie, a prominent Chestnut Hill grocer (2). In 1918 he enlisted in the US Navy, training in California at the same base where his two sons were to train in World War II (3). He served as a Seaman Second Class until his discharge in 1921 (4). At one time he was the Pacific Fleet boxing champion.

Possibly soon after his discharge Earl decided to settle in California, where he became an over-the-road truck driver. By 1930 he was residing with his young family in a rented house at 2144 North Fair Oaks

Avenue in Pasadena (5). The Los Angeles City Directory for 1933 identifies him as a driver for the Keystone Express System. He later drove for Crown City & Los Angeles Express until his retirement in 1956. Earl was very active in fraternal organizations. He was a member of Pasadena-area Masonic and Elks lodges, and during 1946–47 was Commander of American Legion Post 280 in East Pasadena.

Earl Raser was seriously injured in a car accident on Boulder Highway near Las Vegas, Nevada, in the summer of 1957. His son John was driving the family car, towing the family boat, when he was forced off the highway and the car overturned. Earl was taken to a hospital in Las Vegas where, several days later, on 27 August, he died of his injuries. He was buried in Mt. View Cemetery in the Pasadena area.

Earl Raser married about 1921 **CATHARINE GERTRUDE** (“Dottie”) **RUNGE** (pronounced Rundge). She was born 25 December 1898 in Pennsylvania, the daughter of Lewis Runge and Catherine Bloomfield. Lewis Runge was a carpenter and cabinet maker by trade. Catharine, his daughter, was nicknamed “Dottie” after her brown eyes, which looked like two dots. She died in Los Angeles, Cal., on 16 February 1956 (6).

Children (RASER), born in Pasadena, Cal. (1, 7):

- + 1. John Earl (M-37), b. 11 Oct. 1924, d. 11 Sep. 1997, m.(1) abt. 1949 Mary Jane Krivan, m. (2) 2 June 1976 Grete Heidi (Pearson) Turski.
- + 2. Charles Harvey Forbes (M-38), b. 6 Oct. 1925, d. 5 Aug. 1982, m. 1955 Jacqueline Alice Meany.

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M-28. **WILLIAM ALFRED RASER**, son of William Hyde Raser (M-19) and Mary McWilliams, was born in October 1867, probably in New York City. It is likely that he grew up in Manhattan, prior to the removal of his parents to Harrison, N.Y.—probably in the latter half of the 1870s.

William Raser married about 1887 **MAUDE L. GEDNEY**, who was born in May 1869 in New York state. In October 1891 William was listed as First Assistant Foreman in the recently-formed Harrison Fire Department; his uncle, John A. Raser, was the Assistant Fire Chief (1). The Rasers appear in the 1900 census in Harrison, N.Y., with their only child; at the time William was a telegraph operator, working for the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad (2). In 1910 a city directory indicates he was working as a train dispatcher in New Haven’s Union Depot; he resided at 75 Smith Street in West Haven (3). Two years later he was there as night chief; he then resided at 69 Center Street in West Haven (4). He appears to have been missed in the 1910 census, but his mother-in-law, Harriet M. Gedney, was then boarding with his widowed mother back in Harrison (5).

By 1920 William Raser and his wife had returned to Harrison, where they resided in a rented house on Holman Avenue; with them were her mother and their daughter Maude’s family (6). William was then a train dispatcher. They were still all together in 1930, residing in a rented house at 201 Harrison Avenue; William was then called a train master (7). By 1937 the Rasers had returned to New Haven, where the city directory indicates he was an assistant chief train dispatcher, living at 94 West Street, West Haven, Conn. William died sometime after 1937, as his widow was living in West Haven in 1948, at 91 Smith Street (8).

Only child (RASER), probably born in Harrison, N.Y. (2):

- 1. Maude Arleen, b. Sep. 1890, d. 15 May 1976 in Bridgeport, Conn. (9), m. abt. 1910 Frederick K. Coe, b. abt. 1887 in Conn. In both 1920 and 1930 he is listed as a clerk working for the railroad. Chn. (COE): Nelson R., William F., Donald S. (6, 7). In Nov. 1948 Maude (Gedney) Raser stated she had three grandsons and seven great-grandchildren (8).

M-29. **ELIZABETH MARY** ("Betty") **RASER**, daughter of Thomas Jefferson Raser, Sr. (M-23) and Jane Lynn, was born 18 March 1905 in Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pa. She was educated in Spring Mill and Conshohocken public schools, and graduated from Philadelphia Business College in 1923. For a number of years before her marriage she worked as a secretary for Schoenhut Toy Company. (1, 2)

Betty married 24 July 1943, in Leverington Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pa., **MATTHEW L. HASTINGS**. He was born 1 August 1900 in Conshohocken, Pa., the son of George and Carrie (Ruth) Hastings. His father was an executive with Allen Wood Iron & Steel Company, Conshohocken, and was also involved in glass manufacturing with his brother-in-law, Joseph Ruth.

Elizabeth Hastings worked for many years as an office supervisor in the treasurer's office of the Presbyterian Board, Philadelphia, from which job she retired in 1971. She was musically inclined and very active in church affairs. A Presbyterian, she served as organist in several Philadelphia churches. The Hastings resided at 634 Roxborough Avenue, in the Roxborough section of Philadelphia.

Matthew Hastings died 20 January 1968 in Philadelphia; his wife died there on 28 May 1973. Both are buried in George Washington Memorial Park, Whitemarsh, Pa. The Hastings had no children.



M-30. **THOMAS JEFFERSON** ("Tom") **RASER, Jr.**, son of Thomas Jefferson Raser, Sr. (M-23) and Jane Lynn, was born 6 October 1906 in the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia, Pa. He was educated in the public schools of Spring Mill and Conshohocken, and attended Temple University evening classes. (1, 2)

During 1925–49 he worked in Philadelphia for William Montgomery Company, wholesale grocers, first in promotion, then sales, and finally as manager and director of Pioneer Stores (which subsequently became Thriftway Foods, a division of the Fleming Company). In 1949–50 he worked for Consolidated Foods Corporation, establishing voluntary food marketing groups. He then joined Curtis Publishing Company in Philadelphia as food marketing director for the *Ladies Home Journal*; his work included published articles under the pseudonym *Roger Bell*. During his years in the Philadelphia area he taught and lectured on food distribution at Merrill Dobbins Vocational School and Elizabethtown College, and was guest lecturer on this subject at Rutgers and Temple Universities and the University of Pennsylvania. During World War II he served in the Training Within Industry program.

Thomas Raser was married 21 June 1930 in Conshohocken, Pa., to **MARY HANSBERRY TRIMBORN**. She was a daughter of William Charles Trimborn and Violet Hansberry, and was born 22 June 1907 in the Shawmont Avenue section of Philadelphia. Her father was a carpenter and cabinetmaker; he and his wife were both active in the Ridge Avenue Methodist Church in Roxborough. Mary was a graduate of Sayers Business College, and after her marriage served as an officer in both the Philadelphia American Red Cross Gray Lady Service, and their Blood Donor Services organization (3).

In 1955 the Rasers moved to Hartsdale, N.Y., residing in an apartment at 68 Rockledge Road. Tom worked for over a year in New York City for Butterick Publishing Company as vice president of *Progressive Grocer Magazine*. In 1957 he became marketing director for *Farm Journal*, one of the country's leading agribusiness publications. He subsequently was editorial director of the American Institute of Food Distribution and editor of *Wholesale Grocer News*. Eventually he became the marketing director for the United States Wholesale Grocer's Association, Washington, D.C., and the National American Wholesale Grocer's Association, New York City. As a result he became well known and highly regarded throughout the entire food industry. He retired in 1974 due to failing health. His hobbies were art and literature, and writing articles for trade magazines and newspapers. He died after a long illness on 19 June 1980 in White Plains

(N.Y.) Hospital—just two days short of his 50th wedding anniversary. He was buried in the family plot in Ivy Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

Immediately after their move to Hartsdale, Mary Raser “became involved in the community through the Scarsdale–Hartsdale Newcomers Club. An avid gardener, she also belonged to the Scarsdale–Hartsdale Garden Club and planted and maintained the flower circle at the Hartsdale Railroad Station until 1970” (3). Both she and her husband were active members of the Hitchcock Presbyterian Church, Scarsdale—she as a volunteer in the Thrift Shop, and Tom as head usher. Over the years Mary increasingly gave support to her husband in his work. During 1957–63 she was eastern editorial and sales manager for *Wholesale Grocer News*. Mary and Tom operated as a team, traveling from coast to coast, but particularly in the south, conducting seminars and meetings for state-wide food marketing organizations. Following her husband’s death, Mary continued to reside in their Rockledge Road apartment. She died in Calvary Hospital, Bronx, N.Y., on 2 April 2003, nearing age 96 and after a two-year battle with breast cancer. She was buried alongside her husband in Ivy Hill Cemetery.

Children (RASER):

1. Thomas Jefferson, III, m. (1) Edith Chadwick Peters, d. 1976, chn.: Jeffrey William, Susan Lynn; m. (2) Florence Eliese (Eisenbeis) Mooney (4).
2. William John, m. (1) Laura Storti, chn.: Jessica Mary, Alessandra Maria, Francesca Laura; m. (2) Linda Laine (5).
3. Robert Lynn, m. Caroline Anne Jones, chn.: Christopher John, Lindsay Anne (6).

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M-31. **CLIFFORD AARON RASER**, son of Thomas Jefferson Raser, Sr. (M-23) and Jane Lynn, was born in 1919 in Montgomery County, Pa. He was named Clifford for his uncle, and Aaron for Dr. Aaron Ruth, the family doctor. He was educated in suburban Philadelphia public schools, and graduated from Philadelphia Business School in 1938; he later attended Temple University evening classes. From Fall 1938 to December 1941 Clifford worked for William Montgomery Company, a Philadelphia-area wholesale food distributor. He initially served in a clerical capacity, helping to install an IBM punched-card inventory control, billing and sales analysis system—eventually becoming an electric accounting machine operator. (1)

The day after Pearl Harbor, Clifford enlisted in the Army, expressing a preference for the field artillery. After completing basic training he was selected for Officers Candidate School (OCS), from which he graduated as a 2nd Lieutenant in October 1942. He was retained in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to train new OCS candidates and reserve officers, and later, after promotion to 1st Lieutenant, was transferred to the University of Illinois to provide military training and discipline to personnel being instructed in specialized functions, such as foreign languages.

In March 1944 he was transferred to the 771st Field Artillery Battalion at Camp Hood, Texas, to prepare for overseas duty. In July their unit was sent to England, where they were based at Ross-on-Wye, Hereford, until fully equipped in mid-August. He was assigned as executive officer of Battery C, which was equipped with four 4.5 inch high-muzzle-velocity guns. After being landed at Utah Beach in France, they were engaged in the siege of Brest. Upon its surrender his unit supported the advance of American forces across France, Belgium and Luxembourg to the vicinity of the Siegfried Line; in November he was promoted to Captain. At this point his artillery battery was assigned to destroying bunkers in the Siegfried line, until being caught up in the German Ardennes Offensive, which began in a very cold and snowy mid-December.

During the turmoil of the Battle of the Bulge, as described in a citation of his unit, “Capt. Raser frequently made reconnaissance of positions for his battery over heavily mined areas exposed to enemy observation. He

often moved his battery over well nigh impassable roads in all kinds of weather to positions required by the tactical situation." During the course of these movements his unit discovered four abandoned German 150mm howitzers, as well as a nearby supply of ammunition. Word of the discovery greatly excited division headquarters, which dispatched a technical team to evaluate the potential of the find, particularly as US artillery units along the front were frequently experiencing interruptions in their ammunition supplies. Not knowing the trajectory characteristics of the German weapons, but desiring to harass the enemy as much as possible, his unit was able to rehabilitated the howitzers, "and in two days fired 1,700 rounds [into the general area of] enemy strong points. While shooting the enemy material, regular missions with the organic 155's continued without interruption. The battalion was commended for this unusual performance," for which Capt. Raser was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

In late February 1945 US forces began a quickening advance toward Germany. Clifford's battery followed in close support of various infantry units, soon crossing the Moselle, Nahe, Rhine, Main and Danube Rivers, eventually reaching Czechoslovakia. There they were assigned by General George Patton, an old "horse artilleryman," to support the armored cavalry unit which successfully "liberated" the famous Lipizzaner Stallions being held by German forces. When the war ended, he was reassigned to support the military government in the resettlement of displaced persons. He subsequently was sent to Regensburg, Germany, where he was attached to a military history unit traveling about Germany, interviewing officers of units and gathering historical information on their wartime activities. In December he was shipped back to the US, and arrived home on leave on Christmas Eve. Several weeks later he was discharged.

After completing Officer Candidate School in late 1942, Clifford had become engaged to **HELEN VIVIAN ROSHON**. During a subsequent leave, they were married in Philadelphia in the Leverington Presbyterian Church. Helen was the daughter of Charles F. and Mabel L. (—) Roshon; her father was a dealer in hides and fats in the Roxborough section of Philadelphia (2, 3). After graduating from business school, Helen took a secretarial job in a large corporation headquartered in Philadelphia; she eventually became private secretary to one of its top executives. The Rasers resided in Roxborough until 1951, when they moved to a new house in Broad Axe, Pa.

Immediately after his discharge, Clifford returned to the William Montgomery Co., where he became assistant manager of the Manufacturing Department. Its primary product was coffee, processing it at all stages for subsequent distribution. New blends and new packaging forms and sizes were adopted to meet market demands. With the growth of suburbia and the advent of supermarkets, the company's food operations began to expand phenomenally.

In 1953 the company was reorganized to cope with its growth and Clifford became operations manager of the Grocery Division. As such he also became a member (secretary) of the board of directors. His work included the planning and construction in 1955 of a new food distribution center in the suburbs, containing refrigeration facilities capable of handling a broad line of perishable products. Subsequently the company expanded into the frozen food business, including the distribution of ice cream. Soon afterwards the company merged with an area competitor, further expanded its facilities, and changed its name to Thriftway Foods—in the process Clifford became vice president, operations. In 1976 further growth demands prompted a merger with the much larger Fleming Company, and Clifford became vice president and operations manager of the Eastern Division of the Fleming Co., King of Prussia, Pa., operators of Thriftway Foods. He retired from the company in July 1981 after 43 years of service.

Clifford and Helen were heavily involved in Leverington Presbyterian Church activities, including teaching Bible classes for over thirty years—until their removal to Florida in 1991. Shortly after Clifford's 1981 retirement, the Rasers bought a motor home, and during ten years visited every state in the United States.

and parts of Canada. They also traveled abroad, including trips to China and the Holy Land. After moving to Shell Point Village, a retirement community in Fort Myers, Fla., they bought a live-in van and spent much time until 2002 working as volunteer “traveling representatives” in seven southeastern states for Literacy & Evangelism International—a Christian literacy ministry. Clifford continues to teach an adult Sunday School class, while Helen conducts a weekly Womens Bible Study at Shell Point Village. The Rasers had no children.

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M-32. **LINCOLN ALLISON (“Link”) RASER**, son of Lincoln Raser (M-25) and Mary Jane Allison, was born 19 February 1913 in Mary Rose Raser’s house at 7825 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. He received his formal education in the Montgomery County public schools. Following the death of his father, and the loss of most of the family savings in a Depression-era bank failure, he dropped out of Ambler High School in order to support the family by driving loaded coal trucks from Mahoney City, Pa., to Philadelphia. (1).

Lincoln married on 6 February 1937, in St. Bridgets R.C. Church, East Falls (Philadelphia), Pa, **DOLORES GERTRUDE McDONALD**. She was born 16 April 1913 in her parent’s house at 3629 Calumet Street, East Falls, the daughter of Martin John McDonald and Margaret Mary Proctor. In 1910 her father was working as a plumber in a nearby carpet mill; he died in 1918—a victim of the influenza epidemic—leaving his wife to raise their young children in her parent’s household (2).

Following in the footsteps of his father, Link went to work for the Railway Express Agency in 1934, when he turned 21. Early in World War II, while a truck driver delivering government material to various area locations, he was drafted—along with another driver—into the US Marine Corps. Soon after both had left for military service, Railway Express petitioned the government to release at least one of the men, as its delivery operations were being put in jeopardy. Granted the release of one driver, the Agency chose Link, since he had a wife and child to support. The other driver, younger and single, did not survive the war.

In 1941 Link moved from Philadelphia to suburban Flourtown. There he joined the Flourtown Fire Company as a volunteer during off-work hours. For several years he served as assistant fire chief, and subsequently as an engineer—meaning he was in charge of driving a fire truck and supervising its crew. In late-1959 he relocated with his family to the Lansdale area of Montgomery County, Pa. In 1972 he retired from Railway Express after 38 years of service. Link liked to travel, and with his wife visited by automobile large areas of the United States and Canada; he was especially fond of the Canadian Maritime Provinces. He died peacefully on 23 March 1991, having suffered a stroke five days earlier from which he never recovered. He was buried in George Washington Memorial Park Cemetery, Whitemarsh, Pa. His widow died 15 March 2008 in Abington (Pa.) Memorial Hospital, and was buried alongside her husband.

Children (RASER) (1):

1. Dolores Mary, m. John Michael Schumacher, chn. (SCHUMACHER): Michael John, Michelle, Brian Michael.
2. Wayne Joseph, m. Barbara Joan Wells, chn.: Eric Wayne, Rebecca Wells.
3. Gary Paul, m. Dolores Marie Sharkey, chn.: Dolores Marie, Mary Allison.

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M-33. **PAUL FULLAWAY RASER**, son of Lincoln Raser (M-25) and Mary Rose Fullaway, was born 19 February 1916 at the family home on Pleasant Avenue, Wyndmoor, Montgomery County, Pa. (1). He was a graduate of Ambler (Pa.) High School in 1933 (2).

When he enlisted in the US Air Force in September 1942, he was described as 5 feet 10 inches tall and of 168 pounds (3). He trained as a flight engineer and served aboard B-17 bombers. He flew 50 missions over Germany and Austria before his discharge in November 1944.

For most of his working life Paul owned and operated Raser's Flower Shop at 5006 Germantown Avenue—on property which was part of the original John Bernhard Reser tract. His residence was on the same property. Sometime after his retirement in 1976 he went to work for his son-in-law, Paul C. Zieger, who was a wholesale florist and rose grower operating as Zieger & Sons, Inc. Subsequently the Rasers relocated to an apartment at 7700 Stenton Avenue, and in 1994 to Martins Mill Road, both in Philadelphia.

Paul was active in various area organizations. He was Past Master of Hiram Lodge #81, F&AM, and a member of the LuLu Temple Shriners of Philadelphia, and the Germantown Commandery of the Knights Templers. He also was a member of the American Legion and several hereditary associations. He had a great interest in family history, and generously provided the writer with considerable vital records and biographical information appearing in this book.

Paul Raser was married 7 October 1944, in Zion Lutheran Church, Flourtown, Montgomery County, Pa., to **HERMINA ELIZABETH** ("Betty") **GUENST**. She was born 5 December 1913 at her parent's home on Helen Street, in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, the daughter of Henry Karl Guenst and Margaret Roth. Her father, a house carpenter, was born in Uslar, Germany; her mother was born in Budapest, Hungary.

By 1997 the Rasers had moved to 801 Ridge Pike, in Lafayette Hill, Montgomery County, Pa. Paul died in Lafayette Hill on 27 May 1995 (4); his wife died there about a month later, on 21 June 1995 (4). They were buried in George Washington Memorial Park Cemetery, Whitmarsh, Pa. (5).

Children (RASER):

1. Bonnie Jane, m. Paul Charles Zieger, chn. (ZIEGER): Mark Andrew, Jeffrey Paul, Stephen Charles (5).
2. Montel Margaret, m. (1) Keith Edward Hevener, chn. (HEVENER): Jamie Allison, Jenna Catherine; m. (2) Jack Oliver Twist, ch. (TWIST): Brian Matthew (adopted) (6).



M-34. **GORDON RASER**, son of Lincoln Raser (M-25) and Mary Jane Allison, was born 10 July 1920 at the family home on Pleasant Avenue, Wyndmoor, Montgomery County, Pa. He grew to be a handsome man over six feet tall and, unlike his brothers, was thin. (1, 2)

Gordon was drafted into the Army in April 1944, serving in the Pacific Theater. He was attached to the Flying Tigers in Burma, working as a supply truck driver along the famed Burma Road—the construction of which he held in great regard. He was discharged in July 1946. Most of Gordon's post-war employment, beginning in 1951, was with the Keystone Portland Cement Company. For a long time he worked as an on-the-road salesman covering mostly the eastern shore of Maryland; he eventually became assistant sales manager and field manager. Gordon had a charismatic personality, well suited to his work in sales. He was an avid golfer much of his life, and at times would take his young children with him. Despite three marriages, he was always devoted to his children and was much revered by them.

Gordon was married first on 25 July 1942 in St. John the Baptist (R.C.) Church, Manayunk, Philadelphia, to **ROSE MARIE WIDMAN**, more commonly known as Rosemarie. She was born 10 November 1920 at her parent's home, 225 Shurs Lane, Manayunk, Philadelphia, the daughter of Albert Joseph Raymond Widman and Rose Anne Finnegan. Her father was a linotype operator for many years; in 1942 he was in the employ of Cuneo Eastern Press, of Philadelphia (3).

During the 1940s the Rasers resided in the Germantown and East Falls sections of Philadelphia. Following her divorce from Gordon in 1950, Rosemarie moved with the children to Manayunk, close to her parents. There she raised her young children, who frequently stayed with Gordon on weekends. Rose was a beautiful woman when young—looking much like Ava Gardner—and grew up a Catholic; she raised her children in that faith and worked in clerical jobs to support her family. In 1961 she married Berkley Benjamin Shields and had two more children before their divorce in 1985.

Gordon married second, on 5 June 1951 in Rocky Mount, N.C., **MARGARET FRANCES HOPE** (“Margie”) **HOLLOWELL**. The daughter of John Wesley Hollowell and Flora McDonald Sater, she was born 6 September 1921 at her parent’s home on Branch Street in Rocky Mount. Many railroad workers resided in the houses on Branch Street; Margaret’s father appears as a railroad flagman in the 1910 census, and as a conductor in 1920 and 1930 (4). Gordon had met Margie during World War II when she was serving as a WAC, and had continued to be attracted to her. For many years Margie was a legal secretary with Dupont Company in Wilmington, Del. She died 24 June 1975 in the Wilmington Medical Center, and was buried in Gracelawn Cemetery, in Wilmington.

Gordon married third, on 20 November 1976, in The Red Lion Methodist Church, Bear, Del., **MARY (KELLY) BACON**. Their marriage was short-lived. Gordon died of a heart attack on 12 February 1979 while on a skiing vacation with Kelly in West Dover, Vermont (2); he was buried in Gracelawn Cemetery.

Children (RASER) by Rosemarie Widman:

1. Barbara Ann, m. John Alexander Moore, chn. (MOORE): Shawn David, Ryan Patrick (5).
2. Gordon Michael, m. Patricia Ann Taylor, chn.: Jeffrey Michael, Karen Lynn (6).
3. Suzanne Rosemary, m. (1) Gary William Pierce, d. 1977, chn. (PIERCE): Rachel Shannon, Barbara Allison, Samuel Alan; m. (2) Bernardo Comacho Melendez; m. (3) Mark Thomas Williams, ch. (WILLIAMS): Michael Pierce (adopted) (7).

Children (RASER) by Margaret F. H. Hollowell:

4. Mary Jane Allison, m. Guy Harold Lane, ch. (LANE): Guy Harold, Jr. (8).
5. Judith Eileen, d. 1963, aged 3 days.



M-35. **JOHN HUDSON RASER**, son of Charles Fullaway Raser (M-26) and Alida Maud Peverley, was born 8 October 1914 in Philadelphia, Pa. After his graduation from St. Josephs University in 1938, he worked for the Armour Meat Company in accounting, and subsequently in the Title Department of the Bryn Mawr Trust Company. (1)

In March 1943, when he enlisted for the duration of World War II, he was described as 5 feet 8 inches tall, 116 pounds (2). He served in the US Army in the South Pacific. After the war he returned to the Bryn Mawr Trust Company, working in the Mortgage Department. He subsequently went to work for the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) in Cherry Hill, N.J. He was forced into early retirement from RCA by a stroke, and died of a heart attack on 2 November 1978 as he was about to enter his car in a shopping area of Haverford, Pa. He was buried in his wife’s family plot in St. Denis Cemetery, northeast of Oakmont, Pa.

John married 28 November 1946, in St. Colman’s R.C. Church, Ardmore, Pa., **ELEANOR MARIE ARMSTRONG**. She was born 21 August 1910 in Oakmont, Pa. Prior to her marriage she worked in the Trust Department of the Bryn Mawr Trust Company. After their marriage the Rasers resided in the Windermere Court Apartments, Wayne, Pa.; in 1977 they resided at 52 Walton Avenue, Ardmore, Pa. Following John’s death, and suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, Eleanor lived in the St. Francis Country

House, Darby, Pa. She died on 5 August 1986 in Fitzgerald Mercy Hospital, Darby, after a severe illness and operation, and was buried with her husband in St. Denis Cemetery.

John Raser was artistically inclined and clever at making things. He was active in dramatics when younger, was an accomplished ballroom dancer, a church choir and glee club singer, and played the piano by ear. His wife, formally trained, was also a piano player. The Rasers had no children.

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M-36. **ELIZABETH PEVERLEY** ("Betty", "Liz") **RASER**, daughter of Charles Fullaway Raser (M-26) and Alida Maud Peverley, was born 8 January 1921 in Anderson Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa. She was educated in the public schools of Narberth and Ardmore, Pa., and was graduated from Rosemont (Pa.) College in 1943 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. (1)

In the ten years prior to her marriage she worked as a secretary, first in the Bryn Mawr Trust Co. in Bryn Mawr, Pa. Subsequently she worked for Hirst & Hirst Real Estate in Haverford, Pa.; Peartree & Pasfield, builders, in Wynnewood, Pa.; a labor attorney in Philadelphia, and the Home Lines Steamship Co. in Philadelphia. She was involved in various volunteer activities in the Philadelphia suburbs during World War II.

Elizabeth Raser was married on 16 May 1953, in St. John's R.C. Church, Philadelphia, to **WILLIAM HADDON JUDSON**. He was born 19 March 1914 in Winnepeg, Canada, the son of William Haddon Spurgeon Judson and Jessie Manson McCree. His father owned Judson Company, which supplied western Canada with farm implements, and helped open up that area through the sale of huge steam tractors; he subsequently was owner of American Seeding Machine Co., Springfield, Ohio, and Stiffel-Freeman Safe Co., Lititz, Pa.

W. Haddon Judson was a graduate of McGill University, Montreal, Canada, with an Engineering Science degree and a Ph.D. in physics. He served in the US Air Force for about a year in World War II. After the war he was owner, with his brother Charles, of Judson Bros., Collegeville, Pa., selling farm implements. In 1950-51 he owned Judson Research in Bridgeport, Pa., manufacturing 5-inch naval rockets for use during the Korean War. Since 1951 he was owner of Judson Research & Manufacturing Co., Conshohocken, Pa., manufacturing superchargers for sports and race cars, electronic ignition systems, infrared detectors and other electrical/electronic equipment. Mr. Judson died on 12 June 1988 in Ardmore, Pa.

Mr. Judson previously had been married to Josephine Minnick, by whom he had three children: W. Haddon, Jr., Thomas Gregory, and Patricia Ann. Elizabeth raised his children but had none of her own. Over the years she was active in social, community service and college alumni organizations. She studied voice and frequently sang in church choirs, small opera companies and amateur singing groups. Mrs. Judson died in Dallas, Texas, on 4 May 2007 (2).

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M-37. **JOHN EARL** ("Johnnie") **RASER**, son of Earl Raser (M-27) and Catharine Gertrude Runge, was born 11 October 1924 in Pasadena, Cal. He enlisted in the US Navy in March 1943 and served in the South Pacific as a coxswain; he was discharged in February 1946 (1). He subsequently served in the Korean War. (2)

According to his obituary, "He was a retired electrician and head of maintenance at Orleans Square Condos [in Las Vegas] for 25 years. He was a gifted cartoonist and drummer who enjoyed boating, fishing, camping, horses and coaching little league." He was known as "Bompie" to his grandchildren. (2)

John married first, about 1949, **MARY JANE KRIVAN**. She was born 13 March 1931 in Rockford, Ill., the only child of Frank Krivan and Margaret Shugarts. The Krivans later divorced, and Margaret married a Paul Williams. Mary Jane Raser died 31 January 1976 in Las Vegas, Nev., of cirrhosis of the liver (3). She was the mother of John Raser's three children.

John married second, on 2 June 1976 in Las Vegas, **GRETE HEIDI TURSKI** (4), generally known as Heidi. She had previously been married, as Grete Heidi Pearson, to Ronald Andrew Turski (4).

John Raser died of cancer in Las Vegas on 11 September 1997, leaving wife Heidi, three children, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren (2). He was buried in the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Boulder City, Nev. (1).

Children (RASER):

1. Gayle Marie, m. (1) Vincent Arthur Tursini, chn. (TURSINI): Theresa Deann, Christopher; m. (2) John Parker Partain; m. (3) Mark Steven Milburn (5).
2. Gary John Charles, m. (1) Joe Deen Kennedy, ch.: Kimberlee Deen; m. (2) Eleni Metaxas, chn.: John Charles, Teri Danielle (6).
3. Deborah Catharine, m. Vincent Arthur Tursini, ch. (TURSINI): Vincent (5).

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M-38. **CHARLES HARVEY FORBES** ("Rudy", "Chuck") **RASER**, son of Earl Raser (M-27) and Catharine Gertrude Runge, was born 6 October 1925 in Pasadena, Cal. His formal education was received in the Pasadena public schools. He worked at various jobs before entering the service in World War II. (1)

Rudy Raser enlisted in the US Navy in June 1943. He served as Gunners Mate Third Class aboard the heavy cruiser *New Orleans* and participated in all of the ship's 23 engagements in the western Pacific, including the liberation of the Philippines. He was discharged in March 1946. After the war he became involved in various business activities in Pasadena; between 1946–1954 he was part owner of a liquor store, a car painting shop and a plumbing business. In 1954 he began work as salesman for the Bridgeport Brass Company in Los Angeles, eventually making a comfortable living.

During his sales work Rudy Raser became aware of the demand for metal parts made on automatic screw machines. He went to night school to learn how to run this equipment, and soon was certified as a skilled screw machine operator. In 1970 he resigned from his sales job, purchased an automatic screw machine and set up business in a friend's building in Orange, Cal., under the name C. H. Raser Company. The business flourished, necessitating moves into successively larger buildings in Fullerton, Cal., which he purchased in 1972 and 1974. Rudy specialized in component parts for musical instruments, and eventually became the principal supplier of parts for the Fender Guitar, Rogers Drums and Ernie Ball Strings companies. His wife served as bookkeeper for the company in its earlier years, and continued to operate the business for a year after Rudy's death. She sold the business in 1984 but retained the buildings, which she continues to own and manage.

Rudy was a member of the Fullerton Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, and sponsored Pony and Little League baseball teams. He was especially active in the Crescenta Valley Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and was lead singer of its Chorus. He was a private aircraft pilot, attaining a Commercial rating, and owned several aircraft, one of which he flew round trip to the east coast. He died in Santa Ana, Cal., of lung cancer on 5 August 1982, and was buried in Riverside (Cal.) National Cemetery. (2)

Rudy Raser was married in 1955 to **JACQUELINE ALICE** ("Jackie") **MEANY**. She was the daughter of John Joseph Meany and Alice Card Sarles. Her father was a corporal in the US Marines in World War I,

*Our Raser Family*

and her mother was a Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps in World War II. During the war Jackie began taking swimming lessons in the officer's pool at the Pasadena Area Station Hospital, eventually becoming a high school medal and awards winner. On her 16th birthday she was awarded an Outstanding Swimmer Trophy, out of twelve competing schools.

In 1963 the Rasers resided in Prescott, Arizona; in 1965 and for some years afterwards in Placentia, Cal. In 1974 they built a beautiful house at 12267 Alta Panorama, in the Orange Hills overlooking Santa Ana (3), where Jackie continued to live until 1988. Since then she has resided in nearby North Tustin, Cal.

Children (RASER):

1. Nancy Lynn, m. Dawson Harris (4).
2. Teresa, m. Douglas S. Crowell (5).
3. Stephanie, m. Anthony Victor Gheza (6).



*The Matthias Raser Branch*

**Children of  
Thomas Matthias Raser (M-12) (abt. 1818–1890)  
mrd. abt. 1841 Elizabeth Ross Agen (abt. 1826–1874)**



(P-115)

Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16)  
(1844–1906)



(P-116)

Mary Rose Fullaway, wife  
of Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-16)



(P-117)

Mary Elizabeth Raser (M-12-5)  
(1850–1904)



(P-118)

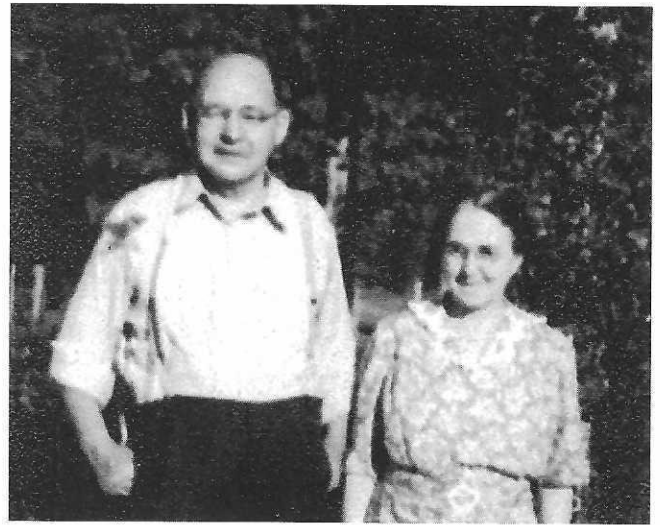
John Garrison Raser (M-17)  
(1854–abt. 1915)

**Children of  
Thomas Jefferson (M-16) (1844–1906)  
mrd. abt. 1874 Mary Rose Fullaway (1852–1935)**



(P-119)

Young  
Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-23)  
(1879–1953)



(P-120)

Thomas Jefferson Raser (M-23)  
and wife Jane Lynn  
(abt. 1883–1941)



(P-121)

Jane (Lynn) Raser and son  
Thomas Jefferson Raser, Jr. (M-30)

*The Matthias Raser Branch*

**Children of  
Thomas Jefferson Raser and Mary Rose Fullaway**



(P-122)



(P-123)

Mary Rose Raser, R.N. (M-24)  
(1880-1962)



(P-124)

Lincoln Raser (M-25)  
(1882-1930)



(P-125)

Earl Raser (M-27)  
(1896-1957)