

How Many Facts, Clues, Leads, Sources, and Research Questions Are in an Obituary?

Video Link

There are more facts, clues, leads, and sources in an obituary than you may have realized. I took a simple obituary and broke it apart to list every clue, source, and detail from one obituary.

To make this fun, you can play along by seeing if you can find as many facts, clues, sources, and leads that you can find in this obituary. [You can download the obituary here.](#)

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I counted every detail as an individual point. How many can you come up with?

Facts = "Information used as evidence or as part of a report or news article." – Google

Each name, event date, event place, occupation, residence, employer, family member, friend, story element, piece of information, counts as a fact.

Clues = a piece of evidence or information.

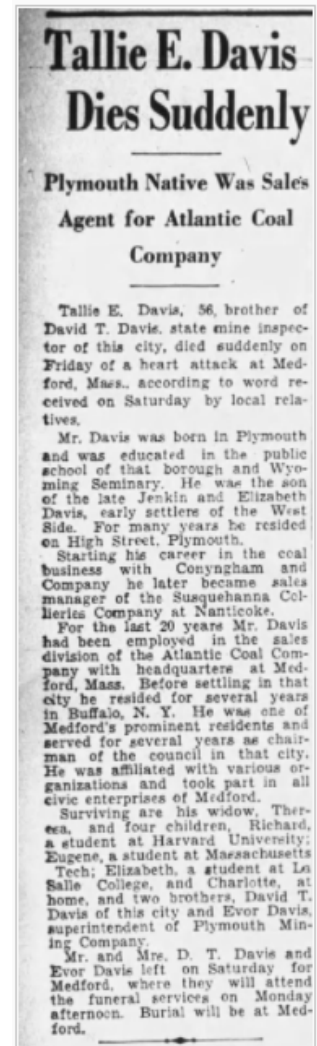
Lead = Clue or piece of evidence that could lead to more information.

Sources = Where the information came from?

Research Question = What question arises from facts and clues given in evidence.

How many points of evidence can you find?

Hint: If you were creating a timeline of every event, each point on the timeline would count separately. Each person counts separately. Each clue counts separately. That's all I'm going to say.



How Many Facts can you find?

Answers to Facts:

1. Tallie E. Davis **died on Friday April 12th, 1940.**
2. He probably did not die on his birthday, or it likely would have been mentioned in the article.
3. **Tallie E. Davis was 56 years old,** when he died.
4. Tallie was **born between** 10th of April **1883** and 11th of April **1884.**
5. Tallie E. Davis was a native/**born in Plymouth,** Pennsylvania.
6. Tallie E. Davis **died at Medford, Massachusetts.**
7. Tallie E. Davis had a **heart attack.**
8. The paper was a **local newspaper.** A quick Google search reveals that Wilkes-Barre Township is just a few miles from Plymouth, PA.
9. **Died suddenly** (part of the life story). Might not have had a will.
10. Tallie **lived in Medford, Massachusetts on April 12th, 1940.**
11. Tallie E. Davis' **occupation was in sales.** He was a Sales Agent/Sales Manager/"worked in sales division.
12. The **Industry** Tallie worked in most of his life was **Coal Mining.**
13. Tallie E. Davis was working for **Atlantic Coal Company when he died.**
14. Tallie E. Davis was **male** by the use of he. Tallie was usually a girls name.
15. **Tallie E. Davis had a brother named David T. Davis.**
16. **David T. Davis was a state mine inspector** for "this city" is not clear (Wilkes-Barre or Plymouth).
17. **David T. Davis lived in Plymouth/Wilkes Barre- PA,** since he worked there... and "of this city."
18. **Tallie E. Davis went to public school in Plymouth** "... was born in Plymouth and was educated in that borough."
19. **Tallie E. Davis went to Wyoming Seminary in Plymouth, PA.**
20. **His father was Jenkin Davis.**
21. His father (**Jenkin Davis**) **had died by April 14th, 1940.**
22. His mother **Elizabeth Jenkin had died by April 14th, 1940.**
23. His **mother was Elizabeth** (maiden name unknown) Jenkins.
24. **Jenkin and Elizabeth Davis were early settlers of Plymouth, PA.**
25. **Jenkin and Elizabeth Davis first settled on the "West Side."**
26. **Tallie E. Davis resided** for an unknown "many" years on **High Street in Plymouth, PA.**
27. Tallie's brothers also worked in the coal industry.
28. **Tallie E. Davis worked first** [years unknown] for **Conyngham and Company.**
29. Tallie E. Davis worked for **Susquehanna Collieries Company** at Nanticoke.
30. Tallie E. Davis worked for **Atlantic Coal Company from about 1920-1940.** The article said the "last 20 years."
31. Tallie's employer **Atlantic Coal Company was in Medford, Massachusetts.**
32. Tallie E. Davis lived in **Bedford, Massachusetts from about 1920-1940.** "Before settling in that city..."
33. Tallie E. Davis lived for an unknown time (**until about 1920**) in **Buffalo, NY.**

34. Tallie E. Davis was a **prominent community member in Medford, MA.**
35. Tallie E. Davis was a **“chairman of council” in Medford, MA.**
36. Tallie E. Davis was **affiliated with various unnamed civic organizations in Medford, MA.**
37. **His wife was “Theresa”** (unknown maiden name) assume Davis for a last name.
38. His **wife Theresa died after 14 April 1940.**
39. **Tallie E. Davis had four sons.**
40. Son **Richard Davis** (likely the oldest).
41. Son **Eugene Davis** (likely the second oldest son).
42. Daughter **Elizabeth Davis** (likely the oldest daughter)
43. Daughter **Charlotte Davis** (likely the youngest because she is at home).
44. **Richard Davis was a student at Harvard University in 1940.** Likely about 22.
45. **Eugene Davis was a student at Massachusetts Tech in 1940.** Likely 18-20.
46. **Elizabeth was a student at La Salle College in 1940.** Likely about 18-20.
47. **Charlotte Davis was still living at home in 1940.** Likely a teenager, possibly a child.
48. This **family was wealthy**, by evidence of the sons going to Harvard and Massachusetts Tech universities. Mass Tech is now MIT in Cambridge.
49. **Tallie had a brother named Evor Davis.**
50. **Evor Davis lived in the Plymouth area.**
51. **Evor Davis worked for the Plymouth Mining Company.**
52. The **funeral for Tallie E. Davis was held in Medford, Massachusetts.**
53. The funeral for Tallie E. Davis **was held on a Monday afternoon** (likely 15 April 1940).
54. **Tallie was buried in Medford, Massachusetts** (cemetery was not named).
55. **Tallie’s middle initial was E.**
56. **David T. Davis** (Tallie’s brother) **was married at the time of the Tallie’s death.** “Mr. & Mrs. D.T. Davis...”
57. **Tallie E. Davis died in Medford, Massachusetts, over 300 miles from home.**

Answers to New Leads:

58. Since Jenkin and Elizabeth Davis were early settlers of Plymouth, PA, this implies they migrated from somewhere else and where not born there.
59. The fact that Tallie went to a local seminary, implies he was of a Christain religion.
60. Additional stories in this paper might be found on Sunday April 14th or after this April 15th article.
61. Research the Medford, MA newspapers around his death dates for more information.
62. Do a name search Tallie E. Davis in newspapers from about 1918-1940. (Adding a couple of years on the beginning since we don’t have the exact year he moved there.)
63. Evor Davis might be single in 1940 at the time of Tallie’s death as he traveled to the funeral with his brother David T. Davis and David’s wife.
64. **Mr. and Mrs. D.T. Davis and Evor Davis left Saturday [13 April 1940]** for Medford, Massachusetts to attend the funeral.
65. Learn about the coal mining business.
66. **Elizabeth Davis is born between about 1904-1940.**
67. **Charlotte Davis is born between about 1904-1940.**

Answers to Sources:

68. This article was in the Wilkes-Barre Record [Pennsylvania], **Monday, April 15th, 1940**, page 8.
69. Relatives informed the newspaper on Saturday, 13th of April 1940.
70. Informants to this article are “local” relatives [Plymouth, PA].

One obituary

281 Words

10 People noted.

70 Facts, Clues, Sources, and Lead...

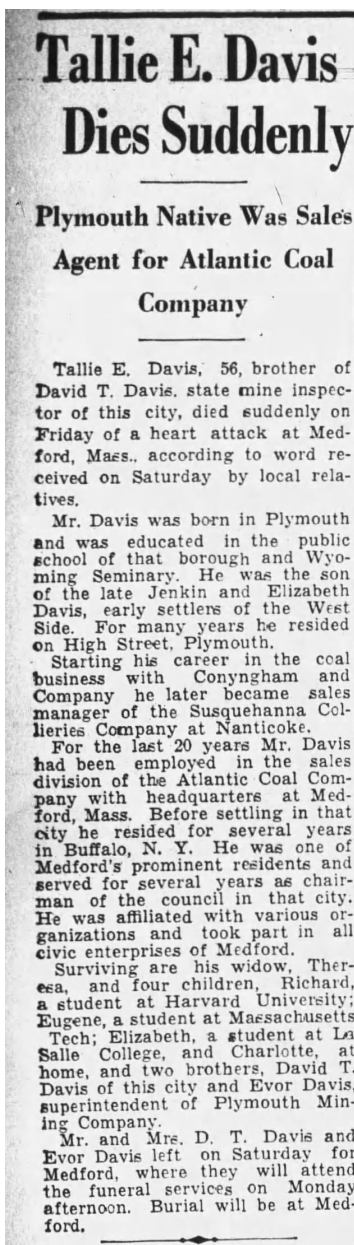
...that created 17 new research questions.

New Research Questions

71. While Newspapers.com calculated his age to be 56, it did not give us his birthday. When was Tallie E. Davis born?
72. What was Elizabeth Jenkins maiden name?
73. Where did Jenkin and Elizabeth Davis come from?
74. What was considered the “West Side?”
75. Are there more articles about the death of Tallie E. Davis?
76. Where on High Street, in Plymouth did Tallie E. Davis live? Look to City Directories.
77. When did Tallie E. Davis work for Conyngham and Company?
78. Where is Nanicoke in relation to Plymouth?
79. What/Where is Sallie College?
80. Since Tallie died of a heart attack in Medford, Massachusetts and his last employer’s headquarters was located there, did he die at work?
81. What was Tallie’s middle name, that started with an “E?”
82. What was the Plymouth Mining Company?
83. Where was Tallie buried in Medford, MA?
84. What County is Plymouth, PA in?
85. What County is Medford, MA in?
86. Are there school yearbooks for any of these people?
87. Resolve conflict. Where was Tallie living when he died, in Plymouth, PA or Medford, MA?
88. What was Mrs. David T. Davis’ maiden name?

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Obituary for Tallie¹ E. Davis



¹ "Tallie E. Davis," obituary, *Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Record*, 15 Apr 1940, p.8; image copy, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com> : accessed 15 November 2021). Also, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/88986425/obituary-for-tallie-e-davis-aged-56/#>

Transcript: Obituary for Tallie E. Davis

"Tallie E. Davis
Dies Suddenly

Plymouth Native Was Sales
Agent for Atlantic Coal Company

Tallie E. Davis, 56, brother of David T. Davis, state mind inspector of this city, died suddenly on Friday of a heart attack at Medford, Mass.. according to word received on Saturday by local relatives.

Mr. Davis was born in Plymouth and was educated in the public school of the borough and Wyoming Seminary. He was the son of the late Jenkin and Elizabeth Davis, early settlers of West side. For many years he resided on High Street, Plymouth.

Starting his career in the coal business with Conyngham and Company he later became a sales manager of the Susquehanna Collieries company at Nanticoke."1

Obituary Continued Next Page.

Source: "Tallie E. Davis," obituary, *Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Record*, 15 Apr 1940, p.8; image copy, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com> : accessed 15 November 2021). Also, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/88986425/obituary-for-tallie-e-davis-aged-56/#>

Obituary for Tallie E. Davis continued from previous page.

"For the last 20 years Mr Davis had been employed in the sales division at Atlantic Coal Company with headquarters at Medford, Mass. Before settling in that city he resided for several years in Buffalo, N. Y. He was one of Medford's prominent residents and served for several years as the chair-

man of the counsel in that city. He was affiliated with various organizations and took part in all civic enterprises of Medford.

Surviving are his widow, Theresa, and four children, Richard a student at Harvard University; Eugene, a student at Massachusetts Tech; Elizabeth, a student at La Salle College, and Charlotte at home, and two brothers, David T. Davis of this city and Evor Davis superintendent of Plymouth Mining Company.

Mr. and Mrs. D. T. Davis and Evor Davis left on Saturday for Medford, where they will attend the funeral services on Monday afternoon. Burial will be at Medford."²

² "Tallie E. Davis," obituary, *Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Record*, 15 Apr 1940, p.8; image copy, *Newspapers.com* (<https://www.newspapers.com> : accessed 15 November 2021). Also, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/88986425/obituary-for-tallie-e-davis-aged-56/#>