

Devil's Den Photo with Laura, Pius and others

The writing on the back of this Devil's Den Gettysburg photograph, likely written by Louise "Weasie" Lawrence-Kuhn states, "Grandma and Grandpa" -- Then in different text it says Johanna's Mom, a reference to Laura Magdalene (Father was Pius Peter Smith). The center woman appears to be under 30 years of age and the Baby in her lap is small, under 6 years old and wearing walking shoes. Ancestry.com has this photo (posted under Kevin Smith a direct decedent) so we have confirmation.



The young child on Laura's lap could be her child Joanna (b. 1892) or Harry (b. 1894) since the timing on the photograph had to be post 1895 and not later than 1898.

According to Adams County Historical Society Historian Tim Smith, we learned the following.

- Historians can tell by the Photographer's signature (stamped emblem) approximately what time a picture was taken. This Photographer is Jacob Ira Mumper (1867-1923) who bought the Studio from his Father in 1895. Jacob continues the business using predominant imprint of "J I Mumper" until 1911 when it was taken over by his brother Clyde Mumper. Also Women hats were very stylish then and so often experts can determine a year based on the style.

- For years after the Civil War the Gettysburg Battlefield was quite popular with locals and visiting Tourist for touring around and in their Sunday's best outfits. Photographer's would set up at their designated spots and offer to take and deliver photos for an average of 50 cents. This price was very competitive to what it would cost to visit an in-house studio. Thus, tourist both local and far away, would tour around the Battlefield and the photographers would be standing at their designated spots offering their services for a fair price to take their picture.
- The Government started to license Photographers to specific Battlefield locations to take formal pictures starting in 1895. The Devil's Den site and a few others quickly became a very popular places so now licensed photographers had these designated picture taking places. This license also required that the Photographers rotate around to various key locations so not one Photographer had a monopoly of a given and preferred location.
- The Historian says this photo has to be later than 1895 and thought to be 1898, since its designated number is 2064. The photographer J I Mumper didn't hit numbers in the 3,000's until later 1900. No master Mumper Photo index has been discovered to date that would provide exact dates. These were kept since people would often come back and order additional prints.
- Mr. Smith said that there were no standard positioning norms like wife and husband standing or sitting side by side. Also, this photo is of close relatives, and not two different or random parties jumping into one picture to maximize cost savings or photographer's revenue.
- The back of the Photo says Grandma and Grandpa, thus the couple sitting down with the young child is Laura and Pius. The other couple in this picture would be very close friends or relatives but not likely Laura Smith's Grandparents (George Edward Lawrence & Joanna Agnes Chambers-Lawrence) since the photographs doesn't show any resemblance (the men shown do have a resemblance). It's possible it could be a sibling to Pius or Laura, but this remains to be investigated further.