

Thomas Boffin (1831 – 1888?)

For a long time, I've had a marriage for Thomas Boffin, baptised 29 March 1831 at Bicester, Oxfordshire, to Charlotte Howes on 28th March 1852 at Oxford, Oxfordshire. I could find nothing to do with either after this date. Note that this Thomas Boffin is not the Thomas Boffin born 6th August 1831 in Oxford (he married Elizabeth Taylor in 1855 and they stayed in Oxford).

Last weekend Fold3.com (who specialise in Military records) had free access to their website and I took advantage of it. I did a search on 'Boffin' and came across about half a dozen entries, mainly for Thomas Boffin. Looking at the images, which were about soldiers in the US Civil War, it identified he (and they were all to do with the same person) came from Oxford. The main problem was that the age given was about 5 years out. I thought it was worth further investigation and started searching Ancestry, FindmyPast and FamilySearch. A family tree on Ancestry gave me some clues of sources to look at. But the direction was pointed to Charlotte Boffin. Some States had census in between the 10 year Federal census. In that respect, I was fortunate that there was an 1855 census for New York. It showed Charlotte Boffin with a son, Jacob James Boffin, and her brother James Hows. [Howse seems to be the spelling of the name nowadays]. Jacob James was shown as 4 years old, which would be out of line with other information e.g. he was born in Massachusetts. Jacob was the name of her father and James was the name of Thomas's father. And there was no sign of Thomas Boffin.

The 1860 census for New York shows Charlotte had remarried Oliver Hilton. Further research showed this happened on 29th July 1857 in Brooklyn, New York. She is shown at the marriage as 'Mrs Boffin' but there is no indication as to the status of the previous marriage. Oliver was killed in the Civil War on 11th November 1862 in Washington DC. As a result, a claim was put in for a pension and the various documents show the situation with children. It states Jacob James is the wife's son by a previous marriage. In the 1860 New York census Jacob James is shown as aged 6 and his mother aged 28years.

By the 1875 New York census Charlotte had remarried again and this time to Robert Milnes (date currently unknown). Jacob James, aged 21, is still living with his mother. He had taken on his previous step-father's occupation of Tinsmith. Charlotte is shown as aged 43. Unfortunately, Robert passed away 4th February 1877.

Charlotte passed away 21st October 1892 in Brooklyn. All of her husbands were born in England.

Jacob James Boffin married Catherine Lydecker (date currently unknown) They had 3 children:

Lottie Boffin born 7 October New York died Jun 1968

Jacob James Boffin born 30 Jan 1888 New York died 2 April 1918

Edward Boffin born 23 March 1889 New York died October 1971

Catherine (or Kath) died aged 29 (therefore born about 1862) 22nd April 1891 at Kings, New York.

Jacob James Boffin (Senior) died 20 July 1901 at Queens, New York; it records the death as drowning and exhaustion. He was buried at Cypress Hills Cemetery. His occupation was given as metal worker.

Lottie Boffin married Albert Scull Prior on 11th May 1922 at Dauphin, Pennsylvania. She died June 1968. Her death was registered in Connecticut but her last residence was St Petersburg, Florida.

Jacob James Boffin (Junior) married Edna L Farmer (date currently unknown). Edward does appear in the WW1 Draft Registration in 1917. Unfortunately, he died 2nd April 1918 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Edna was the witness on the death register. She does appear in the 1920 census for Jersey City living with her father. It appears that there were no children produced. Edna remarries Louis B Wickes in Manhattan, New York (license dated 21 Jun 1926).

Edward Boffin married Minerva Rauth or Rantz on 4th October 1927 in Brooklyn, New York. They had one daughter (that I'm aware of) called Minerva Noel Boffin who was born 27 December 1928 at New Haven, Connecticut. The daughter married David Lockhart Toombs on 25th August 1951 at New Haven, Connecticut. They had 1 daughter and 1 son. When the couple were divorced they went to live with her. Apart from the fact that she died 13th July 2007 I have no further information. Minerva Noel Boffin is the only person that I have found photographs of (in School Yearbooks). Edward Boffin died October 1971 and his wife 8th December 1950 at New Haven, Connecticut.

This ends this Boffin line as I do not know of any other Boffin children.

So what about the Thomas Boffin from Bicester? There are very few hits in searches in the USA. The following are possible hits:

A 'T Boffin' appears in the 1860 census for Kansas. He was aged 28 years (matches), was a miner (no known career) and it says he was born in Canada.

Thomas Boffin signed up for the Union Army on 17th August 1861 at Fort Union, New Mexico but the age is given as 25 years. He resigns on 16th February 1864 at Huntsville, Alabama but aged 27 years. He then deserts on 30th March 1864.

The only other reference I can find is for the death of Thomas Boffin in Chouteau County, Montana. He died 22nd Jan 1888 and was buried in Upper Highwood Cemetery. Findagrave.com has photos of gravestones but none attributed to Thomas. The newspaper 'The River Press' reported 'Mr Boffin was a highly respected citizen of upper Highwood and we believe he owns a farm there. He has no family.'. I have a copy of a document giving a certificate for the property. There are various newspaper articles from 'The River Press' after his death to do with selling the property but I have not accessed these (on subscription site of Newspapers.com). I would think that as probably no one came forward within a period of time to claim the property that it was sold. You didn't have companies specialising in 'heir hunters' as you do today.

I could find few documents for this area during this period as administrations were just be established. If he was 'highly respected' why are so few records? Why did Thomas 'disappear' from the records for about 25 years? Was the army desertion a major factor to stay elusive? And why did he separate from his family early on after reaching the USA?

Descendants of Thomas BOFFIN

Generation 1

1. **THOMAS¹ BOFFIN** was born on 28 Feb 1831 in Bicester, Oxfordshire, England. He married Charlotte HOWES on 28 Mar 1852 in Oxford, Oxfordshire, England (St Paul). She was born about Feb 1832 in Bicester, Oxfordshire, England. She died on 21 Oct 1892 in Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA.



Notes for Thomas BOFFIN:

CENSUS:	07 JUN 1841 BICESTER	AGE 10 OCCUPATION
CENSUS:	30 MAR 1851 SWAN INN, SWAN STREET, BICESTER	AGE 20 OCCUPATION BREWER'S CLERK & ASSISTANT
MARRIAGE BOND:	1852	
MARRIAGE:	MAR 1852 OXFORD	3A 601
SERVICES:	17 AUG 1861 Fort Union, New Mexico, USA	Enlists for US Army - Union AGE
	25	
SERVICES:	16 FEB 1864 Huntsville, Alabama, USA	Re-enlists for US Army - Union AGE
	27	
SERVICES:	30 MAR 1864	Deserted US Army

Notes for Charlotte HOWES:

CENSUS:	07 JUN 1841 BICESTER	AGE 8 OCCUPATION
CENSUS:	30 MAR 1851 SWAN INN, SWAN STREET, BICESTER	AGE 19 OCCUPATION Farmer's Daughter
MARRIAGE BOND:	1852	
MARRIAGE:	MAR 1852 OXFORD	3A 601
CENSUS:	1855 Kings, New York, USA	AGE 23 living with brother
CENSUS:	01 JUN 1860 New York, USA	AGE 28 OCCUPATION
SERVICES:	25 NOV 1862 New York, USA	Claim for Army widow's pension
SERVICES:	29 JAN 1864	Granted pension of 8 dollars per month
SERVICES:	08 SEP 1866	applied for increase in pension - 2 \$ for Olvia (daughter)
CENSUS:	1875 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 43

Thomas BOFFIN and Charlotte HOWES had the following child:

2. i. **JACOB JAMES² BOFFIN** was born in Mar 1854 in Massachusetts, USA. He died on 20 Jul 1901 in Queens, New York, USA. He married CATHERINE LYDECKER. She was born about Dec 1863. She died about Apr 1891 in Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA.

Generation 2

Generation 2 (cont.)

2. **JACOB JAMES² BOFFIN** (Thomas¹) was born in Mar 1854 in Massachusetts, USA. He died on 20 Jul 1901 in Queens, New York, USA. He married **CATHERINE LYDECKER**. She was born about Dec 1863. She died about Apr 1891 in Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA.



Notes for Jacob James BOFFIN:

CENSUS:	1855 Kings, New York, USA	AGE 4
CENSUS:	01 JUN 1860 New York, USA	AGE 6 OCCUPATION
CENSUS:	1875 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 21 OCCUPATION Tin Smith
DIRECTORY:	1897 Brooklyn, New York, USA	Tin Smith
CENSUS:	01 JUN 1900 Kings, New York, USA	AGE 46 OCCUPATION Tin Smith

Jacob James BOFFIN and Catherine LYDECKER had the following children:

- i. **LOTTIE³ BOFFIN** was born on 07 Oct 1885 in New York, USA. She died in Jun 1968. She married **ALBERT SCULL PRIOR**. He was born about 1876.

Notes for Lottie BOFFIN:

CENSUS:	01 JUN 1900 Kings, New York, USA	AGE 14
CENSUS:	1905 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 19 OCCUPATION Sales Lady
CENSUS:	15 APR 1910 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 23 OCCUPATION Clerk - Arc lamp factory
IMMIGRATION:	04 APR 1914 New York, USA	Arrived on "Bermudian" ship

- ii. **JACOB JAMES BOFFIN** was born on 30 Jan 1888 in New York, USA. He died on 02 Apr 1918 in Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. He married **EDNA L FARMER**. She was born about 1884 in New Jersey, USA.

Notes for Jacob James BOFFIN:

CENSUS:	01 JUN 1900 Kings, New York, USA	AGE 13 OCCUPATION At School
CENSUS:	1905 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 17 OCCUPATION Clerk
CENSUS:	15 APR 1910 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 22 OCCUPATION District call
SERVICES	05 JUN 1917	WW1 Draft Registration

Notes for Edna L FARMER:

CENSUS:	15 APR 1910 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 26 OCCUPATION District call
CENSUS:	01 JAN 1920 Jersey City, Hudson, New Jersey, USA	AGE 35 OCCUPATION Packer - Biscuit company

Generation 2 (cont.)

3. iii. EDWARD BOFFIN was born on 23 Mar 1889 in New York, USA. He died in Oct 1971. He married (1) MINERVA RAUTH on 04 Oct 1927 in Kings, New York, USA (Cert 14501). She was born about 1898. She died on 08 Dec 1950 in New Haven, Connecticut, USA. He married (2) ETHEL ???.

Generation 3

3. **EDWARD³ BOFFIN** (Jacob James², Thomas¹) was born on 23 Mar 1889 in New York, USA. He died in Oct 1971. He married (1) **MINERVA RAUTH** on 04 Oct 1927 in Kings, New York, USA (Cert 14501). She was born about 1898. She died on 08 Dec 1950 in New Haven, Connecticut, USA. He married (2) **ETHEL** ???.



Notes for Edward BOFFIN:

CENSUS:	01 JUN 1900 Kings, New York, USA	AGE 11 OCCUPATION At School
CENSUS:	1905 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 16 OCCUPATION Clerk
CENSUS:	15 APR 1910 Brooklyn, Kings, New York, USA	AGE 21 OCCUPATION Stock Clerk
SERVICES:	1917-18 World War 1 Draft Registration Cards	
SERVICES:	15 OCT 1917 New York, USA	New York Guard Service
CENSUS:	01 JAN 1920 Chicago, Cook, Illinois, USA	AGE 30 OCCUPATION Salesman - Cotton Cloth
CENSUS:	01 APR 1930 New Have, Connecticut, USA	AGE 41 OCCUPATION Office Manager - textile wearing co
CENSUS:	06 APR 1940 New Haven, Connecticut, USA	AGE 51 OCCUPATION Office Manager
SERVICES:	1942 New Haven, Connecticut, USA	World War 2 Draft Registration
OBITUARY:	04 OCT 1971 St Petersburg, Florida	Tampa Bay Times Page 31

Notes for Minerva RAUTH:

CENSUS:	01 APR 1930 New Have, Connecticut, USA	AGE 32 OCCUPATION
CENSUS:	06 APR 1940 New Haven, Connecticut, USA	AGE 42 OCCUPATION

Edward BOFFIN and Minerva RAUTH had the following child:

- i. MINERVA NOEL⁴ BOFFIN was born on 27 Dec 1928 in New Haven, Connecticut, USA. She died on 13 Jul 2007. She married David Lockhart TOOMBS on 25 Aug 1951 in New Haven, Connecticut, USA.

Notes for Minerva Noel BOFFIN:

CENSUS:	01 APR 1930 New Have, Connecticut, USA	AGE 1 year 4 months
CENSUS:	06 APR 1940 New Haven, Connecticut, USA	AGE 11 OCCUPATION
NEWSPAPER:	30 JAN 1951 Menden, Connecticut, USA	Record-Journal Page 3