

Whispers Of The Past

Another pioneer who came from New York to Helena and then to the Townsend area is Albert Blake. Albert married Elizabeth (Lizzy) O'Leary in Helena, and they moved south to Winston, where he ran the Blake ferry after a stint in mining and then stock raising in the Canton valley. That's what the obituary says anyway. They had 3 daughters and 3 sons. Lizzy died at the age of 43 in 1909, but Albert died at 80 in 1934.

But wait! This seems pretty straightforward, right? I have to say, the Albert Harry Blake family led me on a merry chase of who is related to whom, and I had to take a break from it because my head kept spinning. Albert is fine. Elizabeth, or Lizzy, had me chasing my tail for a bit, and that is because she was married twice. At first, I thought he had been married twice. Nope, she was married to James McKenna. They had two children, Minnie (Lynch) and Leslie H., and then I don't know what happened or where. In 1894, she married Albert. Whew. Then they had four children, John, Barbara (Doggett), Grace (Waddell), and Frederick.

As far as I can tell, Albert and Lizzy are the only family buried at Centerville. Others are scattered in Deep Creek, Holy Cross, or outside Montana, primarily in Washington. You may recognize the women's local names or know family members from this Blake lineage.



I noticed Lizzy has a nicer headstone than Albert, but at least they are together. I haven't cleaned Albert's yet, but he deserves it to look better. I'm on it. Soon.

Notes from the cemetery in general: it looked really nice over Memorial Day. The county crew did a great job. Benny and Joon, my personal resident ospreys, have done a better job with the nest, but I can't decide if they are sitting on any eggs. If you go out there, they will chirp at you.

I need to postpone the headstone cleaning workshop from June to I don't know when. Recovery from knee replacement surgery takes longer than I want it to, so my own efforts at work out there have been slow, especially the getting up and down off the ground part. No one wants to see that in person.