

# The Sad Life of my Great-Aunt Jennie May Imes

Jennie May Imes  
1875-1907

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See suggestions for further research at the end of this document.

My great-aunt Jennie May Imes was born on November 7, 1875 in the town of Parsons, Labette County, Kansas, USA. Her father, Richard, was 34, and her mother, Eliza, was 22. She died 32 1/2 years later, on April 7, 1907, in an insane asylum in Nebraska.

Both of her brothers would grow up to have very successful professional careers; Carl, my grandfather, as an attorney for the Department of Interior Bureau of Forestry in Idaho and Oregon, and Richard as the superintendent of one of the first national forests in the Black Hills of South Dakota, and later as a successful businessman in realty and banking in Montana. Extensive newspaper articles and family stories document their accomplishments. Both lived until 1931 (ironically they died young — in the same year, 1931).

But Jennie's life was in sharp contrast. She was born blind, and due to poor education, was described in the press as an "imbecile." According to her father's submission made when applying for a veteran's pension, Jennie was "always blind."

Fifth. Have you any children living? If so, please state their names and the dates of their birth.

Answer. *Carl B. Imes April 10. 1874, Jennie May Imes Nov. 7-1875, Richard P. Imes Nov. 6-1878*

*Always blind*

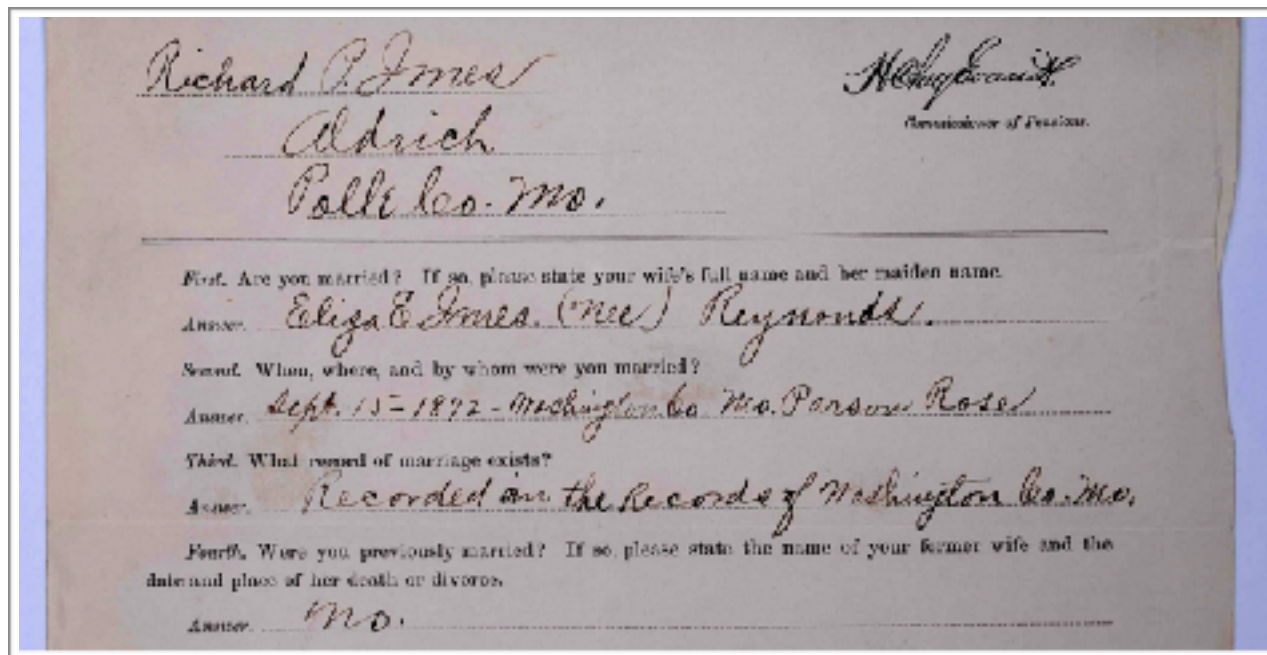
Richard P. Imes  
(Signature)

Date of reply, *Aug 4*, 1898

GPO: 1898: 51

(Correspondence by Richard Perry Imes with Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, 4 Aug 1898).

The three children - Carl, Jennie, and Richard, were the offspring of Richard Perry Imes, who had served as a Union soldier in the civil war, and his wife Eliza Easter Imes, nee Reynolds, who had married in 1872. Eliza was just 22 years old when her second child Jennie was born. She had been born and raised in "Rock Springs on Indian Creek," Washington County, Missouri. I have yet to find a marriage record for this couple, but according to family lore and her husband's pension application record, the couple was married in Washington County on September 15, 1872.



(Reynolds Family Chart by John Henry Scott, <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/1215899/person/352042065385/media/272bb359-0c7f-44f5-b464-3f71ba7362f6>); Richard P. Imes Pension Application, signed 4 August 1889, available on my [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) family tree at: [https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/1215899/person/352042065384/media/b84ff26e-f5c8-48e4-9abc-c4356a31fda5?\\_phsrc=Qji936&usePUBJs=true](https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/1215899/person/352042065384/media/b84ff26e-f5c8-48e4-9abc-c4356a31fda5?_phsrc=Qji936&usePUBJs=true) )

This rural post office at Rock Spring is not far from the town of Potosi, Missouri. (Rock Spring was a post office from 1867-1915 in Johnson Township, twenty miles northwest of Potosi. Named from a large spring nearby. (Postal Guide; Goodwin, 1867; Campbell's ATLAS, 1873; Campbell's GAZETTEER, 1874; Jeff Higginbotham. See Zimmer, Gertrude M. "Place Names Of Five Southeast Counties Of Missouri." M.A. thesis., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1944). See The State Historical Society of Missouri, "Washington County Place Names," [https://shsmo.org/manuscripts/ramsay/ramsay\\_washington.html](https://shsmo.org/manuscripts/ramsay/ramsay_washington.html) accessed 14 Jun 2019.

It appears the newly married couple moved to Kansas shortly thereafter, about 300 miles to the west. Newspapers in Parsons mention Imes as a "boss butcher" and in charge of a meat market there, between 1872 and 1876.

Jennie's older brother, Carl Imes, my grand-father, was born 19 months before Jennie in the same town, Parsons, Kansas on April 10, 1874.

A few years later, the family moved back to Missouri. Eliza's father died at Rock Springs, Washington County, on 6 Dec 1876, so that may have been part of the motivation to move back to the area.

In any case, Jennie's younger brother Richard Perry Imes IV (1878-1931) was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on November 4, 1878. St. Louis was about 70 miles northeast of Rock Springs.

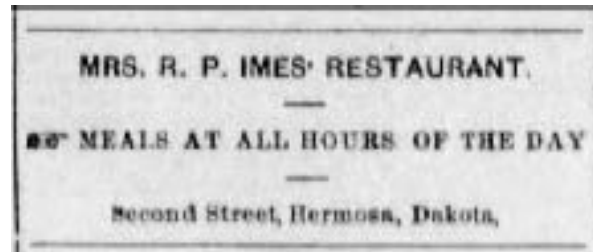
The 1880 census shows the family with all three children living in Buchanan Township, Douglas County, Missouri. This was about 176 miles southwest of Rock Springs. Jennie was then 4 years old, according to the census. The 1880 census form had a column for Health, identifying various possible disabilities. The census record shows that Jennie (age 4) was “blind” since column 16 was checked. The other possibilities were NOT checked: “Deaf and Dumb,” “Idiotic,” or “Insane.”

Sometime in the next ten years the family moved to the Black Hills region of South Dakota.



The woman in this family photo was identified on the back as Jennie’s mother, Eliza Easter Reynolds Imes. Her appearance resembles other family photos of her. The note on the back says these were the *great-grand-parents* of Harold W. Wood Jr. and Evelyn Wood, and guesses that the photo was taken about 1875. However, it easily could have been a few years later. My second cousin Kristen Imes believes that the children in the photo were the older couple’s grand-children, Charlotte Karen Imes and her bother, Richard Perry Imes, If the man in this photo is the Civil War veteran Richard Perry Imes, he seems a little old for the photo to be 1875. Also, the background mountains looks more like the Black Hills of South Dakota than those of Missouri.

Eliza reported in the 1915 South Dakota State Census that she had moved to the Dakota Territory about 1885. But the first tangible confirmation I could find that she and her family was in the state is in a newspaper ad for “Mrs. R.P. Imes Restaurant” on Second Street, Hermosa, South Dakota. She promised “meals at all hours of the day.”



(*Rapid City Journal*, Rapid City, South Dakota Fri, Sep 21, 1888 · Page 1.)

Note that South Dakota did not become a state until November 2, 1889.

We don't know much about Jennie's short life, but in 1891 it appears there was at least the first attempt to put her into an asylum for the insane.

In an article in the *Rapid City Journal* (Rapid City, South Dakota) 27 Mar 1891, Fri · Page 1, it was written:

#### Not Insane.

Judge McGee yesterday received official notice that Miss Jennie Imes of Hill City was insane and notified Sheriff Wilson who went up to Hill City yesterday to bring her down here. This was all the information Judge McGee could give the reporter. By telephone from Hill City The Journal learns that Jennie Imes is about twelve years old and is not, as far as known there, insane. She is blind, and it is thought was born so, and has never on that account had any education. Her father and mother separated some time ago and Mrs. Imes moved from Hermosa Hill City. She is poor and not able to properly care for or give the child the advantages now provided blind people in institutions especially for them. The information sent Judge McGee alleging the child is insane was gotten up either to get rid of her or for the purpose of obtaining for her advantages which she can not have at home. From all information obtainable yesterday the child is not insane and should not be confined in or made to associate with the inmates of an insane asylum.

In a way this determination is surprising. As one scholar notes:

Conceptions of insanity in the late 1800s were very different from today... Cases of insanity were examined individually and relied heavily on cultural factors such as moral ideals. The diagnosis of insanity could apply to individuals who were homeless, in poverty, physically disabled, or troublesome to their families.

John R. Sutton, "The Political Economy of Madness: The Expansion of the Asylum in Progressive America," *American Sociological Review* 56, no. 5 (1991): 665-78, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2096087>. Quoted in "Hastings Regional Center," on Clio.com: <https://www.theclio.com/web/entry?id=58118> (accessed 17 July 2019).

As the Adams County Nebraska Historical Society elaborates on this issue:

In the 1800s patients were admitted for reasons that today would seem outrageous. The list included domestic trouble, disappointment in love, financial trouble, hepatic dullness, heredity, masturbation [sic], intemperance, overwork, overstudy, religious excitement, sun stroke, and others.

[https://www.adamshistory.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=35:hrc&catid=2:history&Itemid=42](https://www.adamshistory.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35:hrc&catid=2:history&Itemid=42)

Indeed, at the same time Jennie was being considered for admission to an asylum for the insane, another young woman, Laura Beatty, who lived near her in the Black Hills was sent to the asylum for reasons that seem incredible today:

“The [insane] commission and a physician also examined Miss Laura Beatty and made out a report recommending that she be sent to the insane asylum at once. Miss Beatty is thirty years old and has for the past five years been teaching country schools in this county. She is well known both in the county and in Rapid City. For some time past she has been studying “christian science” and has become a violent religious monomaniac. For some time past she has been acting queerly, but did not become violent or uncontrollable until last Thursday. She has no relatives in this state but has several brothers and sisters in Ohio. It is to be hoped that treatment at the Yankton asylum will cure her.”

*(Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, South Dakota) 27 Mar 1891, Fri • Page 1,*

[https://www.newspapers.com/clip/32473674/jenni\\_imes\\_examined\\_and\\_referred\\_to/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/32473674/jenni_imes_examined_and_referred_to/)

In fact, at the same time this Miss Laura Beatty was sent to the asylum, she was accompanied by Jennie herself:

Imbecile and Insane.

Jennie M. Imes of Hill City whose case was mentioned in Friday's Journal was yesterday examined by the insane commission and a physician. It was decided to make a report of the case to the superintendent of the insane asylum at Yankton and allow him to decide whether or not she will be sent there. The girl has been blind from birth and is more of an idiot than a maniac. She was for a short time at a blind asylum in Iowa but was returned to her home, the authorities recommending that she be sent to an insane asylum for treatment.

*(Rapid City Journal Rapid City, South Dakota 29 Mar 1891, Sun • Page 4)*

[https://www.newspapers.com/clip/32473674/jenni\\_imes\\_examined\\_and\\_referred\\_to/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/32473674/jenni_imes_examined_and_referred_to/)

We don't know for sure what that “blind asylum in Iowa” in the 1890s might have been. I found an “Industrial Home for the Blind” in Knoxville, Iowa, but it was not opened until January 1, 1892, pre-dating the 1891 newspaper article referring to a blind asylum in Iowa. The Asylum Project Wiki does not list any other facility in Iowa specifically for the blind. <http://www.asylumprojects.org/>.

There was, however, established in 1853 an "Asylum for the Blind," later replaced by the Iowa College for the Blind in Vinton, Iowa in 1862. "Although it was within the powers of the Board of Trustees to admit any blind person, it was the established policy to admit such only as were of school age and of satisfactory physical and mental condition." - see <http://ibsssalumni.org/history-education-iowa> ).

Mary Ingalls, the sister of the famous Laura Ingalls Wilder, author of *Little House of Prairie* attended this College for the Blind between 1881 - 1889. Mary Ingalls, whose family also lived in Dakota territory, had gone blind at age of 14. <https://www.iowa-braille.k12.ia.us/vnews/display.v/ART/4921ebc684123>

Although called a "College," the school curriculum consisted of twelve years, beginning at primary, so it is possible Jennie could have attended there. The Iowa Braille School Alumni Association lists graduates of the school, but a review shows Jennie is not listed. <http://www.ibsaa.org/site/history.html> It is possible Jennie attended there, but did not graduate.

Only a few days after the March 1891 newspaper article, the same newspaper reported that Jennie Imes was refused admission to the insane asylum at Yankton:

Judge McGee yesterday received a telegram from the superintendent of the insane asylum at Yankton. It stated that Jennie Imes, the blind and imbecile girl from Hill City, would not be received but that Miss Beatty would be received and asked whether an asylum attendant would be sent after her. No positive arrangements had been made yesterday but Miss Beatty will leave for Yankton in charge of an attendant within a day or two. Judge McGee stated that he did not know what would be done with Jennie Imes but thought some provision would be made for her when the county commissioners meet.

*Rapid City Journal*, Rapid City, South Dakota, Wed, Apr 01, 1891 · Page 1)

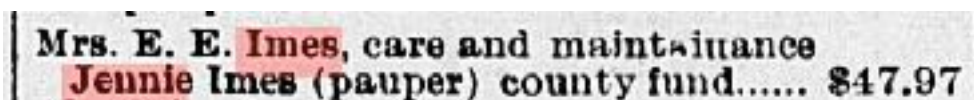
Two days later, another newspaper reported that Jennie Imes had been taken home by her mother since the insane asylum at Yankton refused to admit her:

Jennie Imes, the blind and imbecile girl from Hill City, was yesterday taken home by her mother. It is not known what will be done with her since the superintendent of the insane asylum at Yankton has refused to admit her to that institution.

The *Black Hills Weekly Journal*, (Rapid City, South Dakota, Fri. 3 Apr 1891, page 1.)

A clue as to what happened after that were several newspaper listings that revealed that the County had approved payment to Eliza Imes for the care and maintenance of Jennie Imes.

For example, in *The Black Hills Union*. [volume], May 17, 1895 it was reported that the county commissioners had approved a county warrant to Mrs. E.E. Imes for the "care and maintenance of Jennie Imes (pauper)" from the county fund in the amount of \$47.97:



**Mrs. E. E. Imes, care and maintenance  
Jennie Imes (pauper) county fund..... \$47.97**

*The Black Hills Union*, page 7 column 3, 17 May 1895. (from *Chronicling America*)

Later payments were made in subsequent years:

Upon motion the following bills were allowed and warrants ordered drawn on the proper funds for the amounts as follows:  
E. E. Imes care and maintenance of Jennie Imes, county fund..... \$48 62

*The Black Hills Union* (Rapid City, Pennington County, Dakota), page 3, column 2, 07 February 1896. (from *Chronicling America*)

It was similarly reported on 07 Aug 1896 that the county paid Mrs. Imes the sum of \$51.00 for the care of Jennie Imes (see image on right)

*The Black Hills Union* (Rapid City, Pennington County, Dakota), 07 Aug 1896 page 1 (from *Chronicling America*)

So it appears that at least for some years, the county helped financially support the care for Jennie Imes.

At this point, what happened to Jennie for the final 6 years of her short life is still a little murky. We know from the newspaper report that she died at Hastings, Nebraska, April 3, 1907, and was buried in Spearfish, South Dakota on April 6, 1907.

( *The Black Hills Weekly Journal* (Rapid City, South Dakota) Friday, April 26, 1907 - page 4.)

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.	
Board met pursuant to adjournment. Present, Clark, Tracy and County Auditor. The minutes of the last meeting were read and upon motion approved. Upon motion the following bills were allowed and warrants ordered drawn on the proper funds for the amounts as follows:	
Cornelia Beach stamps past quarter Sinking Fund.....	\$3.50
C D Fall box rent stamps telegrams sinking Fund.....	\$10.00
F P Cory postage first quarter sinking fund.....	\$4.70
Horace Crockett box rent and postage sinking fund.....	\$7.00
Hans Graves cleaning vault in court house grounds, Co fund.....	\$50.00
G P Stannard Co physician Co fund.....	\$75.00
Mrs E E Imes care of Jennie Imes Co fund.....	\$51.00

where she accompanied her mother. Mrs. Bell, of Oreville, visited her mother, Mrs. Higgins, last week. Jennie Imes, daughter of Mrs. Imes, of Rochford, died at Hastings, Neb., April 3, 1907, and was buried at Spearfish, Saturday, April 6. Mrs. Hulst was very ill Saturday. Her mother, Mrs. Sherman, of

Why did she die in Hastings, Nebraska, nearly 500 miles away, so far from her family? When I first saw the town of Hastings listed in the newspaper article, and found out there was a Hastings College located there, I thought perhaps Jennie had gone to college there. But then I realized that seemed unlikely given her disability.

After obtaining her death certificate from the State of Nebraska, I have been able to confirm that she was institutionalized in an insane asylum after all. The cause of death was listed as Pulmonary Tuberculosis. The facility she died in was founded in 1897 as the Nebraska State "Asylum for the Incurably Insane" located about a mile west of the town of Hastings, Nebraska. By the time of Jennie's death, it has been re-named (in 1905, the year her father died in the old soldier's home in Boise, Idaho) the more benign "Nebraska State Hospital." Nonetheless, the certifying physician, Dr. W.B. Kern, identified her place of death as the "State Hospital for Insane, Case #1946" in Ingleside, Adams County, Nebraska. Her death certificate showed that Dr. Kern "attended" the deceased from May 22, 1906 to April 3, 1907.

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS		MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
<b>PLACE OF DEATH</b> COUNTY OF <u>Adams</u> TOWNSHIP OF <u>Denver</u> OR CITY OF <u>Ingleside, Nebr.</u> OR STATE HOSPITAL FOR INSANE, CASE #1946 (If death occurs away from home, give facts called for under "Special Information.")		<b>STATE OF NEBRASKA</b> <b>Certificate of Death</b> REGISTRY NO. _____ Local U.S. State <u>2842</u> Date <u>April 1907</u>	
<b>FULL NAME</b> <u>Jennie M. Doss</u>		(If death occurred in a Hospital or Institution, give the name, number of street and number.) <u>I-570</u>	
<b>SEX</b> <u>Female</u>	<b>RACE</b> <u>White</u>	<b>DATE OF DEATH</b> <u>April 3, 1907</u> 1907 (Month) (Day) (Year)	
<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b> (Month) (Day) (Year)		I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased from <u>May 22, 1906</u> to <u>4-3-1907</u> and that death occurred on the date stated above at <u>1:00</u> <u>A. M.</u> The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows:	
<b>AGE</b> <u>30</u> years _____ months _____ days	<b>MARRIAGE</b> SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED <u>Single</u>	<u>Pulmonary Tuberculosis</u> (Duration) _____ Days	
<b>BIRTHPLACE</b> (State or Country) <u>KANSAS</u>	<b>CONTRIBUTING</b> (Duration) _____ Days	Signed <u>W. B. Kern</u> M. D. <u>4-3-1907</u> (Address) <u>Ingleside, Nebr</u>	
<b>NAME OF FATHER</b> (State or Country)	<b>PREVIOUS RESIDENCE</b> (State or Country)	<b>SEXUAL INFORMATION</b> (only for Hospitals, Institutions, Churches, or Boarding Houses) Former or Present Residence _____ How long at PLACE OF DEATH _____ Days	
<b>MARRIAGE NAME OR NICKNAME</b>	<b>DECEASED'S OCCUPATION</b> <u>UNKNOWN</u>	When was disease contracted? If not at place of death?	
<b>The above stated personal particulars are true to the best of my knowledge and belief</b> (Interpret) <u>Female Register Bk 8-180</u>		<b>PLACE OF BURIAL OR CREMATION</b> <u>Specified So left</u> (Address) _____	
<b>PREPARED</b> <u>April 3 1907 A. J. B...</u> Local Registrar	<b>DATE OF BURIAL</b> <u>4/6</u> <u>Hastings, Neb</u>	(Address) _____	



According to *Past and Present Adams County, Nebraska, 1916*, Dr. W. B. Kern was appointed superintendent of the institution by Governor Charles H. Dietrich, February 1, 1901. He served continuously in that position from February 1, 1901, to February 1, 1909, and again at a later time. (See: *Past and Present Adams County, Nebraska*, Edited by: Judge William R. Burton, Assisted by David J. Lewis, Published By: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., Chicago 1916, a relevant excerpt can be found on the web with this title: "The Ingleside Hospital for the Insane." <http://history.rays-place.com/ne/ad-ingleside.htm> (accessed 15 Jul 2019).)

So, this suggests that Jennie may not have been admitted to the Ingleside Hospital until the middle of Dr. Kern's tenure - May 22, 1906.



Photo from *Past and Present of Adams County, Nebraska, Volume 1* by William R. Burton, David J. Lewis, (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916) courtesy Google

This information from the Adams County Nebraska Historical Society is helpful to further clarify the institution's history:

The institution has gone through a series of name changes. The legislature changed the name from "Asylum for the Incurably Insane" to "Asylum for the Chronic Insane" in 1895. In 1905 the name was changed to "Nebraska State Hospital," and in 1915 to "Ingleside Hospital for the Insane," later to "Hastings State Hospital" and in 1971 to its current name, "Hastings Regional Center."



The Hospital for the Incurable Insane in 1887-1888. - Photo courtesy Adams County Historical Society.

Although the facility is located in the town of Hastings, Nebraska, in 1905 a post office named Ingleside was established on the grounds. The hospital superintendents were postmasters until 1913 when Percy Jones became the first civil service postmaster. The post office closed in 1972. From 1905 until 1972 the institution was commonly called Ingleside, the name of the post office.

The institution is still there; but now simply called the Nebraska State Regional Center, and it continues to care for mentally ill patients. (Adams County Nebraska Historical Society, "The Hastings Regional Center") [https://www.adamshistory.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=35:hrc&catid=2:history&Itemid=42](https://www.adamshistory.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35:hrc&catid=2:history&Itemid=42) (accessed 14 Jun 2019.)

However, the focus today is for temporary stays of 3 to 4 months, providing residential substance abuse treatment.



*Illustrated photo of the Nebraska State Hospital circa 1913 on a postcard. Courtesy of: Adams County Nebraska Historical Society*

The fact that the death certificate not only identifies her as “Case # 1946,” but also refers in the “Informant” box on the certificate “Female Records BK 3-180,” one might think that we could obtain a hospital file about her life there today.

But, according to the Adams County Nebraska Historical Society:

“All records of the institution, are labeled "confidential information" and are closed to the public. Family members must obtain a court order to access the records. Following a lengthy court battle, in 2009 the Adams County Historical Society obtained the names of persons known to be buried in the institution cemetery.”

But that doesn’t help us in the case of Jennie, since we know Jennie was buried in Spearfish, South Dakota (where her mother was buried by her side in 1937), not at the hospital in Hastings.

In an attempt to discover when Jennie may have become a resident of the Nebraska State Hospital in Hastings (Ingleside), I reviewed at the U.S. census records for the patients of the Hastings State Hospital for 1900, which are organized by male and female patients, but did not find Jennie listed there. It appears she was admitted there some time after 1900.

At the same time, although I easily located her mother in the 1900 census for South Dakota, Pennington County, township of Pactola, District 0040, Jennie does not show up in that census location either.

However, i *did* find a Jennie Imes who is approximately the right age listed as a patient in the Douglas County Hospital, Omaha Nebraska. (1900 United States Federal Census, Douglas, Omaha, Ward 07, District 0075 (Douglas County Hospital). She is listed as age 20, and the census claims she was born in August 1879 in Missouri. We know she was actually born in Kansas, and in November 1875, but she did live in Missouri as a child, so the contrary info on this census could just be an error. She may have been transferred temporarily to that hospital for a non-mental illness.

I searched the South Dakota State Census for 1905, and could find neither Jennie nor her mother Eliza, although at least Eliza should have been living there at the time. Unfortunately, it appears there was no Nebraska State Census conducted in the year 1905, so we cannot locate Jennie there either. Jennie's father died in the old soldier's home in Boise, Idaho on August 11, 1905. (Affidavit of Horace L. Chamberlain, Commandant of the Idaho Soldiers Home, declaring that Richard P. Imes died at the Idaho Soldiers' Home August 11 1905, sworn 1 Mar 1906, U.S. Pension File 25 May 1906, available on my [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/1215899/person/352042065384/media/edd684c5-98ce-49ed-9c8b-3f4a0748a41c) family tree at: <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/1215899/person/352042065384/media/edd684c5-98ce-49ed-9c8b-3f4a0748a41c> accessed 20 July 2019.) So perhaps Eliza was in Idaho at the time of the 1905 census.

Interestingly, although Jennie's death certificate does not identify her father or mother's name; clearly the institution knew who her mother was, as her body was shipped to her in South Dakota. Her mother Eliza did not die for many years later, yet the the two now share a prominent joint cemetery monument. Since when Eliza died, all three of her children had pre-deceased her by many years it would seem that remaining family members of her sons Carl and Richard must have contributed to the monument.

There is one last interesting wrinkle to the story. According to the "Complete Burial Report" listing all the graves at the Rose Hill Cemetery in Spearfish, now operated by the City of



Photo of gravestone added by Don Toms on [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com) in Rose Hill Cemetery, Spearfish, South Dakota, [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com) for Eliza Easter Reynolds Imes, [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com) Memorial ID: 108651357 and for Jennie M. Imes, [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com) Memorial ID: 108651347.

Spearfish, in a grave plot adjacent to Eliza and Jennie, there is buried "Baby Imes," age 0, buried on January 1, 1905. (Source: <https://www.cityofspearfish.com/200/Cemetery> accessed 22 Nov 2019). This was apparently a baby who died in childbirth. Whose baby was that? Eliza would have been 52 years old, with her husband near death hundreds of miles away. Could the baby have been Jennie's, who was then only 31 years old? It seems unlikely it could have been one of Eliza's son's, though both were married prior to 1905. But if it was a son's child, Richard would be the most likely candidate, since he married Charlotte Christensen, whose family lived in Spearfish, on 31 Dec 1903, and apparently owned a home there for some years, though his work carried him to various places throughout the Black Hills during the period from 1904 through 1905. His son Richard "Perry" was born in 1906, in Deadwood, South Dakota. Unfortunately, a search of the death index for the official State of South Dakota Birth Record Search Page, [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com), and [familysearch.com](http://familysearch.com) birth indexes do not reveal anyone born in 1905 with the surname Imes. South Dakota's Vital Records System was not started until July of 1905. Deaths in South Dakota were not recorded until *after* 1905.

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Jennie's story is a fascinating one, and shows how much attitudes towards people with disabilities have (hopefully) changed over the years. Be that as it may, I have discovered that Jennie had a nephew named Karl Imes who was also institutionalized, and died in one in 1952, because he had Down's Syndrome. Even today, persons with mental illness as well as other disabilities are often ignored or hidden by their families. But instead of shame, we ought to feel compassion and respect for these people who have to endure many hardships to survive and thrive. If they can be treated with respect, they should be able to live productive and happy lives, no matter what the disability, as has been shown by so many modern cases.

#### NEXT STEPS FOR RESEARCH:

1. Find guardianship and probate records for the commitment of Jennie to this or any other insane asylum, and for her death and interment. Determine if her mother lost custody when enrolling Jennie at the asylum. Ancestry and familysearch both have a record set for "All North Dakota and South Dakota, Wills and Probate Records, 1878-1928" but a search for "Imes" returns nothing. However, in browsing these records by date, a great many of the records are un-indexed. They include commitments of insanity as well as death probate records. There are a few thousand records to scroll through, in order to find the un-indexed ones to examine.
2. Contact Nebraska State Regional Center and attempt to obtain school enrollment records for Jennie; given the age of the record, perhaps a court order is not necessary?
3. Look through family letters of Eliza and the military pension records to see if and when she was ever mentioned besides the off-hand comment by R.P. Imes that she "was always blind."

## TIMELINE:

1875 - Jennie May Imes born on November 7, 1875 in Parsons, Labette, Kansas, USA

1876 - Her brother Carl Imes was born on April 10, 1876 in Parsons, Labette, Kansas, USA when Jennie May was 1/2 years old.

1878 - Her brother Richard Perry Imes was born on November 4, 1878, in St Louis, Missouri, when Jennie May was 3 years old.

1880 - Jennie lived with her family in Buchanan Township, Douglas County, Missouri. The 1880 census listed her as age 4 and blind.

1891 - Jennie lived with her mother in Hill City in the Black Hills, South Dakota. Unsuccessful attempt to put her into an asylum for the insane in South Dakota

1900 - Not found in census for South Dakota or Hastings Nebraska, but found in Douglas Count Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska.

1905 - Her father Richard Perry Imes passed away on August 11, 1905, in Boise, Idaho, at the age of 64. I have been unable to locate either Jennie or her mother Eliza in any state census for Nebraska, South Dakota, or Idaho.

1907 - Jennie May Imes died 7 APR 1907 • South Dakota, USA

PLEASE RETURN THIS AT ONCE

11-4019

Department of the Interior,  
BUREAU OF PENNSYLVANIA

Washington, D. C., January 15, 1906

SIR:

In forwarding to the pension agent the cancelled voucher for your next quarterly payment please favor me by returning this voucher to him with replies to the questions enumerated below.

Very respectfully,

Richard B. Jones  
Chick  
Pelle Co. Mo.

Henry Smith

Ques. Are you married? If so, please state your wife's full name and her maiden name.

Ans. Elizabeth Jones (nee) Reynolds.

Ques. When, where, and by whom was you married?

Ans. Sept. 15-1872. Judge J. H. McParson, Cass

Ques. What record of marriage exists?

Ans. Recorded in the records of Washington Co. Mo.

Ques. Were you previously married? If so, please state the name of your former wife and the date and place of her death or divorce.

Ans. No.

Ques. Have you any children living? If so, please state their names and the date of their birth.

Ans. Carol B. Jones April 10-1875, Jennie M. Jones May 27-1875, Richard B. Jones Dec. 6-1875.

True & valid, Aug 4-1903

Richard B. Jones  
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