GILBERT

Block 45, Lot 5 De Smet Cemetery

Some people named Gilbert lived on a farm north and east of town. There were Pa and Ma Gilbert, Al and Fred and Stella and Leona Gilbert. -Pioneer Girl

SILLIMAN NATHANIEL GILBERT

Buried in Tahoma Cemetery, Yakima, Washington
December 25, 1838 – April 14, 1921; died at age 82

Son of Silas Gilbert and Marietta Gould.
Husband of Emily Jane (Rundle) Gilbert (1844-1927); married June 28, 1858.
Father of Lafayette, David, Estella, Fred, Charles, Elizabeth, Ada, and Luella.

Emily and Silliman Gilbert with daughter Luella

Silliman Nathaniel Gilbert was born on Christmas Day 1833 in New Haven, Connecticut, to Silas Gilbert and Marietta (Gould) Gilbert.

Silliman and his wife Emily had eight children: Christopher Lafayette (1859), David Allison (born April 1862), Estella M. (1864), Fred W. (1867), Charles (1871), Elizabeth Ann (1874), Ada M. (1876), and Luella B. (1881). The Gilbert family lived in Mount Pleasant Township, Wabasha County, Minnesota, before settling near De Smet, Dakota Territory. They were wealthy and quite prominent in Lake City, owning thousands of dollars in real estate. The area where they lived was known as "Gilbert Valley" long after the family left Minnesota.

On October 20, 1879, Silliman Gilbert filed on a homestead northeast of the townsite of De Smet, the NW 23-111-56. That same day, he filed on a tree claim six miles southwest of De Smet in Manchester Township, the SE 15-110-57. On May 10, 1880, son Lafayette filed on a homestead just south of Lake Preston, the SE 6-110-54.

In her handwritten *Pioneer Girl* memoir, Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote that the Gilberts lived north and east of town and had arrived during the spring after the Hard Winter. Laura became acquainted with Stella at Sunday School and visited the family at their homestead. When a dancing club was started in town, Fred Gilbert asked Laura to go with him, but she refused, thinking that she didn't want to spend quite so much time with Fred. Later, though, Laura confessed that she had been quite smitten with Fred, who was exactly her age. Fred Gilbert died young; he and his wife are buried in the De Smet Cemetery near the Ingallses.

 ©2015 Nancy Cleaveland / Gina Terrana

Silliman Gilbert became a prosperous fruit farmer in Washington, with all of his children except Al settling nearby. Silliman Gilbert died in April 14, 1921 at age 88. Emily Gilbert died March 16, 1927. They are buried in Block 44, Lot 1, Tahoma Cemetery (Yakima County) Washington, as is their daughter, Luella Gilbert Sutherland.

EMILY JANE (RUNDLE) GILBERT

Buried in Tahoma Cemetery, Yakima, Washington
May 16, 1844 – March 16, 1927; died at age 82

Daughter of William Oliver Rundle and Elizabeth May (Edwards) Rundle.
Sister of Horace B. Rundle (1841-1921); aunt of Bouchie School students Charles and May Rundle.
Wife of Silliman N. Gilbert (1838-1921); married June 28, 1858.
Mother of Lafayette, David, Estella, Fred, Charles, Elizabeth, Ada, and Luella.

Emily Jane Rundle was born May 16, 1844, in Harley (Wayne County) Pennsylvania, to William Oliver Rundle (1815-1909) and Elizabeth May (Edwards) Rundle (1818-1893). One of her siblings was Horace B. Rundle, who homesteaded in the Bouchie School District during the Little House years. Two of the Rundle children, Charles and May, were taught by Laura Ingalls in the Bouchie school; she called them Charles and Martha Harrison. The Gilbert children and the Rundle children were first cousins.

The Gilbert story is told above. Following the death of her husband, Emily Gilbert lived with daughter Luella. Emily Gilbert died March 16, 1927. She is buried in Block 44, Lot 1, Tahoma Cemetery (Yakima County) Washington, as is daughter Luella Gilbert Sutherland.

DAVID ALLISON GILBERT

Block 45, Lot 5 De Smet Cemetery
April 22, 1862 – May 17, 1933; died at age 71

Son of S.N. Gilbert (1838-1921) and Emily (Rundle) Gilbert (1844-1927).
Brother of Lafayette, Estella, Fred, Charles, Elizabeth, Ada, and Luella.
Husband of Sarah Lyngbye; married October 31, 1888.

Across from Ingalls graves: David Gilbert 1862-1933. On either side are markers that say wife Hazel Failing 1897-1990 and [can't read initial] Elmer Failing 1893-1969. David Gilbert's wife is buried south of the male Failing grave, says Sarah Gilbert 1866-1949. Last grave in row is Guy Gilbert, Pvt U.S. Army Oct. 7, 1931 (1939?)

David A. Gilbert

Oral history records that David Allison ("Al") Gilbert was

the mail boy of the Hard Winter of 1880-1881, walking to Lake Preston and back with the mail. Laura Ingalls Wilder mentioned "Gilbert" as the mail boy in *The Long Winter* (see Chapter 18, "Merry Christmas").

May 22, 1883, David Gilbert filed on a preemption claim in Manchester Township, southwest of De Smet. In September and October of the same year, he filed on an adjoining homestead and tree claim in the Bouchie school district. He built a shanty close to the home of Joseph Bouchie. In his final homestead papers, Gilbert wrote that the only time he was away from his claim was during the winter of 1883-1884, which was when Laura Ingalls taught in the Bouchie District. David Gilbert's claim shanty was used for the schoolhouse that term.

David Gilbert married Sarah Lyngbye, (born July 1866), whose family came from Denmark in the 1870s and homesteaded near David's preemption claim. They had three children: Hazel (born 1897), Ana (born 1890), and Guy (born 1892). Many items belonging to the Gilbert family are on display in the Surveyors' House in De Smet, South Dakota, part of the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Society. David Gilbert is buried in the De Smet Cemetery.

May 19, 1933. The De Smet NEWS.

D.A. Gilbert, resident of Kingsbury County since March, 1880, died at the farm home east of De Smet early Wednesday morning after an illness of some length with cancer of the liver. He had been very low for several weeks.

Mr. Gilbert had spent most of his mature years in this community. For a number of years, the family lived in the city, returning to the farm in recent years.

Surviving the pioneer are his wife and two children, Mrs. E.F. Failing of Arlington and Guy, who made his home with the parents.

The funeral will be held Friday afternoon with services at the farm home at 1:30 and at the De Smet Congregational church at 2:00, the Rev. R.H. Evans of Lake Preston officiating. Interment will be in De Smet cemetery.

May 26, 1933. The De Smet NEWS.
Gilbert Was Early Mail Pouch Boy

Funeral services for D.A. Gilbert, who died at his home east of De Smet last Wednesday, were held Friday afternoon at the Congregational church in De Smet, with the Rev. R.H. Evans of Lake Preston, officiating. Interment was made in the De Smet cemetery beside his brother, Fred.

Obituary. David Allison Gilbert was born in Lake City, Minn., April 22, 1862, the son of Silliman and Emily Gilbert. In March 1880 he came with his parents to Dakota Territory and settled in what is now Kingsbury County. For a time, he carried mail from Volga to Huron and made the trip twice a week.

Later he homesteaded on a claim ten miles southwest of De Smet. He was united in marriage to Sarah Lyngbye of De Smet, October 31, 1888. To this union three children were born.

Except for one year which was spent in Missouri he had made his home in Kingsbury County and was one of the old pioneers who helped build up the prairies to a place of beautiful farms.

For the past few years, he made his home in De Smet, returning to his farm home, four and one half miles east of De Smet two years ago, where he died May 17. He had been a patient sufferer from cancer for over two years.

He was a member of the Lake Henry Congregational church in the neighborhood in which he lived.

David Gilbert is survived by his wife and three children, Mrs. Owen Malone of Lake Preston, Mrs. E.J. Failing of Arlington and Guy, who made his home with his parents; two grandsons, Burton and David Malone; two sisters, Mrs. W.J. Morrison and Mrs. Estella Merrill; and two brothers, Lafe and Charley, all of Zillah, Wash. Two sisters and one brother preceded him in death.

SARAH (LYNGBYE) GILBERT

April 3, 1949. The De Smet NEWS.

Death of Sarah Gilbert, Mrs. D.A. Gilbert brought the loss of another of the pioneers of Kingsbury County, the widow of a man who lived here through the Hard Winter.

March 31, 1949: The De Smet NEWS.
Death Takes Pioneer; Services Here Today for Mrs. Gilbert.

Death came this week to Mrs. D.A. Gilbert, pioneer resident of this vicinity, at a convalescent home in Volga, where she had been cared for lately. She was 82 years of age. Funeral services were held here this afternoon, with burial in the local cemetery.

Coming to Kingsbury County in 1881 with her parents, Mrs. Gilbert had married here and continued to live in De Smet until four years ago, when she went to make her home with her daughter and husband, Dr. and Mrs. E.J. Failing, of Arlington. She suffered a stroke two years ago and had been invalided since then.

Services were held at De Smet Congregational church this afternoon, conducted by the Reverend Olson, Presbyterian pastor at Volga. Chet Trumbo, Arlington, sang two sacred numbers, Mrs. George E. Muser, church organist, accompanying him.

ESTELLA M. (GILBERT) DRURY MERRILL

[see DRURY]

GILBERT, WILLIAM FRED GILBERT

Fred Gilbert

Block 45, Lot 4, then the rest of the Gilberts are south of him. John Drury is north, in Lot 4. Fred Gilbert and wife Arianna, square marker with his info on one side, hers on another. Born June 16, 1867. Died September 26, 1899.

William Fred Gilbert was born June 16, 1867 in Lake City (Goodhue County) Minnesota. Died September 26, 1899 in Silver Creek (Merrick County) Nebraska. He married Arianna Janssen Heeren, daughter of Elske and Garrelt Heeren. Fred and Arianna were married March 4, 1892, in Ainsworth (Brown County) Nebraska. Arianna died February 12, 1901, in Stephenson County, Illinois, at age 31. Fred died September 26, 1899, at Silver Creek (Merrick County), Nebraska, at age 32. They had three children: Emily Mae (1892-1987); Harold Wallace (1894-1914), and Elden Garrelt (1897-1976).

Arianna Gilbert

October 5, 1899. Central City (Nebraska) NONPAREIL.
Died, Tuesday, Sept. 26, at his home in Silver Creek, Mr. Gilbert of Bright's disease. He leaves a wife and three children to mourn his loss. His remains were taken to South Dakota for interment, where his parents reside. He was a member of the Modern Woodman which order paid him honors on his departure from here. He will be greatly missed in this county as he was a good citizen and well respected.

The following is an obituary said to have been supplied by someone at the LIW Memorial Society. It was said to have come from Valentine, Nebraska, where the family lived for a while.

W.F. Gilbert, who leased the mill at this place and lived here several years ago, moving from here to Silver Creek, this state, died there September 26, of heart failure, aged 32 years. He leaves a wife and three children. At the time of his death, he was chairman of both town and school boards and was an active member of the Congregational church and the M.W.A. Mrs. Gilbert writes us that he had been very successful in the mill of which he owned a half interest, and had just reached the point where he could take life easy. He and his family had made all arrangements to spend the winter in California and were to start in three days, when he was suddenly taken sick, and after ten days illness died. The remains were taken to De Smet, South Dakota, where his parents reside. Personally, the editor of this paper feels the loss of a dear friend and a man whom we regarded as one of nature's noblemen.

Arianna is buried in Silver Creek Reformed Cemetery (on South Bunker Hill Road), German Valley, Stephenson County, Illinois (southeast of Freeport, Illinois). She is buried beside her mother; her grave and her husband's grave in De Smet have identical markers.