

Bauer, Rachael Blythe ^[1]

Bauer, Rachael Blythe

by Andrea Smythe, September 2023

May 15, 1870 – January 9, 1897



A photograph of Rachael Blythe Bauer taken by Harry L. Perkins in Baltimore, Maryland, ca. 1880-1890s.

See also: [Bauer, Adolphus Gustavus](#) ^[2]

Rachael Blythe Bauer, stenographer and typist, was a Cherokee woman who married architect [Adolphus Gustavus \(A.G.\) Bauer](#) ^[2]. She was also the mother of [Fred B. Bauer](#) ^[3], vice-chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians tribe.

Rachael was likely three-quarters Cherokee. Her children are both listed as three-eighths on the 1908 census of the Eastern Band of Cherokee tribe. A later application to the tribe stated that Rachael was five-eighths Cherokee. Records for her children Fred B. Bauer and Owena A. Bauer in the Eastern Band of Cherokee Applications of the U.S. Court of Claims, 1906–1909 list their mother's Cherokee ancestors. Rachael's parents are noted as being Johnson Blythe (John Cin-ih on the 1851 Siler Roll) and Nannie Long. Her grandparents on her father's side are Jackson Blythe and Sah-do-yih (Sah-ti-ih on the 1851 Siler Roll). The applications list Rachael's maternal grandparents as Di-dah-li-do-gih and Ga-nun-na-di-ski. These names as spelled did not appear on the Siler Roll or any previous census of the Eastern Cherokee tribe, but spelling of American Indian names varied greatly between records due to the phonetic interpretation of the names by the census taker.

Rachael was educated at the [Oxford Orphan's Asylum](#) ^[4] (now the Masonic home for children at Oxford) in her youth. The Asylum was a Masonic orphanage that opened in 1873. In a letter from A.G. Bauer to his sister, he shared that Rachael "never had parents from the time she was three." On the 1880 census of Granville County, an American Indian girl named Rachael Johnson, age eleven, is listed as a resident of Oxford Orphan's Asylum. It is likely that Rachael was enrolled at the orphanage and her father's first name was mistakenly used as her last name. Rachael Blythe appears on the 1884 Hester Roll census of the Eastern Cherokee with a listed age of thirteen years old. She is shown to be living in a household with Jackson and Elizabeth Blythe along with three older boys, William H., James, and David. At this time, Rachael is denoted as being an orphan and the listed relationship to Jackson is granddaughter.



A photograph of Rachael Blythe Bauer, ca. 1880-1890s.

James and David Blythe, sons of Rachael's grandfather Jackson, were admitted to Oxford Orphan's Asylum in 1873. Though Jackson was still alive in 1873, his second wife, Ah-leh, (alternative spellings Au-lee, Ollie, Olla) had died and orphanages often accepted children with only one living parent. Rachael Blythe does not appear on the list of enrollees, but more than half of that initial list was lost. Not much is known about Rachael's time at the orphanage, but children there were given domestic and vocational training. A 1922 pictorial history shows that the children learned woodworking, telegraphy, and shoemaking in addition to skills such as cooking, sewing, and farming. The children at the orphanage worked at the printing press where *The Orphan's Friend and Masonic Journal* was published. In 1884, Rachael was recruited to be a secretary for the superintendent of the orphanage, John Haymes Mills ^[5], when he left Oxford to open an orphanage in Thomasville.

In September 1890, Rachael moved to Raleigh to begin formal study of stenography and typography at the Raleigh Business College. She had previously attended Judson Female College in Hendersonville. In May 1891, Rachael worked with her professor, J.P. Matheny to create stenographic records for the King's Daughter and

Sons ^[6] convention. A month later, Rachael completed her studies and had accepted employment in an R. D. Robinson's insurance office in Raleigh. Rachael and Adolphus Gustavus Bauer were both listed as lodgers of a boarding house on Fayetteville Street in 1891. This is likely where A.G. and Rachael met.

In 1892, Rachael moved to Asheville for six months to work as a stenographer and typist with Gash & Company. Rachael served as the official stenographer for the Teacher's Assembly meeting the summer of 1893.

Rachael and A. G. Bauer married in the home of Rachael's former professor, J.P. Matheny, in Washington, D.C. on June 18, 1895. Newspaper announcements shared that the marriage was performed in D.C. due to North Carolina's miscegenation laws ^[7]. Miscegenation laws prohibited the marriage between a white person and anyone of Black or American Indian descent. There was speculation that the marriage would not be recognized in the state and that Rachael and Bauer could be "liable to indictment ^[8]" upon returning to North Carolina. However, upon Rachael's return to Raleigh in July, two weeks after her husband, no legal action was taken against either of them.

The Bauers' first child, a daughter named Owena(h), was born in October 1895, shortly after the wedding. In his diary and in a letter to his sister, A.G. Bauer revealed that he and Rachael had been secretly married on November 15, 1894. The secret marriage accounts for the short span between their marriage in D.C. and the birth of their daughter. Rachael stayed with friends in Chapel Hill from August to November 1895, possibly to hide her pregnancy.



Rachael's monument at Oakwood Cemetery, September 2023.

Rachael was pregnant with their second child in May 1896 when her husband was struck by a train while traveling in an open buggy. Newspaper accounts of the incident state that "the vehicle and occupants were carried nearly a hundred feet down the track." A.G. Bauer received a head injury from the accident and was hospitalized for a month. He continued to suffer from headaches, dizziness, and depression as a result for the remainder of his life. Letters Rachael sent during this time revealed that she was concerned with the family finances, as well as her husband's mood and health. In an October 1896 letter to a friend, Rachael shared that she was suffering from dysentery. In December 1896, Rachael birthed their second child, Fred Blythe Bauer.

Rachael died on January 9, 1897, two weeks after the birth of her son. Childbirth was not the direct cause of her death, but the intense physical effort may have worsened a pre-existing illness. Wake County records list her cause of death as an inflammation of her intestines, likely related to the dysentery she wrote about the previous year. The Matheny family sent a letter to Bauer with their condolences and stated that "to know Rachael was to love her." Her funeral was held at the First Baptist Church in

Raleigh on January 10th. She is [buried](#)^[10] in Oakwood Cemetery.

The memorial for Rachael at Oakwood was specially designed by Bauer and is said to be a replica of the “temple of Diana at Ephesus.” Newspapers throughout the state shared the story of Rachael and Bauer’s relationship many years after their deaths and included a detailed description of the monument. In March 1897, the NC legislature passed a [special bill](#)^[11] “validating the marriage of A. G. Bauer and Rachael Blythe.”

After Rachael’s death, her children Owena and Fred were sent to live with family as Bauer was in poor health due to his traumatic brain injury. On May 12, 1898, A.G. Bauer died by suicide, leaving a note stating that he wished to be buried in Raleigh next to his wife.

Owena may have split her time between her family in Ohio and Qualla Township, NC. Census records list her as the ward of James Blythe, but also show her as living in Ohio in the home of John and Augusta Schick. Owena later married Roy Frye of Ohio. The 1898 census records reveal that Fred lived with his great-half-uncle, James Blythe. He attended the [Carlisle Indian School](#)^[12], a “government run boarding school for Native Americans... with the goal of forced assimilation,” in Pennsylvania from 1911 until the school closed in 1918. Fred married Catherine A. Dotterwick in 1927. He served as the vice-chief of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indian tribe from 1935 to 1939.

References:

“Around Town.” *Asheville Daily Citizen*, June 10, 1892. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91068076/1892-06-10/ed-1/seq-4/>^[13]

Bauer, Adolphus G. *Diary of Adolphus Gustavus Bauer, undated*. Diary. From the NC State Archives, PC 1707, *Adolphus Gustavus Bauer Papers, 1895-1898*.

Bauer, Adolphus G. A. G. *Bauer to Mrs. John Schick, 1896* Letter. From the NC State Archives, PC 1707, *Adolphus Gustavus Bauer Papers, 1895-1898*.

Bauer, Rachael B. *Rachel Bauer to Lizzie Broening, 1896* Letter. From the NC State Archives, PC 1707, *Adolphus Gustavus Bauer Papers, 1895-1898*.

“Bauer-Blythe.” *The Evening Visitor* (Raleigh, N.C.), June 18, 1895. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn93064777/1895-06-18/ed-1/seq-1/>^[14]

“Carlisle Indian School Past.” Carlisle Indian School Project, June 17, 2020. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://carlisleindianschoolproject.com/past/>^[12]

“Death of Mrs. A. G. Bauer.” *The Press-Visitor* (Raleigh, N.C.), Jan. 9, 1897. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn92073002/1897-01-09/ed-1/seq-1/>^[15]

“He Was Tired of Life.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), May 13, 1898. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1898-05-13/ed-1/seq-4/>^[16]

“House - Afternoon Session.” *The North Carolinian* (Raleigh, N.C.), Mar. 11, 1897. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91099169/1897-03-11/ed-1/seq-11/>^[17]

Matheny, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. *Mr. and Mrs. Matheny to A.G. Bauer, 1897* Letter. From the NC State Archives, PC 1707, *Adolphus Gustavus Bauer Papers, 1895-1898*.

“Notes About Town.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), May 16, 1891. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1891-05-16/ed-1/seq-4/>^[18]

Oxford Orphan Asylum. *Pictorial history of the Oxford Orphanage: Founded in 1872 by Grand Lodge of North Carolina* Oxford: Oxford Orphanage, 1922. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://archive.org/details/pictorialhistory03oxfo/page/n5/mode/2up>^[19]

“Personal.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), June 4, 1891. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1891-06-04/ed-1/seq-4/>^[20]

“Personal.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), Dec. 3, 1892. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1892-12-03/ed-1/seq-4/>^[21]

Prioli, Carmine Andrew. “The Indian ‘Princess’ and the Architect: Origin of a North Carolina Legend.” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 60, no. 3 (1983): 283–303. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23521657>^[22]

“Raleigh in Brief.” *The Daily State Chronicle* (Raleigh, N.C.), Sept. 18, 1890. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn92072977/1890-09-18/ed-1/seq-4/>^[23]

“Raleigh News Letter.” *The Weekly Star* (Wilmington, N.C.), July 19, 1895. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84026538/1895-07-19/ed-1/seq-2/>^[24]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *United States, Native American, Eastern Cherokee Indian Reservation Baker Roll, 1924-1929* database with images, *AncestryLibrary*, Entry for Owena A. Frye. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/imageviewer/collections/2398/images/3280...>^[25]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *United States, Native American, Eastern Cherokee Indian Reservation Churchill Roll, 1908* database with images, *FamilySearch*, Entry for Fred Blythe Bauer and Owena Bauer. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QKGC-ZS87>^[26]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *United States, Native American, Eastern Cherokee Indian Reservation Hester Roll, 1884* database with images, *AncestryLibrary*, Entry for Rachel Blythe. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/76604:60555?tid...>^[27]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *United States, Native American, Eastern Cherokee Indian Reservation Siler Roll, 1851* website, Entry for Sah-ti-ih. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~nativeamericangen/genealogy/wolf.html>^[28]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *United States, Native American, Census Rolls, 1885-1940* database, *FamilySearch*, Entry for Owenah A Frye (Bauer), 1933. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QPS2-7566>^[29]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *United States, Native American, Census Rolls, 1885-1940* database, *FamilySearch*, Entry for Fred Bauer, 1932. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QG6H-J62F>^[30]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Court of Claims. *Eastern Cherokee Applications of the U.S. Court of Claims, 1906-1909* Fred B. Bauer. Application Number 16028. National Archives Catalog, 1907. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/56564276>^[31]

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Court of Claims. *Eastern Cherokee Applications of the U.S. Court of Claims, 1906-1909* Owenah A. Bauer. Application Number 11214. National Archives Catalog, 1907. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/56512079>^[32]

“Romance and Tragedy.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), Aug. 8, 1909. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1909-08-08/ed-1/seq-5/>^[33]

“Struck By A Train.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), May 3, 1896. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1896-05-03/ed-1/seq-1/>^[34]

“The Teachers’ Assembly.” *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), June 23, 1893. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1893-06-23/ed-1/seq-1/>^[35]

The Wilmington Messenger, June 21, 1895. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91068368/1895-06-21/ed-1/seq-1/>^[8]

United States Census Bureau. *United States Census, 1880* database with images, *FamilySearch*, Entry for Rachel Johnson, 1880. Accessed Sept. 6, 2023. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MC6Y-LVV>^[36]

Image Credits:

Perkins, Harry L, photographer. “Rachael Blythe Bauer, 2012; c. 1880s-1890s.” Photograph. Baltimore, M.D.: Harry L. Perkins, undated. From the North Carolina State

Archives General Negative Collection: N.2012.9.206 Rachael Blythe Bauer.

"Rachael Blythe Bauer, 2012; c. 1880s-1890s." Photograph. Undated. From the North Carolina State Archives General Negative Collection: N.2012.9.207 Rachael Blythe Bauer.

Smythe, Andrea. "Memorial for Rachael Blythe Bauer." Photograph. Sept. 14, 2023.

Subjects:

[Architects](#) ^[37]

[Biographies](#) ^[38]

[Cherokee Indians](#) ^[39]

[Gilded Age \(1876-1900\)](#) ^[40]

[Women](#) ^[41]

[Writers, journalists, and editors](#) ^[42]

Authors:

[Smythe, Andrea](#) ^[43]

Origin - location:

[Buncombe County](#) ^[44]

[Asheville](#) ^[45]

[Henderson County](#) ^[46]

[Hendersonville](#) ^[47]

[Qualla Boundary](#) ^[48]

[Davidson County](#) ^[49]

[Thomasville](#) ^[50]

[Granville County](#) ^[51]

[Oxford](#) ^[52]

[Chapel Hill](#) ^[53]

[Wake County](#) ^[54]

[Raleigh](#) ^[55]

From:

[Government & Heritage Library, State Library of North Carolina](#) ^[56]

6 December 2023 | Smythe, Andrea

Source URL: <https://ncpedia.org/bauer-rachael-blythe>

Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/bauer-rachael-blythe> [2] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/bauer-adolphus-gustavus> [3] <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1185121> [4] <https://www.ibiblio.org/orphanage/history/> [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/mills-john-haymes> [6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/kings-daughters-and-sons> [7] <https://jmcrowmuseum.ferris.edu/question/2010/may.htm> [8] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91068368/1895-06-21/ed-1/seq-1/> [9] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1896-05-03/ed-1/seq-1/#words=Bauer+Bauer%E2%80%99s+G> [10] <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/22157983/rachel-blythe-bauer> [11] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91099169/1897-03-11/ed-1/seq-11/#words=Blythe+Rachel> [12] <https://carlisleindianschoolproject.com/past/> [13] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91068076/1892-06-10/ed-1/seq-4/> [14] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn93064777/1895-06-18/ed-1/seq-1/> [15] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn92073002/1897-01-09/ed-1/seq-1/> [16] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1898-05-13/ed-1/seq-4/> [17] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn91099169/1897-03-11/ed-1/seq-11/> [18] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1891-05-16/ed-1/seq-4/> [19] <https://archive.org/details/pictorialhistory03oxfo/page/n5/mode/2up> [20] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1891-06-04/ed-1/seq-4/> [21] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1892-12-03/ed-1/seq-4/> [22] <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23521657> [23] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn92072977/1890-09-18/ed-1/seq-4/> [24] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84026538/1895-07-19/ed-1/seq-2/> [25] https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/imageviewer/collections/2398/images/32805_259498-00140?pld=31447 [26] <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QGKC-ZS87> [27] <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/76604:60555?tid=&pid=&queryId=7f1797596f0b853e69b2a3b53429821b&phsrc=xzO624&phstart=successSource> [28] <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~nativeamericangen/genealogy/wolf.html> [29] <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QPS2-7566> [30] <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QG6H-J62F> [31] <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/56564276> [32] <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/56512079> [33] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1909-08-08/ed-1/seq-5/> [34] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn85042104/1896-05-03/ed-1/seq-1/> [35] <https://newspapers.digitalnc.org/lccn/sn84024516/1893-06-23/ed-1/seq-1/> [36] <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MC6Y-LVV> [37] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/architects> [38] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term> [39] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/cherokee-indians> [40] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/gilded-age-1876-1> [41] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/women> [42] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/writer> [43] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/smythe-andrea> [44] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/mountain-8> [45] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/mountain-9> [46] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/mountain-7> [47] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location-3> [48] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/qualla> [49] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmon-11> [50] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location-2> [51] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont/g> [52] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont-22> [53] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont-5> [54] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont/w> [55] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/piedmont-0> [56] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/government>