

## **Lee Andrew Ward**

**Town Marshal of Farmerville, Union Parish, Louisiana**

**Son of Elijah Hubbard Ward & Permelia Lavincy Lee,**

**Husband of Frances Wincie Roye**

**by Timothy Dean Hudson**

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Lee Andrew Ward [Leander] (16 Feb 1866–5 Mar 1960) was the third son of Elijah Hubbard Ward (13 July 1830–7 Aug 1887) and Permelia Lavincy Lee (6 Jan 1834–29 Dec 1869), both natives of Alabama [1]. Leander, as he was commonly known, was born and spent his life near and in Farmerville, Union Parish, Louisiana. Both Leander's paternal grandparents, David Ward and Cynthia Seale [2], and his maternal ones, Martin Batte Lee and Levincy Albritton, were pioneer settlers of Union Parish, arriving in 1837 and 1847, respectively [3].

Leander Ward was almost four years old when his mother died in December 1869. He married on 3 April 1889 in Union Parish, Louisiana to Frances Wincie Roye [Fannie] (24 Mar 1857–18 Jan 1931) [4]. Fannie was the daughter of John D. Roye (23 Mar 1822–22 May 1890) and Kittie Minerva Hollis (1825–8 Sep 1886) [5].

Leander and Fannie Ward operated their farm in the Colson community east of Farmerville for their first decade of marriage. In 1896, Leander and his older brother, John M. Ward, became embroiled in a heated timber dispute with Sylvester L. Joiner. This event was a continuation of Joiner's feud with the Ward-McGough-Auld families dating back to around 1878.

Through numerous intermarriages and years of operating neighboring farms, the Wards became closely affiliated with both the Auld and McGough families. A feud of sorts began in the latter 1870s between the Ward-Auld-McGough families and the Joiners who lived nearby. It appears to have originated with the seizure of property made by Leander's uncle, John T. Ward, in performance of his duties as constable. The events escalated to a full-blown shootout in May 1891 that killed Creath McGough and seriously wounded James H. Auld [6]. In retribution, McGough's relatives and friends waylaid and seriously injured Sylvester Joiner a few months later [7]. Neither Leander Ward nor his brothers were directly involved in the 1891 violence. The legal fallout

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appears to have caused the Joiners to sell their Union Parish farm and moved to West Monroe near the mouth of Bayou D'Arbonne.

Trouble began again during the drought of 1896. When the dry weather caused the waters to recede from areas typically inundated year-round, John M. and Leander Ward used the opportunity to cut timber on their land near the D'Arbonne. That fall, heavy rains caused the timber to float downstream towards West Monroe, and the Joiners pulled it from the waters. When the Wards went searching for their timber, the Joiners demanded a price that the Wards found excessive. They hired an attorney, who sent Joiner an official notice that if he did not surrender the timber by a deadline for a fair price, they would file a lawsuit in the district court for piracy.

Apparently frustrated at Joiner's refusal to release their timber, the Wards and several associates armed with pistols and shotguns rode down to West Monroe intending to take their timber by force. Joiner had gathered his own group of heavily armed friends, and when the Wards' party arrived, it appeared that a shootout akin to the one in 1891 was imminent. The Wards eventually left, and later that day, Joiner filed charges against them for disturbing the peace and threatening to kill. They were arrested and summoned to appear for a hearing, where the local justice of the peace dismissed the charges.

The two groups still failed to agree on a compensation price for the timber, and so John M. and Leander Ward again went to West Monroe to collect their timber. Meanwhile, Joiner and his friends had armed themselves heavily and laid in wait, intending to ambush John and Leander Ward and their party. Suspecting their tactics, the Wards evaded the ambush and filed their own charges against the Joiners, who were then arrested pending action of the grand jury. The precise outcome is unclear, but the lack of additional newspaper notices implies that Joiner and the Ward brothers agreed upon a compromise [8].

In November 1897, a group of forty residents organized a Missionary Baptist Church at Taylor schoolhouse. Leander was selected as one of the deacons, along with Henry M. Lee, the husband of his first cousin, while Rev. Samuel R. Nolan, the husband of Leander's second cousin, was chosen as the church's pastor [9].

In September 1910, Leander Ward's farm produced the season's first cotton bale, which his farm tenant sold for 14.30¢ per pound to Ward's first cousin, Farmerville merchant William J. Turnage. In 1915, Ward planted a variety of corn known as Hasting's Prolific without using any fertilizer. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, he brought three stalks of his corn to the newspaper's editor, who remarked that the stalks contained eleven good ears of corn and one "*nubbin*" [10].

Although he continued to supervise his farming operation in the country for the next three decades, Leander and Fannie Ward moved to Farmerville in the 1890s. He bought a house on East Street in which he and his family lived until 1934 [11]. In that era, the health of local citizens was regularly mentioned by the local newspaper. On 29 May 1900, Farmerville's editor noted that Leander Ward was able to return to the streets after his recent illness, while in early October 1908, he commented that a "*spell of malarial fever*" had confined Ward to his home, interfering with his duties for nearly a week. In late April 1911, Leander Ward became ill and suffered "*a three weeks siege of measles*." Just three months later, he spent two weeks suffering from a "*spell of fever*" before convalescing. Around New Year's Day 1913, he became ill with la grippe and suffered with it for two weeks before the newspaper noted that he was up and back to work [12].

The newspaper also reported on the illnesses of Leander's wife and children. During the week of 14 February 1910, he wrote that "*Mrs. L. A. Ward*" had suffered a relapse "*after her long siege of typhoid fever*." During the week of 7 September 1914, Leander Ward's two children, Gilford and Vasa, both suffered "*from continued fever for the past several days*." By the following week, the "*malarial fever*" that had plagued Gilford seemed to have eased [13].

Many Farmerville residents of that era kept chickens, and in July 1909, one of Leander Ward's hens "*has broken all records for laying eggs*." Ward found a nest that contained twenty-nine eggs, all nearly the size of a turkey egg. Farmerville's newspaper editor remarked, "*A few hens of this kind would make the poultry business worth while*" [14].

In addition to farming, Leander Ward invested much of his energy in politics and public service. Like his brothers, he was a staunch Democrat. In the election of April 1888, he challenged the incumbent, H. H. Hill, for parish surveyor, the position that his father had held in the 1880s [15]. In the 1899 Democratic Primary election, Leander ran for constable of Ward One but received only 19 votes to the 94 garnered by James Hall. For some reason, Democratic Party officials allowed both men to appear on the ballot of the general election in April 1900, and citizens elected Hall to the position [16].

In early 1900, Leander Ward and R. A. Bass purchased a gasoline boat to help with transportation issues on Bayou D'Arbonne. In this era before railroads had reached Farmerville or inland Union Parish, steamboats provided the primary means of transportation for mercantile goods, farm products, and passengers between Farmerville, Shiloh, Spearsville, Downsville, and other inland areas of Union Parish to Monroe and the outside world. The new and smaller gasoline boats offered an advantage over steamboats since they could navigate in very low water, allowing

vital transportation along the Union Parish bayous to continue even after the water levels had fallen too low for steamboats to maneuver the waterways. Ward's boat operated for about six months before sinking in August 1900 [17].

The gasoline boat that Ward and Bass had operated threatened the profits of steamboat owners, who had already seen their overall revenues impacted as railroads continued their inexorable march into all corners of the state. They complained to state officials, claiming that Ward and Bass had illegally undercut freight rates established by the Railroad Commission, the body charged with enforcing the established freight rates. In response to the complaint, the Commission filed charges against Ward and Bass for reducing freight rates. After an inquiry, the Commission rendered this decision [18]:

*Upon due hearing and investigation, it having been shown that no change had been made in the rates filed with the commission, it was ordered that the case be dismissed.*

Like his brothers, Leander Ward was a mason, and he maintained his membership in the Union Fraternal Lodge No. 53, Free and Accepted Masons throughout his adult life [19]. Ward also belonged to the Farmerville Camp of the Woodmen of the World. Founded in 1890, this organization focused on philanthropic efforts and projects that benefited local communities. Woodmen of the World is best known for the distinctive headstones that depict tree trunks placed on the graves of members who died during this era. At the meeting held in January 1907, Leander Ward was elected to serve as one of the three managers of the Farmerville Camp for the ensuing year [20].

In 1908, Mr. W. W. Watson established a lumber yard in Farmerville. He put Leander Ward in charge of the lumber yard. Beginning in July, Watson advertised regularly for anyone needing lumber to contact "*L. A. Ward at Farmerville and have your bill filled at once*" [21].

In late August or early September 1908, Leander Ward assumed the duties of Farmerville's Town Marshal, apparently appointed to fill the position recently vacated by Robert Lee Hudson. On September 9<sup>th</sup>, as town marshal, Ward published a newspaper notice to Farmerville residents, directing that those "*who are bothered with hogs are requested to put them up and notify me and I will come for them at once*" [22].

In 1906, a large number of "*useless dogs*" roamed Farmerville's streets, "*barking and yelping at night*," scaring children and horses, and generally creating a nuisance. To address the issue, In August 1908, Farmerville's Town Council approved an ordinance requiring residents to pay a dog tax of \$1.00 per year for male dogs and \$2.00 per year for female dogs. Residents had to pay the tax to procure a tag for each dog they owned. Dogs found running loose in Farmerville without

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tags would be caught and killed by the town marshal. As the 30 November 1908 mandatory deadline for having dogs licensed approached, Leander Ward published a reminder to residents to pay their dog licenses [23].

At Farmerville's municipal election held on Tuesday, 13 April 1909, Leander Ward was elected to a full two-year term as town marshal [24]. This role required him to perform a variety of tasks, including collecting taxes owed to the town for residents living inside the city limits, enforcing livestock ordinances that required residents to keep their livestock in a fence on their property and off the streets, and confiscating loose livestock. On Saturday, 11 December 1909, Ward held a public auction to sell a sheep he collected off Farmerville's streets. Earlier that same year, Ward took a group of workers to the Farmerville Cemetery to clean up brush around the monuments. Their work caused the local newspaper editor to report that Ward "*now has it in fine shape*" [25].

On Friday morning, 1 April 1910, Leander Ward got on his horse to begin his rounds collecting the street tax due from all residents. He went to the home of Sim Wiltz and found him in his garden. He refused to pay, prompting Ward to tell him that if he failed to pay his taxes, he must take him to town to be fined. Wiltz then agreed to pay his tax, saying he had to go inside his house to get his money. Ward got off his horse and began writing Wiltz a tax receipt, so at first, he did not look up to see Wiltz walk out of his house while pointing a double-barreled shotgun at him. Standing about twenty feet away, Wiltz stopped and uttered to Ward, "*Damn you; I've got you now,*" and then fired both barrels at Ward before throwing his shotgun down and running away.

Although critically wounded, Leander Ward managed to get up, pull his pistol from his right pocket with his left hand, and fire four shots at Wiltz as he absconded. Ward's injuries were severe, and it was a miracle that he was not killed instantly by the shotgun blasts. The attempted assassination mangled his right arm, and several pieces of shot had entered his chest and abdomen and injured his right leg. The two tax receipt books that Ward kept inside his coat pocket had saved his life, as most of the birdshot went into the books, thus protecting his chest and heart.

Sim Wiltz fled into the D'Arbonne Swamp after shooting Marshal Ward. The incident created intense excitement in Farmerville, and a large crowd of armed men gathered in town before heading into the swamp to search for the culprit. Officials placed guards at all the ferries along Bayou D'Arbonne. One local young man, Emmett Pace, encountered Wiltz in the swamp, but the fugitive was the faster runner and managed to escape.

Despite the guards, Wiltz managed to exit the D'Arbonne Swamp downstream from Farmerville, but he was apprehended by a posse just as he reached West Monroe. As a sad relict of

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racial attitudes of that era, reports reached West Monroe that a mob was headed there from Union Parish to lynch Wiltz. To ensure his safety, he was whisked away from the jail.

Wiltz confessed to shooting Ward, and when arraigned before the Union Parish District Court for attempted murder on April 30<sup>th</sup>, he pled guilty. Judge Dawkins issued the maximum sentence allowed by law: twenty-one years in the state penitentiary. Leander Ward recovered and published a notice on April 20<sup>th</sup> thanking his friends for their kindness and the officers in Ouachita Parish for apprehending Wiltz [26].

Leander Ward soon returned to his duties as Farmerville's town marshal. In mid-June 1910, he worked to improve several of the main roads through town [27]. At Farmerville's municipal election held on Tuesday, 18 April 1911, Ward ran unopposed in his reelection bid for town marshal, receiving 74 votes [28]. Two years later, Ward ran for reelection as town marshal against D. W. Doss. At the election conducted on Tuesday, 25 March 1913, Ward lost to Doss by a vote of 38 to 40. The following August, the Farmerville Town Council hired Leander Ward to supervise the town's street maintenance for the next five months, as "*Mr. Ward is an expert in this line of work*," and Farmerville's streets were "*now so badly in need of repairs*" [29].

Two years later, four candidates vied for the town marshal position, including Leander Ward and the incumbent, D. W. Doss. At the Democratic primary election held on Tuesday, 23 February 1915, Ward received 32 votes to Doss' 30, with the other two candidates splitting the remaining 25 votes. This forced a second primary election on Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. Ninety-five men voted this time, with Doss winning the contest by a vote of 54 to 41 [30].

Leander Ward again ran for town marshal at Farmerville's next municipal election held on 27 February 1917. He was elected against his opponent, Mr. Ludwig, by a vote of 65 to 13. He once again assumed the duties of town marshal on Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> [31]. Ward went to work immediately with performing some "*badly needed work*" on Farmerville's streets. He had some of the worst issues resolved in the first month, but the work continued throughout the summer. By the end of August, the newspaper thanked Ward for his work, which resulted in the streets "*being built up in first class shape*" [32].

Farmerville held its next municipal election on Tuesday, 8 April 1919, with ninety-two men casting votes. Leander Ward's challenger, J. W. Barr, defeated him by a vote of 53 to 39 [33]. Ward engaged in other work over the next several years, including winning contracts with the Union Parish Police Jury to maintain local roads and to operate the Fork Ferry that across Bayou D'Arbonne at its fork with Bayou Corney. He also remained active with the Union Parish

Democratic Party by serving as one of Farmerville's election commissioners. In the 1923 re-election campaign for town marshal, Ward, his cousin, Batt Lee Brantley, and two others challenged the incumbent, J. W. Barr. At the election held on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Farmerville's citizens elected Brantley as the new town marshal [34].

In the waning months of 1924, a group of Farmerville's citizens gathered to reorganize the Civil League to beautify Farmerville. An unidentified and outspoken citizen wrote a letter to the editor in December 1924, suggesting that cleaning up both the streets, ditches, businesses, and private property across Farmerville should be the priority, writing:

*The town is a mess. It is filthy. The ditches ought to be looked after. They are in bad condition. Rotten apples, onions, lemons, potatoes, cabbage and other rubbish are emptied out in the streets...what are the town council and health officers, and marshal and mayor for in a town.*

The writer then praised the former town marshal, saying,

*When Mr. Lee Andrew Ward was marshall [sic] he saw to it that the culverts [sic] were cleaned out and the ditches were looked after; the paper was picked up. There is no use in any club to make up money to have this town cleaned up if people that own property will not keep it clean. The law ought to force them to do it. We have a beautiful school building if the campus around it was cleaned up.*

In the spring of 1925, Leander Ward challenged his cousin, Batt Lee Brantley, for Farmerville town marshal. On March 18<sup>th</sup>, he published a notice to the public announcing his candidacy and asking for the support of Farmerville's voters. He added,

*I believe that my record as your officer several years ago will not be forgotten by you when you go to the polls to elect a marshall [sic] this time. And, should I be elected, will discharge the duties of the office as faithfully as I possibly can, and without additional help.*

Batt Brantley published his own notice a few weeks later also asking for the public's support. He emphasized his youth compared to Ward's, as Brantley was twenty-six years younger. In the Democratic primary in April, Brantley received more votes and retained his position [35].

On 1 September 1926, Farmerville's Town Council appointed Lee Andrew Ward as Farmerville's night watchman. The local newspaper stated that this appointment was long overdue, as the modern highway just completed through Farmerville had put "us on the map of the world." They stated:

*Mr. Ward will make a splendid night watchman, and it is a relief to know that he is on the job all night.*

Between 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. on the morning of 9 September 1926, Leander Ward stood on Main Street and watched as a car drove into town from the south and parked near the bank. He

walked towards the car as two men alighted from the vehicle and asked them what they wanted. They claimed to want food, and Ward told them where to find something at that early hour. He then contacted the town marshal, who arrested the two for public drunkenness.

About 2:30 a.m. on Saturday, 7 April 1928, a fire broke out in front of the Davis Theatre in Farmerville. A woman living nearby happened to wake up to see the blaze from her window, and she alerted Leander Ward, who promptly called for Farmerville's volunteer firemen to fight the blaze. By the time they had their hose connected, the fire had spread over the entire building and looked as if it would consume the entire block and spread across the street to the drug store and bank. The mayor summoned the Ruston Fire Department, who dispatched a truck that arrived in about forty-five minutes. They finally managed to extinguish the flames, which nearly destroyed Farmerville's entire business district [36].

Two years later, on Monday night, 13 January 1930, Leo Hill of Farmerville made a determined attempt to rob several offices and businesses in Farmerville. He first attempted to break into the Farmerville State Bank by breaking several holes in the back window. Unable to dislodge the wired glass, Hill moved on and broke into the Louisiana Public Utilities Company, where he stole a five-dollar bill and a pistol from the office. He attempted to gain entry into Waller's Pressing Shop by breaking a window but failed. Next, he targeted the Farmerville Post Office by attempting to break through the south back window.

As Hill attempted to enter the post office through the window, Leander Ward happened to be making his rounds nearby and heard the noise. He rushed up and flashed his light, prompting Hill to quickly run away before Ward could identify him. The next morning, Ward assisted Sheriff F. W. Murphy in an investigation, which resulted in their finding the stolen pistol at Hill's residence [37].

Leo Hill proved a habitual offender, as he again attempted to burglarize the Farmerville Post Office three years later, on Sunday night, 15 March 1933. Leander Ward and Carl Miller were on duty as night marshals and recognized that someone was attempting to break into the post office. They alerted the sheriff and postmaster, who arrived to find Hill in the post office lobby, squatting behind a desk. He claimed to be intoxicated and wandered into the building, but he had actually broken the back window and entered the post office.

Among the other excitement he experienced while serving as night marshal, Leander Ward was on duty on Monday night, 6 May 1931. Between 11:00 p.m. and midnight, he heard a gunshot near the Barr boarding house in town. Ward rushed to the scene to find the dead body of Abe Lee lying

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on the ground. He alerted the sheriff and coroner, who proceeded to make an investigation [38]. Leander Ward continued to serve as Farmerville's night marshal through 1934 [39].

It appears that Fannie Roye Ward's health declined by late 1925. Leander published a notice for a *"good, steady white woman"* to work as a housekeeper, to *"assist my wife in general housekeeping and cooking."* For several years, Fannie was able to accompany Leander on regular visits to their daughter, Vasa, in Teague, Texas. However, her health had declined significantly by 1929, and by late 1930, she was confined to her bed. As Fannie's condition deteriorated further, Vasa and her husband rush to Farmerville from Texas on 3 January 1931, and she remained with her mother until her death on January 18<sup>th</sup> [40].

Leander Ward continued serving as Farmerville's night marshal between 1931 and 1934, but he maintained his regular visits to his daughter in Teague, Texas. Now at sixty-five years, he had begun experiencing his own health issues. In mid-1934, his physician advised him to quit work for an extended rest, and so he took a leave of absence as Farmerville's night marshal and went to Texas. Ward apparently liked living in Texas, and he decided to permanently move to Teague near his daughter. He sold his home in Farmerville, and Vasa and her husband conducted a sale of his furniture, kitchen utensils, garden tools, etc. on Friday and Saturday, September 21 and 22, 1934 before returning to Teague, Freestone County, Texas with her father [41].

On 13 May 1936, friends and relatives of Leander's eldest brother, Rev. Hillory H. Ward, threw him a surprise 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday party at his home east of Farmerville. Rev. Ward *"expressed a deep regret"* that Leander could not be with him to celebrate. When Hillory Ward died the following year, Leander and Vasa made the trip from Texas to attend the funeral [42].

Upon his arrival in Teague, Leander Ward settled in at the Teague Hunting and Fishing Club, where he remained for a few years. He began suffering from arthritis about 1940, causing him to move in with his daughter. In June 1941, Leander's nephew, Emmett L. Ward, visited him in Texas. Leander gave his nephew an old fish gig made about 1866 by his late brother, John Martin Ward, Emmett's father. When he returned to Farmerville, Emmett reported that his uncle's health was good. In 1950, his health remained fine, although by this time, his arthritis had progressed so that he could no longer walk, confining him to a wheelchair [43].

Leander Ward lived in Teague with his daughter and son-in-law for twenty-six years. In late January 1960, he fell and broke his leg. This contributed to his death on Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup> [44]. His body was brought back to Farmerville and buried beside Fannie in the Farmerville Cemetery.



### Children of Lee Andrew Ward & Frances Wincie Roye

The known children of Leander Ward and Fannie W. Roye include:

1. **Gilford Lee Ward** (20 Sep 1893–17 Mar 1920) married on 3 December 1916 in Monroe to Alice Esther Gerlicher.
2. **Vasa Ward** (15 Mar 1895–4 Sep 1975) married William J. Stringer (19 Jan 1884–29 Jul 1972).
3. [infant] **Ward** was born and died as an infant prior to 1900.
4. [infant] **Ward** was born and died as an infant between 1900 and 1910.



## Brief Biographical Sketches of the Children of Lee Andrew Ward

### 1. Gilford Lee Ward

Gilford Lee Ward (20 Sep 1893–17 Mar 1920) was the only son of his parents who survived infancy [1]. He grew up in Farmerville and graduated from Farmerville High School on Thursday night, 18 May 1911. The guest speaker at the commencement exercises was Dr. J. B. Aswell, President of the State Normal School at Natchitoches, and at the ceremony, Gilford presented his essay, *“Immigration in the South.”* Farmerville’s mayor, Mr. Charles H. Jameson, presented the class medal to Gilford Ward.

Gilford L. Ward left Farmerville on Tuesday, 19 September 1911 to enroll at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge for the 1911–1912 school year. He and his friends returned to Farmerville on Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> to spend the Christmas holidays with family, and then returned to Baton Rouge for the spring semester. He continued his studies at LSU during 1913 and 1914, returning to Farmerville from Baton Rouge in late May 1914 for the summer break [2]. He taught school at Point in the spring of 1915, and on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, he came to Farmerville to vote for his father in the election to select the town marshal. After he finished his work at Point, Gilford left Farmerville on Saturday, 5 June 1915, to return to Baton Rouge for the summer semester [3].

Gilford L. Ward taught school in Richland Parish beginning in September 1915. Later that fall, he assumed the position of principal of the school at Mangham, Louisiana. He returned home to spend the Christmas holidays with his parents in Farmerville. He continued teaching in Mangham through July 1916, when he returned to spend a few weeks with his parents [4].

While working in Mangham, Gilford met Miss Esther Gerlicher, a local resident. It appears that her full name was *“Alice Esther Gerlicher,”* born about 1900. Gilford and Esther were married on 3 December 1916 at *“the Monroe hotel parlors,”* with Judge Charles Schulze officiating [5]. By early 1917, they lived in Choudrant, a small railroad village in Lincoln Parish, where Gilford worked as a laborer. In late April, he was recruited by Capt. H. C. Price for the officer’s training school scheduled to begin on May 8<sup>th</sup> at Fort Logan H. Roots in Little Rock, Arkansas. He was selected as one of 39 out of 125 applicants in the Monroe region. When Gilford registered for the World War I draft on 5 June 1917, he reported his 2.5 years’ service as a cadet at Louisiana State University. However, he claimed exemption from the draft due to *“Being found Incapacitated physically for Service at Ft. Logan H. Roots about 2 wks ago”* [6].

Gilford L. Ward's physical condition preventing him from serving in the military did not slow him down, as he accepted various jobs requiring travel. In late 1917, he accepted a position at the aviation camp at Lake Charles, Louisiana. He returned to Farmerville to visit his wife and parents the week of February 12<sup>th</sup>. During the late summer of 1918, Gilford accepted a position near Nashville, Tennessee, along with another local resident. Both men returned to Farmerville to visit family the week of August 26<sup>th</sup> [7].

By January 1920, Gilford L. Ward had returned to Farmerville and accepted a position as a deputy clerk of court with the Union Parish District Court. He and Esther lived with his parents and sister in Farmerville [8]. He became critically ill by early March and went to New Orleans with his sister for treatment. Medical officials there were unable to help him, and so Gilford "*returned home at once.*" He appeared to improve by the week of March 15<sup>th</sup> [9].

His improvement was but temporary, for Gilford Ward died of "*mitral insufficiency*" at his parents' home on East Street in Farmerville on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Jordan G. Taylor stated that he had treated Gilford for the past year. His premature death was greatly lamented by his closest acquaintances, who described him as "*a genial companion, kind and courteous to those about him and with whom he came in contact and a faithful friend.*" His obituary stated that he suffered with "*organic heart trouble.*" Gilford Lee Ward was buried in the Farmerville Cemetery [10].

His widow returned to Mangham after Gilford's death, but she visited Leander and Fannie Ward in Farmerville in October 1920 [11]. What became of her is unknown.



## 2. Vasa Ward Stringer

Vasa Ward (15 Mar 1895–4 Sep 1975) grew up in Farmerville. On 16 February 1916, the local newspaper reported that although she had been “*quite sick for the past several days*,” Vasa was now “*very much improved*.” She graduated from Farmerville High School on Thursday night, 15 May 1916 [1]. Vasa then entered the Louisiana Industrial Institute, now Louisiana Tech University, at Ruston, where she studied for three years until she was a senior. She came home on 23 December 1919 to spend the Christmas holidays with her parents in Farmerville.

Vasa Ward suffered from an eye condition, in March 1920, she went with her brother to New Orleans. He was then critically ill with the heart trouble that claimed his life a few weeks later, but Vasa sought treatment for her eyes while in New Orleans with him. In the summer of 1920, Vasa’s parents sent her to Hot Springs, Arkansas for treatment. She remained for several months, and while her eyes improved, they were not completely better. Leander went to Hot Springs in August to bring Vasa home [2].

Vasa Ward returned to Hot Springs, Arkansas by early 1921, either for additional treatment or to work. In June, she stepped into an elevator in the Physician’s Building, and as it began operation, it became disconnected and plunged to the ground. The impact knocked Vasa unconscious and severely injured her. Leander and Fannie rushed to Hot Springs, as initial reports indicated that her injuries would prove fatal. However, she slowly recovered, remaining in Hot Springs for several months as she improved [3].

Vasa Ward moved to Teague, in Freestone County, Texas in 1922 and taught school for several years. On Wednesday evening, 7 May 1924, Vasa married William J. Stringer (19 Jan 1884–29 Jul 1972), son of James Elbert Stringer Sr. (1861–1938) and Sarah Frances Holland (1866–1940). William was a native of Leon County, Texas, and in 1920, he served as the district supervisor for the Bureau of the Census. Stringer settled in Teague and had become well known in the region as the editor and publisher of the “*The Teague Chronicle*” [4].

Vasa and William Stringer spent their lives in Teague. He continued operation of his newspaper, and they later acquired Stringer Florists. In the 1940s, he became the postmaster at the Teague post office. Vasa’s father moved to Texas to live with them in the 1934 and remained until his death in 1960.

Vasa Ward and William Stringer both died in Teague and are buried in the Greenwood Cemetery, Teague, Freestone County, Texas [5].



## Notes

1. Farmerville Cemetery (Farmerville, Union Parish LA), tombstone of "Lee Andrew Ward" (16 Feb 1866–5 Mar 1960). Union Parish LA Conveyance Record W, pp. 57–59: Elijah H. Ward to H. Hubbard Ward, John M. Ward, Permelia L. Ward Nolan, Lee Andrew Ward, and Henry W. Ward, "*the aforesaid heirs children of my pre deceased wife Permelia L. Ward,*" 15 March 1887. Union Parish, LA Marriage Book 1 (1850–1852), p. 121: Elijah H. Ward to "Pamela L. Lee," 5 February 1852.
2. "The Gazette" (Farmerville, LA), 12 October 1939, p. 1, column 2: "David Ward Deeds 40 Acres of Land For Church in 1831." For complete details, see the [David Ward & Cynthia Seale Biography](#) and the [David Ward Family Bible](#).
3. Martin Batte Lee family records (the Lee "slat-book"). [1850 Union Parish LA Federal Census](#), p. 358a, Dwelling #127, lines:
  - #20: Martin B. Lee (age: 52; Farmer; born: "N.C.")
  - #21: "Louisa Lee" [sic] (age: 50; born: "N.C.") [this is a mistake by the enumerator; other records verify that her name was "Levincy Albritton" prior to her marriage].
  - #22: Permelia Lee (age: 16; born: "Ala").
4. Farmerville Cemetery (Farmerville, Union Parish LA), tombstone of "Fannie Wincie Ward" (24 Mar 1857–18 Jan 1931). Louisiana Death Certificate #1297, 1931, "Fannie Roy Ward," Union Parish. Union Parish LA Marriage Book 8 (1889–1894), p. 62: Lee Andrew Ward to Fannie Roye, 3 April 1889. "The Gazette," 21 January 1931, p. 1, column 7: "Mrs. L. A. Ward." Fannie Roye Ward's death certificate lists her death as occurring on January 25, whereas the newspaper published her obituary on January 21<sup>st</sup>, stating that she had died on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The death certificate clearly contains a mistake.
5. "The Gazette," 21 January 1931, p. 1, column 7: "Mrs. L. A. Ward." This obituary identifies Fannie as "Miss Fannie W. Roye, a daughter of the late John D. Roye of this parish." These Union Parish federal census records show her in her parents' households:
  - 1860, P.O. Marion, p. 662/157, Dwelling #1036: J. D. Roye.
  - 1870, Ward No. 6, P.O. Union Cross Road, p. 151a/32, Dwelling #195: John Roy.
  - 1880, Ward N<sup>o</sup> Two, ED #85, p. 418a/8, Dwelling #60: John D. Roye.
6. For a complete description of these events, see the article: [Union Parish Family Feud](#).
7. "The Times-Democrat" June 1 (p. 1, column 7) and August 3 (p. 6, column 3), 1891. "The Guardian-Journal" (Homer, LA), 5 August 1891, p. 3, column 4. "The Weekly Times-Democrat," 7 August 1891, p. 10, column 5. "The Meridional," 13 June 1891, p. 2, column 1. "The Daily Picayune," 15 June 1891, p. 1, column 4. Union Parish LA District Court Minutes, Book February 1891–August 1892, pp. 503, 525, 549, 578, 589, 599–601, 613–615. Case #1695, State of Louisiana vs. James McGough, James Dawson, Lawrence McGough, William J. Roan and James Auld, "*shooting with intent to murder while lying in wait,*" indicted 10 August 1891. Bond of \$2500 on August 14<sup>th</sup>. The charge against Auld was dropped on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Jury trial on 4 February 1892, with defendants' counsel of Everett, Thomas, and G. H. Ellis. Verdict of not guilty reached February 6<sup>th</sup>, and all defendants released. Case #1711, State of Louisiana vs. James Aulds, James McGough, and James Dawson, "*Trespassing.*" Charges dropped against Auld on 12 October 1891. James McGough and James Dawson pled guilty on that date, sentenced to a fine of \$12 each plus costs, or 45 days in jail. Case #1718, State of Louisiana vs. S. L. Joiner, "*manslaughter.*" Indicted 13 August 1891, bond of \$2000. Trial and verdict of not guilty on 8 February 1892.
8. "The Herald" (Shreveport, LA), December 10 (p. 1, column 4: "A Timber War") and 17 (p. 3, column 1: "Monroe's Timber War"), 1896. "The Shreveport Times," December 10 (p. 2, column 2: "Called With Guns"), 12 (p. 2, column 1: "From Over the State"), and 17 (p. 2, column 3: "Back to the Old Home"), 1896. "The Gazette," December 16 (p. 3, column 2) and 23 (p. 3, column 3), 1896.
9. "The Gazette," 24 November 1897, p. 3, column 2. The name of this Baptist church is unknown. Henry Marshal Lee married Emma Octavia Lee, daughter of John Martin Lee Sr., the only brother of Permelia Lavincy Lee Ward. Samuel Rate Nolan married Frances Ardell Aulds, daughter of James Washington Auld, a first cousin of Elijah Hubbard Ward.
10. "The Gazette," 14 September 1910 (p. 5, column 2) and 22 September 1915 (p. 5, column 3). William J. Turnage married Corrine Lee, the youngest daughter of John Martin Lee, who was the only brother of Leander's mother, Permelia Lavincy Lee. For more information on Lee, see the [Sheriff John Martin Lee Biography](#).
11. "The Gazette," 24 March 1920, p. 5, column 4: "Guilford Lee Ward." These Union Parish federal census enumerations show Leander Ward's family living in Farmerville:
  - 1900, Ward 1 Precinct 1, ED #115, p. 10a, Dwelling #156, line #1: L. A. Ward.
  - 1910, Farmerville Town, ED #131, p. 4a–4b, East Street, Dwelling #70, line #50: Leander A. Ward.
  - 1920, Police Jury Ward 1, Farmerville Town, ED #123, p. 226a/3, Dwelling #37, line #12: Leeander Ward.
  - 1930, Ward 1, Town of Farmerville, ED #56-1, p. 96a, East Street, Dwelling #168, line #7: Leander Ward.

The 1920 obituary of Leander's son states that, "*He moved to our town with his parents many years ago when he was but a child and grew to manhood here...*"

12. "The Gazette," 30 May 1900 (p. 3, column 1), October 7 (p. 3, column 1) and 14 (p. 3, column 1), 1908, May 10 (p. 5, column 1) and August 9 (p. 5, column 1), 1911, and 15 January 1913 (p. 5, column 1).
13. "The Gazette," 16 February 1910 (p. 5, column 2), and September 9 (p. 5, column 2) and 16 (p. 5, column 1), 1914.
14. "The Gazette," 21 July 1909, p. 3, column 3.
15. "The Gazette," 3 March 1888, p. 2, column 1. It is not clear who won the 1888 election, but it appears that Ward was unsuccessful.
16. "The Gazette," 13 December 1899 (p. 3, column 3); January 3 (p. 2, column 1) and April 25 (p. 3, column 2), 1900.
17. "The Gazette," March 28 (p. 3, column 1), April 11 (p. 3, column 1), and August 1 (p. 3, column 1), 1900.
18. "The Gazette," 26 September 1900, p. 3, column 3.
19. "The Gazette," 10 March 1960, p. 1, column 1: "Last Rites Held for Former Marshal." His obituary stated, "Masonic rites were held at the grave by Union Fraternal Lodge No. 53, F. & A.M., of which the deceased was the oldest member."
20. "The Gazette," 23 January 1907, p. 3, column 1.
21. "The Gazette," May 20 (p. 3, column 2: "Lumber!") and 27 (p. 3, column 2: "Lumber!"), and July 16 (p. 3, column 5: "Lumber!"), 1908.
22. "The Gazette," August 12 (p. 1, column 1) and 26 (p. 1, columns 1-2), September 9 (p. 3, column 1: "Notice"), 1908. On both August 12 and 26, the newspaper published the "Official Directory" of local and state officials, including Lee Hudson as Farmerville's Town Marshal. On September 9<sup>th</sup>, Leander Ward, town marshal, published the notice about the hogs in Farmerville.
23. "The Gazette," 4 July 1906 (p. 2, column 5), August 19 (p. 2, column 5: "Ordinance No. 12") and November 25 (p. 3, column 2: "Dog Tags"), 1908.
24. "The Gazette," 14 April 1909, p. 3, column 2: "Town Election Yesterday."
25. "The Gazette," February 10 (p. 3, column 1: "Notice Tax Payers"), June 16 (p. 3, column 4: "Notice Hog Owners") and 23 (p. 3, column 2), November 24 (p. 5, column 1), and December 8 (p. 5, column 4), 1909.
26. "The Daily Picayune," April 2 (p. 1, columns 4-5: "Tax Books Save Life of Official; Paper Stops Assassin's Bullets") and 4 (p. 2, column 5: "May Lynch Negro"), 1910. "The Gazette," April 6 (p. 4, columns 2-3: "Town Marshal L. A. Ward Shot by Negro"), 13 (p. 5, column 1), and 20 (p. 5, column 3: "Card of Thanks"), May 4 (p. 5, column 1), 1910.
27. "The Gazette," 29 June 1910, p. 5, column 5.
28. "The Gazette," 19 April 1911, p. 5, column 2: "The Municipal Election."
29. "The Gazette," March 26 (p. 6, column 3: "Yesterday's Election") and August 6 (p. 5, column 2), 1913.
30. "The Gazette," February 3 (p. 5, column 2) and 24 (p. 5, column 7), and March 17 (p. 5, column 2), 1915.
31. "The Gazette," February 28 (p. 3, column 2: "Results of Municipal Election") and May 2 (p. 3, column 3), 1917.
32. "The Gazette," May 30 (p. 3, column 3) and August 22 (p. 3, column 2), 1917.
33. "The Gazette," 9 April 1919, p. 5, column 3: "The Town Election."
34. "The Gazette," 25 August 1920 (p. 5, column 4: "Proceedings [sic] of the Democratic Executive Committee"); 23 March 1921 (p. 1, column 3: "Special Road District No. 3"); April 4 (p. 4, column 4) and July 25 (p. 1, column 6: "Proceedings of the New Town Council"), 1923; 29 October 1924 (p. 1, column 1: "Union Parish Police Jury Proceedings").
35. "The Gazette," 10 December 1924 (p. 2, columns 1-3: "Clean Up Our Town Then Beautify, Says A Good Citizen"); March 18 (p. 1, column 5: "Notice To The Voters Of Farmerville"), April 1 (p. 1, column 5: "Statement To The Voters Of Farmerville") and 15 (p. 6, column 3: "A Card Of Thanks"), and August 12 (p. 1, column 6), 1925.
36. "The Gazette," 8 September 1926 (p. 1, column 6: "Officers Jail Two Suspects Here at 2:30 A.M. Monday;" "Farmerville Now Has Night Watchman"), and 11 April 1928 (p. 1, column 6: "Heavy Losses Sustained in early morning Blaze; only Partly Insured; Boys do Heroic Work; Ruston sends Help").
37. "The Gazette," 15 January 1930, p. 1, columns 6-7: "Burglary and Robbery Here Last Monday Night."
38. "The Gazette," 27 May 1931 (p. 4, column 3: "Negro Killed From Ambush Monday Night") and 15 March 1933 (p. 1, column 7: "Man Held for Breaking Into Post Office").
39. "The Gazette," 9 August 1933, p. 1, column 3: "First Meeting of New Council Held Aug. 1st" and p. 3, column 1: "Town Council Proceedings."
40. "The Gazette," November 11 (p. 4, column 2) and 18 (p. 4, column 3: "Wanted"), 1925; 9 June 1926 (p. 4, column 2); January 7 (p. 4, column 3) and 21 (p. 1, column 7: "Mrs. L. A. Ward"), 1931.
41. "The Gazette," February 25 (p. 4, column 2) and December 23 (p. 4, column 3), 1931; 2 November 1932 (p. 1, column 4); January 3 (p. 4, column 3), May 9 (p. 4, column 2), July 18 (p. 1, column 1: "Condition of L. A. Ward Improved"), September 19 (p. 3, column 4: "Household Furniture at Sacrifice!") and 26 (p. 5, column 2), 1934.
42. "The Gazette," 20 May 1936 (p. 2, column 6) and 19 May 1937 (p. 4, column 2).
43. "The Gazette," 19 June 1941 (p. 1, column 6: "Homemade Fish Gig 75 Years Old") and 2 March 1950 (p. 3, column 2: "Celebrates 84th Birthday"). "Waco Tribune-Herald" (Waco, TX), 2 February 1958, p. 17, columns 3-4.
44. "The Gazette," February 4 (p. 3, column 5: "Suffers Broken Leg") and March 10 (p. 1, column 1: "Last Rites Held for Former Marshal"), 1960. "The Mexia Daily News" (Mexia, TX), 7 March 1960, p. 1, column 2: "Rites Are Held In Louisiana For Teague Resident."

### **Gilford Lee Ward**

1. Farmerville Cemetery (Farmerville, Union Par LA), tombstone of "Gilford L. Ward" (20 Sep 1893-17 Mar 1920).
2. "The Gazette," May 3 (p. 5, column 3) and 24 (p. 5, column 2); September 13 (p. 5, column 2) and December 27 (p. 5, column 1), 1911; 3 January 1912 (p. 5, column 1); June 4 (p. 5, column 1) and August 13 (p. 5, column 1), 1913; 3 June 1914 (p. 5, column 1).
3. "The Gazette," March 17 (p. 5, column 4) and June 9 (p. 5, column 2), 1915
4. "The Gazette," September 15 (p. 5, column 5) and December 29 (p. 7, column 1), 1915; 12 July 1916 (p. 5, column 1).
5. "The Weekly News-Star" (Monroe, LA), 7 December 1916, p. 2, column 5: "Ward-Garlicher."
6. "Shreveport Journal" (Shreveport, LA), 3 May 1917, p. 2, column 3: "Capt. Price Expected to Return Here Friday." [World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918, Union Parish, Louisiana; LDS Film #5152083, Image #3652](#): Name: "Guilford Lee Ward;" age: 23 years; birthplace: Farmerville, La.; date of birth: "Sept 20 1893;" occupation: "Laborer."
7. "The Gazette," February 13 (p. 5, column 1) and August 28 (p. 5, column 5), 1918.
8. [1920 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Police Jury Ward 1, Farmerville Town, ED #123, p. 226a/3a, Dwelling #37](#), lines:
  - #12: Leander Ward – age: 52; home owned; occupation: Farmer.
  - #13: Fannie Ward – age: 62; wife.
  - #14: Gilford Ward – age: 26; son; occupation: "Dep Clerk – Dis Clerk office."
  - #15: Alice Ward – age: 20; Daughter in Law.
  - #16: Vasa Ward – age: 23; Daughter; single.
9. "The Gazette," March 10 (p. 5, column 2) and 17 (p. 5, column 2), 1920.
10. "The Gazette," 24 March 1920, p. 5, column 4: "Guilford Lee Ward."
11. "The Gazette," 27 October 1920, p. 7, column 1.

### **Vasa Ward Stringer**

1. "The Gazette," February 2 (p. 5, column 1) and May 24 (p. 5, column 3: "Closing of Farmerville High School"), 1916.
2. "The Gazette," 24 December 1919 (p. 5, column 1), March 10 (p. 5, column 2), and August 11 (p. 5, column 3) and 18 (p. 5, column 1), 1920.
3. "The Gazette," June 22 (p. 5, column 3: "Miss Vasa Ward Seriously Injured") and 29 (p. 5, column 1), 1921 "The New Orleans Item" (New Orleans, LA), 24 June 1921, p. 25, column 5: "Ouachita Girl May Die of Injuries at Hot Springs." "Shreveport Journal," 24 June 1921, p. 12, column 4.
4. "The Gazette," 21 May 1924, p. 3, column 5: "Stringer-Ward."
5. "The Mexia Daily News" (Mexia, TX), 5 September 1975, p. 2, column 5: "Stringer Service Set at Teague."

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