DRURY

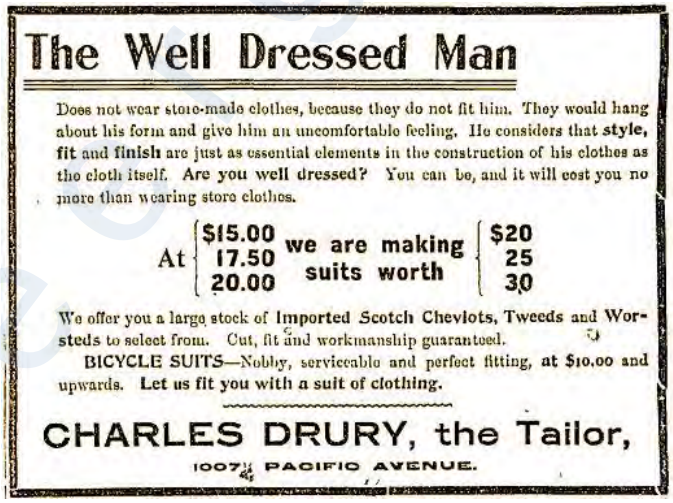
Block 45, Lot 4 De Smet Cemetery

The Drury family in Kingsbury County is somewhat of a mystery. A Charles Drury filed intent to homestead the NE 17-112-57 on November 19, 1883. He converted the claim to cash on November 17, 1884. In early 1887, a Charles Drury is listed as a new recruit in Company E, 2nd Regiment, Dakota National Guard. Later that year, he built a residence on West Third Street in De Smet, and the next mention of him is in a May 1888 newspaper that Charles S. Drury just married Miss Stella M. Gilbert. The trouble is that Stella Gilbert was supposedly married to John S. Drury in De Smet, not Charles, and subsequent mentions of the couple in local newspapers do refer to them as Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Drury.

Mentions of Charles Drury continue in the Kingsbury County newspapers during the late 1880s and early 1890s, however: property belonging to Charles suffered extensive hail damage, Charles was a member and officer of the I.O.O.F., and Charles was part owner of the De Smet Livery, Feed, and Sale Stable, interest which he sold in 1889, with no further mentions of Charles Drury yet found in county newspapers.

Following the "Charles S. Drury" marriage announcement in 1888, the next (and first!) mention of J. S. Drury is upon the birth of his and Stella's son in December 1893.

It is suspected that "John S. Drury" and Charles Drury were brothers, and for some reason John used his brother's name. It is also suspected that John S. Drury's real name was Seth Booth Drury…


The Well Dressed Man

Does not wear store-made clothes, because they do not fit him. They would hang about his form and give him an uncomfortable feeling. He considers that **style, fit** and **finish** are just as essential elements in the construction of his clothes as the cloth itself. **Are you well dressed?** You can be, and it will cost you no more than wearing store clothes.

At $15.00 / 17.50 / 20.00 we are making suits worth $20 / 25 / 30

We offer you a large stock of **Imported Scotch Cheviots, Tweeds and Worsteds** to select from. Cut, fit and workmanship guaranteed.

BICYCLE SUITS—Nobby, serviceable and perfect fitting, **at $10.00** and upwards. **Let us fit you with a suit of clothing.**

CHARLES DRURY, the Tailor,

1007½ PACIFIC AVENUE.

1898 advertisement for Drury the Tailor

CHARLES DRURY was born in Skellingthorpe, Lincoln, England, July 19, 1866, the son of Robert Drury (1829-1874) and Hannah (Booth) Drury (1829-1904). He was a tailor by trade. In 1885, Charles emigrated to the United States, settling first briefly in Wisconsin before moving to Tacoma, Washington, where he opened a tailor shop. He married Nettie B. Rand (1872-1934) and they had one son Malcolm (1893-1907).

In 1923, Charles Drury, known as "Drury the Tailor," opened a second shop, this one in Seattle. The Seattle shop – and ultimately the entire business – was run by Charles's nephew, Fred Seth Drury, the only child of John and Stella Drury. After the death of her husband, Stella continued to live in De Smet until 1904, when she and son Fred (age 11) moved to Washington State, where her parents, the Silliman Gilbert family, had moved in 1889. As a young man, Fred lived in Tacoma with his uncle, Charles Drury, and most likely learned the tailoring trade through him. Another uncle, William Drury, was also in the tailoring business in Washington State.

Charles Drury died October 23, 1942. He was buried in Tacoma Cemetery.

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Malcolm R. Drury 1893-1907
Nettie R. Drury 1822-1934
Charles Drury 1866-1942

October 24, 1942. The Seattle TIMES.
Death Claims Drury, Tailor.
Charles Drury, 76 years old, founder of the "Drury The Tailor" shops in Seattle and Tacoma, died yesterday at his home in Seattle.

A pioneer of the Northwest, Mr. Drury came to this area 55 years ago. He founded the company 53 years ago in Tacoma. He also was known for his participation in Democratic politics in this state.

Mr. Drury had led a colorful and eventful life. A seasoned traveler, he had circled the world twice and had crossed the Atlantic more than 60 times. Two years ago he was awarded a 50-year pin in the Masonic Lodge. This year he had received a similar pin from First Methodist Church in Tacoma. He had been the chairman of the board which supervised the founding of the church.

Born in Skellingthorpe, Lincoln, England, he learned his trade in that country. He came to the United States at the age of 18, settling in Muskegon, Wis. A few years later he moved to Tacoma, where he and a partner started a small tailoring establishment, beginning by doing cleaning and pressing and what tailoring business they could get. In a few weeks he bought out his partner.

In 1923, he founded the Seattle shop, at 1023 Second Ave., now larger than the Tacoma shop. His nephew, Fred Drury, 1631 37th Ave., has been in charge of the business for some time. He and his wife and their son, Caldan, are the Seattle survivors.

Mr. Drury also is survived by a brother, William, and two sisters, Mrs. Charlotte Wilson Marsh and Mrs. Hannah Collie, all of Tacoma, and a brother, Tom, in England.

Funeral services will be held at 3 o'clock Monday in the Buckley King Chapel, Tacoma.

JOHN S. DRURY

Block 45, Lot 4 De Smet Cemetery
June 1858 – November 18, 1895; died at age 37
Note that headstone has 1891 death year.

Son of Robert Drury (1829-1874) and Hannah (Booth) Drury (1829-1904).
Possibly Seth Booth Drury, changing name to John Seth Drury in the United States.
Husband of Estella M. Gilbert (1864-1944); married April 26, 1888.
Brother of Charles Drury (1866-1942).
One son, Fred Seth (1893-1964).

Seth Booth Drury (John S. Drury?) was born in Lincolnshire, England, June 1858, to Robert Drury and Hannah (Booth) Drury. According to the 1881 UK census, Seth Drury was living in Lincoln, age 23, a boot-maker, with his parents and siblings Charles (14), Hannah (11), Charlotte (9). Other siblings included Robert (born 1862), William (born 1864), Thomas (also born 1864), and Elizabeth (born 1865). Hannah, Charlotte, Charles, and William all came to the United States and all settled in Tacoma.

Seth Drury most likely came to the United States in February 1882 (not 1881 as the obituary records). If he did change his name to John, and/or use the name of his brother Charles for a while, the reasons for doing so are yet unknown. De Smet deeds are recorded for "Charles Drury and his wife Stella." His 1888 wedding to Estella M. Gilbert was reported by the De Smet newspaper:

> *May 4, 1888. Kingsbury County NEWS.*
> *Married, Thursday evening, April 26th, 1888 at residence of officiating clergyman, Rev. E. Brown, Mr. Charles [sic] S. Drury and Miss Stella M. Gilbert. The News tenders congratulations and best wishes.*

The birth of their son, Fred Seth Drury, on December 13, 1893, was the next mention of the family found in available county newspapers:

> *December 29, 1893. Kingsbury County INDEPENDENT.*
> *Although rather late in the day, we wish to state that a new boy came to the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Drury Dec. 13th, Dr. Davies in attendance.*

In October, 1894, John Drury worked in a mill in Howard, Dakota Territory, and the family moved there. The following month, however, they were said to be living in Volga. By January 1895, they were again living in De Smet. In March, John brought household goods from Volga to a house on First Street in De Smet, suggesting that perhaps he continued working away from home for a month or more.

In early November, 1895, John Drury was reported to be "quite sick," suffering from typhoid fever. He died on November 18th at the age of 37, and was buried in the De Smet Cemetery in Block 45, where members of the Gilbert family were later buried. His headstone records the incorrect death year. The "F L T" in interlocking rings at the top stands for "friendship, love and truth," the symbol of the International Order of Odd Fellows, of which Charles Drury was reported an officer of in 1889.

F L T / John Drury / 1858-1891 [sic]

> *November 22, 1895. De Smet NEWS & LEADER.*
> *Again we are called upon to chronicle the death of an old resident—John S. Drury, who died at his home in this city at one o'clock Monday morning, Nov. 18, 1895, of typhoid fever, after an illness of three weeks. Deceased was born at Lincolnshire, England, in June, 1858; came to this country in 1881, and to De Smet, South Dakota, in 1883, where he was united in marriage to Miss Estella Gilbert April 16, 1888. With the exception of one year which was spent at Tacoma, Washington, De Smet has been his home since 1883. He was an honest man, a good citizen and an accommodating neighbor, and had a large circle of friends who deeply feel his*

untimely death. He leaves a wife and one child to mourn his loss, besides an aged mother, two sisters and two brothers in England and one brother in Tacoma, Wash. Funeral services were held at the Methodist church Tuesday at 2 p.m. under the auspices of the I.O.O.F., of which deceased was a member, Rev. Norton preaching the sermon. The family have the sympathy of the community in their bereavement.

ESTELLA M. (GILBERT) DRURY MERRILL

Buried in Zillah Cemetery, Zillah (Yakima County) Washington
May 1864 – September 16, 1944; died at age 80

Estella M. Gilbert

Daughter of Silliman N. Gilbert (1833-1921) and Emily (Rundle) Gilbert (died 1929).
Sister of Lafayette, David, Fred, Charles, Elizabeth, Ada, and Luella.
Wife of John Drury (1888-1895); wife of Alva Merrill (1906-1920).
Mother of Fred Seth Drury (1893-1964).

"There will be Mary Power and Ida Brown, perhaps Stella Gilbert, though I think I'll combine Gennie Masters and Stella in Nellie Oleson." - Laura Ingalls Wilder, letter to Rose Wilder Lane, August 17, 1938

Estella "Stella" M. Gilbert was born in May 1964 in Lake City (Wabasha County) Minnesota. Her parents were Silliman Nathaniel Gilbert and Emily (Rundle) Gilbert. When Stella was sixteen, the Gilberts moved to Kingsbury County, Dakota Territory. Her father had filed on a homestead (the NW 23-111-56) and tree claim (the SE 15-110-57) in October 1879, but the family didn't move to Dakota permanently until after the Hard Winter of 1880-1881.

Laura Ingalls Wilder used Stella Gilbert as part of her composite Nellie Oleson character, writing in *Pioneer Girl* that Stella was trying to "edge her out" of Almanzo Wilder's attentions and she wanted no part of it. A similar story appears in *These Happy Golden Years* (see Chapter 20, "Nellie Oleson").

...The next Sunday again Stella came with Manly after me.

I went pleasantly enough, but Stella's smugness gave her scheme away to me. She was trying her best to edge me out of the drives. It was even more plain when she made plans for the next Sunday's drive and kindly (?) included me in them

Never, thought I, did I try to hold any one that wanted to go and I'll not enter into any competition for Manly.

But I wanted a clean break and to do it myself not just hang on until some time they neglected to come by for me.

Stella Gilbert married John Drury on April 26, 1888 – just as Laura and Almanzo Wilder had done several years earlier – at the home of Reverend Edward Brown. The couple lived in Howard, Volga, and in De Smet on First Street. Their only child, Fred Seth Drury, was born in De Smet on December 13, 1893. November 18, 1895, John Drury died of typhoid fever; he was buried in the De Smet Cemetery.

Following the death of her husband, Stella Drury lived in De Smet on First Street until 1904, when she and her son moved to Washington State.

> *April 8, 1904. Kingsbury County INDEPENDENT.*
>
> *Mrs. Stella Drury and son departed Wednesday evening for Toppenish, Wash., where they will make their future home. Mrs. Drury leaves many friends in De Smet who wish her success and happiness. At that place live her parents and two sisters so that she is not going among strangers.*

On May 5, 1906, Stella Drury married Alva Merrill, a fruit farmer in Toppenish, Washington:

> *May 9, 1906. The Yakima HERALD.*
>
> *Quite a pretty wedding took place at the home of S.N. Gilbert Saturday, May 5, at 8 p.m., this being the home of the parents of the bride. The contracting parties were Alva Merrill and Mrs. Estella Drury, all of Springdale. Loyd Phelps of Zillah and Miss Luella Gilbert, sister of the bride, were the attendants. Elder E.E. Francis of Zillah performed the ceremony in his usual and impressive manner. Quite a number of beautiful and useful presents were received. J.E. Estes and wife, set of silver knives and forks; Loyd Phelps, large pie fork; W. Morrison and wife, bed spread; Miss Morrison, set of fruit dishes; Miss Luella Gilbert, rocking chair; J.K. Cox and wife, set of pillow cases and lamp. Shortly after the wedding party had dispersed all was quiet, a soft and gentle tap was heard at the door and just as it was opened by some of the inmates, a general fusillade from all kinds and sizes of firearms ensued which shook the house from foundation to attic, a real old-fashioned cow bell – shotgun serenade, after which the participants were invited in and royally treated to pies, cakes, oranges and lemonade. At 2 o'clock the crowd dispersed. "And all went merry as a marriage bell," of being a participant in the joyous festivities of the occasion, the well wishes of the writer is that the most sanguine hopes of the happy pair may be fully realized.*

Alva Merrill was born around 1853 in West Virginia, the son of Rawley (Raleigh?) Merrill and Nancy (Davis) Merrill. By the time of the 1860 census, the family was living in Morgan County, Missouri, but little else is known about the family or of Alva's location prior to his marriage to Stella Drury. Alva and Stella married when he was 53 and she was 42. On the 1910 census, the couple – and Stella's son Fred (age 17) – were living in Zillah (Yakima County) Washington. On the 1920 census, taken late in January, Alva and Stella are still in Yakima County, but Fred is living with his uncle, Charles Drury, in Tacoma. Alva Merrill died February 16, 1920, in Zillah. He was buried in Zillah Cemetery.

Stella Merrill died September 16, 1944. An undated obituary in the Yakima HERALD reads:

> ***Merrill—Mrs. Estella Merrill,*** *80, died Saturday morning in Yakima. She was born in Minnesota and had lived in this community for 50 years. Members of her family include one son, Fred Drury of Seattle; a sister, Mrs. W.J. Morrison of Buena; two brothers, C.L. Gilbert of Union Gap and C.N. Gilbert of San Pedro, Cal; one niece, Mrs. Martin Bjer of Yakima; a nephew, Charles Morrison of Zillah and one grand child. Langenvin-Meyer has charge of arrangements. (There was another identical notice the next day with additional information that services were being held at the Christian Scientist church.)*

See **GILBERT** for information about the parents of Estella (Gilbert) Merrill.

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