



BY BRUCE M. HENRY

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## PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

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CHARLES MIXER

**Our Hero - Amanda and LN's oldest son**

Growing up, Charles served as protector of his siblings warding off the taunts and cruelty of the other children. This prepares him well for his later years. His story takes many twists and turns throughout the frontier west, gritty alleys and fancy avenues of Chicago, and downtown Mixerville. He finds his stride with the Medicine Business and soon discovers where his true talents lie as he provides muscle for his esteemed colleague US Representative EL Hartley. He achieves power and wealth at the cost of his family and ultimately finds there is more to life than profits.

AMANDA MIXER

**Wife of Lyman N Mixer**

Amanda is the glue that holds the family and early business together. Always the pragmatist, Amanda is the driving force who prods Lyman into developing and marketing his cure. Early on she establishes herself as the capable matriarch of the family. As Lyman ages she struggles to protect the family and is forced to take sides in the huge rift that develops.

LYMAN NEWTON  
MIXER

**Patriarch and creator of Dr. Mixer's Scrofula and Cancer Syrup -**

Lyman, his bride and young son relocate from Chicago to rural Michigan in 1856 in search of their frontier dreams. Life on the farm is difficult and LN soon finds himself afflicted with and disfigured by syphilis. He seeks treatment in New York and returns to life in Hastings with his illness in remission. Lyman uses his vast knowledge of herbal medicine to create *Mixer's Cancer and Scrofula Syrup* using himself as the poster child for the cure. As he ages, his sons are brought into the business creating the lattice over which we drape years of passion, conflict, and turmoil. His claim of Cancer Cure endured until his death in 1903, however, there is more to the story. His cure involved mercury and a trip to a prosthetics maker at 22 ½ Catherine Street in Manhattan before returning home. He suffers later in life due to dementia and advanced Syphilis and is convinced by his son-in-law, Ace, that they can resist Charles by forming their own new company to compete with him.

CURTIS MIXER

Amanda and Lyman's 2<sup>nd</sup> son and brother of Charles. Although raised in the same environment, Curt has a different trajectory than his brother. When success

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arrives in the medicine business, he avoids conflict and acquiesces to Charles demands. He has found what he feels is a “good life” in Hastings after returning from the road without grander aspirations. He continues to pursue painting and the newly discovered art of tattoo after separating from Mixer and Sons. Curt is the opposite of Charles being more of a dreamer and idealist in contrast to Charles determination. He and Charles become equal partners in the Medicine business with Curtis being close to home and the factory as Charles is on the road. He struggles to run the business and calls Charles back to Hastings to help him. Trouble soon starts. He discovers the burgeoning art of tattoo and, always the tinkerer, he partners with a friend to design and sell one of the earliest vibrators. Emily is also an enthusiastic tester of the newest cure for hysteria.

**AZEL “Ace” GRISWOLD  
Protagonist and husband  
of Fannie Mixer**

Azel is a principled, virtuous gentleman who sells printing and is asked to join the growing medicine business. He meets Mixer sister Fannie and wedding bells soon follow. Ace is an asset to the business initially and soon sparks fly between he and Charles. He is strong-willed, cunning, and willing to push back on Charles in a manner that his family will not do. He befriends an ailing Lyman and manipulates him, ultimately creating family rift that lasts for years and pushes a major story line; Charles takes it personally. He is a cunning opportunist and his motives are not always as they seem.

**HAMILTON**

Charles’ long-time valet, confidant and best friend. He purchased his freedom from a Kentucky farm just before the Civil War ultimately making his way north into Charles’ employ. His journey to Hastings was neither linear nor without peril. His backstory has layers of tales to tell. His work in the distillery in bourbon country aids Charles in his pursuit of an enhanced product line.

**EMILY MIXER**

Curtis meets Emily in Chicago and soon finds that she is the illegitimate daughter of a wealthy banker and a dancer in Milwaukee. He maintains a long-distance romance until he can convince her to marry him and move to Hastings. Longing for a stable family life, she adapts well to a rural life of privilege and is thankful that there is a theater in thriving Mixerville for her to

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showcase her dance. In a moment of weakness, she is drawn to Charles and seduces him with great regret.

FANNIE MIXER

Fannie is the younger sister of Charles and Curt. Educated and attractive, she draws the eye of Ace who is a vendor of Mixer Medicine, a wedding soon follows. Ace's involvement in the family business ultimately puts her in the awkward position of having to defend her husband against her brother.

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## WELCOME TO *MIXERVILLE*

### SYNOPSIS

How does Julian Fellows follow up *Downton Abbey*? *The Gilded Age*. (1882 New York)

What is David Spade's newest Fox TV project filmed in Atlanta? *Snake Oil*

If they had a love child, it's middle name would be Mixer, as is my own!

*MIXERVILLE* is a multi-generational drama revolving around the Mixer brothers in conflict over which of them is the "Legitimate owner of the Fake Cure". Their ailing father Lyman began selling his medicine from the back of his wagon in 1861. What follows is a grand tale of political power, wealth, and a family feud. This drama is woven through the fabric of rural Barry County, Michigan, bustling Chicago and rough and tumble Deadwood, SD.

### INTRO

#### 1911 – Washington, DC

Charles Mixer has a very big and very immediate problem. He is a wealthy entrepreneur from Michigan who has built an empire on a Patent Medicine and is in Washington, DC with his friend US Representative EL Hartley. His business has been essentially shut down due to a Mail Fraud Conviction by the US Postmaster, and he has enlisted Hartley to challenge the validity of the ruling on several grounds by putting forward House Resolution (HR)109. If he is successful in this endeavor Charles has pulled off an amazing coup. If not, he faces severe financial and legal hardships. Where we see "[Testimony](#)" in the script, the tale of Charles Mixer is woven into our story through tense hearing/courtroom style drama.



## ACT 1

### 1861 – Hasting Michigan

We are introduced to Charles' father, a young Dr LN Mixer who, in 1865 founded the patent medicine maker Mixer Medicine. He has been disfigured by syphilis and, in one of the greatest lemons-to-lemonade stories of all time, he formulates *Dr. Mixer's Cancer and Scrofula Syrup* convincing the world he has the miracle cure for cancer and that he is the poster child for said remedy. His wife Amanda has a harrowing experience with the "Good" Reverend and during this encounter realizes that Lyman could turn his disability into an advantage. [1911 TESTIMONY](#)



### 1870 – Hasting Michigan

This is the early world of Charles and his brother Curt. The boys join their father at the fair where he has gone to sell his Syrup with his best carnival barker showmanship. He also shares nuggets of wisdom with the boys that will prove valuable for Charles throughout his life. Charles and Curt are bullied for their father's appearance and the protector defends his younger brother while taking a beating. He feels powerless despite his sharp wit and maturing physique.

At 22 Charles is half of *Mixer Brother* with his younger brother Curt. They travel together an independently throughout the land selling art supplies, paintings, and *Mixer's Syrup*. We are introduced to both young Charles and young Curt.

### 1880's Fort Laramie WY

Charles heads west with Hamilton and is betrayed by a rheumy-eyed traveler they befriend. He exacts his revenge and they continue on to Deadwood.

### 1880's – Chicago

Curt is a portrait painter, popular with the frontier wealthy. While in Chicago preparing for the next leg of his journey he meets Emily. At her request he does a boudoir charcoal drawing of Emily; they make love. [1911 TESTIMONY](#)



## ACT 2

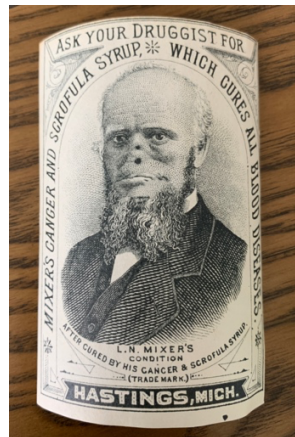
Charles returns to Hastings where he works with Curt and Ace on growing the profitable medicine business an aging Lyman started. They expand the business through creative marketing taking advantage of the US Mail and growing railroad for distribution. Charles has achieved the success he so desperately wants and is introduced to his attorney EL Hartley. Charles and Hartley work together to ensure Charles success and, ultimately, Hartley is elected to the US House of Representatives. [1911 TESTIMONY](#)



## ACT 3

In an effort to help his brother, Charles includes him in one of his frontier timber speculations which ends up in a loss. Curt is suspicious as Charles builds his wealth A great rift develops as Charles asserts his authority and Creates Mixer's #1 Elixir. He uses his legal prowess to shut

down Dr. Mixers while creating Mixer Medicine. While ensuring his father and brother are compensated, Ace feels slighted and enlists Lyman into getting back into business to compete with Charles. Charles succeeds in defeating his new family rivals and goes on to great success.



## ACT 4

### 1911 TESTIMONY

#### 1911 – Charles’ personal rail car

A victorious Charles rides in his private rail car with Hamilton and Hartley on their way back to Mixerville. They discuss the hearing and Hartley warns Charles that his victory was narrow. He also tells Charles that his future is bright in his other business interests and in politics. Charles and Hamilton talk about family and the price Charles has paid for his success.

Upon his return Charles gathers his family to set things right. Before Charles can reveal his plan, he is attacked by a vengeful Ace. In the struggle Ace shoot Charles in the face causing disfigurement similar to his father Lyman’s. Charles generous plan is revealed, and a subdued Ace ends up in jail.





## THEMES

Mark Twain titled his novel “Gilded Age” after this turbulent era thus giving it a name. This is a time when graft, bribery, influence, and intimidation were not against the law, they were the law. Expansion west made fortunes for some and misery for others. This is the setting for our story.

The political landscape was changing fast as our young nation was learning how to govern. What it meant to be a Democrat or Republican was a fluid situation. This is culminated in the 1912 Republican National Convention being contested-Charles Mixer was the Sargent-at-Arms at that convention. As Charles grows the business he increasingly becomes involved in politics as he makes new acquaintances through his dealings with the attorneys he needs to conduct his business and personal affairs.

Patent Medicines – Patent medicines flourished during this time and were the precursor to our modern pharmaceutical industry. Many of these companies and products endure still and will sound familiar to viewers. However, most of them made spurious medical claims went away with the move to modern regulation. Before the Clean Food and Drug Act of 1906 and turn of the century changes in medical licensing it was the proverbial Wild West in health care. The Mixer’s helped write this history and there is ample material to craft story lines around. The OG Snake Oil Salesmen.

Frontier life was hard. Our story begins in Hasting, Michigan with Lyman struggling to provide for his family. The Lyman story line moves him up the social ladder as he enjoys the success of his Syrup. Mixerville is the fictitious name for this small town, so named because of the eventual influence the Mixers would have in the town for better and worse. Being large landowners and employer, at one point there were 2 banks diagonal to each other on the main intersection in town. On the opposing corners were *Mixer Medicine* and *Mixer and Sons* sworn enemies.

Chicago was an amazing and vibrant city during this era and much of our story takes place throughout the city. The 1893 World’s Fair was in Chicago and provides another backdrop for a story line.

A classic struggle of brother vs brother. Much of our story explores the familial relationships we all struggle through which gives the conflict between Charles and Curt context for broader struggles.

Many parallels with society today related to politics, innovation, greed, class struggle, the fine line between legal and ethical conduct.

Character that can either be loved or hated depending on the arc of the story.

The opioid epidemic and big pharma are top of mind today, this show brings the viewer on a journey of what it was like before modern regulation and medical advances.

## ADDITIONAL SPIN-OFFS

### The Sequel

*Mixerville* begins and ends in 1911 with Charles Mixer bending the United States Congress to his will and riding off into the proverbial sunset on his private rail car with his right hand EL Hartley. The real-life Charles Mixer went on his political journey until his death in 1933. He was a philanthropist, Sargent-at-Arms for the historic 1912 Republican National Convention, active in the Masonic Order. He even continued to sell his snake oil until the Federal Trade Commission convicted him in 1933 just prior to his death in 1934. The second act of Charles Mixer 's life is just as fascinating as the first.

### The Prequel

Long before Lyman, there was Isaac Mixer. With his young son Isaac iii and wife Sarah in tow, Isaac(k) Mixer flees religious persecution in Bath England and boards the *Elizabeth* setting sail for the New World. In 1634 the weary passengers end their 3-month voyage on the bank of the Charles River in what would become Watertown, MA, a mere 12 years after the Mayflower landed in Plymouth. As part of the *Great Migration* Isaac is a town elder and granted Founders parcels around the area including the 18 acres that would become a central downtown park and the site of the historic Watertown Arsenal munitions factory. The Mixers were historic figures in the founding of this great land, leaving Massachusetts heading to New York and destinations beyond.

## MERCHANDISING

“Legendary Wellness” – Mixer Medicine is the OG Wellness Company since 1861

### Apparel

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruce Mixer Henry is a retired executive and consultant residing in Atlanta. In addition to writing creative works you can find him on the local trails and back roads of Northern GA on his motorcycle and exploring on foot. He and his wife are Stand-in and Background Actors working with some of the best the local film and television industry has to offer.

## THE STORY OF MIXERVILLE

“I was born in 1965 in Muskegon, Michigan and remember hearing about “snake oil” and “the nose” at one of our extended Mixer family gatherings between stories of Uncle Don playing football with President Gerald Ford at the University of Michigan and listening to Beatles albums in the corner alone. Fast forward to 2020 and Uncle Bob’s struggles with dementia call my mother and sister home for a final farewell. As they are in the basement sorting through old family photographs and trying to figure out what goes to Goodwill, they come across a leather salesman’s case covered in years of dust. After a quick furtive glance and a shrug, they open the case; what they discover is stranger than fiction. And, YES, I do have The Nose...”

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INQUIRE

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