

Biography of Arthur Howard Smith

With Notes on Other Interesting Characters Found Along the Way

C. O. Brantigan

Arthur Smith was born the illegitimate son of John Sadler and Celia Clark on 19 April 1896. On 13 March 1905, while Arthur was 11 years old, his mother married Ben Smith. The ceremony was conducted by Silas Lee, founder of the Nicodemus First Baptist Church and one of the leaders of the community. She died later that year. After his wife's death, Ben "lived around" eventually marrying Mamie Mitchell who was a widow with two children. Arthur was raised by his grandmother, Rosa Clark, and never considered the Mitchell girls to be his sisters. Ben Smith died in about 1970 [doesn't sound right] and is probably buried in Oakley, Kansas.

Life in Nicodemus in the early days was difficult¹. The "Exodusters" had arrived there in the late 1870's ill prepared for the rigors of the great plains in the cold of winter. They arrived with no money, no supplies and no means of transportation. They usually had to walk the last 100 miles from the railhead at Ellis, Kansas. Initial homes were dugouts and soddies due to lack of any building materials. Men walked to Logan and Ellis for supplies and carried sacks of grain on their backs to Stockton and then walked back with the milled flour. Those pioneers like the Sadlers who were fortunate enough to have horses and wagons would drive east during difficult seasons asking more prosperous communities for donations of food and supplies for the Nicodemus settlers. Education of the children was a similar struggle². These settlers had effective leadership and a vision which included education. The Clarks and Sadlers raised willing teachers, like Lula Craig and her daughter Hattie Burney, but there were few books, no blackboards and few slates. There were no formal educational programs to train teachers. Lula taught school for 52 years starting in 1906. After completing the eighth grade, Mrs. Burney took the teacher's examination and started to teach in the Fairview district. She later obtained a high school diploma in Colorado after she married. Informal living arrangements were common, and "all of those begats," in the words of Ora Switzer, unofficial town historian, led to interconnections between many of the families. It was against this background that Arthur Smith spent his childhood. (The attached genealogy table is invaluable in defining who is who in this story).

Arthur was known as a "pretty uppity" fellow. According to Nicodemus historian, Ora Switzer, he did all the things boys did at that time. "He played ball around here with the boys,...helped the farmers with the farms

1. See Schwendemann.

2. See Hattie Burney's reminiscences.

and.....shucked corn and did all--they wasn't like these city boys--now just give them some crack or pot and they go and sell it. See, they had to work, they milked cows and cleaned."

While Arthur was a teenager, his grandmother worked as a maid in a hotel in Logan, Kansas. Arthur worked in the same hotel washing dishes. He finished the second year of high school in Logan and then was "kicked out" for unknown reasons. He then returned to his grandfather's farm and herded cattle.

Arthur served in the army in World War I collecting the dead. He was employed as a cook when he was drafted at Hill City Kansas. When inducted August 31, 1918, he was 5'5 1/2" tall He was accepted at Camp Funston, Kansas on September 2, 1918³. After 3 months at Camp Funston (now Ft Riley), he served almost a year in France gathering the dead. "Of course, you was just as bad off as if you had been fightin'. The only thing of it was, your gun was a detriment to you because you had to keep that gun [in addition to gathering the dead]; better not loose that gun or you was it." On return to the US he was stationed in Norfolk and was then discharged from the army in Detroit. Since he didn't have a job, he returned to his uncle's farm.

He left Kansas in 1922 and went to Manzanola, Colorado to join Aunt Lou, Harvey, Clyde and Johnny Clark and Theopilus who homesteaded there in 1915. (Merido says it was in 1905 and that Theopilus came in 1918 or 1920).⁴ He never owned any land there because it was all taken by then. He lived at Harvey's place and was cook for the group. Sometime after he left the army he met a black girl from Oklahoma and was engaged. She died just before the wedding and he went there to bury her. When he returned to Manzanola he worked for a time in the railroad shops.

He hoboed to Denver in 1925 and spent most of his time looking for a job. Initially he did odd jobs for the Gebhards and others and washed dishes.

The Denver Directory listed him as a soda dispenser in 1926 living at 1808 25th Ave with his cousin Matt. In 1926 and 1927 he was a porter for Liggetts Drug Store living at 2405 Gilpin and 2205 Marion. In 1926 or 1927 he was operated on at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital for hemorrhoids and a lump in his side related to an ulcer.

How Arthur met his wife, Grace is one of the great unsolved mysteries to date. There has to be a story here. Arthur said that Theopilus Craig, cousin and peripatetic osteopathic physician, made the introductions in 1926, one year

3. Graham County Roll of Honor

4. The La Junta Times of 1905 spoke of a colored colony coming sponsored by Booker T Washington. I don't know whether this is related to the Craig's move.

after Arthur moved to Denver. Arthur and The were good buddies and they were often seen together. He said that Theopilus was with a white girl⁵ at the time who was one of Grace's friends. Mable Fryrear, Grace's sister, reported that Theopilus was working as a busboy at a hotel in Salida when he introduced Arthur to Grace, who at the time was working as a nurse in the Salida Railroad Hospital. According to the Denver Directory, Grace came to Denver in 1928 as the manager of the Ellen Apartments at 2428 Welton and lived in unit 15. Arthur was listed in the same year as the janitor of the Ellen Apartments and lived in unit 14, an arrangement that lasted until 1931. In that year Arthur, Grace, and Grace's husband, George Gresham were all listed at 2440 Welton. George was working for Morse Brothers Machinery and Supply Co. George and Grace were divorced in Salida in 1931.

Arthur said that he was married by Bishop Allen in 1936, and there is a Rev John Allen in the Denver Directory at about that time without a specified church affiliation⁶. (Note Rev Liggins, of Zion Baptist Church and longest practicing black minister in Denver in 1990 did not remember him). Second Cousin Rosie Neal insists that their marriage was common law⁷. When Grace died in 1985, Arthur had to get a legal statement that she was, in fact, his common law wife, so that she could be buried in the military cemetery in Fort Collins. According to Rosie Neal, Grace was lucky to find Arthur because her first husband was mean.

Arthur was working at Card Drug (?Tremont Drug in the Directory) at about 16th and Welton when the Gebhards put their mansion up for sale thru VanSchaak Realty. Arthur's job for Card was to deliver prescriptions for customers, pick up supplies from the wholesaler and to be a janitor for the store. He had a policy of never leaving the store until all of the prescriptions were delivered, and Card responded by paying him more than the usual wage. Card eventually sold out to Liggett Drug, and Smith continued to work for Card. Card vouched for Smith and Arthur bought the mansion for \$38,000? \$14000?, beating out a mortician, Mr. Granberry, who for some reason was unacceptable to the Gebhard girls and VanSchaak Realty.

Minnie, Margaret and Otto Gebhard conveyed a warranty deed to Arthur H Smith on 28 February 1938 for the property at 2253 Downing. On 14 March 1938 Arthur conveyed a trust deed to Reality Mortgage and Investments, Inc to secure a loan of \$2000 payable in five years at 6% with quarterly payments of principal. It appears that there was an additional loan from the same company for \$1700 secured by a similar deed on the same date. In March of 1943 the loan was extended by Mary JS Rowe, who apparently owned it. It was extended

5. I once thought it was Ruby Craig, but she was only 14 in 1936 when Arthur and Grace were married.

6. Allen, Rev John H., r. 3300Williams.

7. Affidavit Nettie Moncrief 10 November 1962 noting common law marriage since 10 July 1936

again in 1948, and then the title abstract runs out. This title abstract data seems unlikely because it does not explain where the rest of the money came from and does not match with the generous and flexible pay as you can schedule that Arthur attributes to the Gebhards. Other family members agree that he was paying the Gebhards, but think they took advantage of him. Perhaps there was some informal payment arrangement not reflected in the title documents. In any case, with Arthur working at the Federal Center and Grace taking in boarders, they managed to pay off the mortgage.

In 1937 Arthur went to work as a janitor for the Custom House right after it was built. He became a guard at the Custom House and then when transferred to the Air Force Finance Center he was a sergeant. He practiced extensively at the shooting range at the Federal Center and earned the rating of "Expert". He began to make his own ammunition and even to sell it to other guards and eventually the police. When he left Denver there was enough ammunition in the basement to shoot up all of Five Points.

After moving into the mansion, Grace never worked outside the home. She had her hands full tending the boarders from Rocky Mountain Osteopathic Hospital. She did not fix them meals. She liked to crochet and sew. After the hospital moved they still had no trouble finding boarders. (what year?). Renters included Ed Goodwin, a truck driver, and the Shrewsburys.

Arthur and Grace got along well for the most part, but their occasional fights were legendary in the neighborhood. One episode, recounted by many sources describes Arthur chasing Grace around the house with a pistol⁸. On another occasion Grace is said to have leaned out the first floor window and shot the tires out of Arthur's car with her nickel plated revolver to keep him from driving drunk. Chuck Herrle has the nickel plated revolver to this day⁹. Eventually they also did remarkably well with Grace's family in Buena Vista. The family thought at first that Grace was working for Smith running his boarding house. It was some time before they found out that she was using his last name. Mother Minnie Bertschy was furious when she found out. Although the family did not take kindly to this at first, relations worked out so well that Arthur went on fishing trips with the Bertschy's in the Arkansas Valley several times a year. During the last few years of her life, Minnie wintered in Denver to the extent that the small room at the top of the stairs became known as Grandmother's room.

Arthur loved children, although he never had any of his own. The highlight of his day was to visit with the children behind the fence at the Boettcher School when he returned from work at the Federal Center. When he died he left a considerable sum to Children's Hospital. The Smiths raised Grace's grandson,

8. Pam Schriver, personal communication 26 April 89.

9. Chas Herrle, personal communication.

Charles Herrle. Grace's daughter Juanita married Charles Herrle, Jr., an insurance agent from Buena Vista on 7 September 1933 before a Justice of the Peace, Max Dickman, in Salida. Shortly thereafter they moved to Brooklyn where their son was born. The marriage was short lived, and Juanita moved to Denver a couple of years later with her mother in the Mansion. They returned west because great grandfather was dying and never returned east. Juanita worked as a waitress and cook at Kresses and ***Meisners [a patient reports that this was Neisner's dime store]*** dime stores on 16th and Curtis (they were on opposite corners). She began to date soldiers at Lowery Field. She eventually married Perry Rogers, moved to Kansas and had two more children, Louise and Roger. Chuck lived only briefly with his mother for 1 1/2 years in the second grade and again in the 8th grade. He spent the rest of his childhood with Arthur and Grace. According to his description, the many problems of being a white child in an all black neighborhood and an all black school built character.

Arthur was a multitalented individual involved in wide-ranging activities. For a while he collected spent photographic solutions for Sam South who lived at 477 S Cherokee Street. It was a messy smelly process. Smith learned from him, learned more on his own and from Shrewsbury and mixed lye and sulfur together to form a concoction which precipitated the silver without the smell. He got ten gallons of liquid from St Luke's Hospital every couple of weeks and also collected from Sunshine Photo and St Anthony's Hospital.

He had a true appreciation for his mansion and provided essentially all of the maintenance himself. Without any formal training in history or architecture, or even a high school education he managed to preserve the historic fabric. The city made him tear down the carriage house for reasons that he doesn't remember and remain unknown. When the front porch rotted, he replaced it with brick, preserving the style. Changes in the heating system, electricity and plumbing were all done sensitively. He built the garage but apologizes for the bricklaying, noting that he was getting old (in his 80's) and his helper wasn't very good. All of this work was done from his complete workshop/chemistry lab in the basement. There was enough sodium cyanide left from precious metal extraction to poison whatever remained of the neighborhood after all of the ammunition was expended.

Most of all, Arthur Smith was a packrat. Trips to Kansas were always made alone in his 1952 Hudson Hornet, and he always returned with it full. He returned from Theopilus' funeral with a collection of his medical tools. He collected tools, building parts, medical instruments, iron pipe, hospital beds, rocking chairs, electric motors and all manner of "stuff" which might be useful in the future. On one occasion he was picked up by a trash truck emptying the dumpster in which he was seeking some treasure. When he moved to Gary, Indiana in about 1985 many people got to pick thru his collection, but the cylinder head for the Hudson remained in the basement when the Brantigan

arrived, long after the car was sold some twenty years later for almost as much as he paid for it.

The infirmities of age gradually caught up to Arthur and Grace Smith. In 1979, when Arthur was hospitalized for a seizure disorder and for a pacemaker insertion, the doctors did not believe he would last the year. As it turned out, he lasted a decade longer. When Grace died in 1984 there were no longer any boarders and no reason to remain in the large house, which was beginning to show signs of deferred maintenance. Arthur moved to Gary, Indiana to live with his half sisters, Florence Sadler and Rose Sadler Brown. Gary was not a hospitable place for Arthur. The climate was disagreeable, medical care poor, and attempts to sell the house from afar were unsuccessful. In spite of attempts by Bernard Brown, real estate agents, and the San Rafael Neighborhood Association, the house and grounds deteriorated during the three years it was vacant. Finally, in 1987 he came to Denver to sell his house to the doctor who had implanted his pacemaker almost a decade before. This was accomplished after his congestive heart failure and angina were brought under control with simple medications. Arthur was pleased to have the building in the hands of someone who cared for it. The transition was not smooth, however, as relatives stripped valuable parts of his collection from the basement just before closing, and someone who tried to take more of it on the night of closing was met at the door by the Brantigan' adopted 6' 9" black son and the Brantigan's 80 pound black dog (the one with such a pleasant voice).

Arthur Smith was rescued from Gary, Indiana by Rosie Neal, who took him to Temple, Texas. When he moved to Texas his dining room table and sideboard, which may have belonged to the Gebhards originally, were auctioned as was a large box of medical tools which he obtained when Theophilus died. He prospered during the last years of his life, with his cousin, Rosie Neal, until he fractured his hip and died of complications on July 13, 1991. He visited his mansion twice after he sold it and tears of joy came to his eyes when he saw the restoration that he would like to have completed himself. He also used the opportunity to retrieve his Stradivarius violin¹⁰, given him by the Shrewsburys, which Rosie Neal has subsequently played in church.

Barbara Grace Bertschy was born in Buena Vista in 1891 to a pioneering Arkansas Valley family. Grandmother Chase had come to the Arkansas valley in the 1860's. Describing her life in 1889, she said, "I have lived much of my life in tents or dugouts, living high up in the mining areas in summer and down in the valleys in the winter. I have been for twenty months at a time in Indian camps, never seeing the face of another white woman during the time. I have lived among miners, U.S. soldiers, and Indians until of late I seem out of

10 . This violin is probably valuable, although it is certainly not a genuine Stradivarius. Best impressions among violinists who saw it was that it was one of the many copies produced in the late 19th century.

my element... We have settled down to ranching and stock raising for the last three years.¹¹" Grandfather Bertschy had also come in the 1860's and homesteaded in Centerville, becoming a constable during the Lake County Wars

The family was involved in mining and had a claim in "Bertschy Gulch," several miles north of Buena Vista. This was a gold and silver mine that was worked for many years by many members of the family. In later years the family was also involved in feldspar mining at Kings Crossing. As with many miners, the family supplemented its income and food supplies by farming. They participated in the annual ice harvest¹². Grace is described by relatives as a girl who did not necessarily follow conventions, tending to ride horses and shoot guns at a time when that was not what young ladies did. If she graduated from high school, it was not in Salida. George Gresham (born in 1884 according to the 1910 census) worked in the mines with the Bertschy boys and thus met Grace. They were married in 1913. At that time the whole family was living in St Elmo where he worked in the Fourteen Mine and the old Murphy Mine¹³. They subsequently moved to Salida where she worked in the Railroad Hospital as a nurse and he was the "Village Blacksmith." with his shop at 133 W Second and home at 408 Dodge. Events leading to their divorce are uncertain, but it took place in Salida in 1931.¹⁴

What happened to George thereafter is uncertain as well. By some accounts, George developed terrible asthma and eventually moved to Moab, Utah and then to Truth or Consequences, New Mexico where he married a Spanish girl and lived the rest of his life. By other accounts he moved to Georgia. There is a record of a property transfer in 1942 in Chaffee county involving a mining deed that was notarized in Sierra County, New Mexico and another selling land in Buena Vista where Greshams signature was notarized in Clark County, Nevada in 1944¹⁵. In any event he is not buried in Chaffee County, as all graves there are indexed. Circumstances surrounding their divorce are unknown.

Denver Directory entries for Arthur and Grace Smith:

1924	Smith, Arthur	No obvious listing
1925	Gresham, Grace B	No obvious listing

11. Nash, Claude W, Some Nashes of Virginia, p19.

12. Pam Schriver, personal communication 26 April 89.

13 The Mary Murphy was the most famous of the St Elmo mines and was extracting between 70-100 tons of silver and gold ore daily in 1881, according to Bamford and Tremblay. Gold was the byproduct. More than 250 men were employed at peak production. The mine was located on Chrysolite Mountain. There was also the Pat Murphy and the Lady Murphy, both different mines. Captions on pictures should answer the question.

14. In February 1998 I don't remember how I know that. Donna Nevens did not find a record of the divorce in the Chaffee County Clerk and Records Office.

15. Donna Nevens searched records of the Clerk and Recorder of Chaffee County in 1990. See document.

1925	Smith, Arthur	No obvious listing
1925	Smith, Arthur	No obvious listing
1926	Gresham, Grace B	No listing
1926	Smith A H	soda disp r 1808 25th ave
1926	Smith, Arthur	porter LK Liggett Drug Co r 2405 Gilpin
1927	Smith, Arthur	porter, Liggetts Drug Store r 2205 Marion
1928	Gresham, Grace	mgr Ellen Apts 15 2428 Welton
1928	Smith A H	janitor Ellen Apts 2428 Welton
1929	Gresham, Grace B Mrs.	h 15 2428 Welton
1929	Smith A H	same as 1928
1930	Gresham, Grace B Mrs.	h 2528 Welton
1930	Smith A H	janitor h 14 2428 Welton
1931	Gresham, Geo (Grace B)	wks Morse Bros Machy & Sup Co h 2440 Welton
1931	Smith A H	lab r 2440 Welton
1932	Gresham, Grace B Mrs.	h 2440 Welton
1933	Gresham, Grace B h	2440 Welton
1933	Smith A H	porter Tremont Drug Co r 2440 Welton
1934	Gresham, Grace B h	2440 Welton
1934	Smith A H	r 2440 Welton
1935	Gresham, Grace B h	2440 Welton
1935	Smith A H	same as 1934
1936	Gresham, Grace	(wid Geo) h 2440 Welton
1936	Smith A H	lab r 2440 Welton
1937	Gresham Grace B Mrs.	h 2440 Welton
1937	Smith A H	lab Custom House r 2440 Welton
1938	Gresham Grace B Mrs.	h 2440 Welton
1938	Smith A H	same as 1937
1939	Gresham, Grace	(wid Geo) h 2253 Downing
1939	Smith A H	lab Custom House h 2253 Downing
1940	Gresham, Grace	(wid Geo) r 2253 Downing
1940	Smith A H	lab Custom House h 2253 Downing
1941	Gresham, Grace B	(wid Geo) r 2253 Downing)
1941	Smith A H	same as 1940
1942	Gresham, Grace B Mrs.	h 2253 Downing
1942	Smith A H	same as 1941
1945	Gresham, Grace B	No listing
1945	Smith A H	guard h 2253 Downing
1947	Smith A H	guard r 2253 Downing
1948	Smith A H	guard USPBA h 2253 Downing
1950	Smith A H	guard USPBA h 2253 Downing
1951	Smith A H	(Barbara)guard h 2253 Downing
1953	Smith A H	
1954	Smith A H	(Grayce G)guard Denver Federal Center h 2253 Downing
1956	Smith A H	(Grace G)guard Federal Center h 2253 Downing
1957	Smith A H	(Grace) emp US Genl Serv Admn h 2253 Downing
1958	Smith A H	(Grace G)guard US Fed Center h 2253 Downing
1959	Smith A H	(Grace G)guard US Federal Center h 2253 Downing
1961	Smith A H	guard Federal Center h 2253 Downing
1962	Smith A H	guard Federal Center h 2253 Downing
1963	Smith A H	(Grace G)retd h 2253 Downing
1964	Smith A H	same as 1963
1965	Smith A H	(Grace G)retd h 2253 Downing
1967	Smith A H	(Grace G) retd h 2253 Downing
1968	Smith A H	same as 1967
1969	Smith A H	same as 1968

1971	Smith A H	same as 1969
1972	Smith A H	same as 1971
1973	Smith A H	same as 1972
1974	Smith A H	same as 1973
1976	Smith A H & Grace	retd h 2253 Downing
1977	Smith A H	same as 1976
1978	Smith A H	same as 1977
1979	Smith A H	same as 1978
1980	Smith A H	same as 1979
1982	Smith A H	same as 1980

Interesting Characters along the Way:

Ora Switzer (Nicodemus Vila, Apt 5, Route 2, Bogue, Kansas 67625) appears to be the resident historian of Nicodemus. She is an interesting anachronism, probably is 87 years of age. She is the driving force of what little is left of Nicodemus, Kansas and manages the annual homecoming and local historical projects. She seems to know practically everybody and has made it a point of understanding the history of the place. Her husband was not a very productive citizen, but she was devoted to him, driving long distances on a daily basis to visit him when he became so frail that he could not be cared for at home. Her recommendations for raising children are that the woman should pay her husband to stay home and be the baby sitter while she does the productive work. Her six children are college graduates. One son has been inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame, after an exciting professional football career. When he went to college she worked as a custodian at the Statehouse to help support him while he went to school on a football scholarship. She subsequently returned as a member of the Senior Legislature, a senior citizens advisory group which she served for 4 years after being elected. Ever since Mrs. Ruth Bangle, of the Graham County Historical Society, moved to Hill City, Kansas in 1937 Ora Switzer has been actively involved in the Graham County affairs. There was a great deal of racial discrimination at that time, but even that was not a significant impediment to Ora's involvement. She has always been a respected member of the community. She lives in a retirement villa in Nicodemus. The retirement villa, a playground, a park, and the Community Hall built by the WPA is about all that is left of the town. Ruth Bangle says that there have been hundreds of thousands of dollars poured into that community by the Federal Government. You would certainly never it know it by looking at it now.

Joseph Shrewsbury was a metallurgist and analytical chemist with an interest in music. It appears that all of the orchestral music found in the Smith House belonged to him. Some of the music is wrapped in Denver newspaper from 1944. Some of his Chemical equipment is wrapped in Denver Newspaper from 1966. A previous address was box 1252 Ogden Utah. His wife's name was Mildred. Mr. Smith says he was a conductor of the Denver Symphony, a fact

that the symphony will not confirm. He also says that Shrewsbury lived with his wife in the north front room until his wife died, and then he moved to the basement. He is said to have committed suicide in DGH by hoarding his meds, as he told Smith of his plan ahead of time.

Miss Mary C Matthews of *America Forever* fame was probably also Mrs. Mary C. Timmons of 509 16th St. How she relates to the Smiths is not clear, but there was an interesting collection of photographs found in the house. The first reference to her that I can find is a mortgage conveyed from Barbara Grace Gresham to Mrs. Mary Timmons of Denver for 2 lots in Salida. *America Forever* in sheet music form was written by ET Paull and published by ET Paull Music Co, 243 W 42nd St NY copyright in 1917. On the sheet music Paull it is noted is the composer of the celebrated Ben Hur Chariot Race March. Ben Hur was published in the late 1800's and was dedicated to General Lew Wallace. Only the March version of *America Forever* was easily found in the New York Public Library Performing Arts Division on 5 September 1997. There was no record of the play, or Mary Matthews or Timmons. Miss Matthews address is listed as 728 15th in Denver in the front of "Supplement to Science of the Mind" It is noted that she is manager of book hotel pageant. The piano score to *America Forever* notes that "ET Paull is recognized throughout the entire country as being one of the greatest March writers of the present time. He has been given the sobriquet 'The New March King,' by the two leading musical journals of the United States, *The New York Music Trade Review* and *The Music Trades* (these are obvious sources if it seems important to figure out more about this guy). He also wrote *Woman Forever March*. His compositions give universal satisfaction. All of his marches are wonderfully stirring, bright, catchy, and inspiring throughout. One of the chief characteristics of Mr. Paull's compositions is that they lay well under the fingers and are comparatively easy to play."

Theopilus Craig, also known as "Thee" was born on June 16, 1895 in Nicodemus, Kansas¹⁶. He is said to have gone to college and then to Osteopathic School in Kansas City. I am unable to confirm his graduation from either the Kansas City Osteopathic College or the Cleveland Chiropractic School there¹⁷. Nor am I able to confirm licensure in Osteopathy or medicine in Colorado or Washington. California can find no record of him as a PA, Physical Therapist, Physician or Osteopath. Rolan Dixon Craig suspects that he was never educated as a doctor although he practiced as one¹⁸.

Merido remembers the family moving to Manzanola in 1905 as clearly as if it occurred yesterday. The family moved just because they had to go further west as did so many people at that time. Theopilus was still in school and stayed

16. See oral history of Rolan Dixon Craig, Meredo Craig and Ruby Craig.

17. Their student records go back into the 1920's.

18. American Medical Association has no record of him. The Washington Board of Medical Examiners has no record of him.

behind. Merido thinks that Theopilus was in college in Hill City and Rolan thinks he had finished high school in Hill City and she thinks he never was educated as a doctor although he practiced as one later in life.

He moved to Manzanola somewhere between 1918 and 1920 at the insistence of his mother Lula Craig and homesteaded. He seemed more interested in women than in farming, at least until he married his last wife and went into the practice of medicine. He first "married" Irene Holly, a light skinned black girl from Colorado Springs who already had a child. They moved back and forth between Manzanola and Colorado Springs. The marriage lasted a few years and then broke up.

He then "hooked up" with Genevieve, a white girl who had a little girl before the marriage, which may have been "common law." This lasted but a few years.

Theopilus moved to Chicago where he worked recovering silver from spent photographic solutions. While delivering the silver his vehicle was hit by a mail truck. He sustained severe injuries, particularly to his leg, and was considered dead at the scene. He was taken to a mortuary, where several hours later he was found to be alive. During that time he could hear the people around him talking but couldn't respond. He was then taken to a hospital in Evanston, Illinois where he made a lengthy recovery. He received a sizeable settlement and returned to Manzanola with a big brown Buick Century (?1933 model?) and a white nurse, Bessie, who he had met at the hospital. They bought a small farm east of town. (She had a grown son). They were together for a few years and broke up in Denver.

At about this time he met Esther Ruby (daughter of Gottlieb and Hester Ruby, born September 8, 1923¹⁹), a white girl who lived at 314 First Street in La Junta²⁰. They were married when she was 16 in 1947 Seattle, Washington²¹. This long and happy marriage lasted until his death. They had no children. After they were married, they moved to California and then to Seattle (Roland) or Tacoma (Merido) where he practiced medicine for years and made his fortune. He did not believe in surgery and promised that if he couldn't cure the patient without surgery the treatment was free. She was known ever after as "Ruby Craig", thus confusing researchers.

He moved to Washington State in 1952. His address, 1219 S 13th St, Tacoma was found on an old envelope addressed to Arthur Smith care of Dr. T.N. Craig. It was found in Arthur's trunk of pictures given to the Brantigan at his death. According to the Tacoma Directory 1956, 7, 8, 9, and 1960 he was listed as a physical therapist with home and office at 1219 S 13th St. **In 1960 and 1972**

19. Rocky Ford Daily Gazette 11 January 2002.

20. La Junta Directories.

21 Rocky Ford Daily Gazette 11 January 2002.

he is listed as retired. In the 1961 Tacoma phone book he is listed as a physical therapist and in 1962 he is not listed. Ruby reports that they lived in Washington for 14 years. (Gary, Pacific Northwest Room, Tacoma Public Library, 206 591 5622 will check for other information.)

He practiced osteopathic medicine from about 1958-1972. After he retired from practice in 1972 due to ill health, Theopilus and Ruby returned to Colorado and lived with Art and Grace on Downing Street for several years in the late 1960's and early 70's. **(need to check household directories)** After his mother died in 1972, he returned to Manzanola with Ruby to settle the estate. They lived in La Junta and commuted to Manzanola. He worked with a lawyer whose name is forgotten and got to the point of being able to divide the land, but descendants couldn't agree and the estate remains unsettled twenty years later. During the course of the settlement, he caught pneumonia and died in the La Junta Hospital in about 1976 at 81 according to Ruby²². According to the Rocky Ford Gazette his date of death was June 8, 1976.

I found Esther Ruby Craig in the early 90's living in Denver about 2 blocks from my home. This was accomplished by interviewing members of the Craig family in Manzanola. She spoke to me on the condition that I not reveal her whereabouts and that I not contact her again. She died in Denver on January 7, 2002 and was buried on January 15 at Mountainview Cemetery in Manzanola.²³

References:

- Affidavit, Nettie Moncrief, 10 November 1962. The marriage of Arthur Smith and Grace was common law and dated from 10 July 1936.
- Andrews, Leone, Mrs. LS Craig, Heading for 100, looks back on rewarding life, *Rocky Ford Gazette*, August 17, 1967, April 29, 1965.
- Annual report of Nicodemus School District H 1 August 25, 1906. Arthur Smith is listed as Arthur Clark age 10 whose guardian was his grandfather, John Clark. Theopolis [sic] Craig is listed as born on June 16, 1895, age 11 whose parent is SG Craig.
- Bamford, LV, Trambly, KR, jr., St Elmo, Colorado; The Little Mining Camp that Tried, Colorado Heritage, Spring 2000 p 2-18.
- Bradshaw MN *Pioneer Parade*, Vantage Press 1966
no help
- Brantigan, CO, Arthur Smith: the keeper of the mansion, *Colorado History News*, February 1992, p 6.
- Buena Vista City Directory* for 1911-1912 lists Gresham, George as a property owner of 160 acres worth \$180, and living in Buena Vista

22. Ruby lived in Denver in 1990.

23 Rocky Ford Daily Gazette January 11, 2002.

Buena Vista City Directory of 1911-12 lists Herrle, Charles Jr. appr Chaffee County Independent b Charles Herrle. Charles Herrle is listed as watchman, r w s San Juan Av 4 s of Main.

Burney, Hattie, Mrs. Hattie C. Burney's recollections from Centennial Tidbits, Graham County Historical Society, Hill City, Kansas 1980.

Many of us have thought about the hardships the earliest residents of Graham County endured. Mrs. Hattie C Burney, who lives in Nicodemus, remembers them well. She was born in 1887, just seven years after the formation of Graham County in a stone house near the river south of Nicodemus, the daughter of Lula Saddler Craig and Sanford Craig.

Lula S. Craig was a remarkable woman. During her lifetime she taught school for 52 years in Kansas and Colorado. The People's Reveille of August 16, 1906 states "Mrs. Craig from Nicodemus, who was a student in the first Graham County Institute enrolled on Monday" and the Reveille-New Era of November 12, 1914 found it newsworthy to report that at Nicodemus, on election day, a woman, Mrs. Lula Craig served on the election board. Mrs. Craig's mother and father were slaves and came to Graham County with some of the earliest settlers.. My mother was born in Plat Co Mo [sic] August 12, 1865.

Many of Mrs. Burney's growing years were spent with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Meredith Saddler as her mother was away from home teaching in order to help with the family expenses.

Mrs. Burney remembers the winters when there was not enough food and her grandfather, John Samuels, would hitch his horses to the wagon and drive east asking for food from people to help the Nicodemus families. The Craigs lived about six miles from Nicodemus and upon his return he would take the food on Saturday or Sunday to Nicodemus and share with all the needy families. She remembers men walking to Logan and Ellis to buy provisions and men walking to Stockton carrying sacks of grain on their shoulders and walking home with the ground flour. Despite this, she believes the children did not notice the hard times. At that time the area around Nicodemus was just prairie with nothing but cattle, horses antelopes, deer and coyotes.

Her first teacher in Nicodemus was Hattie Lee, the daughter of Silas Lee, a minister there. Miss Lee was her teacher two or three years, then next was Anna Hickman. Other teachers during the time she attended grade school were Dave Green, Carrie Dabney and her mother, Lula Craig. Some of the other students who were in school with her in 1893 were Annabelle Taylor, Esther Pace, Jennie Vaughn, Clara Williams, Cora Ward, Rose Sayers, Lizzie Motley, Jessie Kirtley, Ed Williams, Leonard VanDuvall, Johnson Kirtley, Tessie Kirtley and Arthur Pace who later became a minister.

School was first held for only 5 months, sometimes 3 months and later for six months. The children of one family walked 5 miles to school and another walked four miles. There were not enough books so the children had to share. There were no blackboards in the school and sometimes the children had only a piece of a slate to use. Her mother would buy slate pencils and break them in pieces and gave the children a piece of a pencil to use.

After completing the eighth grade, Mrs. Burney took the teacher's examination and started to teach. Her first school was in the Fairview District where she taught 4 years, later she taught four terms at Mt. Olive and three at Nicodemus. Her first term was six months and she received \$50.00 per month. In 1915 she had 29 students. Some of her students were: Ora Wellington, Irene Jackson, Roger Sayers, Boyce Buckner, Harrison Williams, Philip VanDuvall, Warren Bucker and his brother, Guy Redd, Minerva Wellington, Juanita Williams, Edith Sayers, Marie Alexander, Marian Coleman, Juanita Alexander, Wilma Wilson, Verna Williams, Iola Coleman, Bernice Bates, Ellen McGee, Leo Williams, Carl DePrad, Andrew Jackson, George Redd, Henry

Williams and Guy Sayers. Mrs. Burney later got a High School diploma in Colorado after she was married.

When she taught at Fairview, she was the instigator of a school lunch program. The children left their lunches in the vestibule near the entrance and they were often frozen at noon. She bought a kettle, large enough to make soup. She instructed the children to bring their spoon and bowl and they were served hot food at noon. Afterwards several other schools started serving hot lunches also.

In 1916 the government opened up land for homesteading and Mrs. Lula Craig thought that it would be an interesting experience so Mrs. Burney, her parents and maternal grandparents went to Colorado and lived on a homestead about 45 miles south of Pueblo. She taught 15 years in Colorado. She married Chester Burney in 1940.

In later years the government asked for teachers to instruct migrant workers so they could become citizens. Mrs. Burney helped with this project in LaJunta, Colorado. At one time she rented a church basement for her classes but other times she set up a tent in the fields where her students might be cutting beets, sopping beets or topping onions. She returned to Graham County in 1972.

One of her early memories is of the time a large herd of cattle was being driven through from Oklahoma to Sugar Loaf Hill by a large number of cowboys and the cattle stampeded in Nicodemus, knocking down sheds and houses and endangering the lives of the people there. She remembers two prairie fires which came from the northwest, sweeping across the county. Many people lost cattle and horses. She also tells of the time the schoolhouse burned in Nicodemus. The school bell rang the entire time during the fire and could be heard for miles. She remembers wild sage and fireweed being pulled up by the roots and hung up to be used for medicinal purposes, and if there was any sickness, neighbors and friends went immediately to help.

Today Mrs. Burney lives in a lovely, modern home at the east side of Nicodemus. She has a deep religious faith and speaks positively of the future. Unless asked, she does not dwell on the hardships of the past. She enjoys watching the improvements being made in her community and states she believes other families, tiring of city life, will be returning to Nicodemus. All of us can learn much from visiting with Mrs. Burney and others who have helped develop our county.

Chaffee County Clerk and Records Office, records searched by Donna Nevens in 1990. References made to Jack Rabbit Lode, Happy Thought Lode, Last Chance Lode and others. Many transactions are in association with the Bertschy's

Chaffee County Directory

1907-8 no listing for Gresham

1913-14 lists Gresham, George as owning 160 acres worth \$180 and living in Buena Vista

Craig, Esther Ruby, Obituary, *Rocky Ford Daily Gazette* January 11, 2002.

A graveside service for Esther Ruby Craig, 78, Denver and formerly of La Junta, will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Jan 15. at Mountainview Cemetery in Manzanola. Mrs. Craig died Monday, Jan. 7 at her home in Denver.

She was born Sept. 8, 1923 in La Junta, the daughter of Gottlieb and Hester Ruby. She married Dr. Theophilus N. Craig in 1947 in Seattle, WA. For many years, she was employed by Pacific Bell Telephone California and Seattle[sic].

She and her husband Dr. Craig also lived in Tacoma, WA, for many years. He preceded her in death June 8, 1976

Mrs. Craig is survived by a niece, Mary C. Travis of Las Vegas, NV.

Griffy Family Funeral Home in Fowler is in charge of arrangements.

Federal Census 1880, Graham County, South Fork of the Solomon River, Kansas

Craig, Nettie 14 f at home [They must have been lining with Taylor Turner, their uncle, and his family as they are interspersed.]
 Craig, Sanford 14 m nephew
 Federal Census, 1880, Graham County, Nicodemus Township, Kansas
 Smith, Henry, 28m farmer born in Kentucky
 Mary, 21f wife keeping house born in Kentucky
 Benj, 1mo son born in Kansas
 Diana, 65yo mother born in Virginia
 Federal Census 1900, Graham County, Nicodemus Township, Kansas
 Craig, Sanford, 35 bm born in 1865 no occupation born in Kentucky
 , Lulla, 30 bf born in 1869, wife, school teacher born in Missouri
 , Hattie, 12 f born 1887 in Kansas
 , Harry, 10 m born in 1889 in Kansas
 , Viola, 8 f born in 1891 in Kansas
 , Theopilus, 4 m born in 1895 in Kansas
 , May, 1 f born in 1899 in Kansas
 Funeral Program, Arthur Howard Smith, 15 July 1991, Daisy P Littles Memorial Chapel, Temple, Texas.
Hill City Republican 29 December 1905. "Mrs. Smith, beloved wife of B.B. Smith of Nicodemus township, departed this life on Sunday morning last from heart trouble. The funeral took place Tuesday morning, burial being made in Mt Olive cemetery. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were united in marriage last March, and in his loss, the bereaved husband has the sympathy of this entire community."
Hill City Times 5 October 1972. Mrs. Harry Bates received word of the death of Mrs. Lula Craig, who celebrated her 104th birthday August 12. She had taught in some of the schools in Graham County. The family moved to Manzanola, Colorado in 1916. She taught in the rural school there. She was mentally alert and was interested in world conditions and had friends she corresponded with. She loved people and enjoyed her associations with them. Mrs. Harry Bates, Mrs. CS Vaughn and AG Alexander attended the funeral and interment which was held in Manzanola.
Hill City Times, 18 Mar 1943, Obituary of Rosa Clark
 Interview with Charles Herrle, 9 April 1990
 Interview with Arthur Smith July 1987
 Interview with Babe Williams and Charlie Herrle 3 April 1990
 Interview with June Shaputas 2 April 1990
 Interview with Mabel Fryrear 14 August 1990
 Interview with Merido Craig and Rolan Dixon 1 April 1990
 Interview with Ora Switzer in Nicodemus, Kansas 31 January 1990
 Interview with Pam Shriver, 26 April 1989
 Interview with Rosie Neal on multiple occasions
 Interview with Ruby Craig 14 August 1990
 Kansas Census 1885, Graham County, Wildhorse Township
 Sadler, M, 41 m farmer
 , Hannah, 36f housekeeper
 , Lula, 16f
 , SA, 14f
 , Frank, 12m

, Cornelus, 10m
, John, 9m
, Thomas, 6m

Kansas Census 1905, Graham County, Wildhorse Township

Clark, John 53m
, RB, 47 f
, John J, 22 m
, Anna, 20 f
, xxxx, 18 f
, Clyde, 12 m
, Charles, 9 m
, Arthur, 9 m [this is Arthur Smith]
, Preston, 2 m

La Junta City Directory 1909, WA Jeffries & Co, Publishers, La Junta
Gebhard listed in classified under livestock in Swink

La Junta City Directory, 1911-12, FA McKinney, Publisher
Same basic entry as 1914-15

LaJunta and Rocky Ford Colorado Directory 1932 including Otero County, RL
Polk and Co Colorado Springs, CO
household index for 314 W 1st Kawata, Taro.???

No Ruby, Smith, Craig, Gebhard.
Merido Craig listed as a shoeshiner in Rocky Ford 703 N 7th. Other
Craigs are listed in rural Manzanola. No Theopilus

La Junta City Directory 1940, Hays and Hays, Brush, CO.

Ruby, Godlett (W) Louise (R) 314 W First St, Laborer WPA (Carl 21
George 20 Esther 16 Louise 14 Bobbie 11 Junior 6)
Craig, Hattie E (R) 322 w 1st Teacher School Education WPA
No other Smiths or Craigs

La Junta District, Telephone Directory, October 1917

HR Craig, Ranch, Olney Springs Ordway 83F4
No other Craigs, Smith, Gebhards in La Junta, Manzanola, Rocky Ford.

La Junta Telephone Book 1950

Louise Ruby 320 w 1st

La Junta Telephone Book 1971-4

Lulu had a phone number in 1971 and 72

La Junta Times 29 March 1905 p4c2. According to the Denver Post of last
Sunday, Booker T Washington is making preparations to establish a self-
governing colored colony near La Junta during the course of the present
year, and ten thousand acres of land east of this city will be bought for
the purpose. There are thirteen colonies of this kind in the United States
at the present time and the next one will be started in Colorado....

Marriage license, Barbara Grace Bertschy and George Gresham, 1913. They
were married by Rev George E Morphy in Salida on October 2, 1913.
Gresham was listed as a resident of Buena Vista and Grace as a resident
of St Elmo.

Marriage license, Benjamin B Smith and Celia B Clark, 1905
 McClintock, RD, *With the Colors from Otero County*, Otero County Colorado
 1920. No Gebhard or Craig
 Nash, Claude W, *Some Nashes of Virginia, Two hundred years of an American
 Family 1774-1974*. Commonwealth Press 1975.
 National Park Service, *The Promised Land on the Solomon*, National Park
 Service. (no date specified but probably 1984)
 Neal, RL, Another Time, unpublished manuscript
 Nevins, Donna. George and Grace divorce 1931. 719 539 4204
 Newspaper article August 15, 1968 Manzanola leader turning 100. Almost
 forgotten page of Negro, pioneer sagas to be relived.
 Newspaper clipping "Lula S Craig honored by the Denver Public Library.
 Obituary, Fryrear, Mabel, *Rocky Mountain News* 24 October 1995 49A, Denver
 Post 31 October 1995 10C. She was born 7 April 1901 and died 15
 October 1995. She was a member of the LDS church and is survived by
 Grace M Young of Edgewater.
 Obituary, Clark, Rosa, *Hill City Times* 18 March 1943
 Obituary, Arthur Smith, Denver Post July 20 1991, p6c
Otero and Crowley County Directory 1914-15, FA McKinney Publisher, Denver,
 New York and La Junta
 Smith, CC 324W 1st
 (Swink is the only "wet spot" in Otero Co, having two saloons and a
 newspaper).
 Gebhard Henry (Gebhard & sons) res Denver
 Gebhard Paul A (Gebhard & Sons) (Eva B)
 Gebhard Otto (Gebhard & Sons)
 Gebhard & Sons (Henry, Otto and Paul A Gebhard) live stk
Otero County Directory 1919, Otero County Press, Publisher.
 Ruby, 314 W 1st street listed.
 No Gebhard, Smith, Ruby or Craig
Otero County Colorado Directory 1935, WE Weber, Publisher, no city.
 Craig, Hattie R 322 W 1st, La Junta.
 Craig SG (Lulu), Craig, Merido (Orene), Craig HJ(Rolan) listed as rural
 routes from Manzanola.
 No Gebhard, Ruby or Smith
Otero County Farm and Rural Directory 1947
 lists Harvey Craig but no others.
 Paull, ET, *America Forever March*, ET Paull Music Co, New York,
 MDCCCXCVIII.
 Patty, Mike, Landmark's savior dies at age 95, *Rocky Mountain News* 20 July
 1991, p91.
Rocky Ford Gazette August 17, 1967, April 22, 1965, Mrs. LS Craig, heading
 for 100, looks back on rewarding life
 Roll of Honor Book of Graham County
 Arthur Howard Smith, Address, Nicodemus, Kansas

Drafted at Hill City, Kansas
Height 5feet 5 1/2 inches, age 21 years, Occupation, Cook
Complexion-colored, Eyes-brown, Hair-black, single
Inducted 31 August 1918 at 3 pm
Accepted at Camp Funston, Kansas 2 September 1918.
Ruth Bangle, Graham County Historical Society, 406 S East St, Hill City,
Kansas
Salida City Directory
1906 lists Perry Bertschy, a farmer married to Minnie and living with
Grace and William on Mesa Blvd 3 mi sw of Salida
1927-28 Gresham Geo (Grace B) blksmith 133 W 2nd h 408 Dodge
1922-23 lists Gresham, Geo (Grace B) blksmith D&RGW h 408 Dodge.
Salida Mail Booster Edition has an advertisement for George Gresham, Village
Blacksmith
Schwendemann, G, Nicodemus, Negro haven on the Solomon, *Kansas*
Historical Quarterly 34 10-31 (1968)
Shaputis, J, Kelly, Suzanne, *A History of Chaffee County*, 1982.
Steward, Paul, Black America West Museum 7476 E Arkansas Ave Unit 3210
Denver Co 80231. Notes that there was a biography of Theo Craig created
for Black Awareness month at the Denver Public Library in 1971 as he
and his wife attended. In 1936 Rev Jn H Allen lived at 3300 Williams.
The Dabney family on 2200 Williams came from Nicodemus and may
have some information.
Strickland, AE, Toward the promised land: the exodus to Kansas and
afterward, *Missouri Historical Review* 49 376-413 (1975)
Title Abstract, 2253 Downing Street