

The author of this article lives and works on unceded territory of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other Tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River.

Homesteaders: Evander Howe

Jan de Leeuw

Version 02-16-2020

Life	2
Death	3
Family	7
References	9

Life

In the 1860s Evander Howe came from Vermont to Oregon. He does not appear even once in any of the Oregon newspapers from the time period. Eugene E. Snyder (1989, p. 114) says

No record tells us what sort of man Evander Howe was, nor how he occupied his time in Oregon.

As I began this research it was unclear when and where he was born and how old he was when he died. There is not much information, but there is a bit more than nothing.

Snyder mentions he has no idea what Howe tried or did during his final years, or if he was even in Portland. But I found him in the 1880 census. He was enumerated on July 14, a 45 year old farmer living in the Willamette Precinct. The name was transcribed as Evanden, but the census form is pretty clear. His neighbor on the form is the 52 year old farmer John Hott (sic). That should actually be John Hotts. Both of them were single. Evander apparently lived alone, Hotts had a hired hand living at the same address. Another neighbor on the same census form is Davis Ulery (sic), a 49 year old farmer, with a large family. That should actually be David Ulery.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UG_QRBABD8gPf79ShC7yWP__qr3oubIK/view

Death

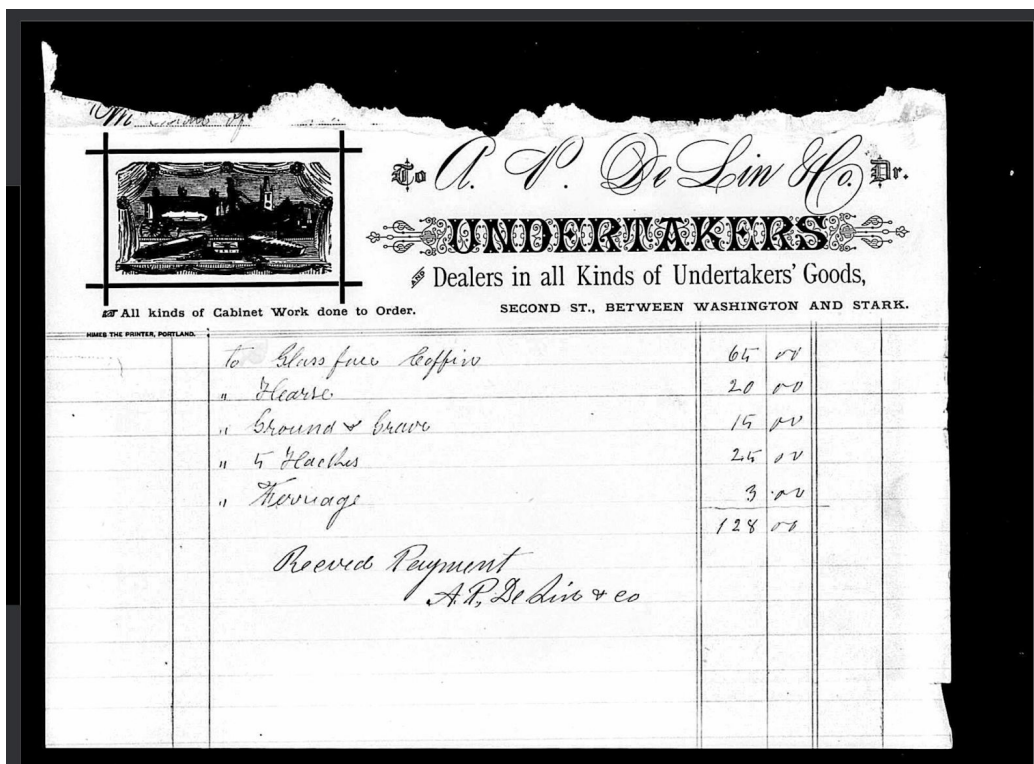
Snyder tells us Evander Howe died in 1882. Initially, I was not able to find the precise date of death, or the location of the grave. But there is much useful information, as is often the case, in the probate file (Case number 858, Multnomah Court Records, 56 pages).

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xs6X_Qrkn7oQ42qUxIBs0PgluGlfWPIM

As I have remarked elsewhere, probate files and cemetery records often make it easier to find out facts about a person's death than about their life. This is partly because they arrived from different places, but they all died in Portland. Also, their birth and childhood often were lived in areas that were not yet incorporated and did not have state, county, or city administrative offices. And thirdly, there is just more bureaucratic and journalistic activity around estates and deaths than around births or marriages, partly because often the heirs tend to get into elaborate fights amongst themselves. This is, of course, especially true for large estates, because greed needs a substrate to grow on.

So what did I learn from the probate file ? Evander Howe died intestate on June 24, 1882. Thus the court had to appoint an administrator to oversee the appraisal and distribution of the estate. In order to get the job potential administrators petition the court for an appointment, usually pointing out why they were especially suited for the position. In Howe's case there were two petitioners. The first was R. G. Rex M.D. who was "one of the principal creditors of said deceased". Also Dr. Rex had some pertinent information. In his petition he gave the precise description of Evander's real estate, and its estimated value of \$ 8,000, and he knew of the existence of " a brother names Estey Howe residing at or near Brattleboro in Windham County in the State of Vermont." Nevertheless Dr. Rex lost out to Edward Holman, the funeral and cremation provider, who ran "the second oldest business in Portland", since 1854. The business still exists. See their website at <https://www.holmansfuneralservice.com>. There was a great deal of money in funerals, it seems, and Holman became a capitalist, and a very prominent citizen of Portland. Note that soon after he would actually own a half interest in Evander's land. I don't think Dr. Rex stood a chance, even though he knew the deceased and Holman did not.

In his petition Holman mentioned that Evander Howe had no family in Oregon, or anywhere else, as far as he knew. But he did mention he was the principal creditor of the estate. The firm of A.P. De Lin & Co, of which he was a member, was owned \$ 128.00 for funeral services. The bill in question is below. It does not say where the grave was, and I still do not know where A.P. De Lin & Co. generally disposed of the bodies.



Being an administrator required one to agree to a financial penalty if the court found the duties of the administrator were not carried out or the powers of the administrator were not misused. In the Evander Howe case Holman had to agree to a penal sum of \$ 12,000. He used two sureties, Levi Anderson and councilman Sylvester Farrell, each for \$ 6,000. Note again that soon after Sylvester Farrell would own a half interest in Evander's land.

The appraisers were D.W. Wakefield, L.L. Parrish, and T.J. Mattock. They concluded, probably without actually looking at anything, on August 11, 1882 that there was \$ 200.00 of cash and \$ 8,500.00 of real property (the northern half of the southwest quarter of section 15). In his final report, of August 24, 1882, Holman adds \$ 12.45 from the sale of potatoes (which were a common part of agricultural estates) and \$ 28.62 from the sale of an old stove and some other personal property. He paid some outstanding bills and charged additional costs to the estate, including a \$ 150.00 appraiser fee for himself and a \$ 100.00 fee for his lawyer. Here is the list. Clearly Evander Howe lived a minimalist and environmentally responsible life on his piece of the Vancouver Road.

Coupon 1	Funeral expenses	\$128.
2	Sister St Vincent's Hospital	30
3	Nurse (John Gates)	25
4	Dr. Rex Medical services	10.
		<u>193</u>
There have been paid out the following sums as expenses in the settlement of said estate:		
	Appraisers	7.50
	Ferries	1.25
7	State & County taxes	7.25
8	Car of crops and place and digging potatoes	41.60
9	4 or potato sacks	3.75
10	Express hire hauling property	5.00
11	Killian Mulvaney, Attorney	100.00
12	Originals prob notice	4.70
13	Administrators fees	150.00
14	clerk's fees	6.35
15	ap & Lin carriage hire	20
	Total amount received from sale of personal property & cash	539.40
		<u>301.07</u>
	Total paid out	539.40

What follows in the probate file are copies of the bills, and various notices from the creditors that the bills were duly paid. More interesting for our purposes is a later note, notarized on March 22, 1883, and written by Edward Holman's attorney to Judge Stearns. It shows that George Woodward, perhaps taking a hint from the petition of Dr. Rex, had found the family. Edward Holman, Sylvester Farrell, and W. K. Smith were waiting in the wings to start buying and selling the land.

That Mr. Geo. Woodward having received dues from certain parties as being to the real estate of the deceased has paid to the Administrator the sum of \$250.00 which fully settles said estate.

That all the personal estate belonging to said estate has been disposed of; all bills presented and all expenses have been paid and said estate fully settled, except for paying for final notice and balance of debts for which will be about \$6.50

Wherefore said Administrator prays that said account may be approved and that he may be discharged.

Killian Thurman

Attorney for Administrator

State of Oregon ss
Multnomah County ss

I, Edward Holman being first sworn say I am the administrator named and that the foregoing report is true and I truly believe
Edward Holman

Family

We have seen earlier that Evander's family lived in Vermont. In the 1850 *Federal Census* I found Joseph Gilman Howe, a farmer, born 1809, married to Priscilla Howe (née Spalding) and living in Jamaica, Windham County, Vermont. They have five children living at home: Evander, age 15, Hannibal, age 12, Louisa, age 10, Lovina, age 7, and Sarah, age 4. Thus Evander was the oldest son. The *Vermont Vital Records* show his birth date was March 12, 1834. It also shows the middle initial T. which disappeared over time.

BIRTH-MALE

Name of Child	Family Record of Joseph G. Howe & Priscilla Howe		
Color		No. of Child of Mother	
Date of Birth	Evander T. Howe	Born	March 12 th 1834
Maiden Name of Mother	Hannibal F. Howe	Born	May 13 th 1836
Mother's Birthplace	Edward D. Howe	Born	Oct 20 th 1838
Mother's Residence	Louisa E. Howe	Born	June 14 th 1840
Full Name of Father	Lovina A. Howe	Born	Sept 16 th 1843
Father's Birthplace	Sarah L. Howe	Born	April 9 th 1846
Father's Occupation	Ezra W. Howe	Born	July 31 st 1852
Condition of Child as to Live or Still Birth	Daughter of Loring & Sarah L. Yamer		
If Still Birth the Cause	Hattie H. Yamer	Born	Nov. 24 th 1868
Name of Informant	Rec'd for record Dec 16 th 1868 & Recorded By me		
Town	Jamaica	By me	Luke Howard

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B94Urj3OjM7BeldUckFKSUx0blk/view>

Evander's profession at 15 was listed by the census as farmer, like his dad. In the 1860 census Evander (transcribed as Elander) was 24, still living at home, a laborer. There is now also an eight year old brother Ezra Olander Howe.

I also found a record in the *Minnesota Territorial Census* of September 21, 1857, showing an Evander Howe, age 23, born in Vermont in 1834, living in Township 109 in the County of Nicollet. He was a laborer on the farm of Luke Rist, who was also from Vermont. And in the *Minnesota Homestead and Cash Entry Patents* Evander Howe bought 27.62 acres of land in Blue Earth, Nicollet County, on October 1, 1860. The land office that handled the sale was in St Peter, another town in Nicollet County. Even more impressively, on December 3, 1860, Sarah Knecht, formerly the widow of Henry Stone, who was a private in Captain Wilson's Company of

the Pennsylvania Militia in the War of 1812, used the Military Bounty Act of 1855 to claim 120 acres of land in Nicollet County. She then assigned the warrant to H.W. Lamberton, who subsequently passed it on to Evander Howe. So clearly around this time Evander was moving west and had acquired some property on the way. I have copies of both patent deeds, but since they are a bit far from our bed, and transcribing them is boring, I will just give the URLs in the references. I have no idea what Evander did between 1860 and 1870.

In the 1880 census Joseph G. Howe is a widower, who lives with his daughter-in-law Maria and two grandchildren, still in Jamaica, Vermont. There is no sign of Hannibal, Maria's husband. It is mentioned in the census that Joseph is sick of old age. He died 1882, 74 years old, in the same year as his oldest son Evander. The *Vermont Probate Records* of 1882 show that the administrator of his estate asks permission of the probate court to sell all real estate belonging to the deceased to satisfy his debtors. There is a debt of \$ 698.77 and a personal estate of only \$ 8.50. The 8000 dollars that Geo. Woodward paid to Evander Howe's siblings came too late to help Joseph Howe.

PETITION TO SELL REAL ESTATE TO PAY DEBTS.

To the Honorable Probate Court for the District of Westminster

Your Petitioner, *Oscar R. Garfield*, Administrator
of the Estate of *Joseph G. Howe*
late of *Jamaica* in said district, deceased, respectfully represents that:

The amount of debts due from said deceased is	\$ 698.77
The charges of administration, estimated	\$ 50.00
	\$ 748.77
The value of the personal estate	\$ 8.50
Of which has been or may be assigned the widow	\$
	\$ 8.50
Balance of debts chargeable on the real estate of said deceased,	\$ 740.27

To raise which sum, he prays said Court to grant him license to sell *all* of the real estate of said deceased, as *the same* is necessary for the payment of said debts and charges of administration.

O R Garfield, Adminr

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B94Urj3OjM7BekM0bEtsUWxjXzg/view>

References

Eugene E. Snyder: *We Claimed This Land: Portland's Pioneer Settlers*, Binfort & Mort Publishing, Portland, Oregon, 1989

Land Office, Saint Peter, Minnesota, *Military Warrant of 12/3/1860 for 120 acres in favor of Sarah Knecht*.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1QZ0y2OJXy5cxz8sOOjw0Va6KYY8rtnbW>

Land Office, Saint Peter, Minnesota, *State Volume Patent of 10/1/1860 for 27.62 acres in favor of Evander Howe*.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1QetYocfLN9_erFqzhu5xll1h1dIJkq8f

Multnomah County Court, *Probate Case 858, Estate of Evander Howe*.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xs6X_Qrkn7oQ42qUxIBs0PgluGlfWPIM

Eugene E. Snyder: *We Claimed This Land: Portland's Pioneer Settlers*, Binfort & Mort Publishing, Portland, Oregon, 1989

General Land Office Records, *Copy of MN1220-00241, issued 10/01/1860*.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QetYocfLN9_erFqzhu5xll1h1dIJkq8f

General Land Office Records, *Copy of MW-0465-308, issued 12/03/1860*.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QZ0y2OJXy5cxz8sOOjw0Va6KYY8rtnbW>

General Land Office Records, *Copy of OROCAA 040709, issued 06/01/1870*.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B94Ujrj3OjM7Bd0RkakyTktEc2s>

Multnomah County Records, *Book I, Page 215, recorded 07/05/1870*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PiJcxtVmqaULLe7XHCWsoMWEEnVwgHo5>

Multnomah County Records, *Book I, Page 247, recorded 07/12/1870*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PyOtjEaGyvoSKLLvfJP47aOp6nn6BtqY/view>

Multnomah County Records, *Book M, Page 56, recorded 11/05/1870*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Q1bc6cNj1x-ssB3AXnrFnUO2-VMFzShy/view>

Ancestry.com, *Vermont Vital Records, 1720-1908*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B94Ujrj3OjM7BeldUckFKSUx0blk/view>

Multnomah County Court, *Probate Case 858, Estate of Evander Howe*.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xs6X_Qrkn7oQ42qUxIBs0PgluGlfWPIM