

GASCONADE VALLEY COUSINS

Catherine Sara Poe

For many years this lady was one of the “brickwalls” in my **Poe** research. A special thank you to Margaret **Gentges** because it was through her research of Osage County history and her generosity in sharing that research that this “brickwall” was removed. Sara was born September 26, 1846, seven months after her father died; the youngest (obviously) of eleven children born to Madison and Eliza **Backues Poe**. In the 1850 Federal Census of Osage County, Missouri she is listed with the rest of the family in Household #533 along with her brothers and sisters, step brother and sister and half brother, James Scott **McQueen**.

In the 1860 Federal Census of Maries County, Missouri she is listed in Household #522, Jefferson Township, that of James **McQueen**, her stepfather. Her name has been changed from Sara to Altasara and that name change seems to have some significance regarding the nature and tone of her life at this point. It also generated a lot of the confusion about her marriage and some of the family traditions that have been created and published by other researchers and descendants. The name Sara or Sarah means “a princess” and as many little girls are at age five, she probably was indeed a little princess. The addition of the prefix “Alta” to the name Sara indicates a radical change in demeanor, if not conduct, in her life. This name change has led several researchers to list two women as descendants of Madison and Eliza **Backues Poe**, Sarah and Altaza when in reality they are the same person. To add to the confusion the information given to Everett **King** and published in “History of Maries County” in 1960 is incorrect and shows her married to William **Anderson**. William **Anderson** was actually her brother-in-law, husband of her sister, Mary Ann **Poe**. They were married when Sara was a toddler of twenty-two months of age.

Catherine Sara **Poe** married A. J. **Johnson** in about 1863, before the birth of their son, Barney M. **Johnson** (January 8, 1864) and died sometime after the birth of their daughter, Elizabeth Margaret (October 8, 1867). Mr. **Johnson** remarried to Susan A. **Keeney** (August 4, 1870) and moved to Oklahoma some time after 1880. Neither the marriage or death records for Sara **Poe** have been found; but her marriage and the birth of her children have been verified through the baptismal records of their daughters, Virginia and Elizabeth **Johnson**. They were christened at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Westphalia, Missouri on May 21, 1868.

Of her children, not much information has been found regarding Virginia or Elizabeth. Virginia apparently moved to the Kansas City area and probably spent most of her life there. She is listed as Jennie **Kirk** in Barney Johnson’s obituary in 1942. Margaret married Thomas **Lore** in Osage County, Missouri on January 4, 1883 but we have found no trace of her beyond that date. Barney M. **Johnson**, probably named for his grandfather, Barnabas Madison **Poe**, moved to Oklahoma with his parents, lived and died there. A large amount of information about his descendants has been gathered with special thanks to a step-grandson, Carl **Jennings**, a great-great-granddaughter Gina **Freel**, other **Johnson** family members and to Marilyn **White**, another Oklahoma researcher.