

# The Genie

Ark La Tex Genealogical Association



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*It is a desirable thing to be well descended but the glory  
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## ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Post Office Box 4463  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71134 0463

The **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.** a non-profit, non-sectarian, non-political, educational organization dedicated solely to the cause of genealogy. This organization is governed by these purposes:

To collect, preserve, and make available genealogical records; to encourage an interest in genealogy and sponsor educational programs for its development; to promote and publicize the City of Shreveport, Louisiana, as a major genealogical research center for genealogists and historians; to cooperate with and assist all other genealogical, historical, and patriotic societies in the furtherance these purposes; to compile and publish a quarterly composed of records and data related to the science of genealogy.

The **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.** meets on the second Saturday of each month from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Randle T. Moore Senior Citizen Center, 3101 Fairfield Avenue, Shreveport, LA.

Dues for membership from January 1 through December 31 of each year in the **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.** are \$20.00; this includes individual or same-household family memberships and one quarterly per household. Dues for those members joining in the last half of the year (July 1 – December 31) are \$10.00. Dues for renewal memberships are due by January 31 at the “whole year” annual rate. Payment may be made by PayPal or by mail. Please refer to our website ([www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~laaltga](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~laaltga)) for details.

All members receive four issues of THE GENIE, which is published quarterly in a .pdf document and distributed electronically via email beginning 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2014.

The **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.** will publicize a book of genealogical interest in THE GENIE when submitted by the publisher or an author. These books are then donated to the Shreve Memorial Library, Broadmoor Branch Genealogical Department, 1212 Captain Shreve Drive, Shreveport, Louisiana 71105, where they are made available to the public. The **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.** periodically donates other genealogical material to this library.

The **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.** welcomes queries, which are published free in THE GENIE.

## Statement of Publication

### Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc.

**The Genie** is published quarterly with issues in March, June, September and December. Each member receives four issues for each year of membership. All materials published in **The Genie** are compiled and contributed by the members. Members and nonmembers of the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, Inc. may contribute material for publication in **The Genie** (*Bible records, cemetery listing, diaries, wills, etc.*). Such contributions are appreciated and encouraged. Send material for publication to the Genie at the Association's mailing address or to the editor's email address. Material will be used at the discretion of the Editorial Review Board as space permits. We reserve the right to edit and /or condense material as needed. Submission deadlines are the last week before the first day of the month of quarterly publication.

The Association *exchanges periodicals* with other genealogical and historical organizations publishing data of general interest. These periodicals are then donated to the Broadmoor Branch Genealogy Department of the Shreve Memorial Library. We regret that we cannot exchange with limited family organizations. However, since many publications possess information of value concerning families contained therein, send samples of your publications for review.

When *Cemetery Records* are submitted, include the name of the contributor, the copier, date copied and cemetery locations (such as road name or number, community, etc.) and also the Section, Township and Range, if known. When *Bible Records* are submitted, give date and publisher of the Bible (if known), date copied, name of the contributor, name of present owner and the original owner.

**Queries** are free and encouraged. Please submit them typed or very plainly written or via email to the editor's email address. Space is limited. Please be concise and specific. The editor reserves the right to edit or reject queries not suitable for publication.

**The Genie** cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies, but will hasten to publish corrections. Please read the material carefully and advise the Association in writing of corrections.

This publication is indexed in the Periodical Source Index (PERSI) published by the Allen County Public Library Foundation, Ft. Wayne, IN.

## **Copyright Laws**

All who submit material from any source should be aware of copyright restrictions. When applicable, permission to use published material must be in writing and should be included when manuscript is submitted. Source and date of information used should be indicated.

## Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association

### Board of Directors for 2014

President	Philip B. Adderly, CG	<a href="mailto:311research@gmail.com">311research@gmail.com</a>
First Vice President	Glenda E. Bernard	<a href="mailto:glenda646@gmail.com">glenda646@gmail.com</a>
Second Vice President	Reed Mathews	<a href="mailto:reedmathews@yahoo.com">reedmathews@yahoo.com</a>
Recording Secretary	Brenda Custer Randall	<a href="mailto:custerbren@aol.com">custerbren@aol.com</a>
Corresponding Secretary	Linda Scott	<a href="mailto:Scott8247@att.net">Scott8247@att.net</a>
Treasurer	June L. Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Trustee	Bonnie B. Beran	<a href="mailto:bbberan@yahoo.com">bbberan@yahoo.com</a>
Trustee	Phyllis Maca	<a href="mailto:phyllismaca@bellsouth.net">phyllismaca@bellsouth.net</a>
Trustee	Dick Tatum	<a href="mailto:rmtatum@suddenlink.net">rmtatum@suddenlink.net</a>
Trustee	Sonja D. Webb	<a href="mailto:sdwebb@bellsouth.net">sdwebb@bellsouth.net</a>
Past President	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>

### Publication (The Genie)

Editor	Linda W. Lynn	<a href="mailto:jlynn48@att.net">jlynn48@att.net</a>
Distribution	Phil Adderley	<a href="mailto:311research@gmail.com">311research@gmail.com</a>
Distribution	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Exchange Reviewer	Glenda E. Bernard	<a href="mailto:glenda646@gmail.com">glenda646@gmail.com</a>
Exchange	June L. Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@al.com">jscholez@al.com</a>

### ALTGA Committees

Education	Phil Adderley	<a href="mailto:311research@gmail.com">311research@gmail.com</a>
Finance	June L. Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Library	Phyllis Maca	<a href="mailto:phyllismaca@bellsouth.net">phyllismaca@bellsouth.net</a>
Programs	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Publications	Linda W. Lynn	<a href="mailto:jlynn48@att.net">jlynn48@att.net</a>
Publicity	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson474@suddenlink.net">jjohnson474@suddenlink.net</a>

### Other ALTGA Key Points of Contact

Membership	June Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Reception/Name Tags	Chris Stoll	(318) 746-0383
Refreshments	Brenda Custer Randall	<a href="mailto:custerbren@aol.com">custerbren@aol.com</a>
Seminar	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Webpage	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>

Visit our website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~laaltga>

Send us an email: [altgenassn@gmail.com](mailto:altgenassn@gmail.com)

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## PATIENCE

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION

**A** conclusion cannot always be reached. When the accumulated materials are appropriately appraised, the evidence may or may not support a decision. If it does not, then the question remains open—the fact of the situation remains unknown—until sufficient evidence is developed. If extenuating circumstances pressure for a decision (as with, perhaps, impending court testimony in a dispute over historical property or heirship), then the researcher is obligated to present all relevant evidence, interpreted accurately, and to appropriately qualify whatever hypothesis seems warranted. This is commonly done through the use of terms that denote levels of confidence.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Chuck Ball of Erie, Colorado, asked for our members' help in 2006. He had hit a brick wall researching his paternal line trying to identify the parents of his great grandfather Samuel Ball. There were no obvious immediate answers. I eventually accepted Chuck's commission as a professional genealogist. Research began in Louisiana and Arkansas, eventually spreading to Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, and Georgia.<sup>2</sup>

Four years of paper-trail research conducted in five phases led only to a **theory** about the identity of Sam's mother, and a **hypothesis** that Sam's father might not be a Ball. It took two more years to build a descending paper-trail, locate living descendants of Sam's mother and first husband Benjamin T. Ball, and obtain DNA samples from those willing to be tested. It took one more year to correlate the DNA information with existing evidence; complete a reasonably exhaustive search for additional, relevant information; analyze and correlate all of it together; address and resolve conflicting evidence; and write a coherent proof argument.

Though we had not met, Chuck and I bonded during the seven-year process. He had already suffered through fifteen years of negative results, so it must have been difficult to endure four more years of the same to see just a **theory** proposed. I struggled to stay the course with the GPS (Genealogical Proof

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG, FUGA, FNGS, *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2009), 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Chuck Ball of Erie, Colorado, commissioned the research discussed in this message and gave permission for its use.

Standard)<sup>3</sup> and avoid giving potentially unrealistic expectations. To spread the cost, each of us conducted research using one evolving research plan. It should come with no surprise that patience on both our parts was crucial.

Patience and the GPS are symbiotic. Patience is both a fuel needed to apply the GPS thoroughly and a characteristic of its (the GPS') results. When applying the GPS routinely and systematically, the patience it requires counterbalances the urgency our culture presses upon us for hasty conclusions and short term, potentially unsustainable success. To me it oozes from Elizabeth Shown Mill's quote above.

By 2013 Chuck Ball had learned the identity of his 2nd great grandmother; her probable resting place in a previously unmarked grave in Corinth Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery, Cass County, Georgia; and most of her life's history.

Chuck and I finally met on Memorial Day weekend, 2014, almost eight years later, among other living (and deceased) descendants of Elizabeth "Bettie" (Kirkland) Ball Stevenson Camp, at a luncheon and ceremony on the church grounds hosted annually by the Corinth Church Cemetery Association.

Our meeting occurred there after examining, analyzing, and correlating a final set of records: fifty years of the congregational minutes, 1875-1925, which were being kept in the association's bank safe deposit box. Their existence came to light in 2012 and they were made available for private access, thanks to several Cass County, Texas, genealogists, and officers of the cemetery association. The minutes are now digitized and being distributed to researchers and descendants in Cass County, various archives, and genealogical libraries.

Another chapter to the story beckons. The identity of the man who fathered Bettie's son Sam Ball is unresolved, but Chuck has some excellent starting points with the present day state of our paper trail research, and the Y- and autosomal DNA results in hand. He is a solid researcher, and one of his finest assets is ... Patience.

Philip Burnett Adderley, CG<sup>SM</sup>, *President*.

<sup>3</sup> Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards* (New York: Ancestry.com, 2014), 1-3.

<sup>sm</sup> CG or Certified Genealogist are service marks of the Board for Certification of Genealogists, used under license by Board-certified associates after periodic competency evaluations, and the board name is registered in the US Patent & Trademark Office.

## **The Vice President's Message**

**Reed Mathews, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association has enjoyed another glorious spring in 2014. Our Family History Day was a wonderful educational experience. Our monthly programs in May and June provided insights into the rich histories of Caddo and Bossier Parishes and our conversion of the Genie to a digital format has proven to be a great success. As the weather has warmed, family historians naturally look to visit their ancestral homes wherever they may be to do research. And the hotter it gets the more we in the Association look forward to our annual August seminar. It really is great to be us.

The Education Committee scaled back on Family History Assistance Day this year. (There was just no way they could compete with their own huge multi-site, multi-day educational fest of April 2013.) This year's event was held on our regular meeting day in April at the Broadmoor Branch of the Shreve Memorial Library. Members of the Education Committee and other volunteers offered one-on-one assistance to beginners focusing on the U. S. Census, vital records, pedigree charts, internet research and more. The Committee also offered in-depth discussions for intermediate and advanced family historians. A series of lectures on land records, research methods, state archive and courthouse research and a DNA case study filled the morning and afternoon.

The Education Committee continues to provide excellent practical lessons in their Hornbook sessions in our monthly meetings. In her May Hornbook session, Glenda Bernard explained how even seasoned experts in family history can still grow and learn new methodologies. Phil Adderley's Hornbook session for June outlined potential pitfalls for genealogists. In my 24 years of membership in the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, the Education Committee has never been as active and as productive as they have been in the last few years. The Association is living up to the educational commitment of its mission statement as never before.

In May Clifton Cardin spoke on "History versus Genealogy: What's the Difference and How One Complements the Other." For many years, Cliff has taken upon himself the role of Bossier Parish Historian. He has acquitted himself well in this position authoring historical and genealogical books and articles that focus on Bossier Parish. He emphasized the study of local history as a way of understanding our family members' lives, migrations and politics.

Cliff outlined the early history of Bossier Parish explaining how the parish was carved out of Claiborne Parish and how the parish seat was established fairly arbitrarily in Bellevue. He related the colorful tale of the political and quasi-legal machinations involved in moving the halls of government from Bellevue to their present home in Benton. The events he related served as a case history demonstrating how the larger story of Bossier Parish is inseparable from the personal histories of the people who experienced it.

Don Weathersby picked up this theme of the importance of local history to understanding our ancestors' lives in June. In his presentation "Influential Figures of Shreveport's past," Don explained that although Shreveport was the headquarters of the Confederate west and although the town served as the state capital of Louisiana after Baton

Rouge fell, it remained a small town through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The seven-hundred-plus deaths in the yellow fever epidemic of 1873 represented a large portion of the population. It was only after the discovery of oil in Caddo Parish after 1900 that the population of Shreveport began to boom, however.

Don discussed Shreveport's founders, as well as leading citizens of later generations, such as Peter Youree. He recounted the story of how 10 prominent business leaders died in a fiery plane crash on January 10, 1954. (Eric Brock also told this story in his book *Eric Brock's Shreveport*.) These men were returning from a duck hunting expedition near Grand Cheniere in southern Louisiana. The pilots contended with snow and sleet. At about 5:45 PM, the plane went down near Wallace Lake just a few miles from their destination at Shreveport's Municipal Airport. There were no survivors.

According to Eric Brock, the victims of this crash included "Justin Ricou Querbes, Sr., an insurance executive; Randolph Querbes, Interstate Electric Company president; Reginald H. Hargrove, Texas Eastern Company president; John Baxter Atkins, Atlas Processing Company chairman; James P. Evans, an oil man; E. Bernard Weissformer, Chamber of Commerce president and vice president of Goldring's Department Stores; Milton Weissan, executive with Goldring's and Volk's Shoe Company in Dallas; and Thomas E. Braniff, founder and president of Braniff Airlines" among others. All deaths bring anguish to the family and friends of the departed, but these losses were beyond tragic. We will never know what these men might have done for Shreveport and for the world if they had lived more complete lives. And we are back to the idea that the grand sweep of history cannot be separated from personal stories.

We have more great programs in store for the summer. The theme of local history continues for our July meeting. On July 12, Beverly Smith will present "History of Claiborne Parish and the North Louisiana Hill Country as Portrayed in the Exhibits at The Ford Museum." I am very excited about our annual August Seminar. This year Kevin L. Myers will give his insights into land records, tax records, probate records and church records. He will have tricks to share with family historians of all levels and he will entertain everyone. Look for further information on the August Seminar, elsewhere in this issue. I will see you there.

As we all know, the Association is experiencing a major change this year in shifting to a digital PDF format for our publication The Genie. The first digital issue that came out earlier this year boldly announced "a new look." Our new editor Linda Lynn has taken advantage of graphic possibilities that were not available in the Genie's former printed form. The content is as good as it has ever been. Linda has done a great job. The Association can continue to take great pride in this wonderful on-going work.

I hope your family history quests are bringing you answers.

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*This packrat has learned that what the next generation will value most is not what we owned, but the evidence of who we were and the tales of how we loved. In the end, it's the family stories that are worth the storage.* Ellen Goodman, *The Boston Globe*



## **PERIODICAL EXCHANGE REVIEW**

Compiled by Glenda Efferson Bernard

June 2014

The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association is part of an exchange program with other genealogical societies across the nation. The idea is to obtain newsletters and bulletins from these various societies in exchange for a copy of this association's publication, "The Genie." This very successful endeavor benefits genealogists who visit the Broadmoor Branch of the Shreve Memorial Library in Shreveport, Louisiana. The items discussed in this article, along with many others, are found on a rotating magazine. Check to one's right upon entering the Genealogy Department.

The purpose of this article is to acquaint the reader with several publications which may be of interest in research. Generally speaking, one can find more data about the person of interest if research is covered in his locale before searching nationwide. For example, regional articles may provide an early church roster with just the name needed while a magazine showcased to reach statewide readers may not include such detail.

This review highlights several exchange publications that are in the library at this time; however, future reviews will include a selection from the digital exchanges as well.

Numerous exchange copies have been deposited recently into the library's collection. Some interesting ones include:

***Yell County Historical and Genealogical Association Bulletin***, (Arkansas) Vol. 9, May 2014, is published by the Yell County Historical and Genealogical Society. The bulletin contains 36 pages. Included in the bulletin is a three-page news article concerning the genealogy of John Hunnicut with no author noted. A photograph is included of Mr. Hunnicut which is always a welcome inclusion. Two other genealogies along with news articles and pictures include "Descendants of James Staton" and "Descendants of Thomas Bridges and Daniel Stevenson Stahl." A number of articles are copied from newspapers at the time and describe their day to day activities from the past. (Editor's note: The pages for this particular bulletin are stapled out of place.)



***Limestone Legacy***, (Alabama) Vol. 36 #2, January 2013, is 25 pages in length and is published by the Limestone County Historical Society. An interesting article "Fall Foliage and Heritage Tour" discusses the town of Elkton, Tennessee, and its various old structures still standing among the beautiful yellow and red leaves of fall. The Elkton, Tennessee Historical Society provided the information for the tour highlighting the Elkton United Methodist Church, Prospect United Methodist church, Bethel United Methodist Church, Stella Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Jenkins' Barn on Rose Road.

A three-page article, "1943: The War Years in Limestone County," greets the reader by providing names and activities of soldiers for a rather lengthy recording of their deaths during World War II. Another great article in this publication is based on a photo of Limestone County gristmills with a map for locations. Another interesting article, "100 Years Ago in 1914," repeats information from the *Alabama Courier* and the *Limestone Democrat*. Finally, three pages of wills from the Limestone County area are added to round out this remarkable bulletin.

***"Kinfolks,"*** is published by the Southwest Louisiana Genealogical Society, Inc., (Lake Charles, Louisiana) Vol. 8, May 2014, and contains 5 pages. Every genealogist researching this area must love the first article, "Early Lake Charles, People and Places."

Also one will find "Kaplan Celebrated Bastille Day," by Jim Bradshaw along with three pages of "Memories of Rose Hill Plantation" by William J. Thibodeaux. An article taken from The Cameron Parish *Pilot*, "Many Menhaden Families Came from North Carolina," is an interesting addition. Another very interesting article repeated from a previous *Kinfolks* bulletin, is "Mourning Customs in South Louisiana." Quite by accident, this editor must segway with this information: several pages of southwest Louisiana persons' obituaries are included. The last few pages of *Kinfolks* are copied from The Daily *American*, 3 July 1897, , depicting life in Lake Charles on that day.

*Life is lived forward, but understood backwards.*



# Genealogical Seminar

Presented by  
Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association

**Saturday August 9, 2014**

Speaker

**Kelvin L. Meyers**



A professional genealogist for the last twenty-seven years and an avid researcher-historian for the last thirty-five years, he is a frequent speaker to many genealogical societies and family associations in Texas and Oklahoma and Louisiana. He was employed for ten years in the Genealogy Department of the Dallas Public Library. Now, he contracts with law firms, banks, the US Immigration Service and energy companies, as a forensic genealogist. Kelvin is an alumni and lecturer at the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research at Samford University. He is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogist and a past President of the Lone Star Chapter of APG and serves on the board of the Council for the Advancement of Forensic Genealogist.

## Seminar Location

**Broadmoor United Methodist Church – Pearce Activity Hall**  
**3715 Youree Drive, Shreveport, La** (Parking lot is on east side on Albany Ave)

## Schedule and Topics

8:00am Doors Open - Registration  
8:45am Opening Remarks / Introduction  
9:00am Plowing Through the **Land Records** to Find Your Ancestor  
10:35am **Tax Records** or Why did Scarlett Make A Dress of Her Mother's Drapes?  
11:45am Lunch  
1:00pm **Probate:** More Than A Will  
2:30pm How Great Thou Art! How Great They Are! **Church Records**

**Book vendors** will be on site with a selection of genealogy and history books • **Numerous door prizes**

**Cost of Seminar - - - \$40.00 - - - Includes lunch if registration received by August 7, 2014**

Seating limit: 75 For information call Jim Johnson (318) 746-1851 or Email [jjohnson747@suddenlink.net](mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net)

Website: [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~laaltga/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~laaltga/) or search Google for 'Ark La Tex Genealogy'

----- (cut here) -----  
To Register: Make your check payable to Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association. Mail with this form to:  
**Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Assn Seminar P.O. Box 4463, Shreveport, La 71134-0463**

Please PRINT the names of registrants (including surnames being researched) separately for each person attending.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

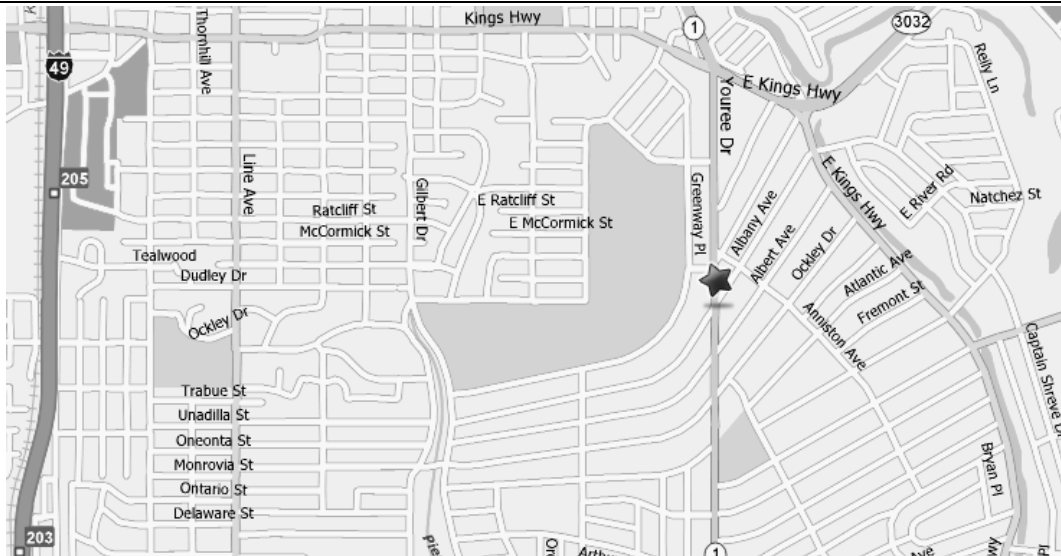
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

List 4 surnames you are researching (*each*). If received prior to **Aug 5, 2014**, your surnames will be included in the seminar handout.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_



Broadmoor United Methodist Church - 3715 Youree Dr., Shreveport

If traveling I-20, take exit 19A south on LA 1 (Market St becomes Youree Dr) - distance 3.4 miles

Then at north end of church, turn left onto Anniston Ave, and go one block. (Note: Parking/entrance on east side of church on Albany Ave)

## Lectures

**Plowing Through the Land Records to Find Your Ancestor** - Because Americans were so "land minded" over ¾ of all males who lived to maturity, well into the 19th century, owned land. Because this is true, land records exist from the beginning of the first permanent settlements in America—frequently one of the few identifying records from this early period. A quality unique to land records is that the older they are the more genealogical data there may be to obtain from that record. This lecture will focus on using these records, combined with other records to identify ancestors.

**Tax Records or Why did Scarlett Make A Dress of Her Mother's Drapes?** - For most genealogists a tax list is merely a substitute for a missing census, but there are many other uses for a tax list. You can determine when an ancestor comes of age, estimate the time of death of an ancestor, or maybe identify a nameless wife. Learn what your ancestor's social standing was in the community. Maybe you can determine the short stay of a family in a county between decennial censuses, as well as give positive clues to the location of land owned in that county. Also learn where to find these tax lists and how to access them.

**Probate: More Than A Will** - Most persons in America, who lived to adulthood, left some type of an estate to be administered. Some left wills, some did not, either way if there was land or large amounts of personal property, this estate had to be disposed of. The records of probate can be some of the most fruitful for the genealogist. Wills, distributions, administrations, inventories, are all vital parts of the probate process and full of genealogical information, these are the things that will be discussed in this lecture.

**How Great Thou Art! How Great They Are! Church Records** - Underused and underutilized this vast group of records can be a challenge to the "un-churched". Determining the denomination, in which your ancestor was a part, can be the biggest challenge. The second challenge is to *find* those records. With these two things accomplished, many genealogical questions can be answered.

# The Paternal Lineage, Ascending, of Early Roy Stoner (1891–1958)

2nd edition © 5 April 2013, Philip Burnett Adderley, CG, 311 Research

Continued from previous issue of The GENIE

## 2<sup>st</sup> Generation, Ascending: Samuel Michael Stoner

2. **Samuel Michael Stoner**, son of George W. Stoner and Elizabeth H. Wilson, was born 18 May 1860 in Ft. Worth, Tarrant County, Texas,<sup>174</sup> and died 8 May 1896 in Caddo Parish, Louisiana. He was buried 9 May 1896.<sup>175</sup> He married ca. 21 April 1889, probably in San Bernardino County, California, **Francis Eliza Vines**.<sup>176</sup> Discussed separately, Frances was born in July, 1872 or 1873, in California,<sup>177</sup> and died ca. 16 August 1957 in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California.<sup>178</sup> Family researchers report that Frances' birth occurred in Napa County, California.<sup>179</sup> Francis married second, 22 December 1896, in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, **George W. Leopard**.<sup>180</sup>

### Sam's Birth and Parental Relationships

Samuel Michael Stoner's 1860 birth in Tarrant County, Texas, occurred prior to the 1 June official start of 1860 federal census. However, schedules for the county do not survive, explaining the family's census absence.<sup>181</sup> Several records corroborate Sam's year of birth and the parent-child relationships given in the family's bible records:

- The 1870 federal census population schedule shows him as S. M. Stoner, the 9-year-old Texas-born, apparent son of G. W. and L. H. Stoner in Caddo Parish, Louisiana.<sup>182</sup>

<sup>174</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828–1901. The handwriting for Samuel's birth entry is that of his father George W. Stoner, possibly recorded 1866–1869.

<sup>175</sup> "Died," *The Sunday (Shreveport, Louisiana) Judge*, 10 May 1896, eighth page, col. 1. This account, published 2 days after the death and 1 day after his burial, is almost certainly based on first-hand accounts of Sam's death. Conflicting dates of death as discussed further under the sub-heading "Sam's Death – Conflicting Accounts and Resolution."

<sup>176</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 27357, E. R. Stoner, et. al., v. Hansen-Mason Realty Co.(1920), Plaintiff's petition, article 4; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. The two plaintiffs named themselves and sibling Mary Stoner Holmes as the issue from this marriage and stated 21 April 1889 as their parent's marriage date in California, county not named. Although the children could not have been firsthand witnesses to the marriage, the information probably came to them from their living mother Frances. For the marriage county see "California, County Marriages, 1850-1952," database, *FamilySearch* (<http://www.familysearch.org>: accessed 9 March 2012), entry for Samuel M. Stoner and Eliza Francis Vines, married 7 April 1889; citing Marriage Records, FHL microfilm 1,290,191, p. 481; San Bernardino County, California.

<sup>177</sup> "California, County Marriages, 1850-1952," database, *FamilySearch*, entry for Samuel M. Stoner and Eliza Francis Vines, Frances born 25 July 1872, California. 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Jewella Precinct, Ward 4, p. 55 (stamped), ED 31, sheet 20-A, dwell. 438, fam. 438, Geo. Leopard household; Fannie E. Leopard born July 1873, Louisiana.

<sup>178</sup> "California Death Index, 1940–1997," database, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 October 2011), entry for Frances Eliza Leopard, 16 August 1957. An approximate date is used to allow for index transcription error.

<sup>179</sup> Samuel G. Stoner, Pedigree Chart for Samuel George Stoner, 11 February 2004, Cornelius, Oregon.

<sup>180</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Marriage Book 21: 657, G. W. Leopard and Mrs. F. E. Stoner, 1896, recorded bond (with original signatures), license and return; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>181</sup> Kathleen Hinckley, *Your Guide to the Federal Census* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Betterway Books, 2002), 114. Tarrant County was the only Texas county whose 1860 census results do not survive. 1860 U.S. census, population and slave schedules, nationwide search with negative results for George W. Stoner, wife Elizabeth (a.k.a. Lizzie) H. Stoner, and son Sam, including name variants; "U. S. Federal Census Collection," database indexes, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 2009-2012); NARA microfilm publication M653.

- The 1880 federal census population schedule reports him as Sam Stoner, then the 20-year-old Texas-born son of G. W. Stoner, in Caddo Parish, Louisiana. His apparent mother was G. W. Stoner's wife Elizabeth.<sup>183</sup>
- Sam's 1889 marriage to Miss Fannie E. Vines lists his age 28, imputing a birth in 1860–1.<sup>184</sup>
- *The Sunday (Shreveport, Louisiana) Judge* reported in its 10 May 1896 issue two days after his death that Sam M. Stoner was the 36-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Stoner.<sup>185</sup>
- On 25 February 1901, an Ernest Stoner identified himself as a son of Mrs. Lizzie H. Stoner, deceased, and stated before the district court that the only living heirs of his mother besides himself were his brother Early and the three minor children of his deceased brother Sam Stoner, whose widow had married George Leopard. An Early Stoner identified himself similarly, that he was 26 years old, that his brother Ernest was 31 years old, and he corroborated Ernest's statement regarding the three minor children of brother Sam.<sup>186</sup> The two brothers appear together with Sam in the 1880 census household of G. W. Stoner and his wife Elizabeth, having ages consistent with expectations: 9 (Ernest) and 6 (Early).<sup>187</sup>
- George W. Stoner stated in a 3 July 1902 family meeting that he was the grandfather of Sam's minors.<sup>188</sup>

The direct and indirect evidence previously described confirms the identity of Sam's parents and his year of birth, and the sum of the evidence is consistent with Sam's entry in the family's bible records.

### Frances' Birth in 1872 or 1873?

Several records touching on the birth of Sam's wife Frances Eliza Vines survive, pointing to an 1872 or 1873 birth. All but one reports her birth in California.

An 1872 birth is derived from the following records, listed in chronological order of the principal event associated with the record. Dates derived from censuses are based upon the person's age effective as of the official census day for that year's population schedule. Francis married George W. Leopard in 1896, and died as his widow in 1958, therefore censuses from 1900 through 1930 refer to her with the Leopard surname.

- A transcribed database of her marriage record to Sam reports her birth on 25 July 1872.<sup>189</sup>
- The 1910 federal census reports her age 37, suggesting that birth occurred 16 April 1872 – 15 April 1873.<sup>190</sup>
- The 1920 federal census reports her age 47, suggesting that birth occurred 2 January 1872 – 1 January 1873.<sup>191</sup>

<sup>182</sup> 1870 U.S. census, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, population schedule, Shreveport Post Office, folio 570 (stamped, back side), p. 114 (penned), dwelling 831, family 950, G. W. Strona [sic] household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 April 2009); citing NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 508. The recorded surname is phonetically similar to Stoner; the initials of the head of household, apparent wife, and apparent children and their ages are consistent with corresponding entries in George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828–1901.

<sup>183</sup> 1880 U.S. census, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, population schedule, folio 349C (stamped), p. 51 (penned), enumeration district (ED) 19, dwelling 603, family 603, G. W. Stoner household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 28 October 2011); citing NARA microfilm publication T9, roll 449.

<sup>184</sup> "California, County Marriages, 1850-1952," database, entry for Samuel M. Stoner and Eliza Francis Vines, 7 April 1889.

<sup>185</sup> "Died," *The Sunday (Shreveport, Louisiana) Judge*, 10 May 1896, eighth page, col. 1.

<sup>186</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 6913, Succession of Lizzie H. Stoner (1901), Affidavits of Ernest and Early R. Stoner, 25 February 1901; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>187</sup> 1880 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., p. 51, ED 19, dwell. 603, fam. 603, G. W. Stoner household.

<sup>188</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 7619, Tutorship of the Minors of Sam M. Stoner (1901), Proces Verbal of Family Meeting, 3 July 1902; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>189</sup> "California, County Marriages, 1850-1952," database, entry for Samuel M. Stoner and Eliza Francis Vines, 7 April 1889. It is unclear exactly when the transcriptions were made and the database created, but the transcription was reportedly made from original District Court records.

<sup>190</sup> 1910 U.S. census, Los Angeles Co., Ca., pop. sch., San Jose Township, precinct 5, folio 130 (stamped), ED 333, sheet 11-A, dwell. 7, fam. 7, Geo. W. Leopard household; wife Frances age 37.

<sup>191</sup> 1920 U.S. census, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, population schedule, ward 5, enumeration district (ED) 72, folio 170 (stamped), sheet 18-A, dwelling & family nos. illegible, lines 31–37 inclusive, George W. Leopard household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 6 March 2012); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 607; wife Francis E. Leopard age 47.



- A transcribed database of her death record reports her birth as 25 July 1872.<sup>192</sup>

An 1873 birth is derived from the following:

- The 1900 federal census reports that she was born in July 1873, but with birthplace Louisiana. This is the only census reporting her birth in Louisiana, but there is reason to suspect her birthplace entry a copying error.<sup>193</sup>
- The 1930 federal census reports her age 56, suggesting that birth occurred 16 April 1872 – 15 April 1873.<sup>194</sup>

A number of factors affect whether information from a record carries more weight when assessing its suitability as evidence. The timeliest record of Frances's birth may be her 1889 marriage record, which occurred at least 16 years after the birth event, and the record's reliability as a transcription is less desirable than the original. In addition, the informant for the birth information is unknown and therefore it may be secondary information as opposed to information coming from someone who was an eyewitness to Frances' birth. The 1900 census informant may have been George or Frances, but no one in the family could have witnessed Francis' birth, so the information is again secondary. For reasons previously stated, this record's reliability is questionable with respect to at least the birthplace entries. Third, the birth information provided in the death index may not be a mutually independent entry—the information may have been reproduced from another record or database. Finally, it is not uncommon to find women's ages overstated in marriage records to avoid complications with minimum marital age laws, or to find women's ages understated in census households due to societal pressures or personal vanity.

As a result, there is no compelling reason why one of the above sets of information should be preferred over the other. Until records are located that were created closer in time to her birth based upon information from a credible firsthand witness, the best statement about Frances' birth is that she was born in July, 1872 or 1873, in California.

### Sam's Brief Life – A Few Glimpses

Little is known of Sam's life as an adult. If his 1896 death notice is to be believed, he had resided in the community "since boyhood,"<sup>195</sup> but the accuracy of the statement is questionable given his marriage in California to Frances Vines<sup>196</sup> and the subsequent birth of his son Early Roy Stoner there.<sup>197</sup> Until additional records become available that resolved the identities below, the best approach is to describe each finding on the assumption that it *may* represent a unique Sam Stoner, perhaps not the same person as the known son of George W. Stoner and his wife Lizzie H. Wilson.<sup>198</sup>

### 1880-1894 CADDO PARISH TAX RECORDS

The Sam Stoner born in May 1860 to George and Lizzie Stoner would be eligible to vote on or after his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, provided he paid a poll tax. Thus through 1880, Sam was not expected to appear with a poll tax liability. If he lived in the parish in 1881 and thereafter, a

<sup>192</sup> "California Death Index, 1940-1997," database, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 October 2011), entry for Frances Eliza Leopard, 16 August 1957. The informant was not provided, so it is unclear if the information about her birth came from a person who witnessed her birth firsthand. It is unclear exactly when the transcriptions were made and the database created, but the transcription reportedly derived from death records of the State of California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics.

<sup>193</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, population schedule, Jewella Precinct, ward 4, folio 55 (stamped), enumeration district (ED) 31, sheet 20-A, dwelling 438, family 438, Geo. Leopard household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 6 September 2008); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 559; wife Fannie E. Leopard age 26. Although her birthplace appears as Louisiana, the enumerator wrote Louisiana repetitively for every place of birth on this census sheet—for the line entrant and his or her parents. This is highly unusual in the author's experience, so the accuracy of birthplace entries is in doubt. Additional examples: the father's birthplace for Early, Ethel and Mary was Texas, not Louisiana. Given the remarkable consistency of the handwriting in all three birthplace columns, this schedule may have been part of the 10% of schedules that were reportedly recopied from water-damaged originals following a 1921 fire: Kathleen Hinckley, *Your Guide to the Federal Census*, 111.

<sup>194</sup> 1930 U.S. census, San Bernardino County, California, population schedule, Chino Township, enumeration district (ED) 36-13, folio 126 (stamped), sheet 6-A, dwelling 128, family 128, George Pike household and mother-in-law Fannie E. Leopard; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 October 2011); citing NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 187; probable mother of Ethel [Stoner] Pike was 56.

<sup>195</sup> "Died," *The Sunday (Shreveport, Louisiana) Judge*, 10 May 1896, eighth page, col. 1.

<sup>196</sup> Caddo Ph., La., 1st Judicial District Court file 27357, Stoner v. Hansen-Mason Realty Co. (1920), Plaintiff's petition, article 4.

<sup>197</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828-1901.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

poll tax liability should be assessed as a minimum. If he additionally owned personal property liable for taxation, or real estate, assessments for those should also appear.

- 1880: No Sam Stoner appeared in Caddo Parish tax rolls (expected).<sup>199</sup>
- 1881–1882: a “Saml Stoner” and a Sam Stoner appeared in successive years assessed for poll tax only, found in the exempt section of the rolls. The “Exempt” section of the assessment book meant that the entrants were *not* assessed a tax liability on other objects, such as land, or on specific types of personal property such as livestock, carriages, etc.<sup>200</sup>

Beginning in 1883, Caddo Parish poll tax records for exempt taxpayers no longer were maintained within the same tax assessment rolls as non-exempt taxpayers. Separate roll books for exempt taxpayers have not been successfully located for Caddo Parish.<sup>201</sup> Therefore it was not possible to determine whether any Sam Stoners who were liable *for poll tax only* were present in Caddo Parish from 1883 onward.

No Sam Stoner or name variants appeared in Caddo Parish non-exempt tax rolls from 1883 through 1894.<sup>202</sup> If such a person did live in the parish in this timeframe, he did not own real estate or property subject to personal property tax long enough to be assessed for it.

#### A 9 MAY 1881 RECEIPT

Family tradition has maintained that Sam reportedly left Shreveport as a result of a fight or a shooting, time frame unspecified, and settled in California.<sup>203</sup>

The law firm Hicks and Son brought suit for non-payment against George W. Stoner in 1883 in 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Court, Caddo Parish. Hicks submitted an account statement describing services rendered to “Judge G. W. Stoner.” The undated first line item reads:

**For professional services in Sam's case ... [\$] 500.00**

The line is undated but the first line item showing receipt of cash for Stoner's 1<sup>st</sup> payment of this bill is dated **9 May 1881**. The leading candidate for the Sam in “Sam's case” is George's son Samuel Michael Stoner, suggesting that Sam had been involved—or was about to be involved—in either a civil or criminal case, prior to 9 May 1881.<sup>204</sup> No Caddo Parish court case has been located identifying Sam as a party. The earliest time in which Sam might have been treated as an adult capable of conducting his own trade would be at age 18, provided he had been emancipated by his parents.<sup>205</sup> No evidence of emancipation has been found in Caddo Parish.

George's son Sam reached the age of majority (21), on 18 May 1881, nine days after George's first payment to Hicks. If a civil suit or criminal suit involving Sam was filed, it probably entered the court's docket in period 1878–1881, the latter year of which is consistent with Hicks & Hicks' account statement. Unfortunately Sam's presence in a civil or criminal proceeding in this time frame did not emerge in Caddo or Bossier Parish. A civil or criminal suit in another parish or county or in federal court has not been ruled out, but it is also possible that the parties settled their differences without filing any legal complaint.<sup>206</sup>

<sup>199</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1880; negative result for Sam Stoner in any category.

<sup>200</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1881 and 1882 tax years, exempt sections only, Saml Stoner and Sam Stoner, respectively.

<sup>201</sup> Philip B. Adderley, year by year review, Caddo Parish Tax Assessment Rolls 1865–1932 (with gaps); microfilm, Louisiana State Archives and Records Commission. Poll tax columns appear in the non-exempt assessments and were used for males 21 and over if they also owned real estate or personal property for which a tax liability was assessed. Those who were exempt from the other assessments but were still liable for poll tax only appear only through 1883. Separate rolls for exempt poll taxpayers have not been located at the Caddo Parish courthouse, nor do they survive for this parish at the Louisiana State Archives.

<sup>202</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1883–1894, year by year review with negative results for Sam Stoner or variants. *Note: persons who had only a poll tax liability do not appear in rolls beginning 1883. Attempts failed to locate volumes of “Exempt” Taxpayers, i.e., those having only a poll tax liability.*

<sup>203</sup> Talman Stoner, Beaverton, Oregon, to Philip Adderley, e-mail, 9 March 2009, “RE: Letter and Address,” correspondence files, 311 Research; privately held by Adderley, 311 Research, 9828 Deepwoods Drive, Shreveport, Louisiana, 2009.

<sup>204</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 1435, Hicks & Son vs. G. W. Stoner (1883); Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>205</sup> Dainow, ed., 1972 *Compiled Edition of the Civil Codes of Louisiana*, 16: 228–38, Articles 367 and 385 of the Louisiana Revised Civil Code of 1870 specified emancipation at/over 18 years. Earlier emancipation at age 15 was possible at this time, but only to confer the power of administration of the minor's estate (and not the authority to conduct a trade).

<sup>206</sup> Civil suits involving the Stoner surname from the period 1875–1881 in Caddo and Bossier parish have been researched and appear throughout the narrative. None name Sam Stoner as a party, witness, or otherwise in a civil suit. Criminal cases for the two parishes were also examined with negative

The second line item in the Hicks' account statement shows travel expenses "to, in, and from Mansfield." Whether this line item is related to the first line item regarding Hicks' professional services is unknown.

Mansfield is the seat of DeSoto Parish. Coincident to the timing of Hicks' professional services, George W. Stoner had purchased a 246 acre tract west of Stonewall, Louisiana, straddling a north-south segment of the Caddo Parish and DeSoto Parish line, legally described as the southeast quarter of Section 13 and the north half of the northeast quarter of Section 24, in T15N-R15W. [Despite the notably different numbers, Sections 13 and 24 are actually adjacent to each other, 13 being directly north of 24.] George paid \$905 cash. He held this tract, hereinafter called the Stonewall Tract, for three years and sold it at a loss to John M. Nelson for \$200 cash and two \$100 dollar promissory notes.<sup>207</sup>

Because of the coincidence, one hypothesis is that George purchased the land with his oldest son Sam in mind, that Sam was given the opportunity to work the tract in some capacity on his father's behalf, and that he subsequently had trouble in DeSoto Parish, in which part of the tract was located.<sup>208</sup>

#### AN 1894 SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, NURSERYMAN

An S. M. Stoner appeared in the city of San Bernardino, San Bernardino County, California, running a nursery. Interestingly, the city was close to the Southern Pacific's "through line to the east." This prospective son's business matches that of his father. His 1894 presence in San Bernardino County is consistent with the birth of son Early in the county in 1891, and his widow's later presence in the county in the next century. Both suggest he is a good candidate for Samuel Michael Stoner, son of George W. Stoner. If so, the correlation between his business and its location near the Southern Pacific line compared with his father's similar arrangement in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, may be more than coincidence.<sup>209</sup>

#### AN 1895 CADDO PARISH, LOUISIANA, TRUCK FARMER

The truck farmers in the Shreveport area organized an association in January 1895 with the initial intent to procure shipping facilities. They elected two officers, President August Mayer and Secretary S. M. Stoner. Given his occupation by inference, and the Stoner family's long nursery and orchard business history in Caddo Parish, the secretary may be one of G. W. Stoner's sons.<sup>210</sup>

George W. Stoner had two sons capable of being described as "S. M. Stoner." The oldest was Samuel Michael Stoner. The next son was known at different times as Sterling Stoner<sup>211</sup> and Martin Stoner.<sup>212</sup> Martin, son of "Judge and Mrs. G. W. Stoner, of Jewella," died of

results; however, in contrast with well-preserved civil proceedings, the author's research experience with criminal trial court proceedings in both parishes is that they do not survive from this time interval unless they were appealed and the appellate proceedings were subsequently reported. Use of WestLaw Research Subscription Services showed no appellate case reports involving Sam Stoner in this time frame and location. That said, legal record repositories have not been exhausted with respect to Sam Stoner: (1) federal trial court cases, (2) civil and criminal trial court cases in Louisiana exclusive of Caddo and Bossier Parishes, and (3) civil and criminal cases in California, Texas, or Kentucky counties of interest where the family has had some interest or presence.

<sup>207</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, Frederick A. Leonard to George W. Stoner, warranty deed, 22 January 1878, original authentic act no. 21865; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, George W. Stoner to John M. Nelson, warranty deed, 10 February 1881, original authentic act no. 24242; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>208</sup> DeSoto Parish courthouse records have not been exhausted.

<sup>209</sup> Maxwell's *Los Angeles City Directory and Gazetteer of Southern California, 1894, Embracing a Directory of the Residents of Los Angeles City and Suburbs, a Classified Business Directory of the City, a Miscellaneous Directory of the Municipal and County Officials, Societies, Churches, etc., etc., Also a Gazetteer of the Seven Counties of Southern California, comprising an Alphabetically arranged list of Every Town in Southern California, with a list of the Business and Professional Men, Description, Population of each,....* (Los Angeles: George W. Maxwell, 1984), 1337, entry for S. M. Stoner, nursery, in the city of San Bernardino, San Bernardino County; digital images, "U. S. City Directories, 1821-1989 (Beta)," *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012); pages 1327-8 describe San Bernardino and its rail traffic, with emphasis on the Southern Pacific Railroad.

<sup>210</sup> "An Important Organization," *The (Shreveport, Louisiana) Progress*, 19 January 1895, p. 8, col. 2; digital images, "Chronicling American, Historic American Newspapers," Library of Congress (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>: accessed 10 April 2012).

<sup>211</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828-1901; Sterling was born 13 June 1866 at Hickman, Fulton County, Kentucky. Also 1880 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., p. 51, ED 19, dwell. 603, fam. 603, Sterling age 13 born in Kentucky.

<sup>212</sup> 1870 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Shreveport P. O., folio 570 (stamped, back), p. 114, dwell. 831, fam. 950, Martin age 4, born Kentucky.



pneumonia between 8 and 11 April 1894 at age 29, possibly on the family homestead in Jewella.<sup>213</sup> His 1894 death rules him out as a candidate for the 1895 truck farmer association's secretary.

#### A TEN DOLLAR SILVER WATCH OWNER IN 1895 CADDO PARISH

A "J. M. Stoner" was assessed personal property taxes for his silver watch valued at \$10 in 1895. He also was assessed a poll tax. His residence was in Ward 4, where Mrs. L. H. Stoner [*Lizzie H. Stoner*] was also taxed on her real estate holdings. As women could not vote in 1895, the poll tax indirectly identifies J. M. Stoner as a male 21 or over. Tax records for 1896 might have shed further light but were illegible. 1897 and 1898 tax listings show no men owning real or personal property by this name.<sup>214</sup> Is it possible that the 1895 tax assessor recorded the first initial incorrectly?<sup>215</sup>

Sam's youngest daughter Mary was born in Louisiana. If her August 1896 birth is accurate,<sup>216</sup> father Sam Stoner's presence would be needed at Mary's conception, or sometime in late 1895 (or before). The 1895 silver watch owner "J." M. Stoner residing in ward 4 and the 1895 truck farmer S. M. Stoner are both candidates for the father.

If a person owns land in any Louisiana parish at his death, the manner in which ownership rights (and obligations) associated with the property are transmitted is called a succession.<sup>217</sup> A succession is a formal court process, similar to probate proceedings in remaining states. In 1896, the parish in which the succession was "opened" was, first, the parish of residence, or if the deceased were a non-resident of the state, then the parish in which the deceased's principle effects were located, or third, the parish where he died.<sup>218</sup> The inheritance of the deceased's minor children was protected under the law via *separately* initiated Tutorship proceedings, and Sam's surviving spouse Frances had a natural right to become the minors' Tutrix. Doing the latter in 1896 required that she cause an inventory to be made of Sam's estate and an Under-tutor to be appointed who would protect the interest of the minors in the event that their interests conflicted with her own interests.<sup>219</sup>

With succession and tutorships in mind, "J. M." Stoner and George W. Stoner's son Sam share a common thread:

- George W. Stoner's son Sam M. Stoner died in Caddo Parish reportedly having lived in the parish since boyhood, yet no succession occurred in the parish and his widow Frances did not start tutorship proceedings. His father George could have petitioned the court to appoint a Tutor to protect the interests of Sam's three children at that time but did not do so. He did, however, do this after his wife Lizzie died, when Sam's children stood to inherit from their grandmother.<sup>220</sup> The negative evidence in this instance—no succession and no tutorship proceedings following Sam's death—implies that (a) Sam owned no real estate, and (b) Sam owned little or no personal property.
- "J. M." Stoner's assessed property in 1895 consisted of no real estate, and the \$10 amount of moveable property was unlikely to trigger a petition to open a succession or start tutorship proceedings, should he die shortly thereafter.

<sup>213</sup> *The (Shreveport, Louisiana) Progress*, 11 April 1894, p. 5, col. 3; digital images, "Chronicling American, Historic American Newspapers," Library of Congress (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>: accessed 10 April 2012); the article, published on a Wednesday, referenced the family's mourning "this week," so Martin's death is presumed to have occurred on or after Sunday 8 April. If accurate, the age at death places Martin's birth between 8 April 1864 and 11 April 1865. Martin's place of death and funeral arrangements were unstated—implying the family homestead in Jewella.

<sup>214</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1895, folio 116 for Mrs. L. H. Stoner and J. M. Stoner [*sic*], both in Ward 4; 1896 listings were illegible; 1897, folio 93 for Ernest Stoner, Mrs. L. H. Stoner, and a [*likely female*] M. Stoner (no poll tax); 1898, folio 94 for Ernest Stoner and Mrs. L. H. Stoner; no Stoners appeared in any non-resident listings in 1895, 1897–8.

<sup>215</sup> In the researcher's experience, tax assessors were less likely to incorrectly record a taxpayer's name than, say, a census enumerator, but their work was not error-free.

<sup>216</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Jewella Precinct, ward 4, folio 55 (stamped), ED 31, sheet 20-A, dwell. 438, fam. 438, Geo. Leopard household, Mary Ray born in August 1896 in Louisiana.

<sup>217</sup> Dainow, ed., 1972 *Compiled Edition of the Civil Codes of Louisiana*, 16: 512–3, Articles 871, 874, Louisiana Revised Civil Code of 1870.

<sup>218</sup> Dainow, ed., 1972 *Compiled Edition of the Civil Codes of Louisiana*, 16: 552, Article 935, Louisiana Revised Civil Code of 1870.

<sup>219</sup> Dainow, ed., 1972 *Compiled Edition of the Civil Codes of Louisiana*, 16: 152–159, especially Articles 246, 250–1, Louisiana Revised Civil Code of 1870.

<sup>220</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, District Court Files, no. 6913, Succession of Lizzie H. Stoner, 1901, for Petition for Probate of Will, 18 February 1901; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport; George W. Stoner stated the minors of Sam Stoner, deceased, have no legal or qualified tutor to represent them, implying indirectly that a succession had not been opened following Sam's death five years earlier. An independent search for a succession also failed.

## Sam's Death – Conflicting Accounts, Hypotheses, and Conclusion

Sam's death is mysterious if only because of the three very different dates of death that appear for him in the records. No one described how he died or where he was buried.

### SAM'S BROTHERS ERNEST AND EARLY STONER: SAM DIED IN 1895

On 9 December 1907, Sam's surviving brothers filed a petition in the 1st Judicial District Court for Caddo Parish seeking to effect a partition of their father's estate with the surviving minors of their predeceased brother Sam.<sup>221</sup> The fourth paragraph begins:

**They aver that their said brother, Sam. M. Stoner died in the year 1895, leaving the above said minors the issue of the marriage between him and his wife, Eliza F. Stoner (born Vines).**

The brothers named no place of death, no cause of death, and no burial information. Municipal and parish published burial records are silent.<sup>222</sup>

The August 1896 birth of Mary Ray Stoner, reported previously, did not rule out an 1895 death for her father Sam, but the timing of her conception rules out all but the last two months of 1895 as the month when he died.

Ernest and Early were ages 26 and 21, respectively, in late 1895.<sup>223</sup> Either brother was old enough to have been a cognizant, firsthand witness to his death, provided Sam's death occurred where they worked or resided.

The recording of the death information occurred in late 1907, about twelve years after the event, which renders it less reliable than if they had reported the event immediately after it occurred. Did the brothers estimate Sam's date of death? In the brother's legal case the exact year of death was not as important as confirming the death itself.<sup>224</sup>

### SAM'S CHILDREN EARLY ROY STONER AND ETHEL BELL (STONER) PIKE: SAM DIED 21 APRIL 1896

On 4 June 1920, Early Roy Stoner and "Ethel Stoner Pike" file suit contesting a land title in Caddo Parish 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Court. Article V of their petition reads:<sup>225</sup>

**That Sam W. [sic] Stoner died on or about April 21st 1896, leaving plaintiffs and Mary Stoner Holmes as his sole legal heirs.**

Sam's children named no place of death, no cause of death, and no burial information. They were not old enough in 1896 to be considered reliable firsthand witnesses to their father's death, so the account of his death had to come to them via another source, rendering it secondary versus primary information. Secondary information is less desirable than primary information, but it can still be true.

<sup>221</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 11731, Ernest & Early Roy Stoner v. Minors of Sam M. Stoner, Dec'd (1907), Petition of Ernest and Early Roy Stoner, 9 December 1907; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>222</sup> Burial searches with negative results for Sam, mother Lizzie, and father George in Caddo Parish: Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Death Register, Book B, folios 43-108, January 1892–December 1898, line by line search for Stoner with negative results; microfilm of same name, Broadmoor Branch, Shreve Memorial Library System, Shreveport. Judy Riffel, editor, *Shreveport Civil Death Records*, Volume 1 1874–1902 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane, 2002); this is a transcription of the previously cited Caddo Parish Death Register. *Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Cemetery Records Volume I* (Shreveport, Louisiana: J & W Enterprises, 1990); negative results for Stoner in general, but the included Jewella Cemetery listing was read line by line.

<sup>223</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828–1901; Ernest was born 8 April 1869 and Early 3 or 30 October 1874.

<sup>224</sup> The longer the time separating the recording of an event from the event itself, the more one must consider failure of exact recall and a tendency to estimate to the nearest five or ten year multiple.

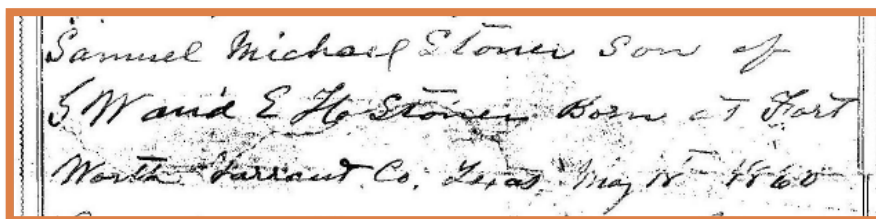
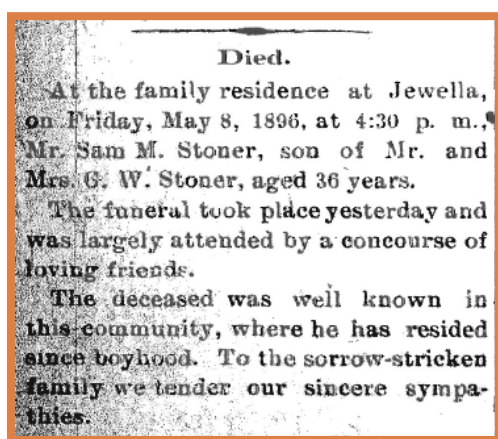
<sup>225</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 27357, E. R. Stoner, et. al., v. Hansen-Mason Realty Co. (1920), Plaintiff's petition, article 5; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

The recording of the death information occurred in 1920, some twenty-four years after the event, which reduces its reliability as evidence, but untimely information can still be true.

Despite its untimeliness and secondary characteristics, the *specific* date of death 21 April 1896 by two of the person's surviving children must be taken carefully taken into consideration. In addition, the court case in which it appeared did not hinge on Sam's exact date of death, so there is no reason to suspect that petitioners intentionally misled the court with an incorrect date.

#### THE SUNDAY JUDGE: SAM DIED 8 MAY 1896

On Sunday, 10 May 1896, Shreveport newspaper *The Sunday Judge* reported that Sam M. Stoner died two days earlier at 4:30pm at Jewella.<sup>226</sup> The timing of the report and its specificity leave little doubt that a firsthand account of Sam's death was its basis. Sam's birth derived from his age and date of death, and his named parents Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Stoner agree with father George's W. Stoner's handwritten entry for his eldest son Samuel Michael Stoner in the Stoner family Bible:<sup>227</sup>



George and Lizzie Stoner's homestead in 1896 was on the land they had acquired in the Jewella region of Caddo Parish beginning 16 November 1870.<sup>228</sup>

#### WHY DID THE FAMILY'S ACCOUNTS OF SAM'S DEATH CONFLICT WITH THE TWO-DAY OLD LOCAL REPORT?

Ernest and Early's 1907 account naming 1895 as Sam's year of death could simply have been an estimate rounded to the nearest multiple of five. The lack of specifics suggests weakly that they were not firsthand witnesses. Ernest can be placed as a resident in Caddo Parish paying taxes on personal property in the years 1893, 1897, and 1898, but not in 1894-1895.<sup>229</sup> Early was still a minor at Sam's

<sup>226</sup> "Died," *The Sunday (Shreveport, Louisiana) Judge*, 10 May 1896, eighth page, col. 1.

<sup>227</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828-1901; forensic analysis of handwriting characteristics and penmanship correlate strongly with those of George W. Stoner, his son Ernest Stoner, and a third unknown author. George's entries may have been made in two or three time-periods: births 1828-1866, including Sam's, appear written in a narrow time frame, possibly between 1866 and 1869.

<sup>228</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Matilda P. G. Allen, Henry E. Allen, and James S. Allen to John J. Hope and George W. Stoner, warranty deed, 16 November 1870, original authentic act no. 16196; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. In 1895, Lizzie (Mrs. E. H. Stoner) was the owner of record: Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1895, folio 116 for Mrs. L. H. Stoner; 228 acres included lands described in the 1870 conveyance.

<sup>229</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1893, folio 127; 1897, folio 93; and 1898, folio 94 for Ernest Stoner entries; 1894 and 1895, negative results for Ernest; 1896, illegible.

death, and his presence in the parish could not, as expected, be determined from 1895 tax records;<sup>230</sup> however, his 1897 marriage to Bennena Davis places him there.<sup>231</sup>

On the other hand, the date of death given by Sam's children in 1920 was very specific—21 April 1896—despite the twenty four years that passed since his death. If an error had been made in only the day or only the month, say 8 April or 21 May 1896, that might suggest a simple slip in recall, but this was not the situation.

On the presumption that his children had no reason to mislead the court about Sam's date of death, the 21 April date may have a kernel of truth. Why did that date persist in their recall?

Looking back, Sam might have run into legal trouble in 1879-1881, reached the age of majority in 1881, and left the parish sometime between 1882 and his marriage to Frances in San Bernardino County, California, in 1889. His first child was born there in 1891. Glimpses of identities that *might* correlate with him suggest that he may have been a nurseryman in San Bernardino County as late as 1894, and that in 1895 he may have been truck farming in Caddo Parish, owning no land but perhaps owning a \$10 silver watch. The summary profile unfortunately does not confirm his presence in the parish on 21 April 1896, and locations outside the parish must be considered.

### HYPOTHESES

Two hypotheses are offered regarding the conflicting date of Sam's death 21 April 1896:

Hypothesis #1 (simplest): His children did not accurately recall their father's 8 May 1896 date of death, or they were incorrectly told when his death occurred.

Hypotheses #2: Something happened on or about 21 April 1896 that was traumatic enough to make Sam's death imminent and at the same time memorable enough imprint the date in his children's memories. In this scenario something unique presumably occurred about 21 April, but he did not actually succumb until seventeen days later on 8 May. Causes could be purely internal such as a stroke, heart attack, or the onset of another catastrophic medical condition. External causes could be traumatic accidents or injuries.

A search for Sam Stoners who might have been injured or involved in accidents sufficient to trigger newspaper accounts uncovered two candidates<sup>232</sup> who have subsequently been ruled out as matches for George Washington Stoner's son.

- *The Daily (Aberdeen, South Dakota) News* reported that a Sam Stoner was killed in a fall in Brookings, South Dakota. He had recently been released from the state penitentiary and reportedly had no relatives in the area. His death reportedly occurred on 15 May 1896, which if accurate, rules this candidate out since his death occurred a week after George W. Stoner's son.<sup>233</sup>
- A Sam Stoner of Glendale, Maricopa County, Arizona Territory, with J. H. Byer, and J. H. Bridenstine, reportedly accompanied a shipment of a thousand head of cattle to Kansas from Glendale on 7 May 1896. The first two had friends in Kansas. Two weeks later, the press expressed "considerable anxiety among their relatives and friends as to their [Byer and Stoner's] safety, as they were visiting in the places swept by the recent cyclone."<sup>234</sup> The tornado spoken of was probably the one that devastated

<sup>230</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1895, negative results for Early Stoner; 1896 rolls illegible. Early's October 1874 birth rendered him a minor until October 1895, which occurred five months after brother Sam's death.

<sup>231</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Marriage Book 22: 162, E. R. Stoner and Benena/Bennena/Bennena Dennis, 1897, recorded bond (with original signatures), license, and return; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. Three different spellings of Miss Dennis' given name occurred in this record. As her original signature was not present on the document, the researcher used all three variations in the citation.

<sup>232</sup> The search should not be considered sufficient until local regional newspapers have been digitized and their content rendered searchable with OCR technology. For example, *The Shreveport Times* owned presently by Gannett News Service, has not yet been digitized.

<sup>233</sup> "Killed at Brookings," *The Daily (Aberdeen, South Dakota) News*, 15 May 1896, p. 2, col. 2; digital images, "Historic Newspapers," *Genealogybank.com* (<http://www.genealogybank.com> : accessed 12 December 2011).

<sup>234</sup> "Glendale Notes," *Phoenix (Arizona) Weekly Herald*, 14 May 1896, p. 1, col. 5; and 28 May 1896, p. 4, col. 4; digital images, "Historic Newspapers," *Genealogybank.com* (<http://www.genealogybank.com> : accessed 20 December 2011).

Clay County, Kansas on the night of 25 April 1896.<sup>235</sup> Nevertheless, this Sam Stoner probably survived, enumerated as Samuel B. Stoner in a 1900 Maricopa County federal census.<sup>236</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Samuel Michael Stoner died on 8 May 1896 at his family's homestead in Jewella, Caddo Parish, Louisiana. He was buried on 9 May 1896, possibly in a private family cemetery located on the Stoner property. The cause of his death and the conditions presaging it remain unknown. Future researchers should consider whether events occurring on or about the date 21 April 1896 are connected.

### Frances' Life after Sam, the Next Thirty Years: 1895–1926

Frances Eliza Vines lost her first husband Sam in May, 1896, while carrying their last child Mary Ray Stoner.<sup>237</sup> On 22 December 1896, she married George W. Leopard. Witnesses were John N. Hicks, Allan V. Wilson, and Geo. E. Ward. Hoyle Tomkies, a Justice of the Peace, officiated the wedding. George's bond surety was Geo. W. Kendall.<sup>238</sup>

Frances was also known Fannie or Fannie E. In 1900 she appeared as such with her second husband George W. Leopard in the 1900 federal census for Caddo Parish. They appeared with her three children from her first marriage and a son Robert O. Leopard who was born reportedly in October 1897. The Stoner children carried Leopard surname, but only for this census, and there is no evidence that George legally adopted the children. Robert was the fourth of four children born to Fannie in her lifetime, all of whom were living on 1 June 1900; thus, he was George's first-born child by Fannie. The census enumerator placed them in Ward 4 of Caddo Parish, just thirty-eight dwellings from the Stoner minors' grandfather and grandmother George and Lizzie Stoner.<sup>239</sup>

Their close proximity to the Stoner grandparents was not coincidence. Ten months earlier George W. Leopard had begun a series of land transactions with Fannie's father-in-law George W. Stoner that would effectively establish the Leopard family homestead in Caddo Parish in the same location for the next twenty years. On 20 October 1899, George Stoner purchased for \$450 two lots (no.1 and 2, about 40 acres each) and a 330 foot-wide strip on the east side of lots 3 and 4 that connected the property to the Shreveport Texas Wagon Road. This 90-acre tract lay in the Jewella region of Ward 4, in the southeast quarter of Section 7, T17N-R14W.<sup>240</sup> The land lay two miles due west of land he had acquired in 1870.<sup>241</sup> On the same day Stoner then sold the land to Leopard for three \$150 promissory notes. Leopard later conveyed the land back to Stoner on 2 December of the same year in exchange for cancellation of the promissory notes. Three years later on 23 December 1902, Stoner resold the same tract of land back to the Leopard family for the same price, this time in cash.<sup>242</sup> Except for 10 square acres in Lot 1 purchased by Francis' daughter Ethel (Stoner) Pike in 1913, a quarter-acre in Lot 2 bought by Ike Shepherd, and the period 4 June 1917 to 11 January 1919 when another buyer defaulted on the purchase of 19.75 acres in the west end of Lots 1 and 2, the land remained in Leopard's ownership and that of his wife Francis (Vines) Stoner Leopard until 15 March 1920. The residual acreage then sold for \$10,000. Two mineral rights leases were executed while the Leopards

<sup>235</sup> "Terrible Cyclone," *The Sunday (Shreveport, Louisiana) Judge*, 28 April 1896, fourth page, col. 2, press release from Topeka, Kansas, 27 April.

<sup>236</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Maricopa County, Arizona Territory, population schedule, T2N-R3E, folio 174 (stamped), enumeration district (ED) 26, sheet 7-A, dwelling 138, family 143, Samuel B. Stoner household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 20 December 2011); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 45.

<sup>237</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Jewella Precinct, ward 4, folio 55 (stamped), ED 31, sheet 20-A, dwell. 438, fam. 438, Geo. Leopard household, Mary Ray Stoner was born four months later in August 1896.

<sup>238</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Marriage Book 21: 657, G. W. Leopard and Mrs. F. E. Stoner, 1896.

<sup>239</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Jewella Precinct, ward 4, folio 55 (stamped), ED 31, sheet 20-A, dwell. 438, fam. 438, Geo. Leopard household. 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, population schedule, Jewella Precinct, folio 53 (stamped, reverse), enumeration district (ED) 31, sheet 18-A, dwelling 400, family 400, G. W. Stoner household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 6 September 2008); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 559.

<sup>240</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, John B. Lewis to George W. Stoner, warranty deed, 20 October 1899, original authentic act no. 44918; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>241</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Matilda P. G. Allen, Henry E. Allen, and James S. Allen to John J. Hope and George W. Stoner, warranty deed, 16 November 1870, original authentic act no. 16196; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>242</sup> Caddo Ph., La., George W. Stoner to George W. Leopard, warranty deed, 20 October 1899. Caddo Ph., La., George W. Leopard to George W. Stoner, warranty deed, 2 December 1899. Caddo Ph., La., George W. Stoner to George W. Leopard, warranty deed, 23 December 1902.



held the land: E. R. Ratliff leased Lot 1 in 1912, and the Union Gas, Oil, and Pipeline Company leased the same lot, less the 10 acres sold to Ethel, in 1915.<sup>243</sup>

On 12 February 1901, Lizzie H. Stoner, grandmother of Frances' three children by Sam Stoner, died at her Jewella home in Caddo Parish.<sup>244</sup> The children's father Sam had pre-deceased them, so Sam's share of his mother's estate passed to them. Their inheritances have been discussed previously within Early Roy Stoner's life history, including the specific roles carried out by Fannie and her husband G. W. Leopard. These roles continued after the death of George W. Stoner in 1907,<sup>245</sup> at which time the Tutorship acquired the minors' interest in their grandfather's estate. On 12 October 1912, having satisfied their obligations, George and Frances Leopard petitioned for release of their obligations as trustees of the minors of Sam Michael Stoner. The outstanding bond and mortgage given by the Tutrix and Co-Tutor as securities were ordered canceled and released.<sup>246</sup>

In the midst of raising her Stoner children and managing their inheritances with her husband's help, Frances had additional children. Unfortunately, death claimed her next three babies. She gave birth to twin daughters about 5 December 1902, but Lillia May Leopard died about five days later, and Lula Gray Leopard followed her within the following six days. Her next child George D. Leopard was born about 25 April 1904 but died sixteen months later about 1 September 1905. Son Claude J. Leopard came next probably between 1907 and 1908. The three Leopard children were buried in Jewella Cemetery in Caddo Parish. Despite the cemetery's proximity, no Stoners have been found in present-day readings.<sup>247</sup>

1908 Caddo Parish tax rolls give a brief glimpse of George and Fannie Leopards' farming interests at the time. They were assessed on the 90 acres George previously acquired from George W. Stoner after their marriage, 16 acres that they held as Trustees on behalf of Sam Stoner's children, and 25 acres that Frances had acquired separately to satisfy the court imposed bond requirement for the tutorship. All acquisitions have been discussed previously. George was further assessed taxes on farm improvements, three horses, eight head of cattle, two wagons, three hogs, one buggy, and agricultural tools.<sup>248</sup>

Francis sold her 25-acre tract on 2 December 1909, the day after her bond requirement was cancelled by the court. The selling price was \$1350 total, an \$850 profit over her February 1904 purchase.<sup>249</sup> Between then and 15 April 1910 the Leopards and their blended family took up residence in San José Township in Los Angeles County, California. Joining them were George's mother Mary J. Leopard, his niece Annie J. Odum, and two servants.<sup>250</sup>

<sup>243</sup> The transactions in the period 1902 to 1920 are found in the following conveyance books in the Caddo Parish Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport: 33:736, Tax Sale to Bernstein & Levy, 1904; 37:470, E. R. Bernstein & J. H. Levy to George W. Leopard, Tax Redemption, 1904; 53:516, warranty deed for .25 acre (Lot 2) to Ike Shepherd; 78:258-9, mineral lease to Ratliff, 1912; 82:395, warranty deed for 10 acres (Lot 1) to Ethel Stoner Pike, 1913; 99:782-3, mineral lease to Union Gas, Oil, & Pipeline Company (E. R. Ratliff, president), 1915; 114:365-6, warranty deed for 19.75 acres to Cass Connaway, 1917; 127:533-4, Connaway's debt default & subsequent reversion to Leopard via Sheriff's Sale, 11 January 1919; and 143:469, warranty deed for residually owned land (about 90 acres) to W. L. Dickinson, 1920. Daughter Ethel (Stoner) Pike's disposition of her 10-acre tract has not been researched. The surveyor map referenced by the 1915 mineral lease is found in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book V:609-610, survey map; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>244</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828-1901. Also, "Died Yesterday," *Shreveport (Louisiana) Times*, 13 February 1901, p. 5, col. 6. Also, *Shreveport (Louisiana) Evening Journal*, 13 February 1901, p. 4, col. 4.

<sup>245</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 170:720, Succession of Geo. W. Stoner to his Heirs, property by judgment, 22 June 1907; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. This was the earliest document of record found after George's death.

<sup>246</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 7619, Tutorship of the Minors of Sam M. Stoner (1901), Petition and Order Discharging Tutrix and Co-Tutor Ordering Mortgage and Bond Cancelled, 12 October 1912; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>247</sup> *Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Cemetery Records Volume I* (Shreveport, Louisiana: J & W Enterprises, 1990), 54, entries for all three children have parenthetical notations indicating the parents were G. W. & F. E. Leopard. There were no Stoner entries. 1910 U.S. census, Los Angeles Co., Ca., pop. sch., San Jose Township, precinct 5, folio 130 (stamped), ED 333, sheet 11-A, dwell. 7, fam. 7, Geo. W. Leopard household; the number of children born to Frances was eight of whom five were living and present in the household. The three deceased children corroborate Jewella Cemetery findings for Lillia May, Lula Gray, and George D. Leopard. The three living Stoner step-children and son Robert O. Leopard were joined by Claud [sic], age 2.

<sup>248</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1908, folios 263-4 for Francis E. Leopard and G. W. Leopard entries.

<sup>249</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Conveyance Book 49:594, Mrs. Francis E. Leopard to L. R. Bloxom, warranty deed.

<sup>250</sup> 1910 U.S. census, Los Angeles Co., Ca., pop. sch., San Jose Township, precinct 5, folio 130 (stamped), ED 333, sheet 11-A, dwell. 7, fam. 7, Geo. W. Leopard household.

Although the family rented a house in California per the April 1910 federal census, they kept paying taxes on their 90-acre farming tract in Louisiana.<sup>251</sup> A conveyance record shows them resuming their Caddo Parish residence by March 1912.<sup>252</sup>

Six months later Frances, with her husband's consent, purchased Lot 9 and the west half of Lot 10 in the Oaksid Subdivision in Shreveport from T. Foreman Parker for \$1000 cash and 3 promissory notes totaling \$1650.<sup>253</sup> About seven months later she sold the same to H. R. Ratcliff and Yates L. Holmes, making a profit of about \$500, selling the land for \$1500 cash and the assumption of the \$1650 mortgage.<sup>254</sup> Francis' motive for acquiring this land on 19 September 1912 is unstated, but the timing coincided with Yates L. Holmes marriage to her daughter Mary Ray Stoner, which occurred sometime between the 24<sup>th</sup> of September and the 7<sup>th</sup> of October.<sup>255</sup>

Frances and George Leopard ninety acre homestead near Jewella in Ward 4 of Caddo Parish dropped to eighty acres the following year 1913. Mrs. Ethel (Stoner) Pike used her separate funds to buy ten acres from her stepfather George W. Leopard in Lot 1 of T17N-R14W on 15 April. Yates L. Holmes-Ethel's brother-in-law-and Fay Jacobs witnessed the sale.<sup>256</sup> Tax records for 1913 echoed Leopard's reduced land holdings, but his cattle holdings had grown to 19 head.<sup>257</sup> George continued to improve his farm for the next six years. On the eve of its sale in 1919 the Caddo Parish tax assessor listed 80 head of cattle valued at \$3770, a value suggesting dairy cattle rather than beef. He also showed two horses, two mules one wagon, agricultural tools, \$1500 improvements of land improvements, and one automobile values at \$130.parish. The land (\$5500) and other personal property (\$4260) assessed at \$9760.<sup>258</sup>

On the last day of 1919, George and Frances joined with W. L. Dickinson and his wife Hazel Heckley Dickinson to buy 150 acres from Morris M. Benson and S. D. Benson for \$5000 cash and nine \$1000 promissory notes, one note due per year for the next nine years.<sup>259</sup> The land was predominantly in the northwesterly portion of Section 29 in T17N-R15W, a few miles west of George's existing farm, but now in Ward 5 of the parish. Tax valuations of their cattle in 1919 suggested that George and Frances owned more expensive dairy cattle versus beef livestock. Like their former neighbors the Roaches, the 1920 census takers verified that both heads of household were dairy farmers. The enumerators captured Frances and George at their new farm in Ward 5.<sup>260</sup> George's most recent child Dorothy Leopard surfaced for the first time in this record, aged 8, implying she was born probably in 1911. Her older brothers Robert O. and Claud J. appeared with her.

In 1920, the Leopards and Dickinsons executed conveyances that effectively exchanged Leopard's full ownership of his Ward 4 farm on 15 March for Dickinson's undivided half interest in the Ward 5 dairy business on 19 August. At the latter date the partnership's movable property on the Ward 5 farm included 24 cows of which most were Jersey cows, two mules and a sorrel horse, seventy large

<sup>251</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1910, folio 284; 1911, folio 312; and 1912, folio 307 for G. W. Leopard's 90-acre entries in ward 4.

<sup>252</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, E. Roy Stoner, Mrs. Ethel B. Pike, Mrs. Frances E. Leopard and George W. Leopard (Tutor and Co-Tutor representing minor Mary Ray Stoner) to C. L. Bland, warranty deed, 13 March 1912, original authentic act no. 30294; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>253</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 76:406, T. Foreman Parker to Mrs. F. E. Leopard, warranty deed, 19 September 1912; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>254</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 82:393, Mrs. Francis Leopard to H. R. Ratcliff & Yates L. Holmes, warranty deed, 15 April 1913; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>255</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, E. Roy Stoner and Yates L. Holmes to C. W. Leach, warranty deed, 24 September 1912, original authentic act no. 34139; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport; Yates was still single on this date. Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, E. Roy Stoner to Yates L. Holmes, quitclaim deed, 7 October 1912, original authentic act no. 34976; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport; Yates is now the husband of Mary Ray Stone [sic]. No marriage record has been found in Caddo Parish or Bossier Parish for this couple.

<sup>256</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 82:395, George W. Leopard to Mrs. Ethel Pike, warranty deed, 15 April 1913; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport; Ethel was identified as the husband of George Pike.

<sup>257</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1913, folio 380 for G. W. Leopard on RFD #2 in Ward 4.

<sup>258</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1919, p. 721 for G. W. Leopard [sic] on RFD #2 in Ward 4.

<sup>259</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 140:503-4, Morris & S. D. Benson to George W. Leopard & W. L. Dickinson, warranty deed, 31 December 1919; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>260</sup> 1920 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., ward 5, ED 72, folio 170 (stamped), sheet 18-A, dwell. & fam. nos. illegible, lines 31-37 inclusive, George W. Leopard household. 1920 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., ward 4, ED 40, folio 49 (stamped), sheet 12-A (struck through, labeled 49-A), dwell. 234, fam. 265, Henry S. Roach household.

neat hogs and sixty head of shotes [*sic*] [*shoats*], one Dodge truck “about six months old,” and a Mitchell 5-passenger touring car (age unspecified). George also acquired the accounts (receivables) and assumed the debts that might be due “by the dairy business.”<sup>261</sup>

Sometime in the early nineteen twenties George and Frances also acquired a Ford Model 15 Roadster, but they sold it to a Shreveport company on 12 January 1921.<sup>262</sup>

Frances and George W. Leopard used their land’s mineral rights as well. George leased for five years his mineral rights to the Sun Oil Company of the entire 150-acre tract he owned in Section 29 of T17N-R15W for \$1000 cash, 1/8 product royalties, and several other provisions. It was stipulated that drilling operations be at least two hundred feet clear of any house and that pipelines be buried below “plow depth.” Witnesses were Mildred Lichtenstein and J. E. Paine.<sup>263</sup> The lease occurred 22 October 1920.

The Leopards’ dairy farming days in Louisiana ended five years later. They executed two transactions on 18 September and 4 December 1925 with W. C. Barnette. Barnette acquired the farm and the Leopards received \$3000 cash, \$10,000 in promissory notes, title to Lots 10 and the east half of Lot 9 in Greenwood’s Holmesville Subdivision, and fifty seven and one half shares of the Shreveport Mutual Builders Association.<sup>264</sup>

Why George (and Frances) quit the business in the parish remains unknown, but perhaps it was part of an overall plan to return to California. They remained in Greenwood, Caddo Parish, for upwards of another year. Tax records in 1926 capture their last Louisiana assessment—for the Holmesville Subdivision lots they bought in late 1925.<sup>265</sup>

### Frances’ Last Thirty Years: 1927–1957

Of the records examined for Frances (Vines) Stoner Leopard’s last thirty years, three observations ensued. First, she remained in California, often associated with her children of both marriages. Second, her husband George does not appear with her. Third, she appeared consistently with the Leopard surname, suggesting that she never married again.

Frances’ appeared with some of her kin in 1928–1930 California voter lists. She lived at 451 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Upland, San Bernardino County. With her were her son Robert O. Leopard, and possible sister-in-law Mrs. Thelma E. Leopard. The precinct did not carry husband George or any persons surnamed Stoner. Both women were housewives, and Robert was a typewriter mechanic.<sup>266</sup> The three Leopards were consistent with the same persons in George W. Leopard 1920 census household in Caddo Parish, Louisiana.<sup>267</sup> Frances’ 1928(+) presence in California is consistent with the family’s absence in 1927 Caddo Parish tax rolls.<sup>268</sup>

Her migration from Louisiana to California probably occurred between 1927 and 1928. The April 1930 federal census saw her living with her daughter Ethel Bell Pike’s family in Chino Township in San Bernardino County. She was listed as George Pike’s mother-in-law

<sup>261</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 143:469, George W. Leopard to W. L. Dickinson, warranty deed, 15 March 1920; Clerk of Court’s Office, Shreveport; George sold it for \$6500 cash and the assumption of a \$3500 mortgage on the land taken out the previous March. Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 151:846–7, W. L. Dickinson to George W. Leopard, quitclaim, 16 August 1920; Clerk of Court’s Office, Shreveport. Dickinson quitclaimed his interest for \$5000 cash and the assumption of the nine promissory notes.

<sup>262</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 156:816, George W. Leopard (Ward 5) to Sewell-Johnson Motor Company, automobile sale, 12 January 1921; Clerk of Court’s Office, Shreveport. Three possible George W. Leopard identities existed in 1921 Caddo Parish. Only one resided in Ward 5—the husband of Frances Leopard.

<sup>263</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 156:144–148, George W. Leopard to Sun Company, Inc., mineral lease, 22 October 1920; Clerk of Court’s Office, Shreveport.

<sup>264</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 220:66–7, George W. Leopard to William C. Barnette, sales agreement, 17 September 1925; Clerk of Court’s Office, Shreveport. Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 631–2, George W. Leopard and William C. Barnette, exchange, 4 December 1925; Clerk of Court’s Office, Shreveport. George’s subsequent disposition of his lots in the Holmesville Subdivision has not been researched.

<sup>265</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1926, p. 1741 for George W. Leopard in Ward 5.

<sup>266</sup> San Bernardino County, California, voter lists, 1928–1930, Ontario Precinct No. 1 for Mrs. Frances Leopard, Robert O. Leopard, and Mrs. Thelma E. Leopard, alphabetical listing, unpaginated; digital images, “California Voter Registrations, 1900–1968,” image 150, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>267</sup> 1920 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., ward 5, ED 72, folio 170 (stamped), sheet 18-A, dwell. & fam. nos. illegible, lines 31–37 inclusive, George W. Leopard household.

<sup>268</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1927, p. 1653, negative results for the Leopards in Ward 5.



Fannie E. Leopard, age 56, and born in California. The enumerator recorded her as married versus widowed, implying that her second husband George was still living.<sup>269</sup>

Her next recorded residence was 1084 Mt. Vernon Avenue in San Bernardino. She registered as a Democrat and lived there in 1932 with her sons Early Roy Stoner and Claude Jefferson Leopard, who worked as a machinist.<sup>270</sup> By 1934, Early had moved out, but Claude remained, by then working as a cab driver.<sup>271</sup> Two years later, the San Bernardino City Directory listed Mrs. Frances E. Leopard at the same address. With her once again was son Early R. Stoner, accompanied by his wife May [sic]. A Geo. Stoner also appeared at the Mt. Vernon address—he was probably Early's son George H. Stoner, who was apparently old enough to be listed separately in the city directory.<sup>272</sup>

In 1937 Frances appeared at the same address, but was now listed by the city directory as a widow. George W. Leopard had apparently died in the years since 1930, perhaps between 1936 and 1937 if the previous year's directory accurately captured her marital status.<sup>273</sup>

Frances Leopard changed her local residence by 1942. She lived then at 556½ 8<sup>th</sup> Street in San Bernardino. Her son Claude and his wife Madeline lived at 556 8<sup>th</sup> Street, the slight address difference signaling a detached dwelling or an apartment. Claude was employed as a fireman with the "UPR," probably the Union Pacific Railroad. Frances was again listed as a widow.<sup>274</sup> The three Leopards appeared on 1944 voter lists at the same 8<sup>th</sup> Street address, listing Claude as an engineer and Mrs. Frances Leopard and Mrs. Madeline V. Leopard as housewives.<sup>275</sup>

Sometime after 1944, Frances left San Bernardino County and established residence in Los Angeles County. In 1948 she lived at 39 Palm Drive in Arcadia and no other Leopards were listed.<sup>276</sup> She registered to vote as a Democrat in Arcadia City Precinct no. 25 in 1950, listing the same address.<sup>277</sup>

By 1952 she had returned to live in San Bernardino at 448 Mill Street.<sup>278</sup> How long she remained there and other details of her life after World War II remain to be resolved. She passed away five years later ca. 16 August 1957 in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California.<sup>279</sup>

Samuel Michael Stoner and Francis Eliza Vines were the parents of the following children:

<sup>269</sup> 1930 U.S. census, San Bernardino Co., Ca., pop. sch., Chino Township, ED 36-13, folio 126 (stamped), sheet 6-A, dwell. 128, fam. 128, George Pike household and mother-in-law Fannie E. Leopard.

<sup>270</sup> "San Bernardino County [Voter Register] 1932[-1934]," San Bernardino Precinct No. 40 for E. R. Stoner, Mrs. Frances Leopard, and Claud Jefferson Leopard, alphabetical listing, unpaginated; digital images, "California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," image 402, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>271</sup> "San Bernardino County Great [Voter] Register 1934[-1936]," San Bernardino Precinct No. 40 for Mrs. Frances Leopard and Claude J. Leopard, alphabetical listings, unpaginated; digital image, "California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," image 602, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>272</sup> *San Bernardino City Directory, 1936, Including Colton and Rialto* (San Bernardino, California: San Bernardino Directory Company, 1936), 371 for Early R. Stoner entry, 238 for Mrs. Frances E. Leopard; digital images, "U. S. City Directories, 1821-1989 (Beta)," *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>273</sup> *San Bernardino City Directory, 1937, Including Colton and Rialto*, 357 for Early R. Stoner entry, 216 for Mrs. Frances Leopard "wid Geo."

<sup>274</sup> *San Bernardino City Directory, 1942, Including Colton and Rialto*, 235.

<sup>275</sup> San Bernardino County, California, voter lists 1944-1946, San Bernardino Precinct No. 33 for Mrs. Frances Leopard, alphabetical listing, unpaginated; digital images, "California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," image 332, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>276</sup> *Arcadia (Los Angeles County, California) Directory, 1948* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Company, 1948), 382; digital images, "U. S. City Directories, 1821-1989 (Beta)," *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>277</sup> "Los Angeles County [California] Great Register, 1950, A-C, Index to Register of Voters, Arcadia City Precinct No. 25 for Mrs. Frances Leopard, alphabetical listing, unpaginated; digital images, "California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," image 233, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>278</sup> San Bernardino County voter lists, 4 November 1952, San Bernardino Precinct No. 8 for Mrs. Frances Leopard, alphabetical listing, unpaginated; digital images, "California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," image 457, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 1 May 2012).

<sup>279</sup> "California Death Index, 1940-1997," database, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 October 2011), entry for Frances Eliza Leopard, 16 August 1957. An approximate date of death allows for index transcription error. Her mother's maiden name Fuqua, father's surname Vines, and date of birth in California help to positively identify her, by correlating with the same information in her marriage record.

- + 1. i. EARLY ROY STONER, born 11 June 1891 in San Bernardino County, California, probably in Moreno or Alessandro,<sup>280</sup> and died 20 August 1958 in Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. He was interred in Riverview Abbey Mausoleum, Portland.<sup>281</sup> Early married 30 April 1912 in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Mary Caroline Roach,<sup>282</sup> born ca. May 1891 probably in Desoto or Caddo Parish, Louisiana,<sup>283</sup> died 16 June 1983, in Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, daughter of Sidney Roach and Annie Bickham. Mary's interment also occurred in the Riverview Abbey Mausoleum.<sup>284</sup>
- ii. ETHEL BELL STONER, born 30 August 1893 or 1894 in Jewella, Caddo Parish, Louisiana.<sup>285</sup> She married about 21 September 1911, in Los Angeles County, California, George Pike, son of Albert Pike and Mary [---?---].<sup>286</sup> By early 1913 Ethel returned to Caddo Parish, Louisiana, with new husband George, but he issued her a power of attorney and returned to California by 21 February 1913. Ethel stayed and joined her siblings in a lawsuit over disputed title to sixteen acres in Caddo Parish.<sup>287</sup> Perhaps with some of her \$5,000 share, she used her separate funds to buy ten acres from George W. Leopard in Lot 1 of T17N-R14W. Yates L. Holmes, Ethel's brother-in-law, and Fay Jacobs witnessed the sale on 15 April 1913. The land had been part of her stepfather's ninety acre dairy farm in Ward 4.<sup>288</sup> Perhaps this land had special significance to her. Her children's birthplaces in her 1920 federal census household suggest George and she moved to New York by 1 January 1916 and from New York to Arizona before 1 January 1920.<sup>289</sup> A Caddo Parish court record confirmed her non-resident status in 1918.<sup>290</sup> By 1930 George and Ethel had settled in San Bernardino County, California, where George rented a farm and was an employer in his own truck farming business. By George Pike she had the following children: (a) Ethel B. Pike, born ca. 1911, California; (b) George R. Pike, born ca. 1913, Louisiana; and (c) F. Marie Pike, born ca. May, 1916, New York.<sup>291</sup>
- iii. MARY RAY STONER, born ca. August 1895 in Caddo Parish, Louisiana.<sup>292</sup> She probably married between 24–28 September 1912, Yates L. Holmes.<sup>293</sup> On 30 January 1913, Yates and Mary bought nine acres in Caddo Parish from Ernest Stoner in Section 9, T17N-R14W for \$4000.<sup>294</sup> The land had been acquired by her grandfather George W. Stoner in 1882<sup>295</sup> and passed in his

<sup>280</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828–1901.

<sup>281</sup> Oregon State Health Division, Center for Health Statistics, death certificate no. 9642 (1958), Early Roy Stoner, 20 August 1958.

<sup>282</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Marriage Book 38: 593, Early Roy Stoner and Mary Roach, 1912.

<sup>283</sup> 1900 U.S. census, DeSoto Ph., La., pop. sch., Ward 2, p. 65 (stamped), ED 51, sheet 7-A, dwell. 123, fam. 127, daughter May [Mary] born May 1891. Mary may also have been born in Caddo Parish, where her parents H. S. Roach and Miss Annie Bickham [sic] married 2 November 1890: Caddo Ph., La., Marriage Book 18: 594, H. S. Roach and Annie Bickham, 1890.

<sup>284</sup> Oregon State Health Division, Center for Health Statistics, death certificate no. 83-010112 (1983), Mary Caroline Stoner, 16 June 1983.

<sup>285</sup> George W. Stoner Family Bible Records, 1828–1901, Ethel Bell Stoner b. 30 August 1893 "Daughter of S. M. and F. E. Stoner." The handwriting for her entry correlates with that of her uncle Ernest Stoner in perhaps one sitting, possibly after his brother Sam's 1896 death, but before Mary Ray's birth later that year. Ernest may have written the year in error, as her mother may have been the informant for her August 1894 birth in 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Jewella Precinct, ward 4, folio 55 (stamped), ED 31, sheet 20-A, dwell. 438, fam. 438, Geo. Leopard household. 1894 is also a slightly better fit with father Samuel Michael Stoner's possible residence in San Bernardino County in 1894.

<sup>286</sup> "California, County Marriages, 1850-1952," George Pike and Ethel Bell Stoner, marriage abstract; index, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/XL4S-KP6> : accessed 2 May 2012); indexed records are not necessarily accurate—future researchers should examine the original record if it survives.

<sup>287</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, Mary Stoner Holmes, Ethel B. Pike, E. Roy Stoner, and W. S. Johnston, et al., agreement and quitclaim deeds, 21 February 1913, original authentic act no. 37613; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. George's pre-authorization signed 14 January 1913 was part of the case file. Per the judge's own written authorization allowing Ethel to sign the deeds, George was absent in California on 21 February 1913.

<sup>288</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 82:395, George W. Leopard to Mrs. Ethel Pike, warranty deed, 15 April 1913. Her disposition of the land has not been researched.

<sup>289</sup> 1920 U.S. census, Maricopa County, Arizona, population schedule, Tempe Ward 2, Precinct 14, enumeration district (ED) 30, folio 207 (stamped, reverse), sheet 5-B (struck through and labeled 14-B), dwelling 110, family 110, Y. L. Holmes household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 October 2011); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 48.

<sup>290</sup> Caddo Ph., La., 1st Jud. Dist. Court case 23946, H. R. Ratcliff vs. Roy Stoner, et. al. (1918); a Curator Ad Hoc represented Ethel.

<sup>291</sup> 1930 U.S. census, San Bernardino Co., Ca., pop. sch., Chino Township, ED 36-13, folio 126 (stamped), sheet 6-A, dwell. 128, fam. 128, George Pike household. 1920 U.S. census, Yavapai County, Arizona, population schedule, Mayer and Camp Verde Precincts, enumeration district (ED) 110, folio 166 (stamped), sheet 7-A, dwelling 209, family 208, George Pike household; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 October 2011); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 52; The oldest daughter was reported on this schedule as "Edith."

<sup>292</sup> 1900 U.S. census, Caddo Ph., La., pop. sch., Jewella Precinct, ward 4, folio 55 (stamped), ED 31, sheet 20-A, dwell. 438, fam. 438, Geo. Leopard household. Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 7619, Tutorship of the Minors of Sam M. Stoner (1901), Petition and Order for Family Meeting, 1 July 1902, Proces Verbal of Family Meeting, 3 July 1902, and Petition for and Judgment Homologating Family Meeting, 3 July 1902; the minors ages places prospective births at 1890–1 for Early Roy Stoner, 1893–4 for Ethel Bell Stoner, and 1895–6 for Mary Ray Stoner.

<sup>293</sup> Yates was single per Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, E. Roy Stoner and Yates L. Holmes to C. W. Leach, warranty deed, 24 September 1912, original authentic act no. 34139; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. Mary signed the tutorship settlement account dated 28 September 1912 as Mary Ray Stoner Holmes, with Yates authorizing his wife to sign the document: Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 1st Judicial District Court case file 7619, Tutorship of the Minors of Sam M. Stoner (1901), Final Settlement of Francis E. Leopard, Tutrix, and Geo. Leopard, Co-Tutor, Receipt and Acknowledgment of Mary Ray Stoner Holmes.

<sup>294</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, conveyance, Ernest Stoner to Yates L. Holmes, warranty deed, 30 January 1913, original authentic act no. 36971; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

<sup>295</sup> Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 1: 647–648, Sophronia Dyer to G. W. Stoner, sheriff's sale and warranty deed, 1 April 1882; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport. Caddo Parish, Louisiana, Conveyance Book 47:378–9, Heirs of G. W. Stoner to Each Other, partition, 15 January 1908; Clerk of Court's Office, Shreveport.

succession to her uncle Ernest in 1908.<sup>296</sup> Yates quickly became involved in real estate as a business. His business transactions with Early Roy Stoner were discussed previously, with Yates acquiring Early's undivided interest in various properties that they had acquired in 1913. By 1914 his occupation as a realtor working for the Union Realty Company appeared with the couple's residence in Shreveport's city directory—the couple lived at 2639 Greenwood (a.k.a. Texas Road), between Arkansas and Kentucky Avenues.<sup>297</sup> In this tax year Yates' real estate holdings in various Shreveport subdivisions peaked at \$4700.<sup>298</sup> He also appeared in the 1915 city directory doing business in real estate and as owner of the Union Penny Company.<sup>299</sup> Yates' real estate holdings declined over the next years, and by 1919 he had dropped off the parish tax rolls.<sup>300</sup> Confirmation of his non-resident status appeared in an 18 June 1918 Caddo Parish court record.<sup>301</sup> The couple's absence from the tax rolls also indicated that they had disposed of the land they had purchased from Mary's uncle Ernest Stoner. Mary Ray and Yates resurfaced in the 1920 federal census in Tempe, Arizona. Yates had switched occupations and worked then as a trader in the cattle business working on his own account. By Yates L. Holmes, Mary Ray had the following children: (a) Mary E. Holmes, born ca. 1913 in Louisiana.<sup>302</sup>

Samuel Michael Stoner was the son of George W. Stoner and his only wife Elizabeth "Lizzie" H. Wilson.

To Be Continued ....

<sup>296</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Conveyance Book 47:378-9, Heirs of G. W. Stoner to Each Other, partition, 15 January 1908.

<sup>297</sup> *Shreveport City Directory 1914* (Shreveport, Louisiana: L. N. Brueggerhoff, 1914), 76, 111, and 245 for Holmes.

<sup>298</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1914, folio 324 for Yates L. Holmes.

<sup>299</sup> *Shreveport City Directory 1915* (Shreveport, Louisiana: L. N. Brueggerhoff, 1915), 251 for Holmes.

<sup>300</sup> Caddo Ph., La., Tax Assessment Rolls, 1915, folio 256; 1916, folio 283; 1917, folio # not recorded; and 1918, p. 531, for Y. L. Holmes entries; 1919 and 1920, negative results for Y. L. Holmes or Yates Holmes.

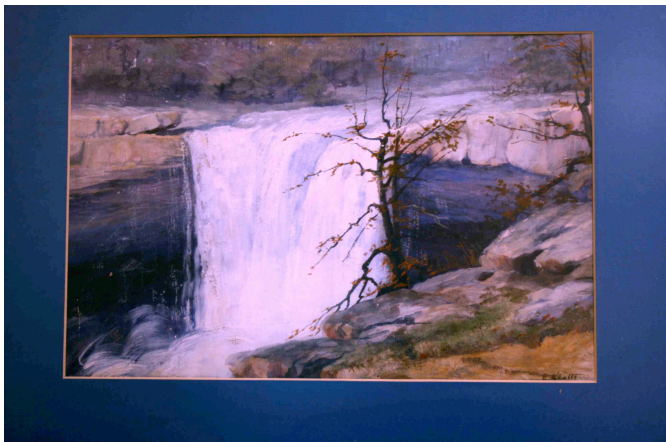
<sup>301</sup> Caddo Ph., La., 1st Jud. Dist. Court case 23946, H. R. Ratcliff vs. Roy Stoner, et. al. (1918); a Curator Ad Hoc represented Yates' wife Mary.

<sup>302</sup> 1920 U.S. census, Maricopa Co., Az., pop. sch., Tempe Ward 2, Precinct 14, ED 30, folio 207 (stamped, reverse), sheet 5-B (struck through and labeled 14-B), dwell. 110, fam. 110, Y. L. Holmes household.

# Mystery, Mystery...Solved

Sonja Dowling Webb

Watercolor



My Granny, Nellie Robbins Dowling, owned a watercolor that had been a mystery for many years for me. My father, John W. Dowling told me the waterfalls depicted in the painting are in Alabama and one of Granny's cousins had painted it. Many times over the years, I have stood before the painting wondering who the artist was and where are the falls.

After Dad passed away, I found a photograph among his things of a woman standing near a waterfall. Was she the artist of Granny's watercolor and were the waterfalls the same as the painting? With some research and help from family members, the woman in the photograph was identified as Eliza Klutts, not the artist, but the mother of the artist. The exact date when Eliza was photographed by the falls is unknown. The picture was taken no later than 1921 for Eliza died in 1921. I discovered the artist was Ethel Klutts, a well-known Alabama artist and highly respected art teacher of her day. She painted the watercolor of Noccalula Falls of Gadsden, Alabama and was known for her flowers and landscapes. Ethel held the position of Art Supervisor of Gadsden City Schools. Ethel was a strong advocate for art education. In an article she wrote for the local newspaper she voiced her position:

*"The study of art is one of the best for reflective thinking. It coordinates the perception, the understanding, and the expression. Training the hand in neat, accurate, workmanship is everywhere recognized as one of the basic principles of education and citizenship for the child. Art Education teaches boys and girls to use their hands, it teaches the nobility of work, the power to be gained through good craftsmanship."*<sup>1</sup>



Photograph

Ethel Klutts earned an art degree from the Cincinnati Art Academy. She studied in New York and worked with the New York Students Art League. From New York she spent time teaching art in Galloway College in Searcy, Arkansas. From Arkansas she returned to Alabama to teach art in public schools and later becoming "superintendent and director of art in the Gadsden public schools" and recognized as a noted artist of the South.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Art Means- "Service in Better Living."* Ethel Klutts. pg. 13. Clipping found in family records without clear source. Believe source to be Gadsden Newspaper.

<sup>2</sup> Gadsden Times. Obituary. Found in family records without clear labeling.



Ethel was a life long member of the First Methodist Church of Gadsden and her art skills were a regular part of the Sunday school.<sup>3</sup> She was so respected by her church for her work with children the church donated a stained glass window in her memory.



Granny's Noccalula Falls watercolor by cousin Ethel is a remembrance of their hometown surroundings. Ethel and Granny's family were from the Gadsden/Walnut-Grove area. For me the painting brings back fond memories of my grandmother and a better appreciation of who Ethel Klutts was in the family.

With this information in hand, my husband, two friends, and I took a road trip to Gadsden in 2009. We found the waterfalls, the church and the stained glass window. There was a hint of familiarity with the place having seen the falls every day in the Klutts watercolor. And Granny, well, she would be proud that I am interested in her hometown and family.



Digital Photograph  
April 2009

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<sup>3</sup> Gadsden Times Obituary.

## Blast from the Past

Several members recently suggested revisiting some of our vintage *Genies* with the intention of reprinting valuable information. In perusing some of those bound volumes, the Tipton name appeared often. **Ennis Tipton** was president of Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association several times and his wife, **Ema Lee Tipton**, served as editor and later president. It was under Mr. Tipton that annual genealogical seminars were begun.

Some of the 1971 officers of ALTGA are pictured below. They are, seated left to right, Mary Slimer, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Marguerite Nation, trustee; and Chairman Northwest Louisiana Records Committee; Mary Jewell Moore, Corresponding Secretary and Chairman of Membership Committee; standing, left to right, Ben Achee, Past President and member Program and Finance committees; Ema Lee Tipton, Editor of *The Genie*; and Mr. T. V. Holmes, Jr., 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and Chairman of Finance and Budget Committee.



Mrs. Tipton wrote a number of chatty articles that were loaded with information that seems relevant even today, especially since the discovery of the Haynesville Shale and recent reports stating that 189 jobs are created for each well drilled in our area. The following article is from *The Genie*, Volume V, Number 3, July 1971, pages 33 and 34.

## RECORDS COMPILED BY OIL COMPANY DEPARTMENTS

Ema Lee Tipton

Oil wells are almost as commonplace as pine trees on the Ark-La-Tex area, frequently outnumber houses and people in rural sections, and everyone has heard of oil leases. However, few genealogists seem to know how much research oil companies do on land they lease or what happens to the records when the lease expires. If you already know this, forgive my eager chatter. What I don't know could fill several oversize boxcars and when I learn something that may help others, I just can't wait to tell about it.

In 1940 a "lease hound" called to locate my father to obtain his signature on a lease for land



that had been in our family over 100 years. He then needed about 400 signatures so I wished him luck and forgot about it. When I began research on the Carlton line I found a list of all the living heirs prepared by the oil co. in 1940. It was actually a pedigree chart of all C. B. Carlton's descendants and I stupidly assumed this was all the data the company had compiled. In 1969 another "lease hound" called. I told him my father was dead but all his children would sign the lease if he would give me an up-to-date list of all the Carlton heirs. He agreed to this. After six months, not hearing from him, I called and was told there were now over 2,000 heirs so the project was abandoned. I never did get the up-to-date list, but wouldn't the names and addresses of over 2,000 living descendants of any great-great-grandfather be wonderful to have?

In April, Willie Farley offered to loan me records on an oil lease to examine. I expected to see a list similar to the one above, plus perhaps a few pages of other data. Instead I received a bound volume of 305 pages! I had never seen a complete abstract on any tract of land before. There must be others who are unfamiliar with such documents. Their availability through oil companies is of special importance in this area. For those who have never seen a complete abstract and who, like me, may not have considered them important, a description of the Farley document may be helpful.

On the **cover** is listed every parcel of land and its exact location in the entire 260 acres. Page 1 to 4 is an index of all **grantors and grantees, page and book numbers of original records, notes whether the transaction was a land grant, sale, succession, mortgage, power of attorney, etc.** Page 5 gives the same data as the cover. Page 6, The Surveyor's Report, is a **graph of the township** divided into 40-acre plots. Page 7 is the abstractor's **explanation of where various records were located** and that some were lost in a courthouse fire in 1878. Four northwest Louisiana Parish Courthouses are listed as sources of the data, with dates when each was formed and from what other parishes.



The first deed on Page 8, dated 27 April 1850, is for 159.12 acres, a **patent based on a military warrant, giving certificate number and land description**. Page 9 states that failure to find any record of sale or transfer of this land was due to records being lost in the courthouse fire. Pages 10 through 305 are copies of all other deeds and transactions related to the 260 acres beginning 23 November 1872 and through 8 June 1937, when the abstract was completed for the oil company.

Just try to imagine 297 pages of land transactions of your very own family, with names, dates and many other details on all those involved in any way. All land abstracts may not be this extensive but some are much large[r] and almost all of them will contain much valuable genealogical data. You could go from courthouse to courthouse and perhaps collect most of these records for yourself, but I suggest you try the oil company lease departments and abstract companies first.

I contacted lease departments of several oil companies and learned it is a common practice to give the abstract to some member of the family when the lease expires, although some companies charge a modest price for them. Since abstracts cost the company from \$100 to \$500 or more, they usually have only one copy and no duplicates will be available from them. Circumstances vary and often the title search goes back only 10 or 20 years. Laws governing oil leases vary from state to state, with more information needed on some leases than on others.

If an oil company ever leased land belonging to your family, or which ever belonged to them, you should contact their lease department to learn if they have a complete abstract on the land and if they will permit you to examine it. They can tell you if they ever had an abstract prepared, if they still have it, if disposed of who received it, and the name of the abstract company who compiled it. Don't forget to ask if they have a list of all the living heirs on any property that has been in your family for several generations. Response to all my questions was most cordial, so you should have no reluctance in calling for this type of information. If you are lucky, you could really "bring in a gusher" of data.



If you don't know the name of the oil company that leased the land, just start through the telephone book and call every oil lease department until you locate the one you want. In oil lease areas, oil companies are the first places to check. However, abstracts re prepared for many other land transactions. Banks and loan companies usually require a complete abstract before granting a mortgage on land. Abstracts are used in many estate



settlements; wise buyers always demand a full abstract on any land they purchase; and many other transactions involving land employ these documents.

I don't know how many deeds, leases, mortgages and other land documents I have signed, but I certainly never bothered to read all that fine print and until began research on my families and started checking land records, I wouldn't have understood it anyway. Shocked by my ignorance, I did some checking on Abstract Companies.

Abstract companies seem to be the outgrowth of early land disputes, long before 1800. They copied all public records affecting land, such as deeds, estate settlements, probate records, tax lists, mortgages, land grants, marriage contracts, divorces, dowers, wills and all other data affecting the title to the land, assembled and posted them to tract books in geographical order, so that all matters pertaining to any land would be gathered together for easy reference. The main objective was to keep the title to the land clear, but the records contained a great deal of genealogical data. Where courthouses have burned, the abstract company in that county or parish may have the only existing records on many details of your family history. See **Know Your Ancestors** by Ethel Williams, Chapter 8, "Land Records as Research Tools" for more data on Abstract office records.

After calling several abstract companies I learned that some of them retain a copy of every abstract they compile for their permanent files. Some companies maintain only a summary indexed by location: township, range, section, etc. In this case, unless you know the exact location of the land, they may be unable to help you. The records of an abstract company are not public records. They belong to the company which compiled them. Policies and procedures are not the same for all companies and you must contact each firm individually to learn what records they may have and to secure permission to examine them. All those contacted stated that they would be glad to supply information available in their office. Since the business of these firms is supplying information, I assume there will be some charge for the data obtained from them. I did not inquire as to this, since each case differs and must be considered separately.

On your vacation, please try to write down the name and address of all Abstract Companies in every county or parish you visit, for our September "Show and Tell" program and so that a master list can be placed in the Vertical Files of the Genealogy Room of Shreve Memorial Library. This information is badly needed.

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NOTE: Much of Mrs. Tipton's article contains methodology still pertinent to our quest for information today. Most land records offices and courthouses in northwest Louisiana and northeast Texas are busy with landmen, geologists, and others associated with the acquisition of property and the distribution of mineral leases and mineral rights.

Look for more advice from Ema Lee Tipton in future issues.

## BITS & PIECES

Sometimes our members discover information that doesn't warrant a full-blown article and doesn't fit into any specific category. BITS & PIECES just a tad of *lagniappe*. Feel free to contribute to this reader-driven segment. Thanks to Friends of Genealogy for these tidbits.

1. **IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME.**

Well, make that *Latin* instead. Land records provide many specific details not found elsewhere; In fact, before 1850, land records might be the only place one could find a woman's first name. Other words and phrases in land records might need explanation.

- ✓ **Consort**—Deceased wife of a surviving husband
- ✓ **Dower**—Provision made by right of law or by will for the wife to receive one-third of an estate
- ✓ **Relic**—a surviving widow
- ✓ **Et ux**—and wife
- ✓ **Et al**—and others
- ✓ **Libre**—book or volume



This headstone is found at the historic Scottsville Cemetery in Scottsville, Texas. Notice that Rebecca Bue's epitaph suggests that, as **consort**, she died before her husband, Stephen Matthews.

## 2. WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DID YOU LIVE?

Reading obituaries, one often finds the phrases *lifelong resident*, *native of*, and/or *long time resident*. Be careful to use them or interpret them correctly.

- ✓ **Native of**—born in that place
- ✓ **Lifelong resident of**—lived there all of one's life
- ✓ **Long-time resident of**—has resided in that location for a significant number of years

So, can one be “a native of Arcadia and a lifelong resident of Jonesboro”? What does this statement mean: “MONROE--Mr. James was a native of Grayson and was a lifelong resident of Caldwell Parish.”

## 3. IT'S ALL IN A DAY FOR A TAPHOPHILIAC.

If you are the least interested in genealogy, you probably like to roam through cemeteries. When doing so, you often find sculptural treasures, monuments the likes of which are rarely created today. Once in a great while, though, you'll stumble upon a plot that begs for contemplation, or gives you pause to grin.

One such plot is a double headstone in the historic Scottsville Cemetery in East Texas. The Mercers apparently had purchased a final resting place in happier times and were determined not to waste money. So, when was the stone erected? And who had the last laugh? Lizzie Woodley died in 1991; E. Brock Mercer, in 1970. Sit and ponder *that* one.





## Did You Know...

...that **Friends of Genealogy (FOG)**, meeting every Thursday morning from 9 till noon, has recently concluded its digitizing of more than *250,000 obituaries*. They are found on about 25 CDs housed in the Genealogy Department of Shreve Memorial Library, Broadmoor Branch. A general catalog of the contents is found at the genealogy desk. Feel free to visit the genealogy staff at 1212 Captain Shreve Drive, Shreveport, or contact them at (318) 869-0120. FOG is now entering the obit card files to Find-a-Grave. Join this new adventure at Broadmoor Branch Library each Thursday.

...that the **Mansfield Female College** just about 30 miles south of Shreveport has a couple of thousand volumes of rich genealogy information? The *Veache Foshee Memorial Library Collection* was donated by preservationist and writer Damon Veach to the DeSoto Historical and Genealogical Society. Visit the collection at 101 Monroe Street, Mansfield, LA, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. Call them at 318h 871-9978 or go online to see some of their holdings: [www.countygenweb.com/DeSotoParishLA/Veach.htm](http://www.countygenweb.com/DeSotoParishLA/Veach.htm).

...that noted genealogist **Dick Eastman** has a daily online genealogy newsletter. Go to [blog.eogn.com](http://blog.eogn.com) for research tidbits, helpful hints and common sense. Sometimes the author will direct you to a link that will brighten our day. Case in point: Read the obituary for George Ferguson, former pastor and minister from Canada who lost his driver's license and was reduced to riding a scooter to get from one destination to another. Ferguson was one of those "characters" you hear about. His obit is a far cry from the one below, originally published in the *Natchez Courier* 5 March 1853, page 4, column 7, and found again in *The Genie*, July 1971, page 35.

"Departed this life on 9 December 1852 in the town of Washington, Adams Co., Miss., Lavinia Lewis, widow of the late Robert Ford of this county. She was born of respectable parents in Conn. in 1775. Mr. Lewis, her father, emigrated to West Florida and located near where the town of Grand Bluff now stands. He was probably part of the colony brought her [e by?] Gen. Lyman who had a large grant of land from the British Government for services rendered in the old French war. The family of Mr. Lewis consisted of several children, the eldest, a son, had just reach maturity. The settlement was made in a dense canebrake; after toiling for a few months, the sickly season came and both parents died. The forlorn children, the subject of this notice being the 4<sup>th</sup>, and about 13 years old, decided seek a more inhabited region. They went by flat boat on the Mississippi to Iberville or Bayou Manchak, the lowest point of British possessions. The eldest other was drowned in the Miss. The children were then divided up among the community. Seth, then a little boy of 10, was afterward the Supreme Judge of the Miss. Territory. One of the sisters married Major Guion, the first military commander of this state. She lived in Adams Co. and was the mother of Gov. John I. Guion of Miss. and the Hon. Geo. S. Guion of La. Mrs. Ford married late in life; was 90 years old 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct. before death. She was a Methodist, her husband a Baptist. Magnolia Springs, 18 Jan 1853. B. M. I. "

...that all's well that ends well.

