

## Oak Grove Cemetery Biographies, Obituaries, and Stories Submitted by the Public

The following people are profiled in this document in alphabetical order:

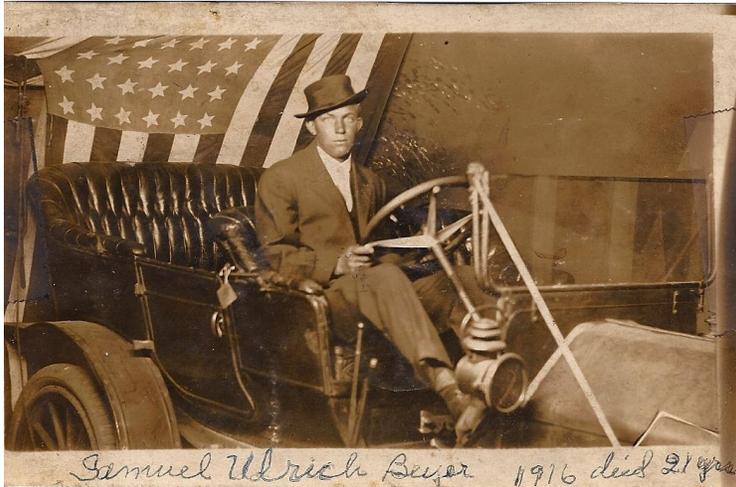
Samuel Ulrich Beyer  
Rosa Adcock Fruit  
Harry Atwood Gish  
James Christopher Gish  
Wylie F. McCormick  
Col. Edward Dumas (E.D.) Nix  
John Adolph "Babe" Vasseur  
Craig Evesta White  
Virginia Fruit White

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***SAMUEL ULRICH BEYER***

(Information submitted by Nora Rikel, Paducah)

January 8, 1895 - April 20, 1916



She was not quite five years old when her big brother, Samuel Ulrich Beyer, died, so her memories were not vivid. Still, the memories were there--haunting, persistent, lingering. She (Evelyn Beyer Rikel Vannerson, now deceased) was the youngest of nine children, and being the baby of the family, had been doted on by this big brother, sixteen years her senior, who threw

her in the air, bounced her on his knee, and played games with her. Then, as she recalled, he suddenly got sick one day and much to her sorrow and bewilderment was gone.

Dead? Being not quite five years old, it was hard for her to understand. Why had he suddenly gone away? Why did they put him in that big box in that huge new building in Oak Grove Cemetery in downtown Paducah? Why did he never come back? She heard big words being said like "meningitis" or maybe "appendicitis." But behind the scenes, she also heard whispers. "Spraying the peach trees in the orchard" . . . "wind shifted" . . . "breathed too much of the spray" . . . "accidentally poisoned." What did it all mean?

Why was it seldom discussed in her presence, then or later? The records at the mausoleum show no cause of death listed, but they do report that Samuel Ulrich Beyer, age 21, was buried there on April 20, 1916 . . . which just happened to be the peak season for spraying peach orchards with insecticides. Hmmm.

\*\*\*\*\*

***ROSA ADCOCK FRUIT***

September 12, 1887 (Christian County, KY) – November 12, 1970 (Paducah, KY)



(Information submitted by grandson, Craig M. White, Melbourne, FL. Pictured in photo at Oak Grove.)

[See also Virginia F. White (daughter) and Craig E. White (son-in-law)]

**Burial site:**

Upon entering the front gate of Oak Grove Cemetery, look to your 10 o'clock position to see two large boxwoods. The gravesite is beside the

boxwoods.

**Obituary from November 13, 1970 Paducah Sun Democrat newspaper:**

Mrs. Rosa Fruit, 83, 406 N. 36<sup>th</sup> Street, died at 8:25 p.m. Thursday at Western Baptist Hospital.

Mrs. Fruit, widow of Paul Fruit, was born in Hopkinsville and had lived most of her adult life in Paducah. She was a member of Broadway United Methodist Church.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Norman Sullivan and Mrs. Craig White, both of Paducah; two sisters, Miss Lois Adcock of Pembroke and Mrs. Edgar Barnett of Nashville, Tenn.; three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Funeral services are scheduled Saturday at 2 p.m. at Roth Funeral Chapel with the Rev. Henry Russell officiating. Burial will be in Oak Grove Cemetery. Pallbearers will be Hal Hall, Ben LeRoy, A. J. Higgs, Jack Johnston, Leonard Smith and Lynn Werner.

Friends may call at the funeral home.

\*\*\*\*\*

***JAMES CHRISTOPHER GISH AND HARRY ATWOOD GISH***



Information provided in October 2013 by Harry Gish.

The family photo is from 1900. Both James Christopher Gish and Harry Atwood Gish were union shop stewards at the I. C. repair shops (grandfather and great grandfather of Harry Gish). Inside the office at the gate of

the Oak Grove Cemetery is a framed photo, 1921, of the burial of James Christopher Gish's first wife. There are numerous floral arrangements. The Gish plot originally was owned by the Clark family who were friends.



Lillian Perkins, Harry Atwood Gish, and Harry Lucien Gish



Harry Atwood Gish and Blackie

1031 North 12<sup>th</sup> Street



Harry Atwood Gish



Harry Atwood Gish

1031 North 12<sup>th</sup> Street



Harry Atwood Gish and Lillian Perkins

A Permanent Record of the  
Obituary and Funeral Details which appeared in

The **Paducah Sun-Democrat**  
PADUCAH, KENTUCKY

AUG 1 0 1957

## Memorial Obituary

### Harry Gish Dies; Served IC 35 Years

Harry A. Gish, 74, of 1031 N. 12th, died at 6:45 a. m. Friday at Western Baptist Hospital. He retired as a blacksmith in 1954 after 35 years' service with the Illinois Central Railroad.

He was a life-long resident of Paducah, and a member of the Park Ave. Baptist Church and Daniel Boone Lodge No. 21.

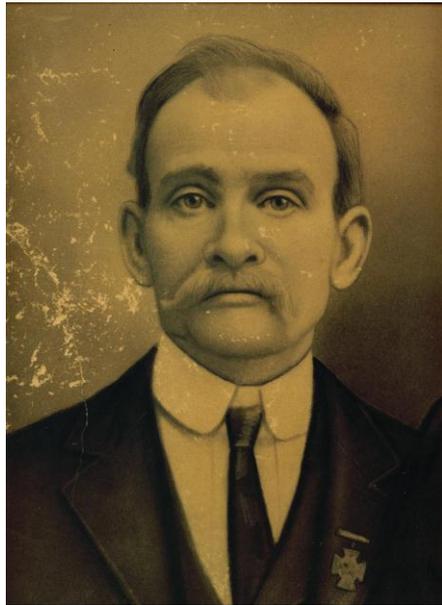
Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Lillian Gish; a son, Harry Gish Jr. of West Memphis, Ark.; a sister, Miss Ida Gish of Paducah; two grandchildren, Harry Arnold Gish and Harriet Ann Gish, both of West Memphis, Ark.

Funeral services will be held at 4 p. m. Sunday at Lindsey Funeral Chapel, with the Rev. Clay P. Roach officiating, assisted by the Rev. H. W. Ellis. Burial will be in Oak Grove Cemetery.

The body is at Lindsey's.



James Christopher Gish and Wife.



## JAMES GISH DIES FROM PNEUMONIA

WELL KNOWN CONFEDERATE  
VETERAN JOINS GREAT ARMY.

Entered Service of Southern States  
From McCracken County Early  
in War.

32 Sept 17-1941  
WILL BE BURIED TOMORROW

Mr. James Gish, Confederate veteran, has joined the ranks of the silent majority. The summons came at 10 o'clock last night after a three weeks' illness of pneumonia at his residence, 1440 Trimble street, and he was conscious almost to the end.

He was born in Muhlenburg county, Kentucky, April 4, 1844, and in his youth moved to McCracken county with his parents, where he lived for 10 years prior to his coming to Paducah, 26 years ago. He was an expert machinist at the Illinois Central railroad shops. Mr. Gish was a member of the First Baptist church and a member of the Knights of Golden Rule and Brotherhood of Railway Carmen. He was also a member of the local James Walbert camp of Confederate Veterans. He went out with the Kentucky troops early in the war to fight for the cause. He was a highly esteemed resident and had a large circle of friends in Paducah.

He leaves his wife, Mrs. Susan Young Gish; three brothers, Messrs. Ephraim and Thaddeus Gish, of the Boston section of the county, and Mr. David Gish, of Muhlenburg county. He leaves three sons, Messrs. Jesse, John and Harry, and one daughter, Miss Ida Gish, of this city. The funeral will be held Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock at the North Twelfth Street Baptist church, the Rev. J. R. Clark, pastor, officiating.

\*\*\*\*\*

**WYLIE F. MCCORMICK**

(Information submitted by Bob Steinkamp, Pompano Beach, FL)

As a youngster growing up in Paducah in the late 1940's, some of my favorite times were spent with my great grandfather, Wylie F. McCormick. "Pop," as everyone knew him, had been a captain with the Paducah Fire Department at the time the City went from horse drawn to motorized fire apparatus. We could not leave Pop's Harrison Street home and cross Fountain Avenue without him making mention of the grave plots he had purchased years before in Oak Grove Cemetery. Pop's plots were right at the end of Fountain Avenue. "I never want people to forget where we're buried," was Pop's often-repeated comment. Over the past sixty years our family has seen scores of loved ones interred in Oak Grove in the plots Pop had selected. Even though for the past 50 years I have lived in South Florida, a thousand miles away from Paducah, on each visit back to my hometown, I can enter Oak Grove Cemetery and drive directly to Pop's plots at the end of Fountain Avenue, thanks to his wise planning. Our children grew up knowing about Pop's plots. On one visit back to Paducah, I told my Florida granddaughter the story of the grave plots Pop had provided, now six generations removed from her. Pop, we won't forget.

\*\*\*\*\*

**COL. EDWARD DUMAS (E.D.) NIX**

September 19, 1861 - February 4, 1944

(Information submitted by Bob Johnston, Paducah)

This person is not a member of my family, but a family friend whom I remember as a boy, Col. Edward Dumas (E. D.) Nix, was born in Calloway County on Sept. 19, 1861. As a young man he worked in Paducah as wholesale grocery salesman and moved to Guthrie, Oklahoma, where he was in the wholesale grocery business. On May 26, 1893, he was appointed by President Grover Cleveland to be the first U.S. Marshal of the Oklahoma Territory. On September 16, 1893, he fired the shot with his revolver that opened the 6 million acre Cherokee Strip for settlement, starting the biggest land rush in history. The territory was a hot bed of outlaw gangs, and during the ensuing years, Nix and his 150 deputies made 50,000 arrests, and brought to justice many famous desperadoes including the famous Dalton Brothers-Bill Doolin gang. Many of the arrests were by Nix himself. In Nix's later years he lived in California, and in the late 1930's and early 1940's, was consultant and participant in many radio and early TV shows dealing with American and western history. During World War II, Nix worked in the famous Henny J. Kaiser shipyard in California. Nix was always proud to say he was from Paducah, "the same as that other gentleman, Irvin S. Cobb." As a boy, I became acquainted with Nix when he visited his sister, Mrs. Herman Graham, who lived on Buckner Lane. The Grahams lived down the street from us and were family friends. Mr. Nix took a liking to me and sent me many articles and letters about his life. He died February 4, 1944 in California, and his ashes are interred in Oak Grove Cemetery, not far behind the Elk's Rest. A lengthy article about his career was posted in the July 8, 1954 Paducah Sun-Democrat.

\*\*\*\*\*

**JOHN ADOLPH "BABE" VASSEUR**

1864-1937

(Information submitted by R. Brent Vasseur, Paducah)

My great, great grandfather's brother, John Adolph "Babe" Vasseur(1864-1937) is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. I write because he had a somewhat unusual funeral and burial. Uncle Babe, as he was commonly known, was a "drayman" or delivery driver. He made his deliveries by a horse drawn wagon. Prior to his death he began the construction of his own tombstone at Oak Grove. He had placed a pile of rocks at his gravesite but did not finish construction before he died. His family finished the homemade marker per his wishes. His casket was taken to the cemetery, again at his wishes, in the horse drawn dray wagon. All of this is described in his obituary. The homemade tombstone is still there - not so pretty, but interesting.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CRAIG EVESTA WHITE**

November 4, 1911 (Bells, TN) – December 1, 2003 (Melbourne, FL)



(Information submitted by son, Craig M. White, Melbourne, FL. Pictured in photo at Oak Grove.)  
[See also Virginia F. White (wife) and Rosa Adcock Fruit (Virginia White's mother)]

Burial site:

Upon entering the front gate of Oak Grove Cemetery, look to your 10 o'clock position to see two large boxwoods. The gravesite is beside the boxwoods.

Obituary from Paducah Sun newspaper:

Visitation and services for Craig E. White, 92, of Indian Harbour Beach, Fla. and Paducah will be at Roth Funeral Chapel on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2003, with visitation beginning at 10 a.m., followed by services at 11 a.m. Dr. Henry Russell will officiate, with burial in Oak Grove Cemetery. Mr. White died at 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 1, 2003, at Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne, Fla.

Mr. White was Chief Clerk for the Shop Superintendent, Illinois Central Railroad, from 1935 until his retirement in 1974. He was a member of Broadway United Methodist Church until 2001, when he moved to Florida after the death of his wife.

He is survived by a son, Craig M. White of Indian Harbour Beach; a daughter, Barbara Delano and husband Frank of Bellmawr, N.J.; five grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. His wife, Virginia F. White, and a sister preceded him in death. His parents were Ernest and Bertha White of Brownsville, Tenn.

Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to Broadway United Methodist Church, 701 Broadway, Paducah, KY 42003.

\*\*\*\*\*

***VIRGINIA FRUIT WHITE***

October 17, 1912 (Paducah, KY) – January 10, 2001 (Melbourne, FL)



(Information submitted by son, Craig M. White, Melbourne, FL. Pictured in photo at Oak Grove.)

*[See also Craig E. White (husband) and Rosa Adcock Fruit (mother)]*

**Burial site:**

When you enter the front gate of Oak Grove Cemetery, look to your 10 o'clock position to see two large boxwoods. The gravesite is beside the

boxwoods.

**Obituary from January 14, 2001 Paducah Sun newspaper:**

Services for Virginia F. White, 88, of Paducah will be at 10:30 a.m. Monday at Roth Funeral Chapel. The Rev. Richard Smith will officiate, with burial in Oak Grove Cemetery. She died at 2:50 a.m. Wednesday at Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne, Fla.

Mrs. White taught for many years at Tiny Tot Kindergarten and First Baptist Church kindergarten. She was a lifelong member of Broadway United Methodist Church.

She is survived by her husband, Craig. E. White; a son, Craig M. White of Indian Harbour Beach, Fla.; a daughter, Barbara Delano of Bellmawr, N.J.; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and a niece. She was preceded in death by a sister. Her parents were Henry P. and Rosa Adcock Fruit.

Friends may call from 4 to 5:30 p.m. today at the funeral home.

Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to Broadway United Methodist Church, 701 Broadway, Paducah, KY 42003.