

**Oscar McNelley, son of Captain W. H. McNelley  
of Cleveland OH ... Kidnapped in October of 1859**

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer, 20th.

**The Lost Child Found—Its Arrival at the Depot—An Immense Concourse of Citizens to Receive it There—Great Rejoicing—Attempt To Lynch the Woman who Stole the Child!**

A week ago last Monday, Oscar, a bright little boy of two years, and youngest child, of Capt. McNelley of the propeller *Bradbury*, was missed from his home on St. Clair street. Every effort was made to get some clew of the missing little one—the pet darling of Capt. McNelley's house—but all to no purpose. The child's parents were almost crazy with grief, and every father and mother in the city deeply sympathized with them. The city was ransacked from end to end and handbills were sent all over the State. A cruel rumor was started that the child had been found in a nursery on St. Clair street, dead, and a portion of its body devoured by hogs, but fortunately the falsity of this was soon proved. The anxiety in regard to the child grew more and more intense, as day by day passed without bringing any tidings of the lost darling.

On Monday last J. M. Kimball, an engineer on the C. C. & C. Road, saw at Crestline a woman with a child in her arms. On the next morning he saw the woman and child again, ten miles south of Crestline. He reported these facts at the Police Office on Tuesday evening. It was thought the child must be Oscar, and officer John Odell was despatched down the Road yesterday morning. He heard of a woman and child at various points. He found she had staid the night before with a German family at Gallion. He pursued his mission in a handcar and on foot, making careful inquiries at every village and of every person he met. He at length found the woman two miles this side of Delaware. She was walking on the track, carrying in her arms a child who proved to be Oscar. The little fellow's legs were terribly scratched and there were stripes on its back where the brute had whipped it. He was thinly clad and had evidently suffered much from cold. She at first denied stealing the child but finally said she had taken it under the impression that it was her own. She had had an illegitimate child about two years before, she said, which had been stolen, and she had thought this was it. This is her explanation. Of course it is absurd.

Officer Odell telegraphed to Marshal Crow last night that the child had been found and this morning when the train came in the depot was filled with people. We never saw so large a crowd there before. When the child was brought out of the car by Capt. McNelley, who had dashed aboard the train before it reached the Depot, the wildest enthusiasms prevailed in the immense throng. Loud hurrahs went up, hats were wav-

ed, and congratulations were upon every tongue. But when officer Odell led the woman out the tone of the crowd changed. A storm of hisses greeted her and several cried "lynch her!" A rush was made for her and in a moment more, so infuriated was a large portion of the throng, she must have been torn from limb to limb had not a powerful effort been made to drive the crowd back. She was taken to jail and locked up. She says her name is Mary Jane Harris though she sometimes adopts the name of Blair. She has relatives residing on the West Side of the River. She is about twenty years old and is well known in this city as a girl of infamous character. Why she stole the child, unless as an aid to beg with, we cannot imagine.

When the child was placed in Mrs. McNelley's arms she fainted away and it was a long time before she could be restored. A large and excited audience gathered around the jail and there were more threats of violence against the woman but the crowd were persuaded to disperse. The rejoicing over the recovery of the lost child is general and heartfelt all over the city.

**\$25 REWARD!**

**FOR THE RETURN OF THE FOLLOWING** described CHILD to its parents, at No. 435 St. Clair street in this City:

The child's name is OSCAR McNELLEY, two years of age, black eyes, light curly hair, its dress light blue, red plaid shawl pinned loosely around its shoulders, black morocco shoes and white stockings.

The above named child walked out of the house No. 435 St. Clair Street, on Monday, at 10 o'clock A. M., was missed in 15 minutes afterwards, but no trace of it can be found.

WM. H. McNELLEY.  
Cleveland, Oct. 12, 1859.—15-1w.

Source --  
Newspaper: *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio.  
Date of "The Lost Child Found": October 20, 1859  
Date of "Reward: October 12, 1859

## Our Family History

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"I say unto you there was more joy over the one that was found, than over the ninety and nine that went not astray."—*Bible.*

Bright little McNELLEY is in his mother's arms. After eleven days of agonizing suspense OSCAR is again restored to his parents, safe and sound. Every parent in town is anxious to toss a trifle into the hat to cancel the reward, and hold a little stock in this enterprise. Provisions will hereafter be made for the young *lady* who has taken care of the child for the last eleven days, but we are not inclined to mix things and will therefore only to-day HURRAH FOR OSCAR McNELLEY! How fierce the little ones are all over the city to see the contribution hat, that their change may be deposited for the liquidation of this reward. Go in children. Kidnappers will be shy of you hereafter. Take stock in this investment by all means. Go in.

Source - Newspaper: *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio; October 20, 1859

Susan McNelley/ [www.tracingsbysam.com/](http://www.tracingsbysam.com/) 2013