# Aleta Utterback REVISED RESEARCH REPORT - PROGEN 52

**DATE:** 24 August 2021

**REPORT TO:** Research file – Thurston, Charles A. and Martha "Mattie (Shaffer)

**SUBJECT:** Divorce of Charles Albert Thurston and Martha "Mattie" (Shaffer) Thurston

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

Identify the divorce date and location of Charles Albert Thurston (1861-1940) and Martha Ann "Mattie" Shafer (1861-1927) who were married on 24 December 1882 in Colfax County, New Mexico.

## **BACKGROUND**

Charles Albert Thurston was born in Illinois on 31 March 1861.<sup>1</sup> He married Martha A. "Mattie" Shafer born January 1860 in Indiana,<sup>2</sup> on 24 December 1882 in Colfax, New Mexico.<sup>3</sup> From New Mexico, the couple moved to El Paso, Texas where their first child, a daughter, Florence was born on 20 April 1884.<sup>4</sup> On 17 August 1886, their second child, Eugene Albert was born in Lake Valley, New Mexico.<sup>5</sup> By 1889 Charles was a clerk at the General Passenger Office of the S.P. Co., and living in Alameda, California.<sup>6</sup>

¹ Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, registrar's no. 380 [stamped no. 9086], (1941), Charles Albert Thurston; County Registrar-Recorder's Office, Los Angeles; U.S., Chicago and North Western Railroad Employment Records, 1935-1970; See also, pension record 4258 for Chas A. Thurston, digital image, *Ancestry.com*, (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed April 25, 2019); citing original data of Chicago and North Western Railroad Employee Records, Chicago & North Western Historical Society, Berwyn Illinois; As well as 1900 U.S. Census, San Francisco County, California, population schedule, San Francisco City, Assembly District 34, enumeration district (ED)106, sheet 6, dwelling 96, family 120; Charles Thurston household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed April 25,2019); FHL microfilm 1240102; citing NARA microfilm T623.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> 1860 U.S. census, , Madison, Carroll, Indiana population schedule, Delphi, dwelling 672, family 672, Moses Shafer household, image, *Ancestry.com* (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed 25 April 2019); citing NARA microfilm publication M653 roll 246. Although Mattie's headstone and her death certificate claim her birth year as 1861, she is clearly on the 1860 census taken in July of 1860 6/12 or as a 6 month old infant, placing her and her twin sister Mary's birthdate as January of 1860 (See 1860 U.S. census instructions page 14, section 7 entitled "Ages," for calculating an infant's age under one year at <a href="https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1860instructions.pdf">https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1860instructions.pdf</a>: accessed 24 August 2021) See - Los Angeles County, California, death certificate, local register no. 2600, (1923), Martha A. Thurston, Registrar- Recorder-County Clerk, Los Angeles; See also, Find A Grave, database with images, (<a href="https://www.findagrave.com">http://www.findagrave.com</a>: accessed 7 May 2019), memorial 179392502, Martha A "Mattie" Shafer Thurston, Inglewood Park Cemetery, Inglewood, Los Angeles County, California; gravestone photograph by BJW:.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "New Mexico, Compiled Marriage Index, 1727-1900," database with images, *Ancestry*.com (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed April 25, 2019) > Thurston > Charles Thurston and Mattie Shafer, Colfax, County, 24 Dec 1882.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> 1900 U.S. Census, San Francisco County, California, population schedule, San Francisco City, Assembly District 34, enumeration district (ED) 106, sheet 6, dwelling 96, family 120; Charles A. Thurston household; digital image, Ancestry.com (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a> : accessed April 25, 2019); FHL microfilm 1240102; citing NARA microfilm T623. For birth date and place of Florence Thurston see: Florence Thurston Hamlin, SS no. 563-24-7740, 8 August 1941, Application for Account Number (Form SS-5), Social Security Administration, Baltimore, Maryland.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid; For birth date and place of Eugene Thurston also see - Eugene Albert Thurston, SS no. 547-09-6766, 1 May 1937, Application for Account Number (Form SS-5), Social Security Administration, Baltimore, Maryland.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "San Francisco City Directories Online," San Francisco Public Library, (<a href="https://sfpl.org/?pg=2000540401">https://sfpl.org/?pg=2000540401</a>: accessed 25 April 2019) for Charles A. Thurston-railroad agent, Langley's San Francisco City Directory, 1889, p. 1272.

The S.P. Company or "Espee" was the Southern Pacific Railroad also known as the Southern Pacific Company and the Southern Pacific Transportation Company.<sup>7</sup> Charles worked for this company as it changed names throughout his career and both El Paso and Lake Valley were on S.P. Company routes at the time of the children's births.<sup>8</sup>

In 1890, the family was living on Buena Vista Avenue in San Francisco, California. In 1898, Charles was promoted to Traveling Agent for Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. In 1900 the family appears together on Valencia Street in San Francisco.

By 1910 Charles is living in Los Angeles with Mary (Young) Thurston, his second wife and has been married for three years. <sup>12</sup> Mattie and her children, Florence and Eugene have not been found in the 1910 census. <sup>13</sup> Eugene married Irma Blanche Bean on 11 August 1910 and listed his residence as Los Angeles and his occupation as a railroad clerk. <sup>14</sup> Florence married Harry R. Hamlin in Denver, Colorado on 15 July 1908. <sup>15</sup>

In 1920 Mattie is living with Florence and her family in Alhambra, Los Angeles County in California and is listed as divorced.<sup>16</sup>

## PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Previous research has been completed as set forth in the "Background" section. An in-depth San Francisco directory study was completed to discern Charles Albert Thurston, the railroad agent from other men of the same name in San Francisco between 1888 and 1906. A timeline on the next page substantiates Charles' identity as an employee with the S & P Company and the Chicago & Northwestern Railway Company for his entire career in San Francisco. <sup>17</sup> Charles Albert Thurston, the railroad agent, and his wife Mattie Shafer Thurston are the subjects of this research.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Southern Pacific Transportation Co., (<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern Pacific Transportation Company">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern Pacific Transportation Company</a> : accessed 13 July 2021)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>"California Great Registers, 1886-1898," database with images; *Ancestry.com* (<u>www.ancestry.com</u>: accessed 25 April 2019) image # 227, line 182, entry for Charles Albert Thurston; citing Collection Number: 4-2A; California State Library roll number 2; FHL roll number 976448.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> "Railway Agents Promoted," San *Francisco Examiner*, 13 March 1898, p. 7, col. 3; digital image, Newspapers.com (<a href="http://www.newspapers.com">http://www.newspapers.com</a>: accessed 25 Apr 2019).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> 1900 U.S. census, San Francisco County, California, population schedule, San Francisco City, Assembly District 34, enumeration district (ED)106, sheet 6, dwelling 96, family 120; Charles A. Thurston household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com.: accessed April 25, 2019); FHL microfilm 1240102; citing NARA microfilm T623.

 <sup>12 1910</sup> U.S. census, Los Angeles, California, population schedule, Los Angeles County, enumeration district
 (ED) 74, sheet 26, dwelling 691, family 711; Charles Thurston household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed April 25, 2019); citing NARA microfilm T624.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ancestry.com (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com/search/">http://www.familysearch.org/</a>) Separate searches included wildcard surname searches "Th\*n" variants of Martha, Mattie, Eugene, Gene, Flo\* and Florence as given names and surnames; variables a range of birth years and Indiana and California birthplaces resepectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> California Department of Health Services, marriage certificate 10-008064, (1910); Eugene Albert Thurston and Irma Blanche Bean: Sacramento.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> "Colorado, County Marriages and State Indexes, 1862-2006," database, Florence Thurston to Harry R. Hamlin; Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com: accessed 25 April 2019) citing Colorado Marriages, State Archives, Denver Colorado, film number: 001690084.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> 1920 U. S. Census, Alhambra, Los Angeles, California, population schedule, Los Angeles County, enumeration district (ED) 577, sheet 4B, dwelling 101, family 103; Harry R. Hamlin household; digital image, Ancestry.com (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed April 25, 2019); citing NARA microfilm T625.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Aleta Utterback, research report dated 24 April 2019, "Charles Albert Thurston and Charles A. Thurston both of San Francisco in the early 1900's." Privately held by Aleta Utterback, [ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE,] Ketchikan, Alaska.

Table 1	Charles A. Thurston Residential/Occupational Timeline in San Francisco	
1888	No listing. Not living in San Francisco yet.	
1889	Thurston, Charles A., clerk Gen. Passenger Office S. P. Co., r. Alameda	
1890	Thurston, C. A., clerk general passenger offices S.P. Co.; r. Alameda	
1891	Thurston, C.A., Clerk, S&P Co., r. Alameda	
1892	Thurston, Charles A., district passenger agent S.P. Co. r. 485 Haight	
1893	Thurston, Charles A., traveling passenger agent, r. 521 Haight	
1894	Thurston, Charles A., passenger agent S & P Co., r. 521 Haight	
1895	Thurston, Charles A., agent S & P Co., r. San Jose	
1896	Thurston, Charles A., district passenger agent S.P. Co., 4 Montgomery, r. Sacramento, Cal.	
1897	Thurston, Charles A., district passenger agent S.P. Co., 4 Montgomery	
1898	Thurston, Charles A., traveling agent Chicago & Northwestern Railway co., 2 Montgomery, r. 667 Bush	
1899	Thurston, Charles A., traveling agent Chicago & Northwestern Ry co., r. 667 Bush	
1900	Thurston, Charles A., traveling agent Chicago and Northwestern Ry., r. Occidental Hotel	
1901	Thurston, Charles A., traveling agent Chicago and Northwestern Ry. Co., 617 Market, r. 907 Valencia	
1902	Thurston Charles A., traveling agt. Chicago and Northwestern Ry., r. 566 Geary	
1903	Thurston Charles A., traveling agt. Chicago and Northwestern Ry., r. 643 Hyde	
1904	Thurston Charles A., traveling agt. C & NW Ry., r. 566 Geary	
1905	Thurston Charles A., traveling agt. C & NW Ry., r. 136 Belvedere	
1906	No listing. Moved to Los Angeles	
#C E	isos City Dinastorias Online" Con Emprisos Dublis Library (https://ofal.org/?pa-2000540401)	

"San Francisco City Directories Online", San Francisco Public Library, (https://sfpl.org/?pg=2000540401 : accessed 25 April 2019) for Charles A. Thurston – railroad agent, Langley's San Francisco City Directory 1888, p. 1150; 1889, p. 1272; 1890, p. 1288; 1891, p. 1346; 1892, p. 1348, 1893; p. 1435; 1894, p. 1388; 1895, p. 1454; 1896, p. 1532; 1897, p. 1678; 1898, p. 1636; 1899, p. 1690; 1900, p. 1674; 1901, p. 1736; 1902, p. 1752; 1903, p. 1797; 1904, p. 1816; 1905, p. 1818; 1906, p. 438.

**LIMITATIONS ON RESEARCH**: Online research only. No time limitation due to personal research.

## REPOSITORIES AND SOURCES

- Newspapers.com by subscription—California newspapers 1888-1910
- Genealogy Bank.com by subscription California newspapers 1888-1910
- San Francisco Genealogy https://www.sfgenealogy.org/sf/sfdata.htm 1888-1910
- California Digital Newspaper Collection <a href="https://cdnc.ucr.edu/">https://cdnc.ucr.edu/</a> San Francisco and San Jose California newspapers 1888-1910

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The research objective was partially met. Evidence was found in local newspapers that told the story of the beginning of the end of the marriage when Charles and Mattie legally separated. The reported elements of a maintenance agreement filed in September of 1896 offered a likely reason for Mattie to file a suit for continued maintenance in 1903 when that agreement ended. She likely had little to no income. Within a year of the court denying Mattie's suit for continuing maintenance, Charles filed for divorce. Their original divorce was finalized in May of 1905.

The San Francisco earthquake that occurred on 18 April 1906 destroyed the courthouse, city hall and most documents held within them. It is likely this caused issues when Charles decided to remarry in 1906. This conclusion is drawn based on the new filing of a divorce that takes place in July of 1906. Charles filed a petition with the court presumably to certify a divorce took place in 1905, or to get a new divorce decree based on documents he may have had in his custody. A final judgment of decree of divorce occurred within a few days of the filing and was published on 17 July 1906 in *The Recorder*. Charles married Mary Catherine Young one week later on 24 July 1906.

Based on direct and indirect evidence gathered from newspaper articles that were likely based on primary information gleaned from either original proceedings and/or original court records which no longer exist, and thorough research in original records as cited in the Detailed Findings section; a timeline of the marriage, separation and divorce of Charles A. Thurston and Mattie A. (Shafer) Thurston occurred as follows:

•	24 December 1882	Charles A. Thurston married Mattie A. Shafer in New Mexico.
•	30 September 1896	Charles and Mattie legally separate in San Jose, California.
•	1 May 1903	Mattie files suit for continued maintenance and support.
•	June 1904	Court rules against Mattie for future support.
•	January 1905	Charles files for divorce in San Francisco.
•	May 1905	Divorce is granted.
•	March 1906	Charles moves to Los Angeles due to a promotion.
•	18 April 1906	San Francisco Earthquake destroys the San Francisco courthouse.
•	13 July 1906	Charles files for divorce, presumably to establish his status as divorced.
•	17 July 1906	Final judgment, decree of divorce is published.
•	24 July 1906	Charles A. Thurston and Mary C. Young are married.

Further research as indicated later in this report may produce original, primary information that could answer the research question directly and further solidify any assumptions made or offer further questions.

## **DETAILED FINDINGS**

<u>Source Analysis</u>: Newspapers of the early1900's capitalized on sensationalism and some court cases were generally open to the public and often targets of that sensationalism.<sup>19</sup> Although some newspaper items may be sensationalized, correlating the information from each of the individual sources brings more cohesiveness and reliability to the "facts" presented in the articles. The first two sets of articles were published on the same dates and could have been shared by one newspaper with the others which was a common practice in the 1900's. The facts of the case are represented comparably in each of the different newspapers of the same dates.<sup>20</sup> The informant is undetermined. The information is secondary and the evidence is direct. The newspaper reporter may have been in the courtroom listening to the proceedings and taking notes or had access to a document that was considered open to the public and gleaned the more sensational items of interest. All newspaper articles were found at Newspapers.com and they were all accessed 3 July 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The Great 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, (<a href="https://www.historynet.com/the-great-1906-san-francisco-earthquake-and-fire.htm">https://www.historynet.com/the-great-1906-san-francisco-earthquake-and-fire.htm</a> : accessed 13 July 2021)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> See the History of American Journalism, "The 1900's" (<a href="https://history-journalism.ku.edu/1900/1900.shtml">https://history-journalism.ku.edu/1900/1900.shtml</a> : accessed 12 July 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> See Teaching History, "Breaking the News in 1900," (<a href="https://teachinghistory.org/history-content/ask-a-historian/22927">historian/22927</a>: accessed 12 July 2021)

**Source 1:** "Wife Demands Support," San Francisco Chronicle, (San Francisco, California), 2 May 1903, p. 9, col. 2. (note that Charles is misidentified as the "proprietor of a stationery store..." see

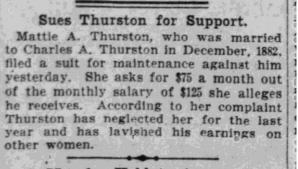
previous research)

Mattie A. Thurston, who is the wife of Charles A. Thurston, the proprietor of a stationery store at 1650 Polk street, filed a suit for maintenance yesterday against him. Mrs. Thurston alleges that her husband deserted his family several years ago and has since then contributed nothing toward its support. She also declares that for more than a year Thurston has been living unlawfully with a woman named G. Clark. The stationer's income is alleged to exceed \$125 per month, and she asks the Court to award her three-afths of it. Attorney Robert King represents her.

Source 2: "Local Brevities," Petaluma Daily Morning Courier, (San Francisco, California), 2 May 1903, p.3, col. 3

Miss Mattie A. Thurston has sued her hussband, Charles A. Thurston, for maintenance, accusing him of desertion. Mrs. Thurston states that she does not desire a divorce, but an order requiring her husband to support her.

Source 3: "Sues Thurston for Support," San Francisco Call, (San Francisco, California), 2 May 1903, p. 8, col. 2



<u>Content Analysis</u>: Three articles published on **2 May 1903** were found in three different Bay Area newspapers: The San Francisco Chronicle, Petaluma Daily Morning Courier and The San Francisco Call.

The first article indicates that Mattie filed suit against Charles "yesterday." Each article seems to be covering the same action, the filing of a lawsuit for maintenance by Mattie against Charles on 1 May 1903. This is the only instance Charles is identified as a proprietor of a "stationary store." No further evidence has been found that he ever owned a store suggesting that this was an error on the newspaper reporter's part. A study of San Francisco Directories located in the Background section details Charles A. Thurston's railroad career in San Francisco. This article also indicates that Mattie alleges Charles,

"deserted the family years ago" and offers no support; that he has been living with another woman; that his income exceeds \$125 per month and that she expects three-fifths of that income for maintenance.

The second article states that she has filed suit for maintenance on the grounds of desertion and "does not want a divorce," but does want him to support her.

The third article again indicates that she has filed suit for maintenance and that Charles has neglected her and has spent his income on other women. The information about his earnings are the same as the previous article but her request for the amount of maintenance is stated in dollars. A date of marriage is indicated as December 1882. This date is consistent with research as stated previously. Their actual marriage date from indexed records for Colfax, New Mexico was Christmas Eve 1882 (original documentation has been requested from the county records office).<sup>21</sup>

All three articles are based on an undetermined informant. The information may be primary or secondary information. Primary information would be witnessing either parties' testimony under oath while present in the courtroom. The information would be secondary if it was gleaned from an *original complaint* filed with the court, which no longer exists. Correlation with other items of information must be considered.

In two separate articles in the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Call* below dated **7 June 1904**, over a year later, Charles A. Thurston has prevailed in the lawsuit Mattie filed against him as reported in the previous three articles.

Source 4: "Other Cases," San Francisco Chronicle, (San Francisco, California), 7 Jun 1904, p. 9, col. 5

A decree in Charles A. Thurston's favor in the suit brought by Mattie A. Thurston for maintenance was signed yesterday by Judge Troutt. The Thurstons were married in 1882, and on September 30, 1896, they made an agreement at San Jose, stating that "owing to certain differences of belief and opinions, which made it impossible for them to live together happily," they would thereafter live apart, deeming this course advisable for the happiness of their children as well as of themselves. They divided their community property, and Thurston paid his wife \$200 down and \$50 per month for five years, in accordance with the agreement, she relinquishing all further claim on him for support.

Source 5: "Escapes Alimony," San Francisco Call, (San Francisco, California), 7 June 1904, p. 16, col. 5.

# ESCAPES ALIMONY.

Judge Troutt has refused to compel Charles A. Thurston, a railroad employe, to pay his former wife, Mattie Thurston, further alimony. He holds that she relinquished any claims she might have in an agreement signed by her at the time she secured a divorce.

©2021 - Aleta Utterback, All Rights Reserved

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "New Mexico, Compiled Marriage Index, 1727-1900," database with images, *Ancestry*.com (<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">http://www.ancestry.com</a>: accessed April 25, 2019) > Thurston > Charles Thurston and Mattie Shafer, Colfax, County, 24 Dec 1882.

<u>Content Analysis</u>: These two articles offer us a more thorough understanding of the couple's time and energy spent in the court system.

The San Francisco Chronicle article indicates that the Court has determined a previous agreement, (direct evidence of an original court document) has been taken under consideration by the Judge. That document was agreed to in San Jose, California on 30 September 1896. The Judge held that, "the couple divided their community property," Charles paid Mattie \$200 down and \$50 per month for five years for maintenance and support; and Mattie relinquished all further claims from Charles with that agreement. This article gives some insight for the separation in the quoted statement from the original agreement; "owing to certain differences of belief and opinions, which made it impossible for them to live together happily." As noted in Source 2, Mattie did not want to divorce, she was looking for maintenance and support. The "divorce" referred to in Source 5 was likely the original separation and maintenance agreement.

The San Francisco Call article indicates that the Judge "has refused to compel," or has ordered that Charles does not have to pay alimony or further support to Mattie due to the agreement she signed previously relinquishing any further claims. The newspaper states that agreement is part of a divorce action, however further research and Mattie's previous statement in the *Petaluma Daily Morning Courier* that she, "did not desire a divorce," offers evidence that was not necessarily the case.

Source 6: "Says Wife is Malicious," San Francisco Chronicle, (San Francisco, California), 29 Jan 1905,

p. 33, col. 3.



<u>Content Analysis</u>: In the above article dated **29 January 1905**, Charles has filed for divorce on the 28 January 1905 accusing Mattie of "hurting his reputation" with claims of "malicious and scandalous charges." This article again confirms the correct couple with the 1882 marriage date in New Mexico.

Source: 7: "Other Husbands Also Unkind," San Francisco Chronicle (San Francisco, California), 25

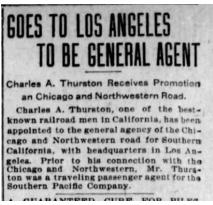
May 1905, p. 13, col.3.

The following divorces were granted: Anna Keiser from Gustav Keiser, to whom she was married last June, for crueity; Carrie B. Keefer from George H. Keefer, to whom she was married in 1879, for desertion, she resuming her maiden name, Flora; J. B. Roebuck from Nora Roebuck, who has been living with J. Morrell at 1022½ Fifth street, Sacramento; Mary Jane Hesen from Edward Detmow Hesen; Charles A. Thurston, a railway agent, from Mattie A. Thurston, for crueity, he to pay \$500 to her for the support of their child.

<u>Content Analysis</u>: In the article above indicating the end of the marriage dated **25 May 1905** the actual divorce is reported as follows: "The following divorces were granted... Charles A. Thurston, a railway agent, from Mattie A. Thurston, for cruelty, he to pay \$500 to her for the support of their child." The only "child" left in the home was Eugene; he was 18 years old at the time of the divorce.

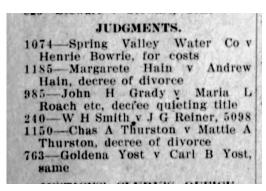
This article offers *primary information*, <u>based</u> on original records (a divorce decree with the court), and recorded by the newspaper reporter (secondary information) which offers direct evidence of the divorce of Charles A. Thurston and his wife Mattie Thurston in the early summer of 1905.

**Source 8**: "Goes to Los Angeles to Be General Agent," *San Francisco Examiner*, (San Francisco, California), 20 March 1906, Page 4, col. 7.



<u>Content Analysis</u>: Charles was promoted to General Agent for the Chicago and Northwestern Railway ten months later and moved to Los Angeles. It appears he did have a worthy reputation as "one of the best-known railroad men in California" according to the local announcement. He married Mary Catherine Young a few months later on 22 July 1906, in Los Angeles. <sup>22</sup>

**Source 9**: "New Filings, Suits, Etc., Superior Court," *The Recorder*, (San Francisco, California), 14 July 1906, page 1, col. 3.



<sup>&</sup>quot;Marriages," Los Angeles Times, 22 Jul 1906, p. 12, col. 2; digital image, Newspapers.com (http://www.newspapers.com : accessed 25 Apr 2019).

**Source 10:** "New Filings, Suits, Etc., 'Judgments,'" *The Recorder*, (San Francisco, California), 17 July 1906, page 4, col. 1.

1147—Missing
1148—In re Easton, Eldridge & Co, insolvent, petition to lease real estate
1149—Jas J Searle v Burnstine
Bros, conversion \$3539—H W Johnson
1150—94322—Dept 3—Chas A
Thurston v Mattie A Thurston, petition
1151—94764—Maud L Stone v L
Stone, copy of complaint
1152—Luigi Drago v Girard Fire and Marine Ins Co of Philadelphia, insurance—Burchard & H

<u>Source Analysis</u>: The Recorder is a local legal newspaper for the San Francisco Bay Area and has been published since 1900. This publication offers primary information based on original documents that are filed at the local court, although the article is a derivative source. This newspaper is a more reliable source than perhaps any other non-legal newspaper because it is specifically based on original documents and not sensationalism.

<u>Content Analysis</u>: The 14 July 1906 listing of the new filings of a petition in case file no. 1150, Chas A. Thurston v Mattie A Thurston can be deemed a petition for divorce based on the judgment with the San Francisco Superior Court in the same month. The 17 July 1906 listing includes the same case file no. 1150 regarding Charles A. Thurston v. Martha A. Thurston and the final judgment or decree of divorce.

As stated earlier, the San Francisco Earthquake on 18 April 1906 destroyed the courthouse and all documents it held. It is likely, due to document loss, that Charles needed an original, certified copy of the divorce decree to wed Mary Catherine Young. The court may have determined a need to submit documentation for review, or file a new case to establish that a divorce took place in May of 1905. Charles married Mary Catherine Young five days after that judgment was published in *The Recorder*. This article offers direct evidence of the divorce of Charles A. Thurston and Mattie A. Thurston with an identifiable final judgment and decree of divorce with a case number, although not a specific date.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on direct and indirect evidence gathered from newspaper articles that were likely based on primary information gleaned from original proceedings (or hearings) and/or original court records which no longer exist, and thorough research in original records; Charles Albert Thurston and Martha A. Shafer Thurston were originally granted a divorce in the early summer of 1905 and then again in the summer of 1906 due to probable loss of records. A complete timeline of the marriage, separation and divorce of the couple can be found in the Summary of Findings at the beginning of this report.

## **FURTHER RESEARCH**

Documentation has been requested from Colfax County, New Mexico for the original record of marriage between Charles A. Thurston and Mattie Shaffer in December of 1882

Documentation has been requested from the Santa Clara County Superior Court Archives for the entire original agreement that was negotiated between the parties in September of 1896.

Documentation has been requested from the San Francisco Superior Court for the second divorce case file which took place after the earthquake for original, direct evidence of the final divorce.

### OTHER SOURCES CONSULTED

Genealogy Bank offered the exact articles in the same newspapers that were found on Newspapers.com. Therefore, this site was not utilized in this research project other than the initial search.

San Francisco Genealogy website did not offer any newspapers for research that were not available at Newspapers.com. There were no further records available on this site that offered information for divorces between the years of 1895-1910 other than the *San Francisco Call* Index. That newspaper was utilized at the Newspapers.com website. Therefore, this site was not utilized in this research project other than the initial search.

California Digital Newspaper Collection did not offer any newspapers for research that were not available at Newspapers.com. Therefore, this site was not utilized in this research project other than the initial search.