

Individual Narrative of Sarah⁷ L. Whaley [111]
Daughter of Alexander Whaley and Abigail⁶ Leverich [55]
Wife of first husband Saint Armand Frere
Wife of second husband Robert McDermot

Sarah L. Whaley^{1,2,3} was born on 8 Mar 1783 at Connecticut, the daughter of Alexander Whaley and Abigail Leverich. The birth date is documented in a Whaley Family Record, communicated by Mrs. Ida Whaley Strahan of Montclair, New Jersey in a 12 March 1924 letter to Dr. Charles K. Clearwater. A transcription of this record is appended to the *Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Deaths of the Bushwick Reformed Church*. Dr. Clearwater was the minister for 28 years at the Colonial Reformed Church at Newtown. A review of that Church's records did not disclose any Whaley family records.⁴

Census Records, i.e. 1850 and 1860 Federal; 1855 and 1865 New York State consistently indicate that Sarah was born in Connecticut. During this transition period at the end of the Revolutionary War Sarah's family had been living in Bushwick, Kings Co, New York. However, her father Alexander's family came from Montville, New London County, Connecticut, so it may be that Sarah was born while the family was visiting in Connecticut.^{5,6,7,8,9}

Sarah L. Whaley married for the first time Saint Armand Frere on 3 Aug 1805 at Flatbush, Kings Co, New York, at the Reformed Dutch Church. Various secondary sources give St Armand as St Ermand, and note additional names Charles Henri Frederick.^{10,11}

Alexander Whaley Frere, son of St. Ermand Frere and Sarah L. Whaley, was baptized on 8 June 1806 at the Bushwick Reformed Church.¹²

Eliza Tunnard Frere, daughter of St. Ermand Frere and Sarah Whaley, was baptized on 16 October 1808 at the Bushwick Reformed Church.¹³

Sainturmon Frere is listed as a head of household in the 1810 U.S. Census of Bushwick, Kings Co, New York. The census tallies included 1 free white male under the age of 10 (son Alexander W. Frere), 1 free white male age 16 to 25 (St Armand Frere), and 1 free white female age 16-25 (Sarah Whaley, actual age 26-27). The lack of a tally for a free white female under the age of 10 suggests that Eliza Tunnard Frere died as a child prior to 1810. No further record of Eliza is found subsequent to her baptism in 1808.¹⁴

St. Armand Frere served in the War of 1812 as a Sergeant in Forbes' New York Artillery Battalion.¹⁵

St Armand Frere is not found as a head of household in the 1820 U.S. Census. St. Armand and Sarah may have been living in Alexander Whaley's household in 1820. Alexander's census record includes tallies for 1 free white male age 26 to 44 and 1 free white female age 26-44 which could represent St. Armand and Sarah. The household also includes 1 free white male age 10 to 15, which could be Alexander W. Frere, son of St. Armand and Sarah.¹⁶

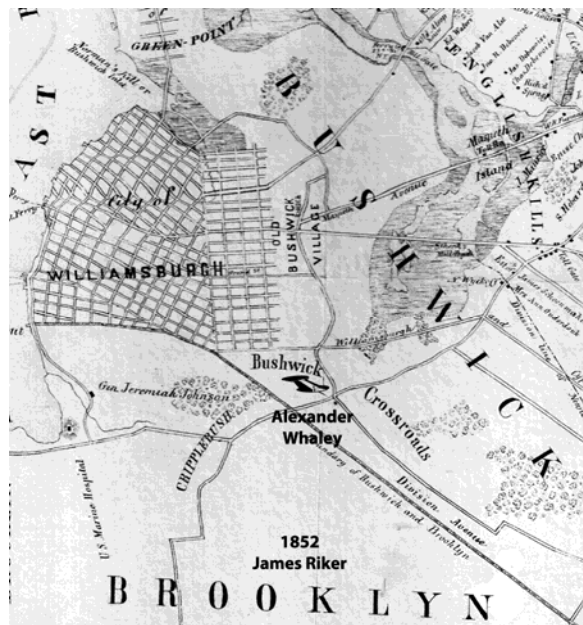
As per an unsourced public family tree at Ancestry.com, as well as correspondence with descendent David W. Hillyer, St. Armand Frere died at Bushwick 20 September 1820. However, this date is consistent with the 7 August 1820 enumeration date for the 1820 census record of Alexander Whaley. In addition, Thomas Frere, son of Armand and Sarah, was born 8 December 1820, which suggests a date of conception in March 1820.^{17,18}

On 9 June 1826 at the Kings Co, NY Surrogate, Sarah L. McDermot, widow, was appointed guardian for infants Alexander Whaley Frere (age 20 on January 14 1826) and Cornelia Frere (age 15 on January 15, 1826). Alexander and Cornelia were the children of the late St. Armand Frere, merchant of Brooklyn. Alexander and Cornelia had inherited property from their late grandfather Jean Baptiste Frere of the Parish St. Croix dit Bouquets, near city of Port au Prince, Island of St. Domingo.¹⁹

Alexander Whaley's will, dated 12 July 1832, names his daughter Sarah L. McDermott. The probate proceedings for William Leverich of Newtown June-July 1831, uncle to Sarah, names among next of kin Sarah McDermot, widow. William's will directs that after the decease of his widow, the estate be evenly divided among the surviving children of William's brothers and sisters, except for John, James, and William McDonough, sons of William's sister Hannah; and Sarah, daughter of William's sister Abigail. No reason is given for excluding Sarah. It would appear that Sarah L. Whaley Frere married for a second time between 1820 and 1826 a McDermot, who must have also died during the same time period. According to the 1857 Brooklyn City Directory, Sarah was the widow of Robert McDermott. No marriage record has been found for Sarah L. Whaley Frere and Robert McDermot.^{20,21,22}

Sarah is not found as a head of household in the 1830 U.S. Census, under the names Whaley, Frere, or McDermot, in New York or New Jersey. Sarah may have been living in her father's household in Bushwick, however the 1830 census record for Alexander Whaley does not include a census tally for a free white female age 47, which would match up with Sarah.²³ However, in a letter dated 28 March 1832, Alexander Whaley wrote to his daughter-in-law Rachel Pye Whaley (widow of Thomas Whaley) that "My daughter Sally takes good care of me."²⁴

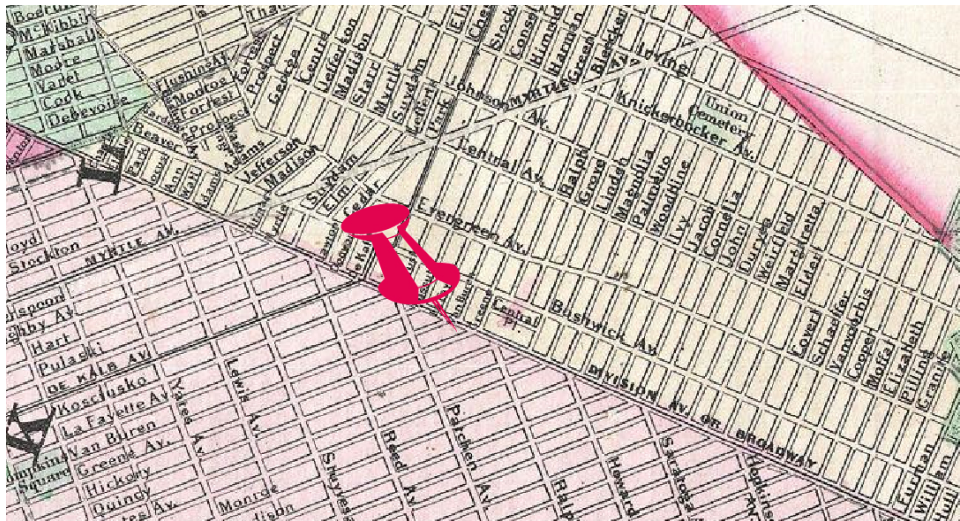
On 1 May 1835, Sarah L. McDermot purchased for \$260 a quarter acre lot from the estate of Alexander Whaley, who died in 1833. The deed does not mention a house on the lot, which was located just east of Bushwick Crossroads. The deed was recorded 29 May 1835.²⁵ Neither Sarah McDermot, nor her son Alexander W. Frere, are found in the 1840 U.S. Census, the 1840 Brooklyn City Directory, or the 1840 New York City Directory.^{26,27,28,29}



Sarah L. McDermot, age 65 born Connecticut, is listed as head of household and a widow in the 1850 U.S. Census of Bushwick, Kings Co, New York. The household included her daughter Cornelia Frere, age 40 (noted as deaf and dumb), and granddaughters Sarah S. Smith age 13 and Elizabeth Smith age 11. Cornelia uses her maiden name "Frere" for unknown reasons. Cornelia married Alfred H. Smith in 1836, and uses the surname Smith in the 1855 New York State Census when she is recorded as a "widow". Alfred is not found in the 1850 census, and apparently died in 1854. It may be that Alfred and Cornelia were separated and estranged in 1850. They are buried in different plots at Green-wood Cemetery in Brooklyn.^{30,31,32,33}

Sarah McDermot, age 73 born Connecticut, is listed as head of household and a widow in the 1855 New York State Census of Brooklyn, Ward 18, Kings Co. The household included her daughter Cornelia Smith, age 44, and granddaughters Sarah Smith age 18 and Elizabeth Smith age 16. Cornelia Smith is described as "mute."³⁴

The Brooklyn City Directory for 1857 lists a Sarah L. McDermott, widow Robert, Greene Avenue near Broadway.³⁵



1866 Johnson Map of Brooklyn, Kings Co, New York
Greene Ave between Broadway and Bushwick
Sarah L. McDermott, widow Robert
1857 Brooklyn City Directory

In the 1860 U.S. Census Sarah McDermott, age 77, born Connecticut is recorded in the household of William H. VanTassel and his wife Elizabeth, granddaughter of Sarah, in Ward 18, Brooklyn, Kings Co, New York. Also listed in the household is Cornelia, daughter of Sarah. A specific surname is not given for Cornelia in this census record. The other granddaughter of Sarah, Sarah the wife of Thomas Irwin, is recorded in a separate household in Brooklyn, Ward 10, District 1.³⁶

In the 1865 New York State Census Sarah McDermott, age 83 born Connecticut is recorded in the household of William H. VanTassel and his wife Elizabeth, granddaughter of Sarah, in Brooklyn, Kings Co, New York. Sarah is identified as a widow, married two times, and the mother of 5 children, 2 of whom were living at the time of the census. Cornelia Smith, daughter of Sarah, is living with Thomas and Sarah Irwin in 1865 in Brooklyn.³⁷

The 1865 Brooklyn City Directory lists William H. VanTassel, clerk, living at 23 Ryerson Street.³⁸

Sarah L. McDermot died on 7 Apr 1865 at Brooklyn, Kings, New York, at age 82, according to family records of descendent David W. Hillyer.³⁹

Letters of Administration were granted on the estate of Sarah L. McDermot by the Kings County, New York Surrogate on 3 May 1866 to her daughter Cornelia Smith.⁴⁰

Sarah L. McDermott was buried at Green-wood Cemetery in Brooklyn on 27 September 1866.⁴¹

An explanation for the discrepancies in death date for Sarah L. McDermott has not been determined.^{42,43,44}

Sarah L. Whaley had four known children by her first husband St. Armand Frere, two of whom survived to adulthood. There were no known children by her second husband Robert McDermot. However, the 1865 New York State Census reports that Sarah had five children, two of whom were then living. The name of a fifth child has not been determined.⁴⁵

- i. Alexander Whaley Frere was born 14 January 1806 (per guardianship record or 25 January 1806 per church record) and baptized 8 June 1806 at the Bushwick Reformed Church. Alexander was not known to have been married, and died after 1826.^{46,47}

- ii. Eliza Tunnard Frere was born 6 August 1808, and baptized 16 October 1808 at the Bushwick Reformed Church. Eliza likely died as an infant, no matching tally found for her in the 1810 U.S. Census.^{48,49}
- iii. Cornelia Ann Frere was born 15 January 1811 in Bushwick, based upon her age reported in guardianship records. Cornelia was deaf and dumb according to census records. Cornelia was married 6 August 1836 to Alfred H. Smith at the Bushwick Reformed Church. Cornelia is recorded in the 1850, 1860 and 1870 U.S. Census, and the 1855, 1865 and 1875 New York State Census, in Bushwick or Brooklyn, Kings Co, New York. Cornelia Frere Smith died 27 January 1888 in Brooklyn and was buried at Green-wood Cemetery.^{50,51,52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59}
- iv. Thomas Frere was born 8 December 1820, according to a family record by David W. Hillyer. Thomas' father had died in September 1820, so Thomas never got to know his father. Thomas Frere married for the first time 1 September 1845 a widow, Mary Adams Gennison Strickland, daughter of John and Sybil Strickland, in Mendon, Massachusetts. Thomas was recorded in U.S. census records 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, Brooklyn, New York; and New York State Census 1855 and 1875 also in Brooklyn. Thomas Frere married for a second time on 4 June 1890 in Manhattan, New York Co, New York to Helen Mae Rice. Thomas Frere died 19 January 1900, 67th St and 5th Ave, Brooklyn, Kings Co, NY, and was buried at Green-wood Cemetery. The will of Thomas Frere was proved at the Kings Co, New York Surrogate on 27 March 1900. Thomas's widow Helen is recorded in the 1900 U.S. Census of Brooklyn, Ward 30.^{60,61,62,63,64,65,66,67,68,69,70,71,72,73}

THOMAS FRERE IS DEAD.

**Was One of the Foremost Promoters
of Chess in America.**

Thomas Frere, for more than thirty years a resident of Bay Ridge, a suburb of Brooklyn, died yesterday. He was in his eightieth year. Mr. Frere was especially prominent in the game of chess, having taken a prominent part in the organization of chess clubs and chess congresses in this country for fifty years, and was the oldest of the veterans in the game. He was one of the most active promoters of the First American Chess Congress, which was played in New York in 1857, through which Paul Morphy was introduced to the world. Mr. Frere was a player in the minor tournament of that congress. He was one of the organizers of the first Brooklyn chess club, in the early fifties, and was Secretary for several years, entertaining Mr. Morphy on his visit to Brooklyn in 1858. He was the organizer of the Manhattan Chess Club of New York, and made the official presentation to that club of the portrait of Mr. Morphy, which was purchased by subscription. In the Fifth American Chess Congress of 1890 Mr. Frere was a member of the Executive Committee, and took an active part in the Sixth Congress, played in New York in 1899. In the famous match between William Steinitz and Dr. Zukertort, in 1896, Mr. Frere was the representative of Steinitz. He was an honorary member of the Manhattan and Brooklyn Chess Clubs.

Mr. Frere was a veteran of the Thirteenth Regiment, N. G. N. Y., his membership in the organization being said to date back to 1845, and he was believed to be the oldest member of that organization. For more than thirty-five years Mr. Frere was a clerk in one of the departments of the Equitable Life Assurance Society of New York. He was retired by the company on a pension when he was seventy-five years old.

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