Matthew Addison Scarborough
(1850–1931)

of

Farmerville, Union Parish, Louisiana

and

Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico,

Son of Noah Lewis Scarborough & Samantha Fowler,

Husband of Clarenda Jane Ham

by Timothy Dean Hudson

Matthew Addison Scarborough (4 Jun 1850–19 Mar 1931), commonly known as *"Matt,"* was the only son of Noah Lewis Scarborough and Samantha Fowler [1]. Matt was the sixth child of his parents, so he grew up with five older sisters and three younger ones.

In 1860, Matt's third eldest sister, Elvyann, married Hillory Herbert Ham [Sr.] (c1828–12 Apr 1889). Ham had first married Isabella Ann Robinson (15 Sep 1828–28 May 1860), and they had three children before Isabella's death, including Clarenda Jane Ham (25 Oct 1854–23 Jul 1902), commonly known as *"Janie."* When Matt's sister married Janie's father in 1860, Janie became his step niece. Thirteen years later, on 18 June 1873, Matt and Janie married—an unusual but not unheard of relationship in rural nineteenth-century communities.

Matt and Janie Scarborough settled on a farm along the Wards Chapel Road near his parents and siblings, and they joined the Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church to which his parents and sisters belonged. Between 1874 and 1895, they had twelve children [2]. Tragically, their family suffered greatly from diseases that cut short the lives of their children. Six of them died from various childhood diseases as infants or toddlers, and most of their children who survived early childhood struggled with health problems, primarily from the scourge of tuberculosis, or *"consumption,"* as it was then known. Even in an era when infant and childhood mortality rates remained high, most of Matt and Janie's siblings had large, relatively healthy families, while they had to repeatedly bury theirs in the cemetery beside the Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church [3].

By the spring of 1902, the tuberculosis that had plagued Janie Ham Scarborough for years had left her nearly bedridden. Her family moved her bed either onto or just inside the front porch so

that Janie could see her daughters in the yard out front. Matthew and Janie had only one son to survive infancy, and thus their daughters regularly helped to cultivate the family's farm.

Swarms of biting gnats descended on eastern Union Parish every spring, tormenting the farmers' livestock. The bites of the gnats sometimes resulted in infections that proved fatal to cattle, so during the worst of the swarms, farmers would build fires and fanned the smoke towards their most prized cattle to drive the gnats away.

On 1 April 1902, Janie lay in her bed watching as her twenty-year-old daughter, Mattie Jane, held the bottom of her long dress over a small fire to catch smoke that she then fanned towards their milk cows to drive away the gnats. She stood too close to the flames, and her undergarments caught fire, causing Mattie to panic. In the commotion, Janie jumped from her bed and rushed to her daughter in the yard, attempting to extinguish the flames. Despite Janie's efforts, the accident left Mattie Jane in critical condition with severe burns. She suffered tremendously for twenty-four hours before succumbing to her injuries the next day [4].

Janie Ham Scarborough's desperate attempt to help extinguish the flames that engulfed her daughter led to serious burns on her hands. She suffered from her burns and the increasing effects of tuberculosis until her death three months later, on 23 July 1902 [5].

Matthew and his surviving children continued to operate their farm on the Ward's Chapel Road about seven miles east of Farmerville for the next two decades. Matt's daughter Linnie married in 1905, and she and her husband soon had a family of small children. The Scarborough farm adjoined those of their relatives, including those of his sister, Betsy Scarborough Ward, and her daughter, Dosia Ward Hudson.

Matt's daughters were especially close to Dosia and her family. Both Matt and Dosia's children all attended the Hopewell School, located just off Ward's Chapel Road near their farms. Due to their relatives there, Matt's daughters remained active with the school even after they had reached their early twenties, as shown by this local newspaper article from April 1916 [6]:

HOPEWELL NEWS

Our school closed, Friday, 31st, with a short but interesting programme…The following is the list of names of those who made 100% in the state spelling contest…Elma Scarborough, Ruth Hudson, Bessie Ward,…, Lillian Scarborough, Reita Hudson, Allie Roan, Lizzie Hudson, Era Ham,…,Lelia Hudson,…Evaline Hudson…

For a while, it seemed that the calamities that engulfed Matt's family over the years had abated.

Towards the latter 1910s, Matt's daughters, Ethel and Lillian, began to experience symptoms of tuberculosis just like their mother. Hoping to save his daughters, Matt Scarborough followed their doctors' advice and decided to leave the humid north Louisiana climate behind and move

west to New Mexico. It was believed that dry, arid climate would benefit tuberculosis suffers, and this became a common migration pattern for consumptive patients in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Matt sent Ethel and Lillian ahead by train to the Catholic Sanatorium in El Paso, Texas. In March 1921, Matt loaded his family's belongings, cattle, and yellow pine lumber from Union Parish on railroad cars and left their relatives and church for the move westward. Instead of remaining in El Paso, Matt and his two other children, Elma and Sim, known as *"Bud"* to his family, went to Loving, a village about twelve miles southeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Ethel and Lillian followed them to the St. Mary's Sanatorium in Carlsbad, where they remained until Christmas Day, 1921 of that year.

Meanwhile, Matt Scarborough's land at Loving lay near the Pecos River, and Italian immigrants had built aqueducts for irrigation that remain today. Matt and Sim began raising cotton, and although they seemed to like their new home, the drier climate did not help Ethel and Lillian. Their condition continued to deteriorate as the insidious disease progressed.

Lillian died on 25 November 1922, just one year after their arrival in New Mexico. Her brother-in-law mailed Lillian's obituary published in a local paper in New Mexico back to family and friends in Louisiana, who had it published in Farmerville's newspaper [7]:

Death and Burial of Miss Lillian Scarborough

Miss Lillian Scarborough died at her home on the Wesley farm east of Loving, last Saturday, November 25th at 3:30 o'clock and was laid to rest in the City Cemetery on Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. Services were conducted at the home by Rev. Z. T. Moon, and at the graveside Rev. Douglas of this city officiated with the committal service. A large number of sympathizing friends from Loving and vicinity attended the funeral.

The deceased was in her thirty-third year and the death was from Tuberculosis. She and her sister came to Carlsbad about two years ago from near Farmerville, Louisiana and were later followed by the father and Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Cole, brother-in-law and sister. She was a patient at sister's hospital until December 24th of last year when she went to her father's home.

While in the hospital, she made many friends among our people, by her many noble traits of character, and is since mourned by all who knew her both in the Loving section and in this city.

NOTE: The above clipping was mailed to us by Mr. A. B. Cole of Loving, New Mexico.

Ethel died two years after Lillian, on 3 February 1925. Her niece sent her obituary back to her hometown of Farmerville [8]:

Miss Ethel Scarborough died at her home near Loving, New Mexico, February 3, at 4 P.M., from that dreaded disease, Tuberculosis. She was the oldest living daughter of Mr. M. A. Scarborough, being thirty nine years of age. She leaves to mourn her loss an aged father, a brother, Sim Scarborough, and two sisters, Miss Elma Scarborough and Mrs. A. B. Cole, who were all with her at the time of her death.

Miss Scarborough's former home was eight miles east of Farmerville, La. In March, 1921, Ethel and her younger sister, Lillian, who has gone on before, left Farmerville for El Paso, Texas. They did not stay there long, but went on to Carlsbad, New Mexico, where they remained in the St. Francis Hospital until December 25, 1921. They then joined their family on their farm near Loving. All kinds of medical aid was given her, while her devoted sister stood continually over her bedside. Nothing did any good. Gradually she became weaker, suffering patiently until God called her home. She was not a member of any church, but a faithful believer in the Primitive doctrine.

The funeral services were held February 4th, at the Carlsbad cemetery. There were many friends, both from Carlsbad and Loving, present. Bro. Coxie, the pastor of the Carlsbad Baptist church, had charge of the service.

Dear one thou hast left us,
And our loss we deeply feel.
But 'tis God that hath bereft us
He can all our sorrows heal.
Yet again we hope to meet thee
When the day of life is fled
And in Heaven with joy greet thee,
Where no farewell tears are shed.

A Niece.

Their deaths left only Matt, Sim, and Elma, together with his married daughter, Linnie Scarborough Cole, and her family. Matt sold his farm and bought a smaller plot on the Pecos River inside the Carlsbad city limits. He had a smaller house built in La Huerta, the most prominent Carlsbad neighborhood. Matt Scarborough died at his home at 5:30 a.m. on 19 March 1931 at nearly eighty-one years. His family held his funeral that same morning, only a few hours after his death [9]. Just nine months later, Linnie's husband, Ambrose B. Cole, died at only forty-seven years of age. Both Matthew and Ambrose were buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, in Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico.

Sim and Elma Scarborough lived in their house in Carlsbad until their deaths, with Sim living until 1953 and Elma until 1964. Family photographs document the occasional visits between their cousins in Farmerville that they had grown up with as children and young adults [10].

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Children of Matthew Addison Scarborough & Clarenda Jane Ham

1. **Dona Isabella Scarborough** (23 July 1874–9 Oct 1876).
2. **Udora Scarborough** (16 Jan 1876–9 Mar 1879) died of croup.
3. **Ada May Scarborough** (5 Sept 1877–31 Jan 1879).
4. **Simeon Climon Scarborough** [Bud] (5 Feb 1880–2 Aug 1953) remained single and is buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County New Mexico.
5. **Mattie Jane Scarborough** (22 Sept 1881–2 Apr 1902) died from serious burns she received in an accident that occurred on 1 April 1902. She is buried in the Taylor/Liberty Hill Cemetery.
6. **Samantha Ethel Scarborough** (17 Feb 1885–3 Feb 1925) remained single and is buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico.
7. **George Noah Scarborough** (17 Feb 1885–19 Feb 1885) was a twin to Samantha Ethel.
8. **Linnie Scarborough** (31 Jan 1887–7 Jul 1969) married on 26 February 1905 in Union Parish, Louisiana to Ambrous Borgan Cole (1 Feb 1883–16 Dec 1931), son of William Meeks Cole (10 Mar 1845–28 Jan 1929) and Caroline Webster Morris [Webb] (9 Aug 1852–22 Nov 1906). Linnie and Ambrose Cole farmed near Farmerville until 1921, when they moved with her father and siblings to Carlsbad, New Mexico. They farmed there and joined a Primitive Baptist Church near their home. Linnie and Ambrose Cole are buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County New Mexico.

   The children of Linnie Scarborough and Ambrous B. Cole include:

   a. **Audrey Plevna Cole** (11 Dec 1905–8 Feb 1977) married in 1925 to Martin Wesley Hunt (5 May 1902–18 Jul 1966). Audrey Cole married in 1952 to James N. Foster [Jim] (1893–30 Dec 1960). Audrey Cole Foster is buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico, Division H. J. N. Foster is buried with his first wife in the Woodbine Cemetery, Artesia, Eddy County, Mexico.
   b. **Brewer Cole** (14 Apr 1907–17 Oct 1963) died in Brownfield, Terry County, Texas. He is buried in the Terry County Memorial Cemetery, Brownfield, Texas.
   c. **Estelle Cole** (14 Jan 1909–9 Dec 1998) married Noley Hugh Burton (4 Apr 1901–26 Sept 1972), son of Alexander Burton (23 Oct 1864–23 Nov 1941). Estelle Cole and Noley Hugh Burton are buried in the Fairview Cemetery, Pecos, Reeves County, Texas.
   d. **Retha Ethel Cole** (19 Dec 1910–9 May 1989) married Lucas Eakin Fletcher (8 July 1900–10 Jan 1999), son of Thomas J. Fletcher (1857–24 Dec 1938) and Sarah Belle Collier (20 Dec 1877–9 July 1962). Retha and Lucas Fletcher are buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico, Division E.

e. **Forrest Bedford Cole** (6 Aug 1913–19 Jun 1992) is buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico, Division H.

f. **Cornell Ambrous Cole Sr.** (9 May 1915–19 Dec 1975) married Clara E. Williams (10 Sep 1915–3 Apr 2010), daughter of Jack David Williams (4 Jul 1884–3 Apr 1966) and Della L. ? (22 Dec 1889–16 Jan 1974). Cornell and Clara Cole are buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico, Division K, Block 10.

g. **Paula Cole** (7 Sept 1917–8 Oct 2002) married on 1 April 1940 in Ector County, Texas to Noble Raymond Liscomb (29 May 1913–16 Feb 1999). Paula and Noble Liscomb are buried in Bluffton Cemetery, Bluffton, Llano County, Texas, Lot 10, Plot 2.

h. **Elsie Marie Cole** (1 Dec 1919–22 Jan 1994) married Charles Gordon Cummings (1904–23 June 1983). Elsie and Gordon Cummings are buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico, Division H.

9. **Lillian Scarborough** (31 Mar 1889–25 Nov 1922) remained single and is buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico.
10. **Mary Hollan Scarborough** (15 Mar 1892–8 Jul 1892).
11. [infant male] **Scarborough** (19 Jul 1893–21 Jul 1893).
12. **Elma Clara Scarborough** (1 May 1895–9 Nov 1964) remained single and is buried in the Carlsbad Cemetery, Carlsbad, Eddy County, New Mexico.

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The Matthew Addison Scarborough Family



Matthew A. Scarborough Family, 1902
Seated (L to R): Clarenda Jane Ham, Elma, Matthew A. Scarborough.
Standing (L to R): Linnie, Ethel, Simeon, Lillian Scarborough.



Matthew A. Scarborough Family, 1940s
(L to R): Linnie, Matthew A., and Elma Scarborough.



(L TO R): SIMEON, ELMA, ETHEL, & LILLIAN SCARBOROUGH



SIMEON C. SCARBOROUGH
(1880–1953)



Samantha Ethel Scarborough
(1885–1925)



Lillian Scarborough
(1889–1922)



Elma Clara Scarborough
(1895–1964)



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Notes

1. These Union Parish, Louisiana deeds identify Matthew A. Scarborough as the son of Noah and Samantha Fowler Scarborough:
   Conveyance Record U, pp. 246–247: Samantha Scarborough, widow, and heirs of Noah Scarborough to William Arnett Albritton, 25 January 1884.
   Conveyance Record 9, pp. 248–250: Samantha Scarborough and the heirs of Noah Scarborough to John F. Albritton, 18 July 1901.
2. The Matthew A. Scarborough Family Record, originally recorded either by Scarborough or his daughter, lists all of the Scarborough children and their birthdates. It is in the possession of Marilyn Fulgate Gerloff, a descendant of Linnie Scarborough Cole.
3. Details of the sickness and early demise of the Scarborough children come from family information shared by Marilyn Fulgate Gerloff, a descendant of Matthew A. Scarborough, as well as three children of his niece, Dosia Ward Hudson, including Ruth Hudson Miller, Reita Hudson Carmack, and Woodrow W. Hudson Sr. The latter conveyed these details to Timothy D. Hudson. Ruth, Reita, and Woodrow all grew up living next to their Scarborough cousins, and remained close to them after their family moved to New Mexico.
4. *"The Gazette,"* 2 April 1902, p. 3, column 3. Taylor/Liberty Hill Cemetery (Farmerville, Union Parish LA), tombstone of *"Mattie J. Dau. of Mathew & Clarenda J. Scarborough"* (22 Sep 1881–2 Apr 1902). The newspaper article describing the accident that led to Mattie's death:

Two serious accidents happened near Farmerville yesterday. A grown young lady, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Scarborough, was badly burned, her clothes catching fire while she was building up a smoke to drive gnats from the cattle…Both the patients are in a critical condition. Just as we go to press we learn that both the above victims died.

5. Taylor/Liberty Hill Cemetery (Farmerville, Union Parish LA), tombstone of *"Clarenda J., wife of Mathew A. Scarborough"* (25 Oct 1854–23 Jul 1902). Information on her burned hands comes from stories told by her daughter, Linnie, to her grandchildren.
6. *"The Gazette,"* 12 April 1916, p. 4, column 5.
7. *"The Gazette,"* 3 January 1923 (p. 1, column 6).
8. *"The Gazette,"* 11 March 1925 (p. 1, column 4).
9. *"Cavern City Chronicle"* (Carlsbad, NM), 20 Friday 1931, p. 1, column 6.
10. Carlsbad Cemetery (Carlsbad, Eddy County, NM), tombstones of *"Mathew A. Scarborough"* (4 June 1850–19 Mar 1931) and *"Ambrous B. Cole"* (1883–1931). Marilyn Fulgate Gerloff, a descendent of Linnie Scarborough Cole, provided New Mexico death certificates and extensive family information.

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