

If you received this message, you're probably related to Robert and Susan (Marks) Byington in one way or another. If I missed someone on this distribution, I apologize and ask that you forward this email to the person(s) and anyone else you think might be interested in this information.

## ***The Robert and Susan (Marks) Byington Family Story***

Susan (Marks) Byington ~ 1852-1910 (58 years)

Many of you know that I've been searching for the whereabouts of my great-grandparents Robert and Susan Byington for many years now. I've learned a lot about their lives these last few years and even though the story isn't complete, I've come to a point where I'd like to share what I've learned with you. First, I'm very pleased to announce that Susan's final resting place has been located, confirmed and marked. Susan is buried at the Arkansaw Memorial Cemetery located in Arkansaw, Wisconsin. Cousins Sarah (Stanley) Salmon (of Washington State) and Pat (Mackenzie) Davis (of Michigan) provided me with a copy of Susan's obituary which provided key information that I used while searching for Susan in the Pepin County area. I visited the Pepin County Courthouse located in Durand, Wisconsin and sorted through several birth, death and marriage records of many relatives. I visited dozens of cemeteries in Pepin County, and worked with the managers of the Arkansaw Memorial Cemetery - together we confirmed she was there. Susan laid in an unmarked grave since dying from complications related to heart disease on May 24<sup>th</sup> and being buried on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1910. The good people at the cemetery placed a headstone on her grave site so it's now officially marked and identified. Please click on the following link to view: <http://www.byingtonfamily.org/showmedia.php?medialD=296&medialinkID=521>

Susan was survived by husband Robert (60) of 42 years, two daughters; Effie (41), Tessie (37), four sons; Elmore (39), Joseph (36), Arthur (32) Clifford (23) and two sisters; Anna (Marks) Burke (62) and Emelia (Marks) LeBrec (59). Records show Susan was also survived by 18 grandchildren at that time.

Robert and Susan's life together went something like this

Robert was born in February of 1850 to Randall & Mary Byington while living in Bristol, Connecticut. The Byington family later moved to Galesburg, MI where Robert spent his childhood there until moving to Wisconsin at the age of 18. Susan was born in May of 1852 to Joseph and Elizabeth Marks in Chippewa Falls, WI. The Mark's family later moved to Frankfort Township, Wisconsin where Susan spent most of her childhood. Frankfort Twp. is located on the west side of the Chippewa River about 10 miles south of Durand. It's important to note that Susan's mother's maiden name has yet to be determined.

Robert probably met Susan while visiting his distant uncle Lucius Byington, who lived in very close proximity to the Joseph Marks family in Frankfort Township. Robert and Susan were married in November of 1868 at the very young ages of 18 and 16, respectively. Their wedding took place in the town of Pepin, Wisconsin and marriage records confirmed Robert's and Susan's as parents stated earlier in this message.

Robert and Susan lived in Frankfort Township for about the next 20 years while raising five of their six children; Effie, Elmore, Tessie, Joseph and Arthur. The family homesteaded a farm near Ella, WI and farmed the land until 1882 when they moved to Pennsylvania where Robert began working as an Insurance Salesman. At that time their oldest of five children (Effie) was 13 years old and the youngest (Arthur) was 2 years. Their six child (Clifford) was born to them while living Pittsburgh, PA. The family continued to live in the Pennsylvania and Ohio areas until Susan became very ill with heart disease and became of her impending death. At this time, Susan decided she wanted to be close with her friends and family during her remaining days so they moved back to Frankfort Township sometime between 1906 and April of 1910. At that time, they lived with Robert's 2nd cousin Charles Byington and his family until Susan's death on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1910. The funeral was at Charles and Sarah's house in Frankfort Township and she was buried May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1910 in the Arkansaw Memorial Cemetery.

Robert's life after Susan

Robert's whereabouts for approximately 13 years after Susan's death is unknown ~ and his final resting place is still a mystery. A fellow genealogist contacted me about a year ago and sent me a copy of Robert's death certificate – I am so grateful for her kindness because I searched for the document for years and it provided valuable information. The record showed Robert lived in the Detroit, Michigan area for about four years prior to his

death on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1927. He died from Apoplexy (severe bleeding disorder). The record also showed Harry Clark (daughter Effie's husband) helped with administrative duties at the mortuary. This may indicate that Robert wanted to live close to his daughter during his elder days. Effie, age 58 at that time, lived in Livonia, MI which is a western suburb of Detroit, MI. Note: Robert's death record shows his father's name as John Byington. It's believed the record is in error and should show Robert's father as Randall Robert Byington as shown by 1850 US Federal Census records.

The trail to Robert's resting place is warm because the record indicates that Robert was buried in Galesburg, Michigan – however, it does not specify a specific location and/or cemetery. I contacted the township clerk in Galesburg and she responded to my questions as follows: *"I have searched the records of all four cemeteries in Charleston Township and have not found any more information concerning your great-grandfather, Robert Byington. It is possible he was buried in an unmarked grave next to his parents. Records were not kept very well back then. It is also possible that he could be buried in one of the cemeteries in the City of Galesburg. I believe the Galesburg Charleston Memorial District Library may have historical information or direct you to the Historical Museum. They have doing a great deal of reorganizing since they became a district library a couple of years ago. Also, Western Michigan University has archives that may contain information that would prove useful."* Robert's death record also shows Norton Mortuary in Detroit processed Robert's body but they went out of business and their records were sent to Detroit Historical Society. I have not contacted them yet. (Pat Mackenzie ~ are you ready to grab your 'ghost meter' and stroll through a few cemeteries again with me?)

I've always been interested to know what brought Clifford to the Pepin area when all other siblings generally settled in the east. I may have answered the question. It appears there's a good possibility that Clifford and Genevieve met when Clifford came to the area to attend his mother's funeral. While studying dates and events, I noticed that my grandparents Clifford and Genevieve were married a mere six months after Susan's funeral. After their wedding in November of 1910, they lived in Frankfort Township from 1910 until 1925. This is the same area that both Clifford's and Genevieve's parents once lived. Clifford and Genevieve gave birth to six children during that time; Darrell, Marguerite, Vera, Velna, Maxine, and Douglas. The family later moved to Minneapolis, MN where Clifford became employed by the Electric Machine Co, and Genevieve by Munsingwear. With the exception of Darrell who died at birth, all the children lived their lives out in the Minneapolis area.

[www.byingtonfamily.org](http://www.byingtonfamily.org)

Written by Jeff Byington – January 2017

Great Great Grandson of Randall & Mary (Scott) Byington  
Great Grandson of Robert & Susan (Marks) Byington  
Grandson of Clifford & Genevieve (McMahon) Byington  
Son of Douglas & Donna (Matter) Byington