"It's a Small World" (My third observation¹)

By Michael P. West

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UDIE Leon Murphy died in a plane crash on May 28, 1971 in Craig County, Virginia. It would have been his mother's 80th birthday.

On May 23, 1941, Josie Bell Killian died in a small house on Neathery Street in Farmersville, Texas. The street was named for a very prominent family – the Neatherys.

The Neathery family of Farmersville, Texas gave us doctors, lawyers, merchants, and — dare I mention — politicians. Harriett, or simply "Miss Hattie", was a daughter of Dr. Allen Hill Neathery and she was equally prominent in social work and various charities. Even being the pillar of philanthropy that she was, she was always known as "Miss Hattie."

In the July 16th, 1945 Life Magazine spread featuring Audie Murphy, there appears a picture of Audie and Miss Hattie sitting on her front porch having a "chat". According to the caption, we learn that Audie delivered newspapers to Miss Hattie.



Figure 1: Audie has a chat. July 16, 1945 Life magazine photo of Audie talking to Ms. Hattie Neathery.

Photo by James Laughead

Is there more here than simply a friendly visit?

Now the rest of the story.

Miss Hattie Neathery had family not only in Texas but in Louisiana where she had second cousins. (This is not a bad affliction – we all have them.)

¹ The third observation of three presented by the author in a speech during the summer 2016 Audie Murphy Days at the Audie Murphy/American Cotton Museum in Greenville, Texas.

One of her second cousins was Mary Susan "Mollie" Neathery. Mary Susan, a daughter of Tillman S. Neathery (see figure 2), would marry William Fletcher Lambert, December 1896, in Catahoula Parish, Louisiana and from that marriage would be born six children. One of their daughters was Eula Thelma Lambert (see figure 3).

Several years later, Eula married Marcus Brown Butler, December 24, in Caldwell Parish, Louisiana and she too had a family. There were at least four children, two daughters, and two sons. One son was named Herman. Herman's middle name was Lavelle. Herman's last name was Butler (see figure 4).

You see, Miss Hattie's - Hattie Neathery's second cousin twice removed – was Herman Lavelle Butler, the pilot of the airplane in which Audie Murphy was killed on May 28, 1971 (figure 5 and 6).

It is a small world after all.

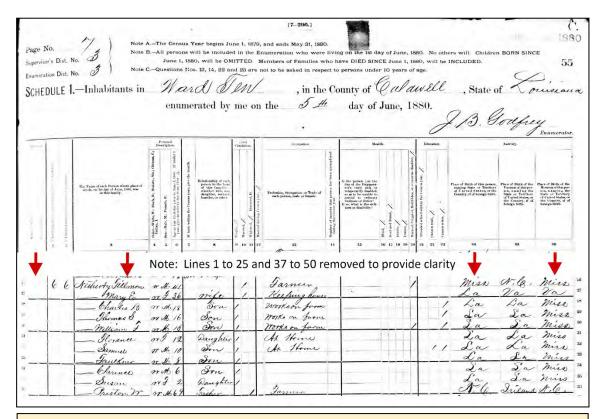


Figure 2: 1880 Federal Census and Neathery family details. Tillman Neathery (line 26) was the first cousin Dr. William Allen Neathery. Dr. Neathery's daughter, Miss Hattie's Neathery, was first cousin to Susan Neathery (line 35). Susan would later marry William Fletcher Lambert in Louisiana. Susan's daughter, Eula Thelma Lambert, would later marry and have a son named Herman Lavell Butler.

Source: National Archives and Records Administration

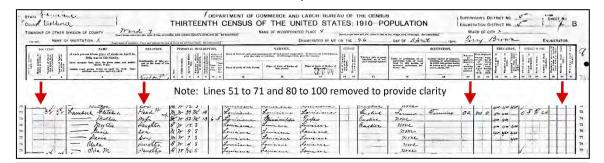


Figure 3: 1910 Federal Census and Lambert family details. William Fletcher Lambert (line 72) was married to Mary Susan "Mollie" Neathery (line 73). Dr. Neathery's daughter, Miss Hattie's Neathery, was first cousin to Susan Neathery (line 35). Susan's daughter, Uula (sic), or Eula Thelma Lambert (line 78), would later marry and have a son named Herman Lavell Butler.

Source: National Archives and Records Administration

Eula Thelma Butler

ALBION — Eula Thelma Butler, 85, died Dec. 2, 1991, at the White County Hospital. She was born Sept. 11, 1906, in Catahoula

Parish, La.; the daughter of Fletcher and Frances (Nethery) Lambert.

She married M.B. "Pop" Butler on Dec. 17, 1924, in Columbia, La., he preceded her in death.

Surviving are two daughters, Velda Morrow of Albion and Mary Fran Messman of Browns, 16 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by two sons, Herman and Marcus Bernard Butler; two brothers, Davis and Govie Lambert; and one sister, Myrtie Horn.

Mrs. Butler, a homemaker, was a member of Easter Star.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday at the First Baptist Church in Albion; the Rev. Randy Miller will officiate and burial will be in Graceland Cemetery.

Visitation is from 6 to 8 this evening at Ingram Funeral Home.

Stock Market Dancet

Figure 4: Obituary of Eula Butler. This article establishes that Eula Lambert was married to Marcus Brown Butler and their children's names.

Source: The Daily Republican Register, p.12, Wednesday, December 4, 1991, Mt. Carmel Illinois

COPY A FOR BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS	REGISTRATION CÉRTIFI AREA NUMBER NUMBE 122	NUMBER NUMBER		EXAMINER'S STATE FILE NUMBER 71 01853				
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	May 28, 1971	DECEASED	43 years	months days	hours minute	es OR RACE	White	
PLACE OF	INSTITUTION OF DEATH None			7. COUNTY OF (if independent city, leave blank) DEATH Craig County 9. STREET ADDRESS OR RT. NO.				
DEATH	OF DEATH yes no New Castle □ ☑			of PLACE OF DEATH. Brushy Mountain				
USUAL RESIDENCE	10. STATE (OR FOREIGN COUNTRY) OF DECEASED'S RESIDENCE Illinois			11. COUNTY OF DECEASED'S (if independent city, leave blank) RESIDENCE				
OF DECEDENT	12. CITY OR TOWN OF RESIDENCE Albion					: 62806		
PERSONAL DATA OF DECEDENT	14. NAME OF FATHER OF DECEASED Marcus Brown Butler			13. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER OF DECEASED ELLIA Lambert				
	16. DECEASED CITIZEN OF WHAT COUNTRY U. S. A.				18. IF MARRIED OR WIDOWED, NAME OF SPOUSE COLLeen Webster			
	0. B. A.	20. IF VETERAN, name way, or if percenting only, so state World War II			21. BIRTHPLACE (state or country) OF DECEASED Louisiana 22. DATE OF BIRTH (mo.) (day) (OF DECEASED December 30, 19			
	23. USUAL OR LAST OCCUPATION	24. KIND OF BUSTR	SINESS	25. INFORMANT - CO OF INFORMATIO	R SOURCE	Тресешье	1 50, 1	
	Director 26. CAUSE OF DEATH (Enter only one cou	TOTAL AND LABOUR		Family			INTERVAL BE	
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	PART II. OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH BUT NOT RELATED DISEASE CONDITION GIVEN IN PART 1 (A)			ED TO THE TERMINAL		26a. AUTOPSY? AUTHORIZED BY:	yes A	
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	12:43 May 28, 1	971 at work	CURRED 26 not while at work	foctory, street, office b Mountain	ne, form, 26h. (city ldg., etc.)	e County	Virgin:	
	26. I CERTIFY that I took charge of the ren NATURAL CAUSES ACCIDENT ACTUAL ACTUAL SIGNATURE	SUICIDE THOMIST	DE UNDETERMINED	PENDING [(city or county) Roanoke Co		June 3	
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Figure 5: Death Certificate. The death certificate of Herman Lavelle Butler which includes lineage and family details.

Source: Department of Health – Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Commonwealth of Virginia

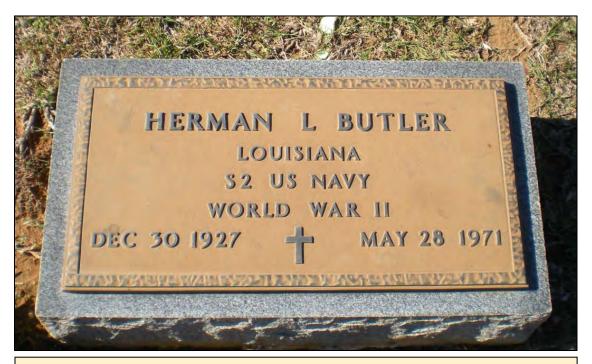


Figure 6: Grave of Herman Lavelle Butler. Herman Butler was the pilot of the twin-engine Aero Commander 680E, N601JJ that crashed on Brush Mountain, Virginia on May 28, 1971 taking the lives of all six people on board including Audie Leon Murphy. In a strange twist of fate, Butler was also related to Miss Hattie Neathery, Farmersville, Texas resident who was photographed 26 years earlier with Audie Murphy in the Life Magazine article, July 16, 1945..

Photo Source: Karen Klemm Pinckard, <u>www.findagrave.com</u>
Plane Accident details: <u>www.thisdayinaviation.com/tag/heman-lavelle-butler/</u>