



Early Groseclose Family Images

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Groseclose Family Reunion

Pipestem, West Virginia

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Introduction

As Groseclose Descendents in America, we as a family are bound today by a large and growing network of interrelated -- and sometimes intertwined -- ancestral charts and family trees, all emanating from Peter Sr. and Mary Magdalena, and their several children (Peter Jr. – Adam – Margaret – Elizabeth – Jacob – Barbara – Henry).

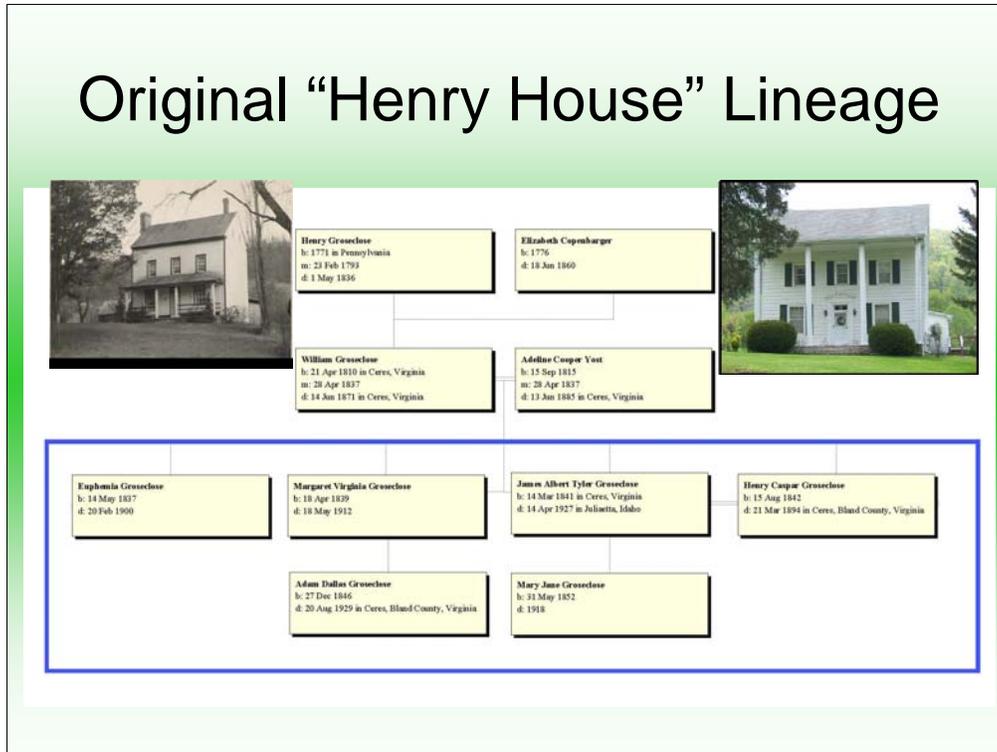
No where is this made more clear than Clark Groseclose's voluminous (and wonderful!) "Green Book" – that, with updates since its publication in 1999, would be expanded to an even larger tome. However, in its present form, the Green Book is such a rich resource of family history, information, and lore, justly celebrated and treasured by us all.

For me, Groseclose family history is particularly enriched by elements other than the detailed ancestral charts handed down through the decades, such as early family documents and correspondence -- and especially early family images. Early portraits and photos of Groseclose family members date from the mid-1800s to roughly the mid-1900s -- some 100 years, paralleling the birth and early history of photography.

We all are fascinated by portraits, tintypes and other early images of the life and times of our Groseclose forbearers. What I want to emphasize today, however, is that discovering, documenting and cataloging, and sharing early family photos can contribute in important ways to strengthening our bonds along -- and across -- the many branches of the Groseclose family tree.

Let me provide a few examples from my own experience, illustrated through discussion of some early Groseclose family photos mostly drawn from the Henry line of the Groseclose Family.

Original “Henry House” Lineage



Have a look here at an abbreviated family chart of the first inhabitants of the Henry House.

The chart begins, of course, with the newly weds Henry and Elizabeth Groseclose, for whom the house was built by Peter Sr.

Henry and his bride were fruitful, and raised a number of children in the house. Among the offspring of Henry and Elizabeth was William Henry Groseclose – Dr. William, as he became known widely in not only the immediate area of the Groseclose homestead on the North Branch of the Holston River (modern-day Ceres, VA), but also the entire area of Bland County, where he served as the Chief Magistrate from the time of the county’s inception during the Civil War.

In the Henry House, Dr William and his wife Adeline raised a family of six children -- three sons and three daughters:

Euphemia – Margaret Virginia – James Albert Tyler – Henry Caspar – Adam Dallas – Mary Jane

Dr. William & Adeline Groseclose



William H. Groseclose
1810-1871

Adeline Cooper Yost Groseclose
1815-1885

These portraits of Dr. William and his wife, Adeline Cooper Yost Groseclose, appear in the Green Book. Although they bear no date, they surely date to as early as the 1860s.

Consider how remarkable these portraits are. Indeed, we are presented here with an image of one of Peter Sr's grandchildren (beard and all)!

Do other Groseclose family portraits date to the 1860s? Also, how many early portraits of Groseclose descendants so closely related to Peter Sr. survive today?

Do you suppose we see in the visage of Dr William any likeness to Peter Sr or to Dr William's father Henry?

And finally, notwithstanding the hard times they surely endured during the Civil War and the aftermath of that strife, do you suppose these Groseclose ancestors of ours ever smiled occasionally (if only for the benefit of their grandchildren!)?

Civil War Soldier Gets His Name Back

(*Washington Post*, March 2012)



David M. Thatcher, 1st VA Cavalry, Co B
Martinsburg, WV
(Enlisted 1861 at age 17, died 1863 at age 19)

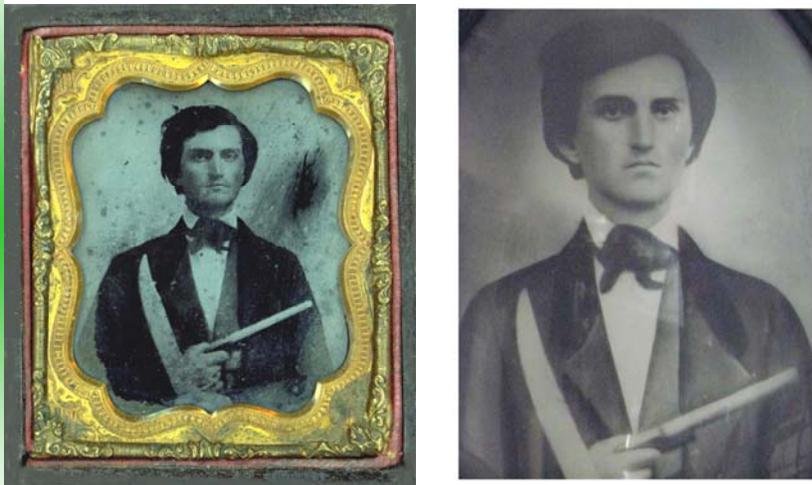
The Civil War was certainly a high time for the new medium of photography. Young soldiers going off to bravely face the horrors of that war widely sat for tintype portraits taken by roving photographers at encampments on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line.

Here is a tintype of a Virginia cavalryman who was killed in action at the tender age of 19. But the identity of the soldier in the tintype was only learned in the last year when a family member recognized the tintype image as the basis for the crayon portrait on the right – a cherished portrait of a fallen ancestor handed down in her family.

How the original tintype became lost to the young man's family is uncertain. Perhaps the tintype and the soldier's identity was forgotten in the family of a "widowed" sweetheart.

An interesting true story. But this story has a parallel in my own experience with Groseclose family history...

James Albert Tyler (JAT) Groseclose



James Albert Tyler (JAT) Groseclose
51st VA Infantry, Co F

I grew up with the tintype image here of my great grandfather, JAT Groseclose. Sadly, it was not always given a great deal of respect. It simply lay in a drawer filled with many miscellaneous household items during most of my childhood growing up in Everett, Washington. However, it was always there for me to look at and handle whenever I wished. It was not until I was about 12 years old that I encountered the second image here – a large charcoal portrait obviously drawn on the basis of the original tintype. (Special thanks to a young cousin in Juliaetta, Idaho, Alec Hensen, for kindly taking the photo of JAT's charcoal portrait.)

The tintype belonged to my grandmother, Bessie Mae Groseclose Shrewsberry -- JAT's only daughter. Sadly, she died in 1920 (at age 39 or 40), and at some distance from her family in Juliaetta, Idaho, where JAT and his family emigrated in 1902 from Ceres, VA.

I instantly recognized JAT's charcoal portrait when I visited Juliaetta for the first time, and stayed in the very home that JAT and his wife Eliza Jane passed their last years. And today, the portrait still hangs in a Groseclose home in Juliaetta. However, until recently, my relatives in Idaho had no knowledge the tintype existed.

I like to believe reuniting these two early images of JAT brings his descendents in the Pacific Northwest, living mainly in Idaho but also in Washington State and Oregon, all somewhat closer.

Groseclose Brothers in Arms



Lt. JAT Groseclose
51st VA Infantry, Co F
(1841-1927)

Capt. HC Groseclose
36th VA Infantry, Co G
(1843-1894)

Pvt. AD Groseclose
51st VA Infantry, Co F
(1846-1929)

During the Civil War, JAT and his two brothers served in the Virginia Infantry, side by side with many of their friends and acquaintances in the hillsides and valleys surrounding the Groseclose homestead area.

JAT and brother Henry Casper were both elected officers. And, they were joined by their young brother, Adam Dallas, who was just 16 when he enlisted in the 51st VA Infantry.

All three brothers survived the war, after being captured together at the Battle of Opequon (Third Winchester), in September 1864. They also survived prison camps at Fort Delaware and Point Lookout, MD, where they were released by June 1865.

After the war, the three brothers returned to Ceres and become respected members of the local community.

Captain Henry is probably best known of the three, and he is credited with establishing a post office and naming the local community Ceres -- after the Roman goddess of agriculture and grain. He was a dry goods merchant, attorney, and, in the footsteps of Dr. William, a Bland County magistrate.

JAT's farm was located just across the road from the Henry House. And, as mentioned previously, JAT moved with his entire family to Idaho in 1902, where ample land was available for homesteading – an important consideration to a family with seven sons (and a very able daughter).

Adam Dallas was also a local farmer. With his family, he resided in the Henry House, raised livestock, and worked the fields surrounding the house.

JAT & Capt Henry in Later Years



JAT Groseclose
Juliaetta, Idaho
c. 1920



Henry Casper Groseclose
Lavinia Victoria Peery Groseclose
Ceres, VA, c. 1875

These are photos of JAT and Capt Henry in later life.

Notice JAT sports a beard shaped not entirely unlike Dr William's.

And, Capt Henry, with his wife Lavinia, presents the image of a successful businessman and attorney.

JAT & Family at Home in Ceres, c1902



This is a photo of JAT, his wife Eliza Jane (also a Groseclose!), and five of their eight children sitting outside their home in Ceres. It was given to me by Bonnie Groseclose Morgan, one of the daughters of the little boy sitting on the steps in the photo (Edward J. Groseclose).

To my mind, this is a “farewell” photo. It was undoubtedly taken not long before JAT and his family moved to Idaho in Spring 1902, selling their Ceres home and farm to Adam Dallas.

The three eldest sons of JAT and Eliza Jane are not in the photo. They had already departed for Idaho!

Coming of Age in Ceres: Bessie & Ed



Here are early photos of my grandmother Bessie and her youngest brother Ed – the boy sitting on the steps in the previous photo. The photo of Bessie as a toddler (c. 1883), was most likely taken at a portrait studio (Wytheville?) and is especially precious.

And notice the other two photos were taken by travelling photographers, who may have passed through Ceres occasionally.

The second photo of Bessie was probably taken when she was about 16 years old (c. 1896) – a sweet sixteen photo? Notice her collar pin – perhaps a special gift from her parents to mark her coming of age. The pin must have been very special to her. I found it (partially broken) among her items preserved by my grandfather, David P Shrewsberry.

Both about 20 years old, David and Bessie met on the train going to the Pacific Northwest with their respective (large) families, the Grosecloses bound for Central Idaho and the Shrewsburys of West Virginia bound for Western Washington. Afterwards, the David and Bessie corresponded for a number of years, and they finally married in the small community of Arrow Junction, near Juliaetta, Idaho, in 1914.

Capt Henry & Celebrated Son



Here is Captain Henry and his wife Lavinia again. They too raised a large family, but remained in Ceres.

Among their offspring was Henry C. Groseclose II, a VPI (Virginia Tech) faculty member and one of the founders of the Future Farmers of America.

The museum of the Ceres Alumni Association is also named in his honor.

What of Adam Dallas?



But what of the third brother, Adam Dallas?

Granddaughter Mae Heslep, whom we sadly lost during the past year, told me no good photos of her grandfather existed or survived, at least in her possession.

The photo here provides a glimpse of how the Henry House must have looked not long after Adam Dallas called it his home.

A Photo Recently Received, Fall 1902?



For a number of years, I have been keen to find a photo of Adam Dallas, notwithstanding Mae Heslep's belief none existed.

It finally occurred to me to post a notice in the newsletter of the Ceres Alumni Association. And I was recently rewarded!

Michelle and Patrick Groseclose of Ceres, through Michelle's father, Wade Hall (past president of the Ceres Alumni Association), sent me this photo found in the home of James Benton Groseclose, Patrick's grandfather.

The legend on the back of the photo identifies only three individuals, among them "Uncle Dallas Groseclose." Unfortunately, no date or other details are recorded on the photo.

I **want to believe** the photo was taken at the gathering of Civil War veterans held in Wytheville, VA, in October 1902. This is because I know, from correspondence between JAT and AD in my possession, Adam Dallas attended a veterans gathering in late-1902 or early-1903.

But, at this time, I cannot be certain. And, no one with whom I have consulted in Wytheville has been able to identify the building in the background of the photo or to provide photos of the October 1902 veterans gathering to support my theory about the photo.

Adam Dallas Groseclose?

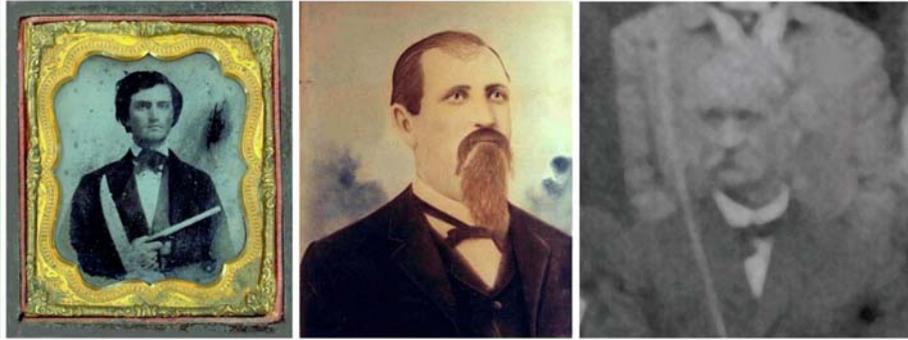


And here is the image of Adam Dallas Groseclose, according to the legend on the reverse side of the photo.

A distinguished looking man.

But, sadly we no longer have Mae Heslep with us to verify the image is indeed her grandfather.

Groseclose Brothers Reunited



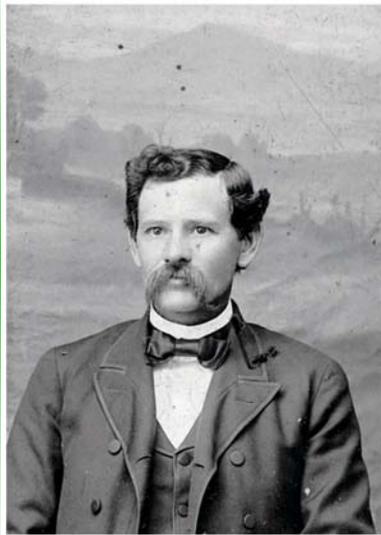
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So, tentatively, here are the three Groseclose brothers reunited, after many long years!

“Reverend Groseclose”



David Bittle Groseclose
(1855-1932)



Mary Jane Buck Groseclose
(1860-1928)

I have shown these two photos at previous Groseclose family reunions. Reverend Groseclose is David Bittle Groseclose, the brother of my great grandmother, Eliza Jane Groseclose, and JAT's brother-in-law. His wife was Mary Jane Buck Groseclose.

About 1900, David Bittle Groseclose was a chaplain at VPI (Virginia Tech). And, later he preached in South Carolina.

Among his descendents is Raymond Groseclose, also of South Carolina. Raymond and I were drawn together, via the internet, some years ago when we found David Bittle's photo on the VPI web site with no other description than "Reverend Groseclose." Raymond successfully verified the identity of his great grandfather for the university archivists, and today the photo on the VPI web site correctly identifies David Bittle Groseclose as an early chaplain of the University.

And just recently, I was able to share with Raymond a letter his great grandfather sent to my great grandmother on the death of JAT in 1927. The letter was found, and forwarded to me, by yet another Groseclose cousin in the Pacific Northwest.

What an interesting network of family connections and information has developed around these two photos (and the next two!), which mainly involve members of the Peter Jr. line of the Groseclose family, because Eliza Jane and her brother David Bittle were children of Joseph Groseclose, a grandson of Peter Jr.

Rev AL Groseclose Visits His Uncle, 1926



**Albert Lee Groseclose
(1875-1958)**



Rev. & Mrs. D.B. Groseclose & Son, Wife, and Child, and Rev. A.L. Groseclose
at Columbia, S.C. Lutheran Parsonage, Nov. 1926

**DB Groseclose & Family with AL
Groseclose, November 1926**

This is Rev Albert Lee Groseclose, one of the eldest sons of JAT and Eliza Jane Groseclose. He aspired to become a minister from an early age, possibly inspired by the example of his uncle, Rev David Bittle.

In 1926, Albert Groseclose visited Ceres to see his uncle, Adam Dallas, and, during the same trip to the East, he visited South Carolina to see his uncle, David Bittle.

The studio photo of AL Groseclose on the left was taken in Kansas City, MO, in 1927. The photo is part of a special collection of Missouri Valley clergy posted online by the Kansas City Library.

Dr William & Adeline's Daughters?



Euphemia, Margaret & Mary Jane Groseclose?

Here is a mystery tintype!

It was found in a sewing basket belonging to my mother, handed down to my cousin Susan Rodgers. There was no information accompanying the photo.

But ***I want to believe*** (again) it is a photo of Dr William and Adeline Groseclose's three daughters:

Euphemia – Margaret – Mary Jane Groseclose

The tintype might have been sent to my mother by Uncle Ed Groseclose (the boy on the steps!). And the three women in the vintage photo here look about the right age to be the three daughters of Dr William and Adeline.

A Family Resemblance?



Of course, I can't be sure!

But, if you will indulge me a bit further, I see a possible resemble of the woman seated in the photo on the left to my mother, Rhoda DeRosa, in the photo on the right (siblings Rhoda Shrewsbury DeRosa, Clyde Shrewsbury, and Cleo Shrewsbury Rodgers).

I know the married names of the three daughters (thanks to the Green Book!), and in time I hope to trace some descendents of the three daughters of Dr William and Adeline who might have information – or better, actual photos – to enable me to identify the three women in the tintype.

Mae Groseclose Heslep



Gone but not forgotten: Mae Groseclose Heslep (1913-2011), granddaughter of Adam Dallas Groseclose.

The photo at left is courtesy of Tim Burk's post on the Groseclose Family site on Facebook.

Lura Groseclose Butler



Lura Groseclose Butler (b. 1917), granddaughter of JAT Groseclose and eldest daughter of Ed Groseclose (that boy on the steps again!).

Like her father was before her, Lura is a font of information and stories about the Groseclose families of Idaho. Read about Ed Groseclose and some of his stories about the Groseclose families of Idaho at <http://www.deanscorner.net/TribuneFeb201983.pdf>.

So Much More to Tell & Learn



There is so much more still to tell – and learn – about Groseclose family history from early family images.

And, there are countless more recent photos to document and share about the lives and times of our more recent Groseclose family members.

The photo here is just one example: Eddy Groseclos (1926-1965) atop Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima in 1945, shortly after the famous WWII flag raising photo was taken by Joe Rosenthal during the Battle of Iwo Jima, the photo that inspired the Marine Corps War Memorial sculpture, located adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery just outside Washington, DC.



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Conclusion

My remarks today have been to give examples of early Groseclose family images that have strengthened my ties with Groseclose relatives who were little known to me just a short decade ago. I have also tried to relate how sharing images can facilitate research and documentation of Groseclose family history.

The Green Book has a number of fascinating early Groseclose family portraits and photos. And, for my part, I have collected and posted a number of early photos of the Groseclose families that migrated to Idaho on my web site, www.DeansCorner.net.

However, I wonder whether as a group we should aspire to develop a Groseclose Family Image Base? Not with the intention of cataloging every Groseclose descendent to modern times. Rather, the objective would be to preserve and share more widely important early Groseclose family images through, say, 1920 or 1930. This might be done centrally. But more realistic and practical would be simply for each Groseclose family interested and able to do so, to gather and post prized early photos in their collections online. Then, a central location on the web (possibly Facebook) might be established to provide web links to the various internet collections of early Groseclose family photos.

In my view, this would facilitate and possibly inspire greater research and communications between family members, and contribute to further preserving the history of the Groseclose Family in America.