

A HISTORY SHORT The Jonas Gray Family

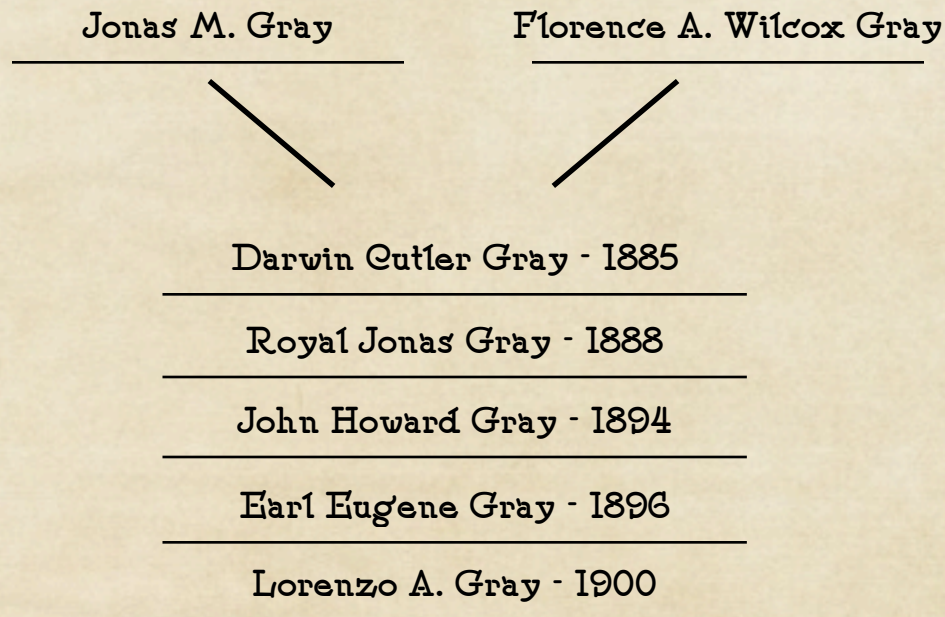


COMPILED IN 2017 By:



Pine City Area History Association

Jonas Gray was born in Bakersfield, Vermont, July 10, 1850. He came to Pine City before the railroad was through here. He married Florence Wilcox on May 19, 1884. They had 5 sons.



Jonas Gray moved his family from Beroun on Monday and is now located at the Wilcox farm where the family lived before moving to Beroun last fall.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
APRIL 3, 1903

The family lived for a time near Florence's family near the south end of Cross Lake. They moved briefly to Beroun and then back to Pine City. In 1906 they had a chimney fire.

A Chimney Fire.

Thursday morning an alarm of fire was turned in, and upon investigation it was found that the roof around the chimney on the Jonas Gray residence, on the south end of Cross lake, was on fire. The fire ladders turned out but owing to the deep snow and the distance the engine and hose carts were not taken out. When the citizens reached the scene J. D. Wilcox, Jr., and several of the neighbors had the fire about out. The damage to the house is but slight.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 9, 1906

The 1910 census lists Jonas Gray's occupation as a rural mail carrier.

Gray, Jonas	Male	28	11	24	5	Minnesota	New York	Vermont	English	None	Rural Mail W
Gray, Florence	Female	25	11	24	5	Minnesota	New York	New York	English	None	
Gray, Darwin C.	Male	11	11	28	5	Minnesota	Vermont	Minnesota	English	None	Telegraph W
Gray, Royal J.	Male	28	11	22	5	Minnesota	Vermont	Minnesota	English	None	School O2
Gray, Earl E.	Male	28	11	16	5	Minnesota	Vermont	Minnesota	English	None	
Gray, George	Male	28	11	13	5	Minnesota	Vermont	Minnesota	English	None	
Gray, George	Male	11	11	9	5	Minnesota	Vermont	Minnesota	English	None	

Some time between 1910 and 1920 the family bought a home just south of the Methodist Church at 530 8th St. SW.



1921

Jonas passed away in 1920.

Pioneer Passes Away

Jonas Gray passed away at his home in Pine City yesterday—Wednesday—at 6 p.m. death being due to old age and the result of a fifth paralytic stroke, after a weeks confinement to his bed. The first stroke was suffered about 8 years ago. This is the first break in the family for 40 years, when a brother of Mrs. Gray was drowned.

The deceased was born in Bakersfield, Vermont, July 10 1850, coming to Pine City when a young man, before the railroad was through here. He married Miss Florence Al Wilcox, daughter of John D. Wilcox at Pine City, May 19, 1884. 5 children were born—Darwin C. of Duluth, Royal J. of Virginia, John H. of Pine City, Earl E. of Fairmont, Lorenzo A. of Minneapolis—all of whom are living and were home when the end came. After the marriage they moved to Taylors Falls and lived there until 1893 when they returned to Pine City and have made their home here since that time.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow—Friday—afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from the M. E. church and interment made in the local cemetery. The pall bearers will be: George Sherwood, Frank Cort, Robert Greig, S. B. Wells, C C Ives and Charles Stephan.

The deceased was one of the few pioneers left, had seen this community grow from nothing to its present size, and was known, liked and respected by all, who extend their sympathy to the bereaved family.

PINE POKER
NOVEMBER 18, 1920

Florence Wilcox Gray was born November 10, 1862 in Sunrise in Chisago, County. She was the second child born to John D. and Sarah A. Wilcox.

John D. Wilcox

Sarah A. Clover Wilcox

Webster Horace - 1861

Florence - 1862

Eugene A. - 1867

John D. - 1869

Grace - 1871

Sarah - 1877

Leland - 1884

Louise - 1884

LAST RITES FOR MRS. FLORENCE GRAY

Mrs. Florence Gray passed away at her home here last Friday, December 30th, after a lingering illness, death resulting from diabetes. Mrs. Gray had been in poor health for some years and had been confined to bed practically all of the past year.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Clark from the Methodist church last Monday morning, January 3rd, and her remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband in Birchwood cemetery. The pall bearers were W. P. Gottry, Herman Borchers, Nick Perkins, J. D. Boyle, R. P. Allen, and Emil Hoefler.

Mrs. Gray was born in Sunrise in Chisago county, Nov. 10, 1862, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Wilcox. She came to Pine City with her parents about 1870 and was united in marriage to Jonas Gray at Pine City, May 19, 1884. After the marriage, they moved to Taylors Falls and lived there until 1893 when they returned to Pine City. Her husband passed away here Nov. 17, 1920. She is survived by five sons, Darwin C. of Brainard, Royal J. of California, John H. of Pine City, Earl of Fairmont and Lorenzo of Davenport, Ia. Darwin and Earl were here for the funeral, the other boys from out of town being unable to come and John is ill in the N. P. hospital at St. Paul. She is also survived by 2 brothers, John D. and Eugene Wilcox of Pine City, and 3 sisters, Mrs. Gene Barnum of California, Mrs. Albert Lloyd and Mrs. Rob. Stewart of Pine City.

Mrs. Gray was a member of the local Methodist church, the Emily J. Stone Circle, ladies of the G. A. R., and the Pine City Chapter of the Eastern Star. She was an active worker in all these organizations up to the time of her illness. She suffered intense pain during the past week.
(Continued on Page four.)



FLORENCE GRAY & 2 SONS
1922



FLORENCE GRAY &
SISTER LOUISE
1921

PINE POKER
JANUARY 5, 1928

Darwin Cutler Gray was the first child born to Jonas and Florence Wilcox Gray. Darwin, or Darb as he was sometimes called, was born August 15, 1885 in Taylors Falls. In 1893 the family moved to Pine City. After leaving school, he worked as a telegraph operator for the railroad. In 1923 he married Neata Wise Gould. He had no children.



DARWIN AND FLORENCE GRAY
1922



DARWIN GRAY 1922



NEATA & DARWIN
GRAY 1922

Darwin C. Gray Died at Brainerd

Darwin C. Gray, 57, prominent Brainerd realtor, lodge and club member, and chairman of the Crow Wing county Republican committee, died Sunday noon in St. Joseph's hospital, Brainerd. Death was due to a blood clot on the heart. Mr. Gray, who was a brother of John Gray of Pine City had undergone an operation Oct. 7th, death coming suddenly and at a time when he was believed to be recovering from his illness. Mr. and Mrs. John Gray had been to Brainerd to see him, returning here Sunday morning feeling that he was well on the road to recovery.

Funeral services were held from St. Paul's Episcopal church, Brainerd, Tuesday at 10 a. m. The remains were sent to Sunset Memorial Park for cremation.

Mr. Gray was born in Taylors Falls, Aug. 11, 1885, a son of the late Jonas M. and Florence Wilcox Gray. When a small child the family moved to Pine City, where he attended and graduated from the local high school. After leaving school he worked for many years as a telegraph operator for the Northern Pacific railroad. He also served as a relief agent and traveling auditor for the Northern Pacific, during which time he made his home in Duluth. After moving to Brainerd, he became a member of the Gould and Gray realty firm.

He was a member of the Masonic and I.O.O.F. lodges, Aad Temple of the Shrine at Duluth; Brainerd Lions Club; treasurer of the Brainerd Red Cross Chapter; treasurer of the Brainerd Defense Council and past president of the Brainerd Chamber of Commerce.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Neata Gray; a brother John H. Gray of Pine City; two nieces Betty Gray of Pine City and Virginia of Minneapolis and a nephew, Audrey Gray of Colorado.

Mr. and Mrs. John Gray, Miss Betty Gray, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wilcox, John D. Wilcox, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hinze, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Voss of Pine City and Mrs. Carl Wallace of Cromwell attended the funeral services.

PINE POKER PIONEER
OCTOBER 22, 1942

Jonas and Florence Gray's second son was Royal Jonas Gray, born January 25, 1888, in Taylors Falls. Royal suffered from Pott's Disease, which is a form of tuberculosis that affects the spine. In 1897 his parents went to St. Paul, Minnesota seeking treatment for him. Royal was the first patient at Gillette Children's Hospital. You can hear his story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmjZlBvvKtU>



ROYAL GRAY ABOUT 1899

—We are pleased to state that Jonas Gray's little son Royal, who has been a cripple for so many years, is now improving finely in St. Paul, where he is being treated. The little fellow is as happy as can be, and will be home about January 1st, as well as can be.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
DECEMBER 3, 1897

The next mention of Royal is 1910 when he took on a substitute rural mail job.

Royal Gray carried the mail Tuesday, owing to the death of Mr. W. C. Stephen's sister's baby, whos funeral occured Tuesday.

PINE COUNTY PIONEER
FEBRUARY 4, 1910



ROYAL GRAY 1912

On September 12, 1916 Royal married Mildred Russell of Virginia, Minnesota. Royal worked as a taxi driver while living in Virginia for about 8 years. Three children were born.

Audrey - September 20, 1916

Betty Florence - November 18, 1918

Virginia Lillian - March 18, 1922



ROYAL & MILDRED GRAY
DATE UNKNOWN



AUDREY GRAY
1922

"A TERROR TO SNAKES"



ROYAL "BROWNIE" GRAY
1922



BETTY GRAY
1922

"SHAKING THE
TOUGH OUT OF
HIM."

UNIDENTIFIED,
AUDREY GRAY,
BROWNIE GRAY



VIRGINIA GRAY
1922

By 1930 Royal and Mildred were divorced. Royal was living in Pine City and working at the power company. Royal and Audrey were lodgers with Jerry and Josephine Collins on 3rd Ave. Betty and Virginia were also in Pine City, living with Edward and Evelyn Hakes.

BROWNIE GRAY TO OPEN CHICKEN SHACK

"Brownie" Gray has leased the lots owned by Adam Biedermann on the highway at the south end of the bridge, opposite the Pine City Bottling Works, and will open a Chicken Shack. He has purchased a 30 passenger bus body which he will use for his establishment. Bus bodies and street car bodies are used for this purpose in California and other places. He will also put in a filling station.

In March of 1930 Royal ("Brownie") made plans to open a restaurant.

PINE POKER
MARCH 13, 1930



The restaurant did well. Brownie even made plans to enlarge it the following year.

BROWNIE'S CHICKEN SHACK OPENS SATURDAY

Brownie Gray will open his chicken shack for business Saturday. The shack, which is located on the highway at the south end of the bridge, has been closed during the winter.

PINE POKER
FEBRUARY 26, 1931

BROWNIE GRAY WILL ENLARGE CHICKEN SHACK

The Brownie Gray Chicken Shack will be enlarged to over twice its present size by the use of a street car which will replace the bus body used at present. Mr. Gray recently purchased a used street car body in Duluth. It was brought down a few days ago and is being repainted and the interior will be remodeled. The bus body will be moved a little north and will be used as an oil station.

PINE POKER
APRIL 16, 1931



A TOKEN FOR BROWNIES

ROYAL J. GRAY DIED LAST SATURDAY

Royal Jonas Gray passed away at the Grantsburg hospital last Saturday, May 12th, at 1:45 a.m., death resulting from acute nephritis. He became ill about a week before his death, suffering from heart trouble, and his condition grew steadily worse and he was taken to the hospital late Friday night.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. D. W. Thompson from the Presbyterian church, Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock and the remains were laid to rest in New Birchwood cemetery. The pall bearers were Clark Pennington, Webster Hodge, Dave McLaughlin, Theodore Buselmeler, Herman Kowalke and James Wandel.

R. J. Gray was born in Taylors Falls, January 25, 1888 and was 46 years, 3 months and 17 days of age. He came to Pine City with his parents in 1893 and this has been his home since with the exception of 8 years he was in business in Virginia, Minn. On September 12, 1916, he was united in marriage to Mildred Russell of Virginia. Surviving are his wife, one son, Audrey, and two daughters, Betty F., and Virginia L., also two brothers, Darwin C. of Brainerd and John H. Gray of Pine City.

"Brownie" Gray, as he was known to everyone in this community, operated Brownie's Chicken Shack here the past three years. He filed last week as a candidate for county register of deeds but his name will not appear on the ballot on account of his death. This will eliminate a contest in the primaries for this office as there are only two other candidates.

Those from out of town here for the funeral were Darwin Gray of Brainerd; Mr. and Mrs. Ray Russell of Proctor and Mrs. Bert Wheeler of St. Paul.

Card of Thanks

We wish to express our sincere thanks to our kind friends and neighbors for their sympathy and assistance during our bereavement and for the beautiful floral offerings.

The Grays

PINE POKER PIONEER
MAY 17, 1934

Brownie continued to run the restaurant until his death in 1934.

John Howard Gray, the third child born to Jonas and Florence Gray, was born February 15, 1894 in Pine City. He worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad. In 1942 he married Gladys Olson. John lived in the family home south of the Methodist Church until his retirement in 1959 when he and Gladys moved to California.



JOHN GRAY 1922
THE WHITE BUILDING BEHIND JOHN IS
THE ORIGINAL METHODIST CHURCH.



THE GRAY FAMILY HOME AT 530 8TH ST. SW.



MAVIS HOTCHKISS IN FRONT OF THE GRAY
FAMILY HOME. THE METHODIST CHURCH,
BUILT IN 1927, IS IN THE BACKGROUND.

**Last Rites Held
 For John H. Gray**

THE PINE POKER-PIONEER
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1967

North Highlands, Calif., until his passing.

He passed away at her home suddenly on September 28, at the age of 73 years. Mr. Gray was a past master of the Mt. Olivet lodge in Pine City.

Private funeral services, for John H. Gray of North Highlands, California, and formerly of Pine City, were conducted from the Ingold chapel at Fontana, Calif., on September 30 with burial in Green Acres Memorial Gardens in Bloomington, Calif.

He is survived by his step-children, Russell Olson of Palos Verdes, Calif.; Elaine Larson of Fontana, Calif.; Orville Olson of Littlefork, Minn.; and Mavis Hotchkiss of North Highlands, Calif.; and two nieces, Mrs. Bette Peterson of Wyoming, Minn.; and Mrs. Virginia Zaworski of Minneapolis.

Mr. Gray was born to Florence and Jonas Gray on February 15, 1894. He was united in marriage to Gladys Olson on October 3, 1942 and they made their home in Pine City where he was employed by the Northern Pacific railroad until his retirement in 1959. At that time they moved to Fontana, California. After his wife's passing in 1961, he resided with his step-daughter, Mavis Hotchkiss and family at

**JOHN DIED IN 1967. THE
 LAST OF THE FIVE GRAY
 SONS.**

Jonas and Florence Gray's fourth son, Earl Eugene Gray, was born July 11, 1896 in Pine City. After serving in the aviation corps in World War I Earl worked as a mechanic and electrician in Fairmont. Earl had tuberculosis and spent considerable time during 1920 - 1923 at Ah-Gwah-Ching Sanatorium recovering.

Much of the information on the Gray family came from the photo album Earl kept during 1921 - 1923.



**EARL GRAY
PHOTO ALBUM 1920 - 1923**



EARL GRAY 1922 IN THE LITTLE DORY



AH-GWAH-CHING 1921



AH-GWAH-CHING 1921

Earl lived in Fairmont where he worked as a mechanic and electrician. Earl was killed in a plane crash in October 1930.

EARL GRAY KILLED IN AIRPLANE CRASH IN IOWA LAST FRIDAY

Pine City was shocked, last Friday evening, when word was received here announcing the death of Earl Gray and a fellow-pilot, Roy Pond, which resulted from an airplane crash near Nevada, Iowa. Earl was killed instantly and Pond lived only a few minutes, dying before he reached a sanatorium at Nevada.

The accident occurred on the farm of Roy Pond's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pond, as they were taking off in Earl's Monocoupe on their return to Fairmont about 4 o'clock Friday afternoon.

Earl was handling the controls of the plane and was starting to circle above the home, just after taking off, as Mr. Pond Sr. was standing near the house waving goodbye to the two pilots. At a height of about 300 feet, something went wrong, as the plane was banking in a turn, and shot toward the earth in a nose-dive, crashing on one wing and burying itself in the ground. The impact of the crash threw both the occupants forward and they were crushed on the dashboard of the plane.

With Pond's father near the house was Hans Anderson, an automobile salesman, who were watching the takeoff. Neither was able to say what caused the accident. The plane dropped in the farm yard less than thirty feet from the salesman's car, near which they were standing.

Earl and Pond left Fairmont about 7 o'clock Friday morning for Boone, Ia., where Earl was to take an examination for a pilot's license, after which they flew to the Pond home for a short visit there.

Roy Pond was quite well known here as he had accompanied Earl to Pine City in the plane last summer when a number of local passengers were taken up. Earl's Monocoupe won most of the honors at the recent air celebration held at Jackson. Piloted by John Kipp, with Earl at his side, the ship took first in the closed ship race, first in the dead-stick landing and third in bombing. Earl had planned to fly to Pine City, Saturday afternoon, to spend the week end with his brothers here, John and Royal.

Following receipt of the news of the tragedy here, Royal Gray, accompanied by Cecil Blanchard, left for Fairmont arriving there about 4 o'clock Saturday morning. Immediately upon their arrival there they were taken by D. S. Milne, Earl's employer, to Nevada. They found the plane a total wreck, with the exception of the motor which was removed and taken to Fairmont. Earl's body was brought direct to Pine City for interment.

Military Funeral

The last sad rites for Earl Gray were held last Monday afternoon, with services by Rev. Lorenzo Johnson, in the Methodist church at 2:30 o'clock under the auspices of the Leon Heath Post of the American Legion. Military Honors were paid to the former soldier by comrades as the flag-draped casket was lowered to its final resting place with the firing of the regulation salute by a guard from Battery E. "Taps" the bugle call that summons all American soldiers to rest, was sounded by Kenneth Cox, battery bugler. The funeral cortege was preceded from the church to the cemetery by a color guard, bearing the United States and American Legion flags, the firing squad and guard of honor. The remains were laid to rest in Birchwood cemetery. The pall bearers were, Erick Larson, I. A. Chmelik, George Deley, Dick Kowalko, Wm. Chalfen and A. C. Klicker.

As the services were being held at the cemetery Carl Freeman in his plane circled overhead and dropped flowers as a final tribute to the departed pilot. Captain Kipp, accompanied by a flyer of the Marines, also flew up from the Wood Chamberlain field to attend the funeral.

Earl Eugene Gray was born in Pine City, July 11, 1895, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Gray, and was 34 years, 2 months and 20 days of age. He attended the local schools and remained with his folks here until 1915, starting to work here as an electrician and automobile mechanic.

On leaving Pine City, he attended the Bliss electrical school in Washington, D. C. In 1917, he joined the employe of the Bell Telephone Company in Pittsburg, Penna., remaining there un-

til he enlisted in the aviation corps in the World War. He was stationed at the army aviation fields at St. Louis, San Antonio, Texas and Mather Field, California, and was discharged at Baltimore after 22 months of service. He spent two years working at Virginia, Minn., one year in California and then worked as a mechanic and electrician at Fairmont. He suffered an attack of tuberculosis of the throat and after a three year fight conquered that disease and returned to his work. He took additional aviation instruction and purchased the new Velle Monocoupe last spring and just before his death, received a limited commercial pilot's license. Left to mourn his departure are three brothers, Darwin of Brainerd, and John and Royal of Pine City.

(Continued on last page.)

PAGE THREE

EARL GRAY KILLED IN AIRPLANE CRASH

(Continued from page 1.) Royal of Pine City. Earl had a host of friends in this community and was respected and admired by all who knew him.

Earl was a member of the Masonic lodge at Pine City and the Fairmont Chapter of Royal Arch Masons and was also a member of the Fairmont American Legion Post.

Friends and relatives from out of town here for the funeral were:

Mr. and Mrs. Darwin Gray of Brainerd, Charles, Hattie and Minnie Starkweather of Sunrise, Mrs. Wolf and daughter and Glenn Clover of Harris, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Clover of North Branch, Mrs. Priester of Sandstone, Mrs. Carl Wallace of Poplar, Wis., Mrs. Parker of Albert Lea and her daughter, Miss Ethel Parker of Fairmont, Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Daniels of Webster, Wis., and Dr. and Mrs. Deagon and Frank Fealy of Fairmont.

The following is taken from the Fairmont Sentinel:

"Earl was not only an excellent mechanic but a salesman as well, and considerable of his time was devoted to selling automobile accessories throughout this territory. In this way he established a wide acquaintance and had many friends who admired him for his quiet, unassuming manner and for the honesty of his character.

"Roy was also a good mechanic, being familiar with various kinds of machinery, particularly automobiles. Ever since boyhood he had a desire to fly and he learned the fundamentals of aviation several years ago.

"While Gray had learned to fly before he knew Pond, the latter had given him much valuable information in the flying game and had operated Gray's plane as pilot on numerous flights. Later when Pond got local employment, John Kipp, of Winnebago, operated Gray's plane.

Left Lighthearted

"I'll see you tonight for supper," Gray told Mrs. J. B. Guckeen, with whom he boarded, yesterday morning when he left to fly to Boone.

"Earl was exceptionally lighthearted and happy when he went away," said Mrs. Guckeen. "Sometimes he was depressed or had forebodings upon taking an air trip and he would tell me, 'I better pay my board bill, I may get killed.' But yesterday I never saw him so bright and jolly. He ate an early breakfast, about 6 o'clock, so he could get away in good time. He had boarded with us for five years and was like one of the family."

"Gray roomed with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Nichols, who were equally grief-stricken over the disaster which robbed them of a friend of long standing.

With Milne Six Years

"Gray had worked at the Milne garage some six years, starting about 1925. Mr. Milne stated as he told of Earl's many fine qualities. Gray, suffered from pulmonary trouble and was compelled to quit work for a couple of years and go to the Veterans hospital. He returned about 4 years ago and had been with the garage since that time.

"Earl took up flying about two years ago. He got started on it while in the army and altogether was said to have about 170 flying hours to his credit.

"He had gone to Boone yesterday to take a pilot's examination.

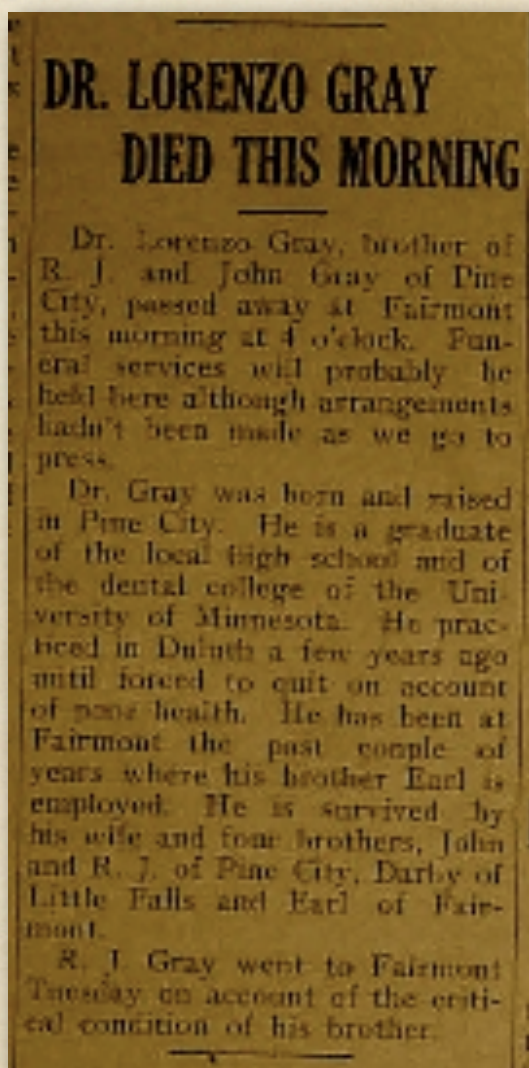
"Gray's parents are dead. He is survived by three brothers; Darwin, of Brainerd and John and Royal of Pine City.

"The death of his brother Lorenzo in Fairmont, Feb. 20, last was a tragedy in Earl's life. He had put Lorenzo through dental school, in spite of Earl's own frail health. A year after Lorenzo had been established in practice in Duluth he was stricken with sleeping sickness. He was in a hospital at Davenport, Iowa, but Earl brought him to Fairmont so he could be with him. He obtained home care for the patient from Mrs. James McMerney, at whose residence Lorenzo lay helpless for 18 months until he died. Throughout this time, Mrs. McMerney said today, Earl watched over him and rendered every possible service and assistance. "Earl was a wonderful brother to him," said Mrs. McMerney.

"Most sorrowful at the news of the terrible tragedy is his fiancée, Ethel Parker, to whom Earl was engaged to be married this winter. They had been friends for a long time and Miss Parker had accompanied him on numerous flights. She is employed at the Bob Wallace Mercantile company."

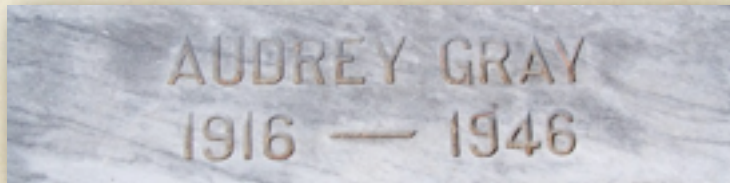
PINE POKER
OCTOBER 16, 1930

Lorenzo was Jonas and Florence Gray's youngest son. He was born November 29, 1900 in Pine City. With the help of his brother Earl, Lorenzo went to dental school and set up a practice in Duluth. A year later Lorenzo became ill with sleeping sickness. His brother Earl took care of him until his death in February 1930.



PINE POKER
FEBRUARY 27, 1930

That is the end of the Jonas Gray family. Five sons and only one heir, Royal's son Audrey, to carry on the name. We could find no evidence that Audrey had children. It appears he died in California at age 30.



GRAVE MARKER
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

For some reason we have received a variety of items, from multiple sources, connected to the Jonas Gray family in the last six months. Coming across the Gillette Hospital video was the impetus to organize the material to tell their story. We are grateful to everyone who contributed a piece to the puzzle.

Our thanks go out to:

Bob Carlson
Jim Foster
Mavis Olson Hotchkiss
The Pine City Pioneer
Patti Bisset
Margery Stratte Swanson
Nora McKinnon

COMPILED By:



Pine City Area History Association

2017