

## Resolving John Wesley Steadman's Birth

John Wesley Steadman died on the morning of 13 April 1949 in Hillsboro, Oregon, at the reported age of sixty-eight. A tavern owner, John resided in Huber, an unincorporated area west of Portland in the county of Washington. His wife, Audrey, served as informant for his death certificate. She indicated that he was born on 23 August 1880 in Michigan; no parent names were provided.<sup>1</sup>

On 15 April 1949, two days after John's death in Hillsboro, his obituary was published in the *Oregonian*:

“STEADMAN — April 13, John Wesley Steadman, late of Huber, Or.; husband of Audrey Steadman, brother of George and Stanley Steadman. Friends invited to services Friday, 1 pm, at the Colonial Mortuary, Sandy blvd. at 14th, under the auspices of Portland lodge NO. 142, BPOE. Vault entombment Lincoln Memorial Park mausoleum. EA4111.”<sup>2</sup>

A search for John Wesley Steadman's birth in Michigan produced no result.<sup>3</sup> Deeper examination of records supplying direct evidence of his birth information illuminates two facts: Audrey provided erroneous information as informant for the death certificate, and John Wesley Steadman altered his birth year during his life.

### EXAMINING JOHN'S BIRTH DATE AND LOCATION

John W. Steadman's vault marker in Lincoln Memorial Park bears the emblem of the Benevolent and Paternal Order of Elks, as referenced in his obituary. It also states his birth year as 1879, conflicting with the 1880 date noted on his death certificate.<sup>4</sup>

According to the records of the Milwaukee-Portland Elks Lodge #142, John W. Steadman's membership file, established in 1933, states that he was born on 23 August 1879 in Ontario, Canada.<sup>5</sup> Seven years after joining the Elks, John and Audrey were living on Shaw Street in unincorporated Aloha, Oregon. John was sixty years old, placing his birth between 1 April 1879 and 31 March 1880, and his birth location was Canada.<sup>6</sup> John again provided consistent birth

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon State Board of Health, death certificate, state file no. 9392, local registrar's no. 128 (1949), John Wesley Steadman; Oregon State Archives, Salem.

<sup>2</sup> “Steadman—April 13,” funeral notice, (*Portland*) *Oregonian*, 15 April 1949, sec. 3, p 4, col. 3; image, *GenealogyBank* (<https://www.genealogybank.com> : accessed 03 August 2020), image 32.

<sup>3</sup> For search of John Wesley Steadman's birth in Michigan, “Michigan Births and Christenings, 1775–1995,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1675348> : searched 20 August 2020) and “Michigan Births, 1867–1902,” database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1459684> : searched 20 August 2020). Both databases searched for births between 1879 and 1881 for J\* W\* Ste\*dman.

<sup>4</sup> John Wesley Steadman vault marker, Lincoln Memorial Park, 11801 SE Mt Scott Blvd., Portland, Oregon; digital image taken 08 July 2016 by author. See Attachment 1. Also, Oregon death cert. no. 9392 (1949), John Wesley Steadman.

<sup>5</sup> Benevolent and Paternal Order of Elks, (Portland, Oregon), to Kim Thurman, Shady Cove, Oregon, email, 12 August 2020, extracting data for John W. Steadman, Milwaukee-Portland Lodge #142, 1933–1950; privately held by author, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> 1940 U.S. census, Washington County, Oregon, population schedule, Aloha, enumeration district (ED) 34-11,

information two years later when he registered with Local Board Number 1 (Washington County) on 26 April 1942 for the Selective Service's fourth draft registration for World War II. He stated he was born on 23 August 1879 in Ontario, Canada.<sup>7</sup>

The consistency with which John's birth information was recorded between 1933 and 1942 calls into question the date and location recorded on his death certificate and provides a reasonable explanation as to why a search of birth records in Michigan provided no result.

## JOHN'S MARRIAGES AND IDENTIFICATION OF HIS PARENTS

John Wesley Steadman and Audra (Audrey) Austin were married on 15 July 1931 in Saint Helens, Oregon. B.I. Fenne and Geneva Hanna served as witnesses. On the medical certificate, John noted his birth as 23 August 1889 in Ontario, Canada, ten years younger than he would document in his Elks membership application only two years later.<sup>8</sup> Audrey was twenty-eight at the time of the marriage, which possibly led John to revise his age to forty-one. He also reported both of his parents were born in Canada and that he was divorced in Portland in 1929.<sup>9</sup>

John W. Steadman, a clerk working for B.I. Fenne, and his wife, Margaret, are found in the 1929 Polk Portland City Directory residing at 453 E. Burnside.<sup>10</sup> The relationship between John and B.I. Fenne appears to have extended beyond employer-employee, as Fenne served as a witness for John and Audrey's marriage. Also, the address on Burnside is identical to the residence reported for John and Audrey in Geneva Hanna's affidavit for their marriage license.<sup>11</sup>

On 14 December 1923, John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline applied for a license and married the same day in Vancouver, Washington. Both residents of the Ritz Hotel in Portland, each noted their status as divorced. John noted his age as forty-four and birthplace as Canada. He indicated his parents were Albert Steadman and Sarah Arune, also natives of Canada. The familiar name of a witness confirms John's identity: his employer and friend, B.I. Fenne of Portland.<sup>12</sup>

As John noted his marital status as divorced in 1923, a search of marriage records in Portland and surrounding counties provided no other possible unions.<sup>13</sup> Utilizing the 23 August

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sheet no. 3A, household 58, John W. Steadman; database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 09 August 2020), citing National Archives microfilm T627, roll 3,382.

<sup>7</sup> "U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1002/> : accessed 09 August 2020), card for John Wesley Steadman, serial no. U739, Local Draft Board No. 1, Washington County, Oregon.

<sup>8</sup> "Oregon, Columbia County Records, 1854–1958," unindexed images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1923992> : accessed 09 August 2020) > Marriage records, 1931 > images 198–204, Steadman-Austin, no. 1638, 15 July 1931. Also, Benevolent and Paternal Order of Elks, (Portland, Oregon), to Kim Thurman, 12 August 2020.

<sup>9</sup> "Oregon, Columbia County Records, 1854–1958," *FamilySearch*, Steadman-Austin, no. 1638, 15 July 1931. See Attachment 2. The marriage was initially reported as his first, then corrected to "2nd" above the divorce information.

<sup>10</sup> R. L. Polk, compiler, *Portland (Oregon) City Directory* (Portland: R.L. Polk & Co., 1929), 1612, John W. Steadman; "U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2469/> : accessed 20 August 2020).

<sup>11</sup> "Oregon, Columbia County Records, 1854–1958," *FamilySearch*, Steadman-Austin, no. 1638, 15 July 1931.

<sup>12</sup> "Washington, Marriage Records, 1854–2013," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2378/> : accessed 09 August 2020) > Clarke > Marriage Certificates 1923 Sep-Dec > image 1792, marriage certificate no. A1697, John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline (1923). See Attachment 3.

<sup>13</sup> For search of John Wesley Steadman marriages in Oregon before 1923, see "Oregon, State Marriages, 1906–

1879 birthdate assists in identifying a potential marriage 175 miles to the north. In 1918, John Wesley Steadman reported to the Local Board for Division No. 5 in Seattle, King County, Washington, for the third draft registration of World War I. While listing his date of birth as 23 August 1879, the registration card states his citizenship status as native born. John was working as a ship builder, and resided at 88 Lenora Street with his wife, Martha.<sup>14</sup> A physical description comparison of Seattle's John Wesley Steadman to Portland's John Wesley Steadman indicates it is possible they are the same individual (see Table 1), as gray eyes may be described as blue in some cases.

Table 1 Physical Description Comparison		
	John Wesley Steadman 1918 WWI Draft Registration Seattle, WA <sup>a</sup>	John Wesley Steadman 1942 WWII Draft Registration, Huber, OR <sup>b</sup>
Race	White	White
Height	Medium	5' 6"
Build / Weight	Medium	150 lbs.
Eye Color	Gray	Blue
Hair Color	Brown	Brown
<p>a. "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918," images, <i>Ancestry</i>, card for John Wesley Steadman, serial no. 5459, Local Draft Board for Division No. 5, Seattle, Wash.</p> <p>b. "U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942," image, <i>Ancestry</i> (<a href="https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1002/">https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1002/</a> : accessed 09 August 2020), card for John Wesley Steadman, serial no. U739, Local Draft Board No. 1, Washington County, Oregon.</p>		

A search of King County marriage records produced a marriage certificate for John W. Steadman and Martha Uphouse. As in the 1923 marriage to Margaret Cline, the license was issued on the same day of the ceremony on 15 December 1917 in Seattle.<sup>15</sup> No additional identifying vital information, such as parent names or birth date and location, is available within the marriage record to confirm the identity of John Wesley Steadman as the same individual found in Portland, Oregon in 1923.<sup>16</sup>

## SUMMARIZING EVIDENCE OF JOHN'S BIRTH AND FAMILY

Correlating sources containing birth information provided by John Wesley Steadman with the death certificate where Audrey Steadman served as informant supports the conclusion that

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1966," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61677/> : searched 1 October 2020) and "Oregon, Marriage Indexes, 1906–2009," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/5193/> : searched 1 October 2020). A search of all marriages for J\* W\* Steadman, male, provided only one suitable match: the 1931 marriage to Audra Austin.

<sup>14</sup> "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6482/> : accessed 09 August 2020), card for John Wesley Steadman, serial no. 5459, Local Draft Board for Division No. 5, Seattle, Washington.

<sup>15</sup> "Washington, Marriage Records, 1854–2013," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2378/> : accessed 09 August 2020) > King > Marriages 1917 Sep-Dec > image 1595, marriage certificate no. 61185, John W. Steadman and Martha Uphouse (1917).

<sup>16</sup> "History of King County marriage certificates, 1853 to the present," King County website (<https://bit.ly/3aOWYZs> : accessed 20 August 2020), section regarding county level certificate (1855–2002), para. 1.

the death certificate was in error regarding John's birth date and location (see Table 2).

Table 2 Correlation of Birth Information (Primary versus Secondary)			
SOURCE	BIRTH DATE	BIRTHPLACE	INFORMANT
1923 Marriage <sup>a</sup>	Abt. 1879 (calculated)	Canada	John
1931 Marriage <sup>b</sup>	23 August 1889	Ontario, Canada	John
Elk's member record <sup>c</sup>	23 August 1879	Ontario, Canada	John
WWII Draft Card <sup>d</sup>	23 August 1879	Ontario, Canada	John
Death Certificate <sup>e</sup>	23 August 1880	Michigan	Audrey
<i>Sources:</i> a. "Washington, Marriage Records, 1854–2013," <i>Ancestry</i> , marriage cert. no. A1697, John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline (1923). b. "Oregon, Columbia County Records, 1854–1958," <i>FamilySearch</i> > Marriage records, 1931 > Steadman-Austin, no. 1638, 15 July 1931. c. Benevolent and Paternal Order of Elks, (Portland, Oregon), to Kim Thurman, 12 August 2020. d. "U.S., World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942," <i>Ancestry</i> , card for John Wesley Steadman, Washington Co., Ore. e. Oregon death cert. no. 9392 (1949), John Wesley Steadman.			

One obvious discrepancy is presented—the 1889 birth year noted in John's marriage to Audrey in 1931. A search of Ontario birth records for John Wesley Steadman in 1889 provides no match.<sup>17</sup> It's likely that he falsified his birth year due to his bride's age being a much-younger twenty-eight compared to his age of fifty-one. Regardless of his reasoning, he did consistently note the 1879 year in records after the marriage.

In addition to the evidence of John's birth in Canada, two documents provide familial relationships. When John married Margaret Cline in 1923, he indicated his parents were Albert Steadman and Sarah Arune, both natives of Canada.<sup>18</sup> His obituary in 1949 noted he was survived by two brothers: George and Stanley Steadman.<sup>19</sup>

Utilizing the combination of John's birth on 23 August 1879 in Ontario and his known relatives, another John Wesley Steadman is found in Ontario and Michigan records, but he was not born in 1879.

## JOHN WESLEY STEADMAN OF ONTARIO AND MICHIGAN

John Wesley Steadman was born in Lambton County, Ontario, to Albert and Elizabeth (Arnew) Steadman.<sup>20</sup> Albert, a native of the area and farmer by occupation, married Elizabeth,

<sup>17</sup> For possible birth records, "Ontario, Canada Births, 1832–1914," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8838/> : searched 23 August 2020). Search parameters used were J\* W\* Ste\*dman, born 1889 +/- 1 year. No records matching John Steadman born in August were found.

<sup>18</sup> "Washington, Marriage Records, 1854–2013," *Ancestry*, marriage cert. no. A1697, John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline (1923).

<sup>19</sup> "Steadman—April 13," (*Portland Oregonian*, 15 April 1949).

<sup>20</sup> "Ontario, Canada Births, 1832–1914," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8838/> : accessed 09 August 2020), birth registration no. 16

also a Canadian native, on 24 December 1878 in Enniskillen.<sup>21</sup> Four children were born to the union, John being the third:

- George Melvin, born 6 October 1879<sup>22</sup>
- Thomas Stanley, born 27 July 1881<sup>23</sup>
- John Wesley, born 23 August 1883<sup>24</sup>
- Lizzie May, born 28 April 1887<sup>25</sup>

Twenty days after Lizzie's birth, Elizabeth died on 18 May 1887 due to "inflammation."<sup>26</sup> Now a widower with four young children, Albert and his family moved into the home of his elder brother, Thomas.<sup>27</sup> Tragically, young Lizzie died on 11 July from congestion of the lungs, only two months after her mother's passing.<sup>28</sup> Albert remarried on 5 June 1889 to Emma Andrews, a spinster seven years his junior.<sup>29</sup> The newly formed family migrated northwest two weeks later to Huron County, Michigan, and settled in Verona Township.<sup>30</sup>

By the summer of 1900, the Steadman family had grown to include four additional sons:

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(handwritten), 015969 (stamped), for John Wesley Steadman (1883), Enniskillen, Lambton County, Ontario, Canada.

<sup>21</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1938," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7921> : accessed 15 August 2020), marriage registration no. 2 (handwritten), 005105 (stamped), for Albert Steadman and Elizabeth Arnew (24 December 1878), Lambton Co., ON, Canada.

<sup>22</sup> "Ontario, Canada Births, 1832–1914," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8838/> : accessed 09 August 2020), birth reg. no. 32 (handwritten), 013628 (stamped), for George Melvin Steadman (1879), Enniskillen, Lambton Co., ON, Canada.

<sup>23</sup> "Ontario, Canada Births, 1832–1914," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8838/> : accessed 09 August 2020), birth reg. no. 20 (handwritten), 014221 (stamped), for Thomas Stanley Steadman (1881), Enniskillen, Lambton Co., ON, Canada.

<sup>24</sup> "Ontario, Canada Births, 1832–1914," *Ancestry*, birth reg. no. 16, for John Wesley Steadman (1883).

<sup>25</sup> "Ontario, Canada Births, 1832–1914," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8838/> : accessed 09 August 2020), birth reg. no. 21 (handwritten), 015948 (stamped), for Lizzie May Steadman (1887), Enniskillen, Lambton Co., ON, Canada.

<sup>26</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1948," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8946> : accessed 15 August 2020), death registration no. 27 (handwritten), 008261 (stamped), for Elizabeth Steadman (1887), Enniskillen, Lambton Co., ON, Canada.

<sup>27</sup> Sarah Jane (Steadman) McKinney, "A Bit of Steadman History" (MS, ca. 1959), p.2; photocopy in author's files.

<sup>28</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths and Deaths Overseas, 1869–1948," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8946> : accessed 15 August 2020), death reg., no. 28 (handwritten), 008264 (stamped), for Lizzie May Steadman (1887), Enniskillen, Lambton Co., ON, Canada.

<sup>29</sup> For Albert and Emma's marriage, "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1826–1938," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7921> : accessed 15 August 2020), marriage registration no. 6 (handwritten), 006390 (stamped), for Albert Steadman and Emma "Anderson" (1889), Enniskillen, Lambton Co., ON, Canada. For Emma's correct surname, "Michigan, Death Records, 1867–1952," database with images, *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60872> : accessed 15 August 2020), death certificate no. 430 for William David Steadman (1916), Huron County, Michigan. Emma (Andrews) Steadman was the mother of William David Steadman and informant for the death certificate.

<sup>30</sup> E.B. Foote, compiler, *Plat Book of Huron County, Michigan: Also Patron's Business and General Farmer's Directory of Huron Co. Mich.; with Biographical Sketches Compiled and Drawn from Personal Observations and the County Records* (Philadelphia: Imperial Publishing Co., 1904), 84; image, *HathiTrust* (<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/miua.2933913.0001.001> : accessed 03 August 2020).

- William David, born 10 March 1890<sup>31</sup>
- Noble Clifford, born 10 July 1892<sup>32</sup>
- Alton Duncan, born 17 June 1894<sup>33</sup>
- Clarence Albert, born 7 January 1900<sup>34</sup>

George, Thomas, and John, single young men of the ages of 20, 18, and 16, respectively, were still living at home with Albert, Emma, and their four half-brothers.<sup>35</sup>

A daughter, Mary Aileen, completed the Steadman family in 1904.<sup>36</sup> Her birth coincides with the last mention of John's name located in Huron County records: a biographical sketch of his father. "Wesley" is listed as one of three children born to Albert and Elizabeth.<sup>37</sup> While John's two older brothers, George and Stanley (as Thomas was alternately known), ultimately married and settled into farming life in Huron County, a search of area records provides no trace of John.<sup>38</sup> Albert and Emma Steadman, along with John's half-siblings, relocated to New York state in 1919, three years after the death of William David.<sup>39</sup> No evidence was located to indicate that John Wesley had joined his family in the move east.<sup>40</sup> Albert Steadman died in Allegany

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<sup>31</sup> "Michigan Births, 1867–1902," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 23 August 2020), entry for William D. Steadman, no. 183, 10 March 1890, Huron Co., Mich.; citing FHL microfilm 2,321,265, digital folder 4,207,579, image 55.

<sup>32</sup> "Michigan Births, 1867–1902," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 23 August 2020), entry for Noble C. Steadman, 10 July 1892, Huron Co., Mich.; citing FHL microfilm 2,322,377, digital folder 4,206,347, image 447.

<sup>33</sup> "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6482/> : accessed 09 August 2020), card for Alton Steadman, serial no. 2746, Precinct 1, Allegany County, New York.

<sup>34</sup> "U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917–1918," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6482/> : accessed 09 August 2020), card for Clarence A. Steadman, serial no. 2672, Local Draft Board for Huron Co., Mich.

<sup>35</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Huron Co., Mich., pop. sched., Verona Twp., ED 26, sheet no. 17A, dwell. 317, fam. 319, Albert Steadman household; database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 09 August 2020); FHL microfilm 1,240,715.

<sup>36</sup> "Michigan, County Births, 1867–1917," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : accessed 25 August 2020), entry for Ilene Steadman, 27 Feb 1904, Huron Co., Mich.; digital folder 5,191,158, image 573.

<sup>37</sup> Foote, *Plat Book of Huron County*, 84.

<sup>38</sup> For George Melvin Steadman in Huron County, 1910 U.S. census, Huron Co., Mich., pop. sched., Sigel Twp., ED 26, sheet no. 1B, dwell./fam. 14, George M. Steadman household; database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 09 August 2020); FHL microfilm 1,374,663. For Thomas Stanley Steadman in Huron County, 1940 U.S. census, Huron Co., Mich., pop. sched., Bad Axe, ED 32-1B, sheet no. 5B, house no. 132, Thomas S. Steadman household; image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 09 August 2020); National Archives microfilm T627, roll 1,758. For evidence of John Wesley Steadman after 1900, searches were conducted for "J\* W\* Ste\*dman" in Huron County, Michigan, in the 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940 U.S. Federal census records on *Ancestry* with no positive result.

<sup>39</sup> "Many Parties for Steadmans: Well Known Huron County People About to Move to New York," *The Times Herald* (Port Huron, Michigan), 18 November 1919, p. 6, col. 2.; image, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com> : accessed 1 October 2020). Also, 1920 U.S. census, Allegany Co., NY, pop. sched., Allen, ED 3; database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 09 August 2020); National Archives microfilm T625, roll 1,084. For Albert, Emma, Clarence and Mary Aileen Steadman, see sheet no. 5B, lines 51-54. For Alton Duncan Steadman, sheet no. 5B, line 87. For Noble Clifford Steadman, sheet no. 6A, line 17. For William David Steadman's death, see "Michigan, Death Records, 1867–1952," William David Steadman, 16 September 1916.

<sup>40</sup> For evidence of John Wesley Steadman in New York, searches were conducted for "J\* W\* Ste\*dman" in Allegany County, New York, in the 1920, 1930 and 1940 U.S. Federal census records on *Ancestry* with no positive

County, New York, in 1939; Emma predeceased him in 1924.<sup>41</sup> No obituary or probate records for Albert or Emma mentioning John Wesley Steadman have been located.<sup>42</sup>

### CORRELATION OF EVIDENCE FOR TWO JOHN WESLEY STEADMANS

The correlation of vital and family information between John Wesley Steadman of Ontario and Michigan and John Wesley Steadman of Oregon points to the likelihood that they are one and the same man (see Table 3). While minor conflicts exist, they can be easily resolved.

Table 3 Comparison of Men Named John Wesley Steadman		
	JWS - ONTARIO & MICHIGAN <sup>a</sup>	JWS - OREGON <sup>b</sup>
Birth Date	23 August 1883	23 August 1879
Birthplace	Lambton County, Ontario, Canada	Ontario, Canada
Father	Albert Steadman (born in Canada)	Albert Steadman (born in Canada)
Mother	Elizabeth Arnew (born in Canada)	Sarah Arune (born in Canada)
Brother	George Melvin Steadman	George Steadman
Brother	Thomas Stanley Steadman	Stanley Steadman
<i>Sources:</i> a. For John's birth, parents, and brothers, see text. b. For birth, see Table 2. For parents and brothers, see text.		

Both men share a birth date and place of 23 August in Ontario, fathers named Albert, and parents born in Canada. Both have brothers named George and Stanley. George Melvin Steadman and Thomas Stanley Steadman were alive and living in Michigan at the time of John's death in 1949, providing a logical reason why Audrey Steadman reported Michigan as John's birthplace.<sup>43</sup> Only two items of evidence differ: John's birth year and his mother's name. Logical explanations can be provided for both.

result.

<sup>41</sup> For Albert Steadman death, "New York, Death Index, 1852–1956," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61535/> : accessed 1 October 2020), Albert Steadman (1939), certificate no. 58791; citing New York State Department of Health. For Emma Steadman, "New York, Death Index, 1852–1956," *Ancestry*, Emma Steadman (1924), certificate no. 46924.

<sup>42</sup> For Albert Steadman probate search, Allegany County, New York, Probate Index Book 4:283; "New York Probate Records, 1629–1971," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/> : accessed 1 October 2020); citing FHL film 005114784. No listing for Albert Steadman was located. For Emma Steadman, Allegany Co., NY, Probate Index Book 3:283; "New York Probate Records, 1629–1971," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/> : accessed 1 October 2020); citing FHL film 005114783. No listing for Emma Steadman was located.

<sup>43</sup> For George M. Steadman, see "George Steadman," obituary, *The Times Herald* (Port Huron, Mich.), 2 June 1953, p. 13, col. 4-5; image, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com/> : accessed 23 August 2020). The obituary states his residence in Cass City, Mich., for four years prior to his death. For Thomas Stanley Steadman, see "Stanley T. Steadman," obituary, *The Times Herald* (Port Huron, Mich.), 25 February 1980, p. 16, col. 3; image, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com/> : accessed 23 August 2020). The obituary states Stanley had made his residence in Bad Axe since 1935.

The difference in birth year does not occur until John Wesley Steadman is found in the Pacific Northwest. No evidence has been located to pinpoint the exact time John would have left Michigan. His last documented residence at home was at the age of sixteen.<sup>44</sup> It's quite possible that he may have chosen to leave the farm prior to achieving the age of majority of twenty-one and subsequently falsified his birth year to legally qualify as an adult.<sup>45</sup> Also, the fact that John listed his birth year as 1889 when marrying his third wife in 1931 demonstrates John's flexibility with altering his age.

Both mother's documented maiden surnames, Arnew and Arune, are quite similar. An alternative interpretation of the handwriting on the 1923 marriage license could be "Arnue," phonetically similar to Elizabeth's name. Why would John list his mother's given name as Sarah, and not Elizabeth? John was three years old at the time of his mother's death in 1887. Growing up with a stepmother since the age of five, perhaps he did not accurately know his mother's name. Sarah may have been a family nickname or the middle name of Elizabeth, although no supporting evidence has been located.

## CONCLUSION

While John Steadman's reasoning is left to speculation, analysis and correlation of direct evidence exposes John's duplicity regarding his age after leaving home. A marriage record and obituary provide the familial connections necessary to link to sources correcting his birth date. John Wesley Steadman, who died on 13 April 1949 in Hillsboro, Washington County, Oregon, was born on 23 August 1883 in Lambton County, Ontario, Canada.

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<sup>44</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Huron Co., Mich., pop. sch., sheet no. 17A, dwell. 317, fam. 319, John W. Steadman.

<sup>45</sup> Michigan Legislature, *Age of Majority Act of 1971*, Act 79 (1 January 1972); transcription, *Michigan Legislature* (<https://bit.ly/34qOs1D> : accessed 23 August 2020), citing Section 722.52, Sec. 2(1). Age of majority in Michigan was not lowered to eighteen until 1971.



ATTACHMENT 1

John W. Steadman – Vault Marker  
(Photo)



John Wesley Steadman vault marker, Lincoln Memorial Park, 11801 SE Mt Scott Blvd., Portland, Oregon; digital image taken 08 July 2016 by author.

ATTACHMENT 2

Medical Certificate for Marriage Licenses – John W. Steadman and Audra Austin  
(Document)

1/

**Medical Certificate  
for  
Marriage License**

John W. Steadman

No. ....

\$9739. AMOUNT OF FEE TO BE PAID  
BY APPLICANT. All fees and charges of  
any physician making the necessary exami-  
nation of and issuing the necessary certi-  
ficate to any one party, as herein provided,  
shall not exceed the sum of \$2.50.  
(L 1913 c. 187, §8)

Filed July 15, 1931

J. W. Hunt, Clerk,  
By *W. E. Steadman*  
Deputy

CLERK OF COUNTY CLERK

Write Full Answer to All Questions in This Form Before Presenting to County Clerk. Bring a Witness Who Knows Both Parties.

GROOM	BRIDE
Name in full <i>John W. Steadman</i>	Name in full <i>Audra Austin</i>
Residence <i>Portland, Ore.</i>	Residence <i>Portland, Ore.</i>
Race <i>White</i>	Race <i>White</i>
Date of Birth <i>Aug 23 - 1889</i>	Date of Birth <i>Feb - 12 - 1903</i>
Place of Birth <i>Ontario - Canada</i>	Place of Birth <i>Oklahoma</i>
Occupation <i>Clerk</i>	Occupation <i>.....</i>
No. of Marriage <i>One</i>	No. of Marriage <i>One</i>
If Divorced, where? <i>Port. Ore.</i> Date <i>1929</i>	If Divorced, where? <i>Port. Ore.</i> Date <i>1924</i>
Father's Place of Birth, State or Country only <i>Canada</i>	Father's Place of Birth, State or Country only <i>Missip.</i>
Mother's Place of Birth, State or Country only <i>Canada</i>	Mother's Place of Birth, State or Country only <i>Ills</i>

“Oregon, Columbia County Records, 1854–1958,” unindexed images, *FamilySearch*  
(<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1923992> : accessed 09 August 2020) >  
Marriage records, 1931 > image 203, Steadman-Austin, no. 1638, 15 July 1931.



## ATTACHMENT 3

Certificate of Marriage – John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline  
(Document)

A 1697

### CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE

PLACE OF MARRIAGE, County of Clarke Town of Concord

GROOM		Personal and Statistic Particulars		BRIDE	
Full Name	<u>John W. Steadman</u>	Full Name	<u>Margaret Cline</u>	Residence	<u>Rt. 1, Walnut</u>
Residence	<u>Rt. 1, Walnut</u>	Residence	<u>Rt. 1, Walnut</u>	Age at last	<u>30</u>
Street and No.	<u>Rt. 1, Walnut</u>	Street and No.	<u>Rt. 1, Walnut</u>	Birthday	<u>Years</u>
Age at last	<u>44</u>	Age at last	<u>30</u>	Color or	<u>White</u>
Birthday	<u>Years</u>	Birthday	<u>Years</u>	Race	<u>White</u>
Color or	<u>White</u>	Color or	<u>White</u>	Single, Widowed	<u>Divorced</u>
Race	<u>White</u>	Race	<u>White</u>	or Divorced	<u>Divorced</u>
Single, Widowed	<u>Divorced</u>	Single, Widowed	<u>Divorced</u>	Number of	<u>Second</u>
or Divorced	<u>Divorced</u>	or Divorced	<u>Divorced</u>	Marriages	<u>Second</u>
Number of	<u>Second</u>	Number of	<u>Second</u>	Birthplace	<u>Or.</u>
Marriages	<u>Second</u>	Marriages	<u>Second</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>
Birthplace	<u>Or.</u>	Birthplace	<u>Or.</u>	Occupation	<u>Businessman</u>
State or County	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>	Occupation	<u>Businessman</u>
Occupation	<u>Businessman</u>	Occupation	<u>Businessman</u>	Name of	<u>Jacob Cline</u>
Occupation	<u>Businessman</u>	Occupation	<u>Businessman</u>	Father	<u>Jacob Cline</u>
Name of	<u>Albert Steadman</u>	Name of	<u>Jacob Cline</u>	Birthplace of	<u>Or.</u>
Father	<u>Albert Steadman</u>	Father	<u>Jacob Cline</u>	Father	<u>Or.</u>
Birthplace of	<u>Or.</u>	Birthplace of	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>
Father	<u>Or.</u>	Father	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>
State or County	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>	Maiden Name	<u>Ada Goss</u>
State or County	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>	of Mother	<u>Ada Goss</u>
Maiden Name	<u>Sarah Anna</u>	Maiden Name	<u>Ada Goss</u>	Birthplace of	<u>Or.</u>
of Mother	<u>Sarah Anna</u>	of Mother	<u>Ada Goss</u>	Mother	<u>Or.</u>
Birthplace of	<u>Or.</u>	Birthplace of	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>
Mother	<u>Or.</u>	Mother	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>
State or County	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>	Maiden Name of Bride, if	<u>Margaret Cline</u>
State or County	<u>Or.</u>	State or County	<u>Or.</u>	She Was Previously Married	<u>Margaret Cline</u>
Maiden Name of Bride, if	<u>Margaret Cline</u>	Maiden Name of Bride, if	<u>Margaret Cline</u>	We, the groom and bride named in this certificate, hereby certify that the information given herein is correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.	<u>John W. Steadman</u> Groom <u>Miss Margaret Cline</u> Bride
She Was Previously Married	<u>Margaret Cline</u>	She Was Previously Married	<u>Margaret Cline</u>		

CERTIFICATE OF PERSON PERFORMING CEREMONY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline were joined in Marriage by me in accordance with the laws of the State of Washington, at Concord this 18 day of Dec. 1923

<p>Signatures of Witnesses</p> <p><u>B. J. Renne</u> Res. <u>Or.</u> St. No. <u>Or.</u></p> <p><u>Avalyn Asaavage</u> Res. <u>Or.</u> St. No. <u>Or.</u></p>	<p>Signature of the person performing the ceremony.</p> <p><u>Jas O. Blair</u> Official Station <u>J.O.B.</u></p> <p>Residence <u>Or.</u></p>
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“Washington, Marriage Records, 1854–2013,” image, *Ancestry*  
(<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2378/> : accessed 09 August 2020) > Clarke > Marriage Certificates 1923 Sep-Dec > image 1792, marriage certificate no. A1697, John W. Steadman and Margaret Cline (1923).