

One Child or Two? Sorting Out the Cochran Children

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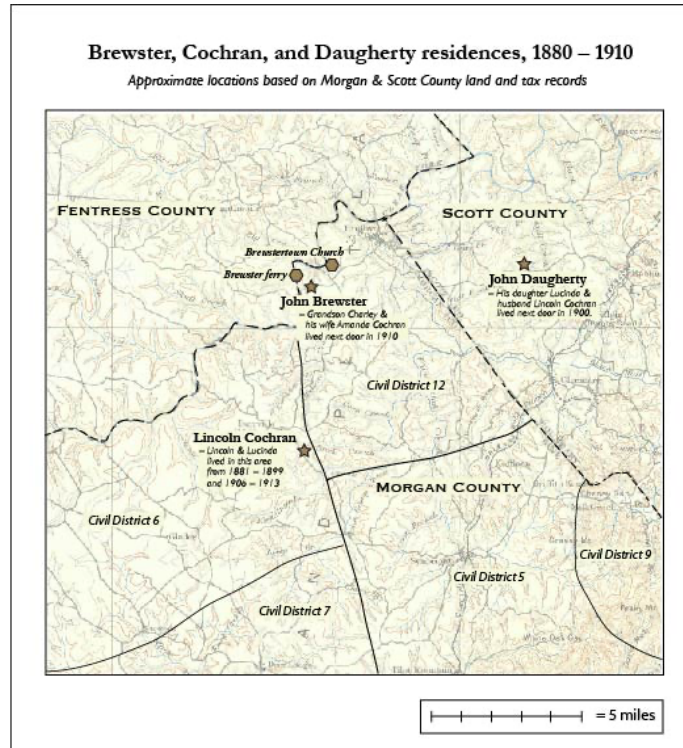
Bennie Cochran and Amanda Cochran both appear to be the children of James Abraham Lincoln Cochran and his wife, Lucinda Daugherty, who lived in a remote section of Morgan and Scott Counties in eastern Tennessee from 1880 to the early 1900s.

But were Bennie and Amanda two different people or might they be the same person? Bennie's connection to Lincoln and Lucinda rests on a single census record, while several records as well as indirect information support Amanda's identification as their daughter.

Where's Bennie?

In the 1900 U.S. census, Lincoln Cochran and his wife Lucinda were enumerated in northwestern Scott County near the Morgan County line with ten children in their household; the family lived next door to Lucinda's elderly father, John Daugherty.¹

Map 1: Brewster, Cochran, and Daugherty residences, 1880-1910



The fourth child in Lincoln and Lucinda's household was a son, 10-year-old Bennie, born in November 1889. According to the census, Lucinda had borne ten children and all ten were still alive. The census record for the family has no other information about Bennie, including whether he had been in school that year.

After 1900, however, Bennie is missing in action. In the 1910 census enumeration, five of Lincoln and Lucinda's children were still living in their parents' Morgan County home, about 10 miles to the west of their previous residence.ⁱⁱ (See Map 1.) Lucinda was again reported as having borne ten children, but this time, only nine were still alive. In a 1972 interview, Lincoln and Lucinda's son Frank said that his brother John had died about the age of 12 after collapsing in the yard outside their home; this places John's death around 1904.ⁱⁱⁱ Three other adult children of Lincoln and Lucinda have been located in the 1910 census, either in Tennessee or in Washington state, but Bennie cannot be found.^{iv}

Table 1: Lincoln & Lucinda Cochran family, 1900 & 1910 comparison

1900 census (enumerated 21 Jun 1900) ¹		1910 census (enumerated 30 Apr 1910) ²	
Name	Age (birthdate)	Name	Age
Link Cockrum	40 (Jan 1860)	Lincoln Cochran	49
Cinda Cockrum	40 (Mar 1860)	Lucinda Cochran	[blank]
Melvina Cockrum	18 (Apr 1882)	Melvina [Cochran] Garret ⁴	28
Miny Cockrum	16 (Dec 1883)	Miney [Cochran] Brewster	23
Allac Cockrum	13 (Oct 1886)	James A. Cochran ⁴	24
Bennie Cockrum	10 (Nov 1889)		
John Cockrum	8 (Mar 1892)		
Lenore Cockrum	8 (Mar 1892)	Lenora Cochran ⁴	18
Thomas Cockrum	6 (Apr 1894)	Tom Cochran	17
Frank Cockrum	6 (Apr 1894)	Frank Cochran	17
Clarenda Cockrum	4 (May 1896)	Clearenda Cochran	14
Lorenda Cockrum	4 (May 1896)	Lorenda Cochran	14

If Bennie was still alive in 1910, where was he? An extensive search of sources in Morgan County, as well as surrounding counties, found no records that mention him. He does not appear in land or marriage records, whether as a witness or a neighbor.^v He is not named as a parent in any delayed birth certificates, death certificates, or Social Security applications.^{vi} Other types of local records that could be helpful are lacking: the family attended the tiny Brewstertown Church, which kept no records; no school records for this time period survived; and no newspapers were published in any of the tiny villages in Morgan County. Broadening the search to other states, including Washington, where two Cochran daughters moved as adults, found no candidate who could conceivably fit the description of Bennie from the 1900 census. He simply vanished.

Amanda Appears in Records-A Little

While Bennie Cochran was listed in the 1900 census, Amanda cannot be located in any household in Scott or Morgan County in the 1900 enumeration, including through a line-by-line search of both Lincoln and Lucinda's 1900 and 1910 neighborhoods. A broader search across the entire state also found not a single Amanda Cochran anywhere.

Amanda's first appearance in local records was in 1906, when she wed Charles Albert Brewster on 9 December in Scott County.^{vii} The marriage registry form did not ask for the names of the groom and bride's parents.

The couple was enumerated four years later in Morgan County with their two-year-old daughter, Gertrude, living near Charles's father James, his aunt Farsina Brewster Berry, and his grandfather John Brewster.^{viii} (Lincoln and Lucinda Cochran's 1910 residence was in a different civil district in Morgan County but was only about three miles away.) Amanda and Charles had two more children after 1910: Carrie Cordella (born in 1912) and Lawrence (born in May 1918).^{ix}

Amanda Cochran Brewster died on 19 December 1918 at the age of 30 in Morgan County of pneumonia brought on by influenza.^x Her death certificate listed Linkoln Cochran and Lucinda Dougherty as her parents; the informant appears to be "H.C. Bruster," which may refer to her husband, Albert Charley.^{xi}

Evidence Supporting Amanda (and no Bennie)

Anecdotal evidence offers further clues suggesting that Amanda was Lincoln and Lucinda Cochran's child:

- **Marriage ties:** Two of Lincoln and Lucinda's known daughters — Mina Cochran and Lorenda Cochran — married two of Charles Albert Brewster's brothers: John Samuel Brewster and Jesse Washington Brewster, respectively.^{xii} Mina's great-granddaughter has said that her grandmother and other family members frequently spoke of their family's three sets of "double first cousins."^{xiii}
- **Scott County links:** Amanda married in Scott County in 1906, where Lincoln and Lucinda had lived. Another of Lincoln and Lucinda's children — Frank — also married in Scott County, and their eldest daughter Melvina Cochran Garrett continued living there after her parents had returned to Morgan County.^{xiv}
- **Naming patterns:** All five of Lincoln and Lucinda's known daughters had names ending in "a" — Melvina, Mina, Lenora, Lorenda, and Clarenda. Amanda's name is consistent with that pattern. In addition, Mina Cochran Brewster named one of her daughters Lola Amanda.
- **Potential alternative parents:** There are no other Cochran families in the area who could be Amanda's parents. In 1900, there were no other Cochran households in Scott County at all, and the only Cochran household in Morgan County that year was headed by Lincoln's half-brother, David, all of whose children are accounted for and none of whom was named Amanda.^{xv}
- **Chronological consistency:** Amanda and Bennie do not overlap at all in records. Bennie appears in the 1900 census and nowhere else, while Amanda is missing in 1900 and appears only in scattered records afterwards. At no time do they appear in records in the same year.

Evidence Supporting Amanda and Bennie as Separate People

The sole evidence supporting the thesis of Amanda and Bennie being two different people lies in the 1900 census. Beyond the name and sex differences, the census gives Bennie's birth month as November 1889, while Amanda's death certificate lists her birth month as July 1888. The two dates are in conflict.

However, mistakes did happen with such census transcriptions, including with this same household. For example, Lincoln's birth month in the 1900 census was listed as January, while family Bible records indicate that he was born in February. Given that the census filed with the federal government was a copy of a copy of the original, it is possible that a tired clerk miscopied the name "Amanda" (or "Mandy," as she was sometimes called) as Bennie for whatever reason.

Conclusion

Amanda Cochran was the daughter of Lincoln Cochran and Lucinda Daugherty. Born in July 1888, she likely was mistakenly identified as "Bennie" in the 1900 census. Her children, as well as the children of her sister Mina consistently and repeatedly identified themselves over the years as double first cousins, related to each other both through their Cochran mothers and their Brewster fathers.

ⁱ 1900 U.S. census, Scott County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #3, sheet #16, Enumeration District (ED) #128, dwelling #323, family #324, Link Cochran household; Ancestry digital images.

ⁱⁱ 1910 U.S. census, Morgan County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #6, sheets #6-A & 6-B, Enumeration District (ED) #55, dwelling #29, family #29, Lincoln Cochran household; Ancestry digital images.

ⁱⁱⁱ Letter from Wilma Crabtree Gibson to Donna Rowland Gough, 1983, information from Cochran and Brewster family Bibles and personal records, no photocopies provided. Wilma is the great-granddaughter of Lincoln Cochran and Lucinda Daugherty through their second child, Mina Sarah Cochran.

^{iv} 1910 U.S. census, Scott County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #3, sheet #22-B, Enumeration District (ED) #164, dwelling #398, family #401, Henry Garret household; Ancestry digital images. 1910 U.S. census, Morgan County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #6, sheet #6-B, Enumeration District (ED) #55, dwelling #30, family #30, James A. Cochran household, Ancestry digital images. 1910 U.S. census, Spokane County, Washington, population schedule, City of Spokane, Ward 5, Enumeration District (ED) #194, dwelling #96, family #97, William Wood household; Ancestry digital images. Census searches for "Ben" or "Ben* C" born about 1888 in Tennessee produced no candidates for Bennie.

^v Morgan County, Tennessee, Deed & General Index, Direct and Reverse, Nov 1914 – Jul 1951, Tennessee State Library & Archives, Roll A-3769/3770. Tennessee, Marriage Records, 1780-2002, Ancestry online database.

^{vi} Birth records were not systematically collected in Tennessee until 1914; delayed birth certificates were an option, but most residents did not apply for them. Clarenda Cochran was the sole member of the Cochran family who filed for a delayed birth certificate. (See Tennessee, Department of Public Health, delayed birth certificate, file #D-322268, Clarenda Cochran Flowers, (1949), Division of Vital Statistics, Nashville; Ancestry digital images, Tennessee, Delayed Birth Records, 1869-1909.

^{vii} Scott County, Tennessee, Marriage Records, V. 5 (Apr 1904–Nov 1907), Charly A. Bruster and Manda Cochran entry, County Court Clerk, Huntsville; FamilySearch digital images, FHL #926290, DGS #4265164, item 2, p 405 (image 618). Amanda's first name appears in various records as Amanda, Emenda, Armanda, Mandy, and Manda.

^{viii} 1910 U.S. census, Morgan County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #12, sheet #2-B, Enumeration District #55, dwelling #33, family #35, Albert Brewster household; Ancestry digital images.

^{ix} Carrie Cordella Brewster, SS no. 287093089, 1937, Social Security Administration; Ancestry online, Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007. 1920 U.S. census, Morgan County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #12, sheet #1-B, Enumeration District (ED) 52, dwelling #26, family #26, Charles A. Brewster household; Ancestry digital images. Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 27 Jul 2022), memorial #85618889, Lawrence Robert Brewster Sr., created and maintained by Melissa Bertram Daugherty (contributor 47556981); citing Todd Cemetery, Scott County, Tennessee, USA.

^x Tennessee, State Board of Health, death certificate, file #604 (1918), Armanda Bruster, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Nashville; Ancestry digital images, Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1965, Scott, 1918.

^{xi} The handwriting throughout the certificate appears to be hurriedly written, with multiple misspellings and corrections. Charles Albert Bruster's name alternated between Charles (or Charley) Albert and Albert Charles (or Charley) in various records over the years. The first initial of the informant's name could be either A or H; the letter differs from other A and H capital letters in the document.

^{xii} Morgan County, Tennessee, Marriages, Jul 1906 – Jun 1910 (1906), page 91, J.S. Brewster and Mina Cochran entry, County Court Clerk, Wartburg, Tennessee. Tennessee, State Board of Health, death certificate, file #3, (1914), Altie Brewster; file #4 (1914), Lorenda Brewster, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Nashville; Ancestry digital images, Tennessee Death Records, 1908–1965. No marriage record for Lorenda Cochran and Jesse Washington Brewster has yet been located.

^{xiii} Ancestry direct message from Wilma Crabtree Gibson to Donna Rowland Gough, 22 July 2022. Wilma is the granddaughter of Mina Cochran Brewster.

^{xiv} See FN 4 for Melvina Cochran Garret census citation. Morgan County, Tennessee, Deed Records, Deed Book Z-2 (1914-1915), pp 269-271, M. Alice Douglas and Belle Douglas to J.L. Cochram, deed, 28 Jul 1906 [recorded 14 Jul 1914], County Court Clerk, Wartburg.

^{xv} 1900 U.S. census, Morgan County, Tennessee, population schedule, Civil District #10, Sheet #16-A, Enumeration District #107, dwelling #275, family #279, David Cochram household; Ancestry digital images.