

# The Genie

*To inspire interest in family history through education, preservation and service.  
We're in the family business.*



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

**ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.**

P. O. BOX 4463  
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71134-0463

# *THE GENIE*

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## ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. Box 4463

Shreveport, Louisiana 71134-0463

The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association is a Section 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Louisiana.

The purpose of this organization is:

- To collect, preserve and make available genealogical documents and records
- To encourage an interest in genealogy and to sponsor educational programs for its development
- To promote the Shreveport/Bossier City area as having significant resources for genealogical and historical research
- To compile and publish a quarterly publication, *The Genie*, composed of records of genealogical and historical importance, helpful research information, and ancestral queries.



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

The membership year is from January 1 through December 31 and dues are \$20.00 annually for individual or same household family memberships. Dues for those members joining in the last half of the year (July 1 - December 31) are \$10.00. Membership renewals are due by January 31 at the "whole year" annual rate. Payment may be made online through PayPal, by regular mail, or at regular meetings. Refer to our website: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~laaltga/join.htm> for details.

**Statement of Publication:** *The Genie* is published on a quarterly basis and distributed electronically as a pdf document to members and subscribing institutions that have provided an email address. The Association also participates in an exchange agreement with other organizations that publish similar genealogical publications. Those publications that are received are donated to the Broadmoor Branch Genealogy Department of the Shreve Memorial Library.

We welcome family history and genealogy research articles and records, especially those that are likely to be of an interest to others. Some examples are family pedigree charts, cemetery surveys/records, family and community histories, and transcribed courthouse records. We also accept articles describing a genealogical "brick wall," as well as queries. All submitted material should be typed or very plainly written and sent to our mailing address above or emailed to our editor at [thegenie.editor@gmail.com](mailto:thegenie.editor@gmail.com). Please note that *The Genie* cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies, but will hasten to publish correction.

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Email articles for *The Genie* to: [thegenie.editor@gmail.com](mailto:thegenie.editor@gmail.com)

## President's Message

*Contributed by Glenda Efferson Bernard*

July, August, September! Cooler weather, plenty of rain, and two hurricanes hitting neighbors to the east and west have ushered in a very unusual quarter in the area. Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association has been on the move as well. What a great summer!

At the July 8<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting, everyone seemed to enjoy the "Show and Tell" planned program led by Jim Johnson, Program Chairman. It has always been a hit! About fifteen members and guests brought items from their collections from the past to share with those present that day. A quilt, a picture frame, photographs, tools, telephones, and many other heirlooms were explained. Their owners related why they were significant in their histories. Many questions ensued with some comments heard among the group, "I wish I had brought my old\_\_\_\_." Perhaps there will be another opportunity next year! Also a continued emphasis on writing family stories was encouraged by Peggy LaCour. Writing prompts were provided to help members put pen to paper to get started that very day!

If being a part of the August seminar this year was not possible, a real treat was missed! Ms. Cari Taplin was the featured speaker, and she was so knowledgeable! She was an excellent presenter and covered each topic well. Elsewhere in this 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter issue of *The Genie* will be a full explanation of Ms. Taplin's topics. It was a wonderful day, as always, catching up with friends who had not been seen since the August before, meeting new friends and possible relatives, as well as learning so much that was brand new!

Ms. Sally Hamer made an encore visit to the Randle T. Moore Center on September 9<sup>th</sup>. She has a vibrant personality and knows every aspect of writing which she loves to share! "Battling the Basics of Writing Memoirs" was a thorough, step-by-step approach as to the importance of writing memories and how easy the project could be. "You don't have to write a book. Just small snippets on a regular basis about any event which comes to mind can be written and placed in a binder or emailed to a relative," she said. Basic composition hints were an added bonus. Ms. Hamer discussed how stories need to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "They need to show a conflict, show one's emotions, instead of just telling about it," she added. Many members wanted to know of her next speaking engagement in the area so that they could learn more. The Horn Book program with Glenda Bernard discussed "Researching the Louisiana State Archives." September was not a month to miss attending!

This summer has brought many opportunities to learn more about family history and how to record it this year. It is so exciting to anticipate what comes next!

Items from July 2017 “Show and Tell”  
*Contributed by Jim Johnson*



Photos:

1. Photo: Municipal Auditorium – Mary Ann Heinsohn
2. Photo – Barbara Dean Kronenberg
3. Family China – Sarah White
4. French Phone – Suzanne LaCour
5. Confirmation Certificate – Brenda Kelly
6. Crank Phone – Jim Johnson

In addition, there were items with no photo:

1. Woven Coverlet – Martha Fitzgerald
2. Dog tags – Sylvia Powers
3. Religious Artifact – Linda Gibson



Paper Doll - Sonja Webb



Notebook - Nancy Menasco



Homemade shears – Johnnie Covington

## Periodical Exchange Review

Contributed by Reed Mathews

The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association currently exchanges periodical publications with dozens of historical and genealogical organizations across the country. These exchange publications are donated to the Genealogical Department at the Shreve Memorial Library. It is the purpose of this column to make readers aware of these wonderful resources for the family historian by giving brief descriptions of the publications and their content.

***Searchers & Researchers.*** *Searchers & Researchers* is the quarterly of the Ellis County (Texas) Genealogical Society which is headquartered in Waxahachie. The winter 2016 issue has a card-stock cover and 41 numbered pages which include a table of contents and a surname index. The style is plain and forthright. There are no illustrations in this issue. A society news section and listings of officers and members are included, but most of this issue is devoted to “county and historical records.”

Many of the articles in this issue of *Searchers & Researches* are transcripts of original sources. Several were gleaned from Ellis County newspapers. From the *Waxahachie Daily Light* of January 3, 1911, come meeting notices of three camps of the Woodmen of the World and an obituary for Jefferson R. Reeves. Readers learn in March of 1936 that “Waxahachie and County are Scenes of Much Construction” and stamps for the Texas Centennial are available at the post office. A December 1936 article tells of Santa Claus’ planned tour of the county. For the same Christmas celebration “Waxahachie merchants [are making] arrangements for ... forty fowls, including turkeys, guineas, and chickens [to be] released on the west side of the public square [to] become the property of anyone lucky enough to catch them.”

Colorful historical articles are taken from a variety of sources. In “Letters from the Past,” The *Pulaski (Tennessee) Citizen*, published two letters of 1883 and 1886 which were written from Ellis County residents to family in their old home in Tennessee. Information on Ellis County’s Fort Smith is given in a letter written by R. E. Sparkman to Ella Stevens Watkins in 1935. An undated newspaper article, entitled “On Richland Creek,” tells the story of Thomas I. Smith, the commander of a Texas Ranger unit for whom Fort Smith was named. This issue also presents the story of the Kookan Cross, which was erected on Kookan Hill in the 1930s and was lighted in 1954. The lighted Kookan Cross, a focus of Easter sunrise services and a beacon to the world, unfortunately went dark about 2000, but it was restored to its glory in 2015. “Ellis County Art Association is Organized” is a report dated May 31, 1973, that announced the new “county wide art club.”

Articles which are specifically genealogical include “The Hartsfield Family,” which is a small excerpt of Nancy Boren Solohubow’s book *Boren Cemetery: The First One Hundred and Forty Years*, “Henry Lyda Jackson,” and “Judge J. W. Ferris and his son Royal A. Ferris.” Obituaries for Rev. Dr. William Daniel Turner and Mrs. Martha Lee Turner are re-printed here. Short articles, “Information on Branding Cattle” and “Finding Women in Civil War Photos” provide practical pointers on research.

The Ellis County Genealogical Society and *Searchers and Researchers* editor, Sylvia Smith, have done wonderful work in collecting and publishing this rich genealogical and historical material. They have made *Searchers & Researchers* an indispensable source for anyone who has family connections to Ellis County.

***The Carroll County Genealogical Quarterly.*** *The Quarterly* is the product of The Carroll County (Georgia) Genealogical Society which is based in Carrollton. The summer 2017 issue contains 47 numbered pages and includes a table of contents and a full-name index. It is staple-bound with a card-stock cover. Almost every article in this issue is an abstract of original records. Many are continuing projects. There are no illustrations.

Members of the CCGS have done much to collect biographical material on residents of Carroll County. In his "President's Message," Donald Levans announces that French researcher, Christian Montriol, has assembled a database of World War I veterans from Carroll County. Since 2014, Montriol has collected the discharge papers of 1,240 veterans of the war. George Wheelless reports that the Casimir Pulaski Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution has identified 17 veterans of the Revolution who lived in Carroll County. His article, "Brief Biographies of Revolutionary War Veterans Settling in Carroll County," tells their stories. Betty Jo Parsons presents an installment of her ongoing series, "Mount Zion Baptist Church: Memorial Abstracts of Some Members," as well.

This issue also has a few articles which are effective roll-calls of county citizens at various points in time, but which give some surprising flashes of color. "*1855 Tax Digest, Carroll County, Georgia*" is a list of the people who were eligible to vote or who owned real estate. This information is valuable in itself, but there is a column labeled "Agent" which lists guardians of minors and executors of estates which might connect family members as no other source of information can. S. C. Candler, for example, was a guardian for James, Albert, and Polly Tate, "all free persons of couler [sic]." "Record of Recipients of Southern Cross of Honor" and "Record of Lineal Descendants of Confederate Soldiers Serving in the U.S. Navy and Abroad" identify Confederate soldiers and their families from Carroll County.

Two articles really breathe some life into bygone eras. "*1884 Merchant's Ledger*" is a record of all the people who bought at a general store that was presumed to be in Carroll County. The store offered everything from meat, flour, oats, and potatoes to tobacco, "specks," shoes, gloves, hats, hinges, hoes, pocket knives, and flower pots. Each customer's whole shopping list has been set down for posterity. "*Items of Genealogical Interest Carroll County Times, August 11 – August 18, 1876*" provides obituaries, legal notices, and wedding announcements, as might be expected. *The Times* also informs the readership that the watermelon crop is "better than usual" and that the Chattahoochee Musical Convention is meeting in Haralson County. An "anonymous communication" sent to the editors complains of "the indecent bathing indulged in by some of the boys and young men of Carrollton, near Kingsbery's Bridge." The ladies of the town who must pass by way of the bridge and who cannot help noticing are righteously indignant.

*The Carroll County Genealogical Quarterly* offers much for the researcher who has connections to Carroll County. Editor, Betty Jo Parsons, and the CCGS are doing excellent work.

## Everybody Has a Story

*Presented to the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association 10 Jun 2017 in its Hornbook segment by  
Glenda Efferson Bernard*

“What exactly is *The Genie*?” a member recently asked. Another wanted to know, “Why does it seem to be so important?” These are great questions, and the answers are easy to enumerate! This explanation was attempted at a recent Hornbook segment as a part of our emphasis this year on the importance of family historians writing memories of their ancestors.

*The Genie* is the newsletter of the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association which is published four times a year and is digitally shared to the members of the organization as well as to institutions such as libraries across the nation. In fact, its history is fifty years old! About forty libraries throughout the fifty states share their newsletters with us. We call these “Exchange Societies.” *The Genie* is a quarterly which contains quite a variety of genealogical data. It can help family researchers learn of the people and way of life of those who have lived in the Ark-La-Tex. Preserving *The Genie* for future generations is paramount because those who begin to research thirty or forty years from now will have a haven of information to help them. *The Genie* has published cemetery listings, tax rolls, church records, articles about small towns that may no longer exist, biographies of city leaders and small farmers, as well as articles describing the migrations of a family to name a few kinds of articles submitted over the years. We continue to receive submissions explaining the significance of a particular article such as a knife used by a grandfather to whittle, a cuckoo clock, or memories of an old homestead. *The Genie* is a vital, tangible, record of these kinds of topics which we work to make accessible to researchers for years to come.

Some, but definitely not all, of the types of articles which the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association love to receive are:

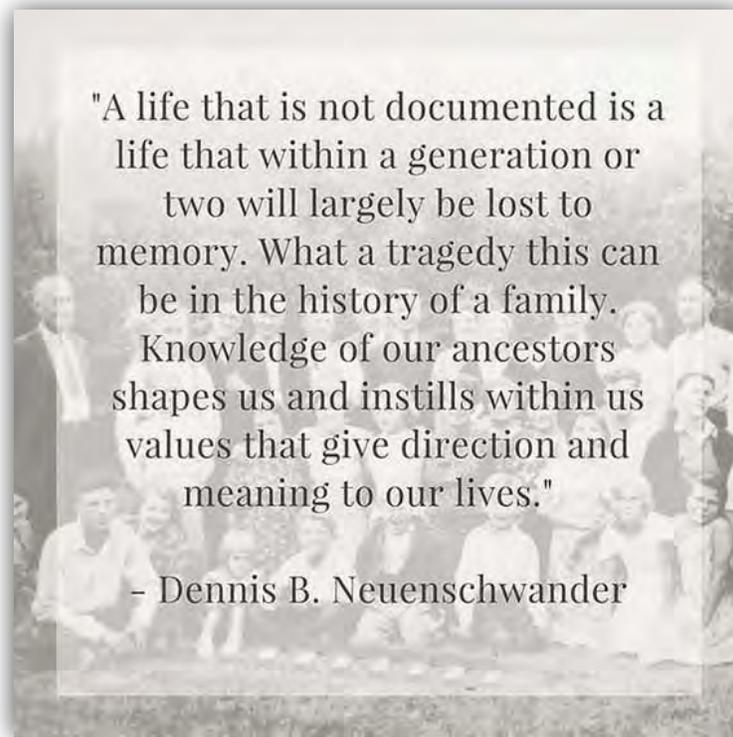
- History of a Home
- Cemetery Listing
- Research of an Ancestor or a Homestead
- Query Writing
- Transcribe Old Newspaper Articles
- Photo with a Written Explanation
- Explain a Process (success/failure) or “The Way Things Were”
- Highlight a Treasure

When we think about it, every person has a memory which they could bring to mind and record. The most critical part of this important activity is that it is a *written* record. Another very important part of this activity is sharing it with future researchers. These researchers may be

family members or others who may have family who lived in the same town or went to the same church as the person researched by the article's author. Writing the memory down and sharing it for others' research is so easy because everybody has a story which they usually love to relate, and there is a plethora of ways that that story can get into the hands of others!

Our stories, great or small, short or long, keep our family's history alive. When they are written stories, they can live for generations. Some of the types of articles above lend themselves to more memory than research. However, even in articles with just a memory shared, a notation of evidence may be a wonderful addition. Would a citation in the form of a footnote or endnote help others research the topic further? Of course, in a researched article, such as in a history of a home or biography of an ancestor, citations give credibility to the research and are extremely important in giving credit to the ideas of other authors.

Everybody has a story. *The Genie* would love to publish your story or research at no cost to you! Consider writing your story and sending it to our editor, Ms. Sylvia Powers, at [thegenie.editor@gmail.com](mailto:thegenie.editor@gmail.com). Your family, your friends, and your fellow genealogists want to know your story!



## HESSIANS AND OTHER GERMAN SOLDIERS IN AMERICA

*Contributed by Chris Stoll*

Growing up in California, as I'm sure it was in most of our families, family history was not a big topic of conversation, but I do remember hearing that we had an ancestor from Alsace-Lorraine who was a surgeon in the Hessian Army.

A very distant cousin, Clarence, whom I never met, contacted me in the 80s. He had had the same story passed down to him, which is especially interesting since Clarence's branch and my branch wouldn't have had any contact for well over a century.

Clarence wrote me that he had written thousands of letters and received hundreds back. Through his 20 years or so of research, we now know a lot about this very interesting ancestor.

When Clarence started his research in the mid sixties, our ancestor didn't even have a name; now I can find our ancestor all over the Broadmoor Library.

His name was Friedrich Tisius.

But first, let me review the Hessian story.

King George III of England was deeply in debt after the French and Indian Wars, and in order to put some money back in his treasury, he levied exorbitant taxes on the colonies. We all know that story. When the colonists rebelled, the king, who didn't want to expend his limited British troops, chose to hire German troops.

At that time, Frederick the Great, the King of Prussia, controlled the north from the East to the West. Austria was in the South East and the rest was made up of 300 sovereignties and 1400 estates of Imperial Knights. Each petty little prince had his own court and his own army.

Germany wasn't to unite until 1871, forming the German Empire, with Wilhelm I taking the title of German Emperor of Prussia.

King George III negotiated with six princes of larger principalities to supply him with men, which was not an uncommon practice at that time. King George had ties to Germany; Frederick II of Hesse-Kassel was his brother-in-law, and Friedrich's son William of Hesse-Hanau was his nephew.

Some in Parliament argued against it for many reasons: the morality of trading in men, the fact that there were already 150,000 Germans in America, and that hired troops were likely to desert.

The King prevailed, and the British Empire paid a terrible price for the German Auxiliaries. The employment of foreign mercenaries by the British government was largely instrumental in persuading the colonists to throw off their allegiance to the English Crown and to seek alliance with their former French enemies and make a Declaration of Independence

The men recruited from the six principalities, all over Germany and other countries in Europe, were all referred to as Hessians, as the largest group was from Hesse.

These German princes were disreputable. Life under them was hard, and a subject's life or death was in their hands. Some of the men were already soldiers, but many were just rounded up and sent. They were recruited by persuasion, cunning, deception, and force. Some may have looked forward to going, hoping for a better life, freedom from oppression, and the promise of free land, but many were torn away from their loved ones.

The first German troops were able to proceed directly to their port of departure, but in the fall of 1777, Friedrich the Great refused them passage through his territory, and many were held up for months. In 1778, they were allowed to pass through, but then they suffered the terrible sea voyages without proper food or drink in inhumane crowded conditions.

The princes were paid by the man, and if a man died, the princes were compensated, which meant later than some of the deserters were listed as dead. As an aside, many soldiers were offered 50 acres by the colonists to desert.

In all, close to 30,000 German soldiers were sent. Approximately 7,500 lost their lives, 1,200 in battle and over 6,000 to illness or accident. About 17,000 returned to Germany. 6,000 or so did not return home; 2,400 went to Canada and stayed under British rule; and 3,600 became new citizens of the United States.

Now to tell the story of Friedrich Tisius

Was he from Alsace-Lorraine?

It is altogether possible that earlier his family had come from the region.

There is a Tisius family in Germany with whom Clarence was in touch, who says the family was Huguenot and fled the region around 1685 to escape the religious persecution. Many went to Germany, Holland, Ireland, England, and America at that time.

This same family relates that the Tisius family was in the Royal Court of Emperor Friedrich I Barbarossa in the 1152 time frame and was known as von Tisius, but I don't think I can take that to the bank. The German family did send a photograph of a Tisius family crest found in St. Stephani's church in Aschersleben, Germany.

Was he a Hessian? Actually, no.

Fredrick was recruited in Hanover in August 1776, directly into the British Army as a private. King George III ruled the Electorate of Hanover. Frederick served in the Kings Own 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot. He was in New York Island in December 1776 and participated in four battles. We have copies of the muster rolls.

He deserted in June 1778 at the withdrawal of Philadelphia. There is a possibility he was captured, but there is no evidence of that presently. Prisoners were often "farmed out as workers to American employers." At any rate, there is no record of Fredrick for about 20 months.

He re-surfaced in the Continental troops as a private in Von Heer's Light Dragoons, enlisting in March 1780, in Reading, Pennsylvania. Bartholomew Von Heer was a Prussian veteran who recruited his corps from the Pennsylvania German communities of Berks and Lancaster County, PA.

The Light Dragoons was a very elite horse company set up by General Washington and approved by Congress. It was the beginning of the military police in the American military establishment. They may have served as Washington's body guards toward the end of the war.

The Johannes Schwalm Historical Association was very excited when they determined this information and wrote to Clarence that he should "check the DAR and the SAR as this was almost considered holy." (I did look in the DAR index and found him there.)

Now let me talk about Fredrick Tisius.

Between the sound of Tisius and the "s" we are all familiar with in the writings of that era, there were many versions of his name, as many as three in the same record. Clarence counted 37 in the writings he gathered. In Frederick's marriage record, it was written TICIUS. Frederick settled in Virginia along with several of the men from his regiment, and his name became DECIUS, and that is the name that came down to his descendants, (except Clarence's branch, who Clarence said for some reason, in 1914, his father changed their spelling to DECIUS.)

Fredrick's marriage in Shenandoah County, Virginia, in 1788, was to Magdalene Heistand. Her grandfather, Henry Heistand, a Mennonite from the Canton of Zurich, had come from Switzerland before 1739. Of this union eleven children were born with eight reaching maturity.

#### Was he a doctor?

There would be a possibility he attended medical school prior to his 1776 enlistment, but there is nothing to indicate in the military records that he was a doctor. We do know that in "A History of Shenandoah County Virginia," found at Broadmoor Library, he was a Hessian surgeon, and in 1975, the Luray, Virginia, Clerk of Court found Dr. Fredrick Decius in their records.

Frederick Tisius died in 1826, and there is evidence he was buried with family and neighbors in a Lutheran Church cemetery near Luray, Page County, Virginia.

I descended from his son, John, born in 1810, in Virginia. He went first to Lancaster, Fairfield County, about 1830, and then to Irbana, Champain County, Ohio, where he worked at his trade as a cabinet maker. He married Mary Stevens, and seven children were born. About 1854, he took his family to Jones County, Iowa, and his final westward journey was in 1863, when, in a wagon train consisting at times of 40 ox-drawn wagons, he and his family crossed the plains to Lassen County, California.

His daughter, my great-grandmother Jane, was on that train, and I will read you an excerpt of her crossing; she is my hero. She died in 1921 at age 80, so I never met her.

From the Lassen County Historical Society.  
Aunt Jane Christie by Claude C. Wemple

“When the John Decious family came to California in 1863, his daughter Jane traveled with them.

All the way across the plains, Jane, who was energetic and of a restless nature, was out ahead of the first wagon each morning, and she walked all day every day of the trip.”

Jane married James Christie, a New York native, who had come to California on a wagon train from Michigan. They had three children: John, Mamie and James.

Son James, married Grace Dill, and they had two children, son Fay Irvin and daughter Merle.

Merle had two children, James Dorman Downing and Jane.

Son Fay married (Ella) Gladys Eastman, and they had two children, daughter Nellygrace (or Chris) and son Carter Irwin.

I, the daughter, have five children: James Patrick Hennessy, Sherry, Christie Nancy and Allan Stoll Jr., 12 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Son Carter Christie had one son, James Carter Christie, who has two girls, Ann Elizabeth and Lauren Mary

\*\*\*Footnote...Here are some of the 37 spellings of TISIUS found in the records:

Tissius, Titus, Titius, Ticius, Tissus, Titins, Titius, Tecius, Tisus, Tedious,  
Decious, Decius, Dicius, Dissius, Decies, Dezius, Disius, DeCius, Devious



**California Wagon Train**

Records Selection Table  
*Contributed by Glenda Efferson Bernard*

<b>RECORDS SELECTION TABLE</b>		
<p>The table below can help you decide which records to search. It is most helpful for post-1800 research.</p> <p>In column 1 find the goal you selected.</p> <p>Then find in column 2 the types of records that are likely to have the information you need.</p> <p>Additional records that may also be useful are listed in column 3. The terms used in columns 2 and 3 are the</p>		<p>same as the subject headings used in this outline and in the locality section of the FHLC.</p> <p>Records containing previous research (genealogy, biography, history, periodicals, and societies) could provide information for nearly all of the goals. These have not been repeatedly listed unless they are especially helpful for the goal.</p>
1. If You Need	2. Look First In	3. Then Search
Age	Census, Vital Records, Cemeteries	Military Records, Taxation
Birth date	Vital Records, Church Records, Bible Records	Cemeteries, Obituaries, Census
Birthplace	Vital Records, Church Records, Census	Newspapers, Obituaries
City or parish of foreign birth	Church Records, Genealogy, Biography, Naturalization and Citizenship	Vital Records, Obituaries, History, Emigration and Immigration
Country of foreign birth	Emigration and Immigration, Census, Naturalization and Citizenship, Church Records	Military Records, Vital Records, Newspapers, Obituaries
County origins and boundaries	History, Maps	Gazetteers
Death	Vital Records, Cemeteries, Probate Records, Church Records, Obituaries	Newspapers, Bible Records, Military Records
Divorce	Court Records, Vital Records	Newspapers
Ethnicity	Minorities, Native Races, Societies	Church Records, Emigration and Immigration, Naturalization and Citizenship
Historical background	History, Periodicals	Minorities
Immigration date	Emigration and Immigration, Naturalization and Citizenship, Genealogy	Census, Newspapers, Biography
Living relatives (and adoptions)	Genealogy, Directories, Court Records, Obituaries	Census, Biography, Societies, Church Records, Probate Records
Maiden name	Vital Records, Church Records, Newspapers, Bible Records	Cemeteries, Military Records, Probate Records, Obituaries
Marriage	Vital Records, Church Records, Census, Newspapers, Bible Records	Cemeteries, Military Records, Probate Records, Naturalization and Citizenship, Land and Property
Occupation	Census, Directories, Emigration and Immigration	Newspapers, Court Records
Parents, children, and other family members	Vital Records, Church Records, Census, Probate Records, Obituaries	Bible Records, Newspapers, Emigration and Immigration
Physical description	Military Records, Biography	Naturalization and Citizenship, Vital Records, Emigration and Immigration, Genealogy
Place-finding aids	Gazetteers, Maps	History, Periodicals
Place (town) of residence when you know only the state	Census (indexed), Genealogy, Military Records, Vital Records, and other records with a statewide index	Biography, Probate Records, History
Places family has lived	Census, Land and Property, History	Military Records, Taxation, Obituaries
Previous research (compiled genealogy)	Genealogy, Periodicals, Societies,	History, Biography
Record-finding aids	Archives and Libraries, Societies	Periodicals
Religion	Church Records, History, Biography	Bible Records, Cemeteries, Genealogy
Social activities	History, Biography, Newspapers, Societies	Town Records, Court Records, Cemeteries, Directories, Obituaries

*Ruth Remembers*  
The Bicycle Race  
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LINEAGE

Page 2

**RUTH REMEMBERS****THE BICYCLE RACE**

©2016 by Ruth Roberts Frank Berlin

Marilyn and I received bicycles the summer before my tenth birthday. Mine was a regular 27-inch bike. Marilyn's was smaller, a 23-inch bike, because she was so little. We were so pleased to each have a blue-and-white, Western Flyer, bicycle from the Western Auto Store on Texas Avenue in Shreveport, Louisiana, that we took very special care of them.

We were instructed to walk our bikes across Highway 80 at the point where cars coming from the east and from the west could be easily seen. To this day, I have never ridden a bike across Highway 80, so ingrained was that rule. At night we parked the bikes on the south porch of the house so that they were out of the weather. To get them on the porch was a struggle because there were three steps from the ground to the porch. To this day, I do not know why no one thought to have us put the bikes in the vacant side of the garage. Or maybe they did, but felt the bikes were better off on the porch.

During the day, we had fun riding our bikes all over town. We rode around on the school yard, where there are side walks. We rode our bike on the sidewalk in front of Mrs. Lila Alexander's and the Simmon's homes. We rode them on the sidewalk in front of the stores in town. We even rode them down the store's sidewalk and then off the end where there was a step to the street. It was really a rough ride down that step; but Mary Lou particularly enjoyed doing it because her bicycle was equipped with "shock absorbers." We were all awed by that addition to a bicycle.

Across the street in front of the school and behind the Odd Fellows Building was a great drop off in the hill. It probably had been caused by excavating and leveling land. But that deep drop-off had a well-worn path down it caused by high school students, who traversed it on their way to and from the New Greenwood Café at the bottom of the hill. We rode that drop-off on our bikes!

On Saturdays, we kids enjoyed riding our bikes over to the Tussey's or by the cemetery to the creek, where we fished for crawdads. Sometime we packed a picnic, rode our bikes three miles out to my grandfather's farm, and had our lunch there under the big, tall pine trees. The families who lived on the farm provided us gourds for drinking the cool water we drew up in a bucket from the well. We thought that was great!

Any time we biked for more than a few blocks, Jimmy and Ed took turns pumping Marilyn on their bike; and the

other one rode Marilyn's bike. That way, Marilyn kept up with the group.

The thing most memorable about bike riding in Greenwood was the racing that took place on the bikes. Mary Lou, Betty Lou, Marilyn, and I were the only girls our ages in town. So most of the racing was done by the boys: Jimmy, Ed, Glenn, Jr., Jack, Harold, and Jimmy, Jr. There were often races between the boys beginning on the hill at our house down to the east corner of the town square—about two city blocks long.

They began at the end of our driveway and traveled past Mr. Goldsby's cow pasture, where he kept cows that he milked daily and where he departed the pasture on his way home. The race path continued past the Thweet's home, Jimmy's home, the Goldsby's home, Donahadee, the Old Soldier's Home across from the town square, and ended at the street intersection in front of the May's cow pasture. I t was a dazzling ride!



Riding Marilyn's bike in a race was fun to watch because the boys, being eleven and twelve years old, could not sit on the seat and pedal the bike. They had to ride in a somewhat standing-up position. Their hands had to be on the handle bars and their feet on the pedals so their bottoms were in the air and their faces staring at the ground under the bike. It was because of this unorthodox bike-riding position that none of us will ever forget a certain race.

One day a big, big race was scheduled. All of us gathered to witness this race between Jimmy and Ed. Jimmy was to ride Marilyn's bike. Ed was to ride his own bike. The two contestants were lined up and the crowd had gathered around. The signal was given and the racers headed down the hill at a rapid rate.

About this same instant, Mr. Goldsby, carrying a milk bucket full of fresh milk, unlatched the gate on his cow pasture and stepped on to the street to walk home. Unable to see Mr. Goldsby because his face was parallel with the street, BLAM, Jimmy plowed into the back side of Mr. Goldsby! Mr. Goldsby, bike, Jimmy, bucket, and milk went up into the air and came down in pools of warm milk all over the street.

We were horrified to witness such a disaster. However, we quickly recovered our wits and went rushing to provide assistance to Mr. Goldsby, Jimmy, and the bike. The bucket was empty! Thankfully, no one appeared hurt; and I do not remember Mr. Goldsby being angry.

We learned that day to watch where we were going and that you can't retrieve spilled milk!

Growing up in Greenwood, Louisiana, was great fun!

## Finding the Fretter Family Bible

Contributed by Elaine Johnson

Last summer The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association was involved in sorting through boxes of genealogy information that had been donated to the Broadmoor Library to be placed in the vertical files. I would like to share my story about why I thought this was such a great project.

My first introduction to genealogy was in 1985. My grandmother, Florence Fretter Moreland Mecum, and her cousin, Wilma Johnson Kidd, were the ones that got me interested. Wilma's mother, Jennie May Fretter, and my grandmother's father, Emanuel James Fretter, were siblings. When my grandmother became interested in genealogy, she contacted Wilma, who had done a lot of Fretter research. Wilma willingly shared her information with my grandmother. The source cited for much of her research was the *Family Bible*. Over the years, I have tried a couple of times to find out if this Bible still existed.

The Fretter family was from Wood County, Ohio. Wilma died in 1989, and she is buried in Wood County. I never thought to ask about the Bible while she was still alive. Several years after Wilma died, I contacted Wilma's son, Charles, to see if he knew where the Bible was, but I never received a response.

On April 19, 2014, I posted a flower to Wilma's memorial on [Find a Grave](#). I added the following comment:

"Wilma Kidd was a cousin to my grandmother, Florence Fretter (Moreland) (Mecum). When my grandmother became interested in genealogy, she contacted Wilma. I have copies of Wilma's original genealogy notes which reference a family Bible. I would love to know if there is anyone out there that knows where the Bible is."

On October 5, 2014, I was contacted by Pam Gibson, who was related to Wilma's father's side of the family. She told me that she thought Wilma's research was either at the [Wood County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society](#) OR the [Center for Archival Collections at Bowling Green State University](#).

I contacted the Center for Archival Collections at Bowling Green first. They said they did not have the research. Then I contacted the Wood County Chapter of OGS. They were more extensive in their research and found that the CAC did have them. This is what I was told on October 16, 2014:

Elaine,

Please bear with me, Lolita Guthrie, for some background info re: Wilma Kidd's collection. I've used our *Source Book 1, Newsletters 1981-1990*, to back up my memory. Wilma was one of our founding members in 1987 and was well respected for my family research. When she died in 1989, we published an abbreviated obit. and a tribute in our Sept-Oct issue. An Addendum January 2000 appears. "The children of Wilma Kidd donated her entire genealogical collection to the Chapter in September 1999. It is currently being processed so that some public access may become reality."

I remember so well her daughter-in-law phoning us and asking if she could bring Wilma's boxes of photo-albums and such to our office. Eager to see that these records be inventoried and kept, Ann Bowers, then Director of the BGSU Center for Archival Collections, moved

them to their facilities. I honestly **assumed** they had been fully inventoried and added to their "Family Collections."

In October, 2014, Steve Charter, now Director, was surprised to learn that the Collection was in their possession, BUT no inventorying had been completed.

Steve phoned this response to us on October 9, 2014: "He had Wilma Kidd's Collection. He is putting a grad student on inventorying it and will let us know when it is available to be researched. There was no Family Bible in the Collection."

Thank you for pursuing this research for KIDD and FRETTER. We'll let you know just as soon as it is available.

Sincerely,  
Lolita Guthrie, Mbr #15 volunteer.

In September, 2015, ([after CAC completed the inventory](#)), my husband and I went to Bowling Green, Ohio, to look at the information. We spent two days going through 15 boxes of information. Although I found over 280 pages of information that I did not have (including some great pictures), there was no copy of the Bible information. But we found an absolute treasure trove of other information!!

With this experience in mind when we were working on sorting the boxes for Broadmoor Library, I imagined other excited descendants finding information they did not have.

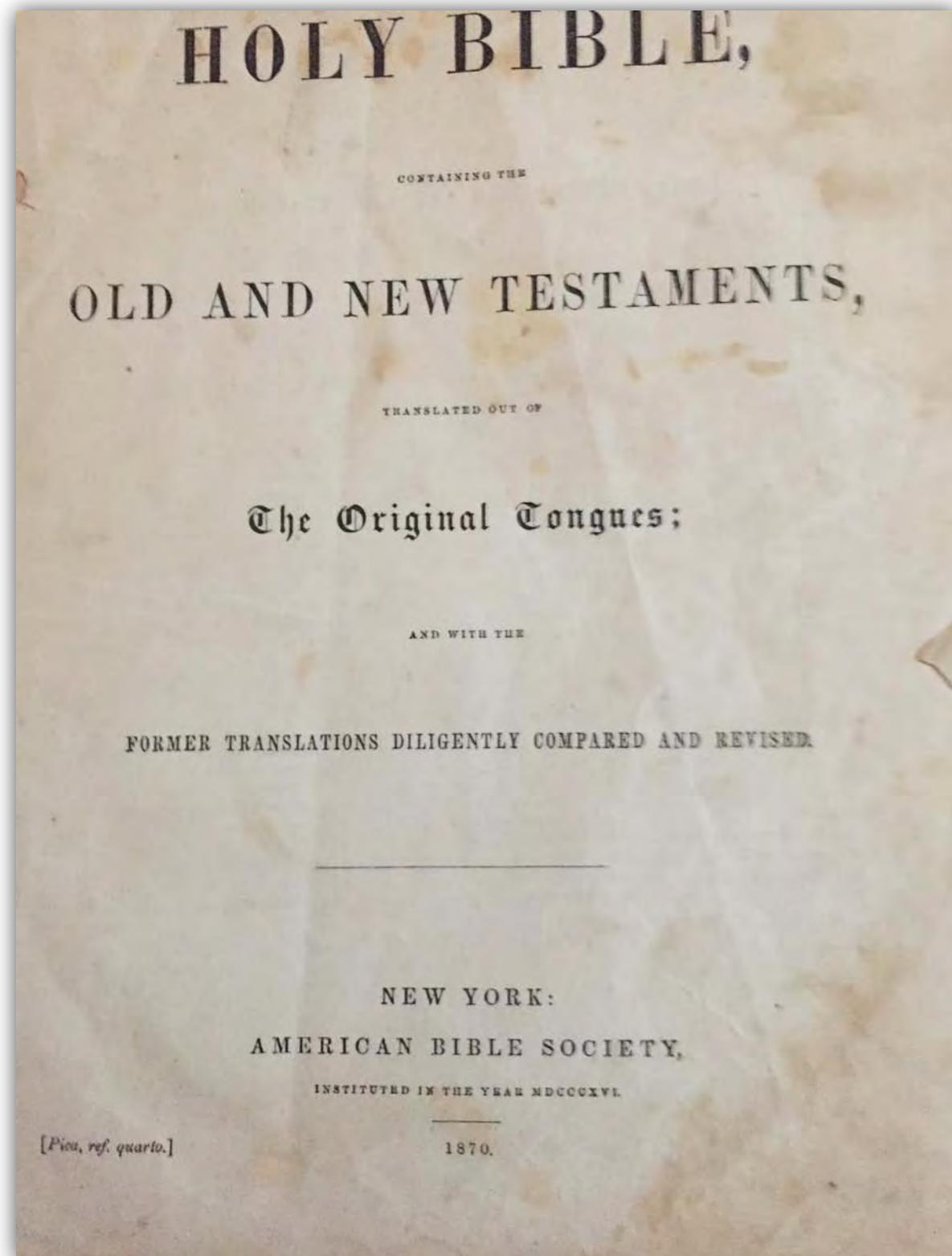
But there is more to the story. On August 26, 2016, I was contacted by Cody Scherff, the youngest grandchild of Wilma Kidd. He had also seen the comment I posted on *Find a Grave*. He told me that the Bible was in the possession of his mother. As it turned out, she had the JOHNSON family Bible, which was Wilma's maiden name. Her father was Franklin Johnson; her mother was Jennie May Fretter. Even though she did not have the Fretter Bible, Cody's mother became interested and started asking around. She found that the Bible had been given to her brother, Charles, who had passed it on to a distant cousin. Cody's mother contacted the cousin, and she agreed to give the Bible to Cody. On September 26, 2016, he sent me copies of the Bible pages. You can only imagine my excitement.

Cody said, "Most of the information is on 3 pages (front & back). If I had to guess it is approx. 10" x 12" and 3" thick and the binding is almost nonexistent. As for Doris, I just met her briefly, and all I know is she is my mother's cousin through my great gma Johnson (born Fretter). The obituary of Tabitha is cut out and inserted inside (actually there are several copies of it) along with other clippings that I have yet to look at."

Cody is just getting started in genealogy research, and he had no idea this Bible existed. He did know that his grandmother, Wilma, had worked on genealogy, but he had never seen her work. I was able to tell him that all her work was at the Center for Archival Collections at Bowling Green State University. As it turned out, he had just moved back to Bowling Green, so he was excited about looking at that information.

I find it so ironic that in 1985, my grandmother, Florence, contacted her cousin, Wilma, to get information. Thirty years later the grandson of Wilma contacted the granddaughter of Florence to get information. I think that is a pretty interesting circle.

Following is a transcription of the Bible information. This is the Bible of Thomas Oliver Fretter and Tabitha Eleanor Armstrong Fretter (my maternal gg grandparents), from Wood County, Ohio. The **bold** information indicates my direct ancestors. My notes are in *italics*.



HOLY BIBLE  
 Containing the  
 OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS  
 Translated out of  
 The Original Tongues;  
 And with  
 FORMER TRANSLATIONS DILIGENTLY COMPARED AND REVISED.  
 New York  
 American Bible Society  
 Instituted in the Year MDCCCIVL  
 [*Pica, ref. Quarto.*] 1870

\*\*\*\*\*

Dec. 26, 1870

Presented to  
**Thomas Oliver Fretter**  
 By his mother and father  
**Henry and Mary Fretter**  
 My Son Except for the  
 Givers sake and read  
 For Thine Own.

\*\*\*\*\*

**BIRTHS**

Northhamptonshire

**Henry Fretter Born November 11<sup>th</sup> 1799 Naseby, Old England**  
 Thomas Fretter born August 8<sup>th</sup> 1802 Naseby Old England  
**Mary Askill Born February 10<sup>th</sup> 1804 Brinklow, Warwickshire, Old England**

\*\*\*\*\*

*Children of Henry Fretter and Mary Askill*

Jane C. Fretter Born December 26, 1829  
 John James Fretter Born January 11<sup>th</sup> 1832  
 Anne Fretter Born January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1834  
 Mary R. Fretter born May 29<sup>th</sup> 1836  
 Ann M. Fretter Born June 15<sup>th</sup> 1837  
**Thomas Oliver Fretter Born March 30<sup>th</sup> 1841**  
 Henry Wm Fretter Born April 19<sup>th</sup> 1843  
 Joseph A. Fretter Born Oct 10<sup>th</sup> 1844  
 Judson Fretter Born June 18<sup>th</sup> 1847

*Children of Thomas Oliver Fretter and Tabitha Eleanor Armstrong*Loretta Francis Fretter Born Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 1865Genette A. Fretter Born Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> 1866 (22<sup>nd</sup> marked through and written as 21)Elmer Elonzo Fretter Born May 20<sup>th</sup> 1868**Emanuel Fretter (Jim) Born January 30 1872**

Bertha Fretter Born April 14 1874

Benjamin F. Fretter born August 27<sup>th</sup> 1877

Jennie May Fretter born Mar 28, 1881

*Children of Elmer Alonzo Fretter*

Lester J. Fretter born July 17, Sat 1897

Frank Earl Fretter born Tues May 5, 1891

*Children of Genette A. Fretter*

Edward O. Hutchinson Born Dec 22, 1888

Albert E. Hutchinson Born June 21, 1890

Agnes E. Hutchinson born Jan 7, 1892

Bertha L. Hutchinson Born Aug 21, 1893

Mildred E. Hutchinson Born Dec 15, 1894

Walter John Hutchinson born Jan 31, 1897

Elma Hutchinson born Aug 22 1899

Florence Hutchinson born Feb 11, 1901

John Wm born May 17, 1909

James Edward Foster born Nov 17, 1917, died Feb 24, 1928 (Bertha's boy age 10 years)

**MARRIAGES****Married October 15<sup>th</sup> 1828 Henry Fretter to Mary Askill**Married March 14<sup>th</sup> 1850 Josiah Walker to Jane FretterMarried July 4<sup>th</sup> 1856 John James Fretter to Hellen TunbelMarried December 25<sup>th</sup> 1857 George M. Shaw to Ann M. Fretter**Married February 7<sup>th</sup> 1865 Thomas Oliver Fretter to Tabitha E. Armstrong**Married June 11<sup>th</sup> 1867 Henry Wm Fretter to Phebe M. RandalJoseph A. Fretter Married January 1<sup>st</sup> 1868 to Hannah Gleace**MARRIAGES**

Married June 22, 1887 Jeanette Fretter to William Hutchinson

Married Oct 25, 1890 Elmer Fretter to Sadie Randell

**Emanuel J. Fretter married to Amanda Roush June 12, 1898**

Jennie M. Fretter married Wed Aug 7, 1901 to Frank C. Johnson

Frank Fretter married March 23 1902 to Elma Walden

Lola F. Fretter Married June 1<sup>st</sup> 1910 to Wilson D. Kramer

## Jennies Children Married:

Marian Elaine Johnson to Forest Myers Feb 13, 1932 Sat.  
 Aubrey Franklin Johnson to Margaret Johann Sat July 29, 1933  
 Arnold Chalmer Johnson to Vernice Mosseny Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 1935  
 Emerson Cecil Johnson to Neva Frost Sept 14, 1947  
 Wilma May Johnson to Charles Kidd Sept 28, 1946  
 Marian Johnson Myers divorced in 1947 and remarried Merl Askins April 26, 1947.

\*\*\*\*\*

## DEATHS

Ann Fretter died June 30<sup>th</sup> 1836, aged 2 years and 5 months  
 Mary B. Fretter died May 27<sup>th</sup> 1836  
 Judson Fretter died June 13<sup>th</sup> 1847  
**Thomas O. Fretter died Oct. 20, 1918, Sun. 1 a.m. Age 77 yr, 6 mo. 19 day--Our Father**  
 Walter John Hutchinson died May 5<sup>th</sup> 1908  
 Loretta Ellanor Johnson died Mon. a.m. 1 o'clock Sept. 21, 1908 Jennie's girl  
 Virgil Oliver Fretter died at Camp Rumford, R. I. of Spanish influenza Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> 1918, age 18 yr 4 mo. 10 day – Emanuel Fretters boy  
 Nettie Fretter Hutchinson died Tue July 8<sup>th</sup> 1924, 57 yr, 9 mo 17 dy.  
 Wm Hutchinson died Dec 13<sup>th</sup> 1920 age 61. Born April 21, 1859  
**Our Uncle Jim - Emanuel Fretter died Fri. 12 min of 7 a.m. Oct 18, 1929 age 57 yr 8 mo.**  
 Floyd Fretter died Fri 4 pm Aug 9<sup>th</sup> 1929 Emanuel Fretter's boy 23 yr 6 mo 19 da,  
 Elmer's boy Lester J. Fretter died Mon Mch 31 a.m. 1941. Buried Wed. 2 p.m. April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1941 in Bradner Cemetery  
 Lola Francis Fretter Kramer died Mon 1 am Dec 11, 1939  
 Edward Oliver Hutchinson died Tue April 8 1941 in eve buried Fri April 11 in Cincinnatti pm.  
 Albert Ellison Hutchinson died Thur April 8 1943  
 Agnes Ellen Hutchinson 1949  
 Bertha Fretter died September 19, 1874 5 months and 4 days  
 Virgil Elwin Fretter died Sat Feb 25 1899 Bro  
 Aunt Covey Francis (Armstrong) Clifford died July 18 1934

\*\*\*\*\*

When I am done with the Bible of my mother and father I want my son Arnold to have it. Written on the eve of Lester Fretter's burial April 2d 1941.

This was given to my father and mother when they were married by his father and mother.

Signed Jennie M. Johnson

*Note by EJJ: The last statement was probably an assumption by Jennie Fretter Johnson. Her parents were married Feb. 7, 1865 and the Bible is dated 1870 (with an inscription date of Dec. 26, 1870). So it was probably given to them for Christmas after they were married. Jennie's oldest son Arnold predeceased his mother, so it appears the Bible went to her daughter Wilma (Johnson) Kidd.*

*I think it is so important that genealogy researchers make plans for their genealogy information to be shared. I am so grateful that Wilma's information was finally found after all these years.*

## The Confederate Uniform and It's Implements

An article written and shared by member, Ms. Isabelle Woods, of presentations at the Family History Club, Bastrop, LA.

## LINEAGE

*Family History Club*

Volume 2, Issue 4

April 2014

## LINEAGE

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Captain Thomas E. Taylor

### The Confederate Uniform and its Implements

Re-enactor, Captain Thomas E. Taylor, 13th Louisiana Volunteer Infantry, and Northeast Brigade Commander of Sons of Confederate Veterans, Thomas O. Benton Camp No. 1444, Monroe, Louisiana, was the keynote speaker at the Family History Club, at Bastrop, Louisiana, on April 18,

2014.

The 13th Infantry Regiment completed its organization in August, 1861, at Camp Moore, Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana, composed of men from the Parishes of Lafayette, St. Mary and Tangipahoa. The unit engaged in combat at Shiloh, Chickamauga, and Mobile, among other conflicts

In 1865, the unit surrendered with the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana.<sup>1</sup>

The Thomas O. Benton Camp No. 1444 is named for Captain Thomas Owen Benton (b 1830, Suffolk City, VA; d 1907, Monroe, LA) of the 3rd Louisiana Field Battery (Bell Battery), who is buried at the Tennille Cemetery, Monroe, Louisiana.<sup>2</sup> Today, the Thomas O. Benton Camp No. 1444 owns and maintains the Tennille Cemetery, the former Old Strauss Cemetery.

Among other factors, Captain Taylor said a Confederate soldier ranged in age from 16 years to 40 years old. To avoid military service, a male could pay someone

three hundred dollars to serve in his place in this conflict. Captain Taylor remarked that from a population of eight million in the South, only five million males were eligible for enlistment in this war. Eventually, an estimated 65,000 civilians and 320,000 military soldiers died in the War for Southern Independence.

Added to this loss, are the deaths of Confederate soldiers in northern prisons who died in a greater number than Union soldiers who died in southern prisons.

Captain Thomas married at the stamina of Confederate soldiers to withstand both combat and the brutal weather as they fought in the War for Southern Independence. As a re-enactor engaged in "The Hobby," Captain Taylor personally has experienced the impact of the weather upon a Confederate soldier during combat and while at camp.

He added the hobby of a re-enactor is expensive. The cost to completely outfit a re-enactor in a Confederate uniform is approximately one thousand dollars.

Captain Thomas' uniform consisted of a single-breasted jacket and trousers of wool in sky blue called "Richmond Gray," and two belts crossing his chest. Another belt with a buckle with "CS" on it along his waist held accoutrements like a belt, cap pouch, a bayonet in a holder and a cartridge box. He wore shoes called brogans affixed with horse-shoe-shaped, metal, caps on the heels to extend wear. At the onset of the conflict, he said, some soldiers wore civilian clothing on the field of battle. When later issued a uniform, a soldier also re-equipped himself from articles found on deceased Union and Confederate soldiers.

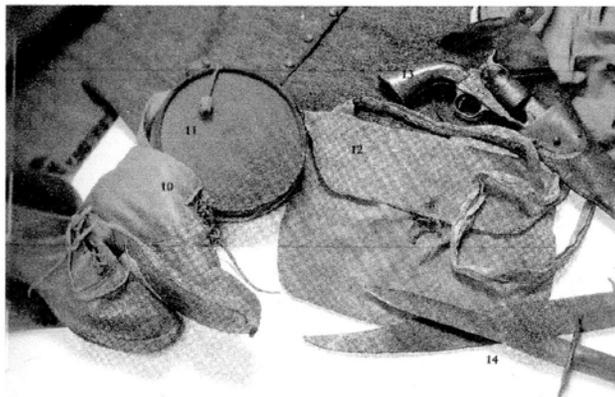
He displayed a soldier's uniform, his weaponry, and accoutrements. He began by selecting a dark blue cap or "kepi" of a soldier.



A kepi<sup>3</sup>

These caps also came in gray, butternut or dark cadet gray. The trim on a cap denoted the various divisions: infantry (blue), cavalry (yellow), medical officer (green), and artillery (red).

Coats for soldiers came in three lengths: shell (to waist), sack (to thigh) and frock (to knee). The collar of his coat was one of several areas where a soldier's rank was shown. A General wore three



Above: Confederate Infantry Equipment: 10. Brogans, 11. Wooden canteen, 12. Haversack, 13. Model 1860 Colt Army Revolver and Holster, and 14. Side Knives

stars encircled by a wreath with the middle star larger than the outer two stars. The collar of a Colonel had three stars, no wreath; a Lt. Colonel had two stars, and a Major had one star. Other officers like a Captain, a 1st Lieutenant, a 2nd Lieutenant—each wore gold bars of three, two, and one gold bar, respectively.

Captain Taylor then demonstrated a Confederate soldier's weaponry consisting of a large knife, a .36 caliber pistol, a .58 caliber rifle, a bayonet, and a sword. He said a Cavalry soldier usually possessed six or eight pistols because he could not reload while riding on horseback.

With an 1861 Springfield Rifle in his hands, Captain Taylor showed how a Confederate soldier quickly loaded a rifle with a metal rod on the rifle's barrel to help insert a 500 gram mini-ball to hit a target about 350 yards away. This metal rod was very essential. A soldier is unable to load ammunition

into this rifle's barrel without it. The rifle's bayonet, he added, was triangularly shaped to do more damage when inserted into an adversary's body.

He explained that a sword's main use was not to cut or to stab a person. Doing so would make the sword difficult to remove from an adversary's body. Thus, a soldier would be vulnerable to injury or even death. A sword served (1) to slash someone on the shoulder or elsewhere on the body; (2) to signal action by a troop, and (3) to lead men into battle.

He visually showed us that a sword held in an upward, a mid, then a downward direction consecutively signaled soldiers to get ready, to aim, and to fire their weapons. An officer with cap or hat on the point of his sword rallied his troop into battle.

Captain Taylor mentioned that a canteen held between a quarter to one-half a liter of water. He related how a lack of canteens played a major

role in the Confederate Army's loss at the Battle of Gettysburg.

Captain Taylor then discussed accoutrements usually attached to a soldier's belt: a box for his cap (cap box), cartridge box, and haversack.

The haversack was a bag with a sling which held anything a soldier did not want to lose. These items may be held therein: eating tools (tin cup, plates, utensils), foodstuffs, miscellaneous items (bible, a sewing kit), precious letters and photographs from home.

He said the tin cup was used not only to drink liquids but also to cook a soldier's meal, such as cornmeal and bacon drippings.

Thanks to Captain Taylor's detailed presentation, we saw a close-up view of the Confederate soldier, his uniform and its implements.

Notes: <sup>1</sup> "Historical Notes," regarding the Louisiana 13th Infantry Regiment found at [www.researchonline.net/lacw/unit28.htm](http://www.researchonline.net/lacw/unit28.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Data of Captain Thomas O. Benton from headstone at Tennille Cemetery found at [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com).

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, Russell E., *Warman's Civil War Collectibles, Identification and Price Guide*, 3rd Edition, ©2009, Krause Publications, Inc., Iola, Wisconsin., photo of "kepi" is on book's back cover.

<sup>4</sup> Photo and captioned items of "Confederate Infantry Equipment" from *The Civil War Catalog*, edited by Anthony Shaw, Published by Courage Books, an imprint of Running Press Book Publishers, Philadelphia, PA, ©2003 by Salamander Books, Ltd., London, England, Page 137.

## Granny and the Eggs

I loved my grandmother. She was a no-nonsense type of person who did not tolerate wasteful habits. She lived through the depression; she understood hard times. I can still hear my grandmother gently telling me, "Eat your breakfast, Eileen." Eileen is my middle name, and she used it as an endearment at times. She had prepared scrambled eggs for me one morning, as she did many mornings when we were at her house. That morning, I refused to eat the eggs. I don't remember what I wanted instead of the eggs. I was probably only trying to challenge my Granny, which was not a good idea. Granny calmly, without any argument, put the plate of eggs on the stove. I ignored her frugal gesture.

Granny was small in stature, about five feet four inches, but she was a giant in will power. When she said I needed to do something, she meant it without question. She made her point quietly and clearly, and she then went on about her business knowing she would not be backing down on her declaration. So, when she told me to eat those eggs there was no question that they would be eaten. I had to decide when.

Several hours later into the morning, I heard the chimes of the ice cream truck. I eagerly ran to Granny begging for ice cream. She knew I wanted an ice cream cone. In her decidedly calm voice, she told me no! I was crushed. She pointed out that I had not eaten my breakfast. I ran to the stove and inhaled those cold scrambled eggs. Cold scrambled eggs are not fun to eat. Yuk!

She bought me an ice cream cone. After that experience, I always ate my breakfast when she placed it before me. I learned scrambled eggs are better eaten warm, ice cream is a wonderful treat, and when my Granny told me to eat the eggs, she meant business. It wasn't a suggestion.

Sonja Dowling Webb



*Nellie Robbins Dowling and  
Granddaughter Sonja Dowling 1950*

 *Family Genealogy*  
*A Passage In Time*



## *A Tribute to Friends of Genealogy, Inc.*



By Janine Johnson Dunlap

Friends of Genealogy, Inc. was formed in 1988 by a group of dedicated genealogists and is ceasing operations in 2017. During the course of our almost 30 years in operation, our members and friends have generously provided genealogical materials in *The Journal*, our quarterly publication. We have microfilmed several area collections, published several books, and held programs and seminars to educate genealogists about research techniques and available resources. We have held books fairs, donating quite a few books and materials to the Genealogy Department at Shreve Memorial Library. We have digitized the obituary collection at Shreveport Memorial Library, making this information available in searchable files on CD.

At the request of our late president, Brenda Custer Randall, we have recently donated the full collection of the Mobile (Alabama) Genealogical Society's publications, which includes historical information in the Mobile area from the early 1800s through the early 1900s. This collection has been donated in memory of all our officers, members, and volunteers who have contributed so much of their time and efforts over the years.

Our quarterly publication, *The Journal*, was published 1989-2007 and contains previously unpublished genealogical materials, including Bible records, cemetery transcriptions, church records and histories, family articles, vital records, research articles and information, and articles of general interest. Full sets of *The Journal* have been placed in the Genealogy Collection at Shreve Memorial Library, as well as other genealogy libraries. They are also available online to Shreve Memorial Library patrons. Also, the complete set along with a topical index is available on our website: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~lafog/journal.htm>

We have published several books, including cemetery transcriptions and family group sheets. These are available on our website, as well as in the Shreve Memorial Library, Genealogy Collection in print and on CD, and can also be found in other library collections.

Over the years, our members have filmed various area collections and placed copies of the films in the Shreve Memorial Library, Genealogy Collection. These films are also located in other library collections, including the Allen County Library, the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and other genealogy libraries. These collections include family records and histories, Osborn Funeral Home burial records, various church records, oil & gas lease affidavits with family histories, DeSoto Parish Court House records, and other records of interest to family researchers. Information about our microfilm can be found on our website.

Our many members and friends in our area genealogical organizations have provided excellent support to our organization over the years. We thank you all.

*The only Rose without a thorn is Friendship*

## Preserving the Past: The Vision of the Columbia County Library Genealogy Department

*Contributed by Rhonda Rolan, Director*

### COLUMBIA COUNTY LIBRARY GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT

2057 North Jackson

Magnolia, Arkansas 71753

[www.cocolib.org](http://www.cocolib.org)

870-234-1991



### Library History

Columbia County Library is located in the southwest corner of Arkansas in the county seat of Magnolia. Part of its mission statement affirms that the library will preserve and maintain items that enhance unique areas of expertise in local history for genealogists and other researchers in a distinct collection known as the Bob and Nina Grayson Warnock Genealogy Department.

Long before the wonders of the Internet and electronic resources existed, the foundation of this library was established in 1929 by a group of people from the Sorosis Club of Magnolia. Mrs. J.B. Brown, chair of the committee, made a study of city libraries and was responsible for opening the library. The first library was located in the municipal building of Magnolia, which became City Hall. Miss Olga Couch was the librarian when the Magnolia City Library opened its doors for the first time. After thirteen years, the city library closed its doors and reopened as the Columbia County Library upstairs in the county courthouse. Miss Ruth Cross was the librarian for a short time, and in November of 1942, Mrs. Jessie Hines became the librarian.



Regional Library First Bookmobile

After Florene Jordan became the librarian, she facilitated forming a library regional group in 1951 that had the purpose of bringing library services to neighboring counties. The first county to join was Lafayette County, which formed the Columbia-Lafayette Regional Library. In 1952, libraries opened in Bradley, Lewisville, and Stamps. Taylor was opened in 1958 with Emerson following the next year. Calhoun County joined in 1962 and then Ouachita County in 1965. This created the Columbia-Lafayette-Ouachita-Calhoun (CLOC) Regional Library which existed until 2001, when loss of state aid made it necessary to dissolve the region. The CLOC Regional Library became the Columbia County Library once again with one branch in Taylor.



Library Entrance



Children's Area

In 1959, the library board began a campaign to purchase the former U.S. Post Office building when it was replaced with a new building; this became a reality in 1967. Matching funds were raised to remodel the building and convert it to a more modern facility. The building, named the Asa C. Garrett Memorial Library, had its dedication and open house in April of 1969. The Warnock family gave a donation to add the Bob and Nina Grayson Warnock addition to the library, and it was dedicated in 1989. This gave the library its children's section and meeting place for organizations, but more importantly, it included room upstairs for a genealogy section and Arkansas Room. The members of the Southwest Arkansas Genealogy Society (SoWeAr) were mainly responsible for helping to develop an extensive collection for the library's genealogy department over the years.

The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) began to operate in the library's basement in November 1972 and served a sixteen-county area. Because of cuts in state aid, it became necessary to close the facility in Magnolia in 2010, but the Arkansas State Library in Little Rock assumed the work. Although disappointing, this loss led to having space for genealogy expansion.

The library received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 1999 to purchase computers for public use. This generous gift ushered in the age of technology for the library and brought opportunities to meet patron needs using new tools, such as online databases and an electronic catalog.

In 2007, Columbia County Library purchased property at 2057 North Jackson Street near Southern Arkansas University and eventually opened the building to the public April 20, 2009. This process converted a 25,000 square-foot building into a multi-faceted facility that will serve the citizens of Columbia County for many years to come.

### Genealogy Department



The Bob and Nina Grayson Warnock Genealogy Room at the Jackson Street library started out being located upstairs in a corner of the library near the periodical area. Here in one small room was the microfilm collection, the print book, print periodicals, and the local genealogy collection. The periodicals and the books were shelved together, but the local collection was separated and collocated on one shelf. There was one computer and printer on a small desk near the microfilm reader, which

was an older model that didn't have replacement parts anymore.

When director Rhonda Rolan began working at the library in 2013, she noticed the need for more space to do research and that the collection needed more organization. Library staff helped her separate the periodicals from the monographs, organize the yearbooks, and arrange the local collection in order by county using the Dewey Decimal system.

Later on, the director decided that the rooms left empty when the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) was dissolved would be perfect for genealogy. Then one day, she saw a message on a state listserv offering free shelving from Oppenheimer Library at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. (The state listserv is called ARKLIB-L; it is for members

of the Arkansas library community who want to get input from others or make announcements via email. It is moderated by a person, but many things, such as joining or unsubscribing, are managed by a computer program.) Rhonda accepted the offer and then told the Assistant Director, Dana Thornton, that they needed to rent a U-Haul. This was the first step in the Genealogy Room's becoming an actual department.

Fortunately, Dana and the previous director, Laura Cleveland, had the foresight to create a position for genealogy cataloging; therefore, the books in the department there were already being entered into the computer when the idea of moving the genealogy department came to be. The person doing the cataloging at the time asked to move upstairs to the original genealogy room to catalog materials there instead of working in the back of the library in processing. This became the basis for having a genealogy clerk in the area to both catalog and help people with research. Those patrons who come to the library from out of town tell the library staff that having someone in the department makes a huge difference in finding what they need—an actual person who knows the resources and has them organized so they are easier to use.



The rooms vacated by the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) were perfect for a new Genealogy Department and the shelving from Oppenheimer Library was plentiful for the project. The former LBPH processing room was large enough to hold the print book collection, periodicals, and the local collection. The office of the LPBH director had an ideal location that would allow the genealogy clerk to both catalog and oversee the collection.

Many items in genealogy cannot be replaced because they are not being published anymore, so if someone were to remove them from the room, it would be a detriment to researchers. This was an important consideration due to the genealogy position's being unique to the library. Those doing processing and cataloging for the other parts of the collection work in the back part of the library since cataloging requires concentration and freedom from distractions. The genealogy clerk presently has a dual role, both cataloging and helping the public.

Next to the office, there is another smaller room that became known as the SoWeAr Research Room in order to honor the group responsible for helping to create the library's extensive research collection. This room houses the microfilm collection, the microfilm reader, a computer dedicated to Ancestry.com and other genealogy databases, Arkansas periodicals, and Arkansas reference for history research. There is space for serious researchers whose

proliferative work might require more than the small desk previously used in the genealogy room.

The Genealogy Department had its ribbon-cutting and grand opening ceremony on March 16, 2016, where it demonstrated something special to the public--the new digital microfilm reader. Visitors were impressed with being able to search the local newspapers on microfilm and then have the article emailed to them directly from the computer. After touring the department, guests had refreshments in the new Magnolia Room, a large area adjacent to the Genealogy Department. This room formerly housed the actual LBPH collection, and due to its large size, it is perfect for large groups. The library uses it not only for genealogy programs, but for other larger meetings and special programs, such as Summer Reading.

In the summer of 2017, the library received a donation for the purchase of two new computers for the Genealogy Department. They were given in honor of Mrs. Louise Hooks, a retired history teacher, who at age 89 still comes to the library several times a week to help friends and family with genealogy research using Ancestry.com and other resources.

#### Holdings in the Collection

The department's resources have a focus on Columbia County, but there are also materials relating to other Arkansas counties, the state of Arkansas, and many other states. Printed materials include African-American genealogy resources; books on how to do genealogy research; census indexes; Civil War collections; DAR lineage books and indexes; genealogies; local history resources, such as cemetery indexes, churches, county information, and obituaries; local family histories and biographies; military records; newspapers; passenger lists; periodicals; and yearbooks from area schools.

Books in the collection that are especially helpful to learn about Columbia County include the publication *Images of the Past: Columbia County*, which was written by former Library Director Laura Cleveland and Assistant Director Dana Thornton. Their hard work and research produced an excellent book that is helpful to anyone researching Columbia County history. Two other standards in the department are Nettie Hicks Kilgore's book *History of Columbia County* and *Biographical Family Histories of Southwest Arkansas*, which are in two volumes.



As for equipment, there is one computer in the department dedicated to online genealogy research, one computer dedicated to the ScanPro 300 microfilm reader, one Canon printer/photocopier, one scanner; and one DVD player for digitized collections. A recent donation will add another computer to the Warnock room.

The library subscribes to Ancestry.com and has access to Heritage Quest through the state's Arkansas Traveler databases. Recently the library purchased a subscription to HistoryGeo, a database that contains an Antique Maps Collection and the First Landowners Project. There are links to Family Search and FindaGrave.com on the genealogy research computer.

*The Banner News*, which had various name changes through the years, is available from 1884 to present on microfilm, except for the dates from January 1, 1948, to February 2, 1954. The bound copies of the paper are located downstairs in the Archives Room, but unfortunately the months of April – June of 1951 are missing.

The library is privileged to have the Robert Walz Photographic Collection, along with the Early Days of Magnolia and McNeil Photographic Collection. It also collected the "Visions from the Past," photographs which were published in *The Banner News*, which can be helpful for research.

In addition, obituaries and cemetery records that are available in the department have been a help to those seeking to find ancestors in this area.

### Genealogy Research

If you were to ask Library Director Rhonda Rolen what the best resource in this library is for genealogy, she would reply, "The best resource in this department goes home each night." Fortunately for the library, the perfect person was hired for its dual position, genealogy clerk, Tracey Mohdzain. Tracey, a Magnolia transplant from the "Show Me" state, began working in the library in 2015, and she immediately became an asset for organizing the collection and providing top-notch service to patrons needing help. She helped the director to develop research guides for those new to genealogy research, including a tip sheet, a departmental brochure, and a list of department holdings. She organized periodicals by state and then labeled the shelving in the department for ease of use. The books that remain to be cataloged in the collection are organized by state and by topic. Tracey makes certain that research worksheets and generational charts are handy for those who need them. There is a bulletin board for flyers about genealogy meetings and activities that she updates regularly. She provides excellent customer service and still finds time to catalog materials.

The genealogy department brochure has this statement printed below its mission: "Facts are recorded; stories are remembered. What is your story?" Each day Columbia County Library works toward the goal of helping people find their story. "Finding Your Roots" is not merely the name of a PBS television show; in Columbia County, it is something within everyone's reach.





# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Chris Stoll

*By Glenda Efferson Bernard*

Do you recognize this lovely lady from our monthly meetings? You have seen her, no doubt. Her name is Chris Stoll, and she has been an active part of Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association for at least thirty years! Until the last couple of years, she was our name tag maker and greeter. Chris had a smile for everyone and made us feel welcome. She still does!

A California native of the Sacramento area, she has made Bossier City her home for many years. Chris said, "I lived in Bossier City before it came in style." After moving to the Ark-La-Tex, Chris longed to return home to California. Her family had been there beginning in 1859, and she spent summers there with her children at the ranch, which has been in the family for several generations. Then one day, her daughter asked her, "Mom, when are we going home?" She then realized that California was not home to her children, and she was able to think in terms of becoming a true Louisiana girl!

Chris has five children. Yes, five children, 12 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Four children and their families live in Bossier City today, and a daughter and her family live nearby in Lafayette, Louisiana. She was a real estate agent for about twenty years and a travel agent for another twenty years. Chris has traveled the world, saying, "I really like Paris." She stays involved with her family, with "Master Gardeners," a service organization "Quota," and genealogy, which she loves.

Family history has been a part of Chris' life since her grandmother shared family stories with her. Her grandmother had taken an interest in her own family, her husband's family, and cousins all over the country, with whom she has stayed in touch. She saved letters, memorabilia, everything! Chris has boxes of her grandmother's "treasures" in her home. It does seem to be a difficult task for all of us to keep up with these physical memories and to organize them, doesn't it?

Chris had the privilege of organizing for the ALTGA at least two trips to SLC and several to the fine Clayton Library in Houston. Not long ago she spent time in Toronto with family connecting back to the time of the Revolutionary War. What fun that must have been!

Chris is in the process now of sorting through the research which she has gathered over the years and is trying to organize. When asked what advice she would give to other genealogists, she said, "Re-read the information which you already have in hand. The answers to questions you have been seeking may be right before your eyes."

The next time you see Chris, be sure to say hello and introduce yourself to this treasured member.

## Ma Effie Said, “ Hershey’s Ain’t For Sniffin’! ”

*Contributed by Sylvia Powers*

Growing up as a tom-girl on a West Tennessee farm during the early ‘50s, I embraced adventure on an everyday basis. Macomb, Alabama, had its Scout Finch; Dresden, Tennessee, had ME. It’s only in looking back that I sometimes wonder how I survived my childhood in the country. My three younger brothers and I were left to our own devices with what free time we had whenever we weren’t picking, shelling, shucking, chopping, canning, peeling, gathering, planting, or whatever else my parents could come up with to keep us out of trouble because they lived by the premise that an idle mind led to idle hands which led to mischief, or the devil’s workshop as they liked to call it.

On our down time, what little we had, I would make mud pies with real eggs which I stole from under our best layers (which got my backside in trouble more than once) because I wanted them to be the real thing when I fed them to my younger brothers. Also when I was about six years old, I remember needing milk for my next batch of pies, so I “snuck” into the old sow’s pen when she was suckling her newly-born brood. I didn’t figure she would notice one more at the dinner table, so I was able to get enough milk from her to make the most delicious pies (again which caused me to feel the heat on my derriere)! During another “free- time” activity, I remember giving my little brothers real mud packs from the barnyard mud to make their complexions beautiful like the actresses I had seen advertising mud packs on TV. Though these life experiences caused me a bit of discomfort from time to time when I tried to sit down, that pain was nothing compared to the pain I experienced when I went through my short-lived snuff sniffin’ phase.

When I was about six or seven, my boy cousin Corkie (whom I looked up to and who was six months my senior) and I had observed an older neighbor lady sniffing some brown stuff from the back of her hand one day. She had it piled up in the valley between her thumb and index finger. We knew all about the nasty habit of seeing that brown stuff called snuff tucked in the bottom lip of some of the folks in the neighborhood, and we thought it nasty to see how they would squirt it out through their lips on the ground or into cups, cans, and spittoons, all puckered up like they were whistling the stuff right out of their mouths. But this brown stuff on the back of Miz King’s hand was intriguing to us. We’d never seen the like! (We’d already tried smoking grapevines in our smoking phase but didn’t care much for the taste). So fascinated were we by this brown powder that we knew we had to give it a try. The closest thing we could find that looked the same as the stuff on Miz King’s hand was in a can of Hershey’s Cocoa Powder on a shelf in my grandma’s kitchen.

We had been careful observers of how to go about getting just the right amount in that little valley on our own hands, so we piled it on. Next we laid our noses real close to that little valley of brown dust and took a mighty inhale. The pain I had experienced on my backside for previous escapades was nothing compared to the excruciating pain I felt as that brown stuff went straight to my brain!!! Corkie and I just knew we were dying. We sneezed, snotted, and sputtered brown stuff everywhere it seemed for an eternity. We went running to Grandma Effie ready to confess that we had raided her pantry, willing to take our punishment, if only she could make the knife-sharp pain in our brains go away. In time, after several nose-blowings, the pain abated, and Ma Effie, trying to stop laughing so she could look suitably stern with us, gave us some good advice, which we have heeded to this day. “Hershey’s ain’t for sniffin’!” This sage advice probably saved us from being snuff sniffers when we grew up because we knew that anything you sniffed up your nose was liable to cause a lot of pain.

*(Note: for those interested in surnames, Ma Effie’s full name is Effie Luella Hilliard Sipes).*

## JAMES BLAIR GILMER – PLANTER AND ENTREPRENEUR, Part II

By Dale Jennings

George O. Gilmer, father of James B. Gilmer, was a man of good judgment as alluded to by a cousin, Georgia Governor, George R. Gilmer. He was quite focused in acquiring and developing his Plain Dealing and other Bossier Parish plantations. Mr. Gilmer distributed most of his property to his family before he died. He gave his daughter, Sarah, and her husband, Leonidas Spyker, the Hard Times Plantation on the east side of the home place. He gave another on the northwest side to his daughter, Mary, and her husband, John Sandidge. Unidentified, it seems to have been a detached tract of the Plain Dealing Plantation. Twenty miles to the south, George had a large river plantation that he had begun to assemble in July 1839. Facing approaching death from cholera in 1849, he donated it to his children also. He described it simply as his property on Red River “known as the plantation,” in deeding it to his daughters and minor son, George Edwin.

George Oglethorpe Gilmer executed his will on October 15, 1849, and died on November 27<sup>th</sup>. He willed that his wife, Martha, should have all that he died possessed of, except his remaining land (the Plain Dealing Plantation). She would have its use during her lifetime, and then it was to go to their youngest son, George Edwin.

George Oglethorpe stated in his will that he had given all of his children but George Edwin an equal share of his property. Louisiana conveyance records show only one donation to his oldest son, James Blair, eighty-one acres of land given in 1849. However, James’ exceptional land purchases suggest that he had received the bulk of his settlement by the time the Gilmers moved from Alabama in 1839-1840, the widowed James Blair with three small daughters.

George Edwin, through his under tutor, John Sandidge, sold his interest in the river plantation to his sisters. They divided it between them, Sarah calling her plantation Cash Point or “Cash’s Point.” Mary named hers Shady Grove, with a parcel on the other side of the river being called “Southside.” James had earlier sold his father a small acreage off his Buck Hall Plantation for a building site. These five acres bordered the north boundary of the now Cash Point Plantation. Young George Gilmer wanted his own plantation while his mother was yet living. James sold his brother a 642-acre section he owned along the east border of Shady Grove. George added greatly to the tract to form his Bee Bend Plantation.

It’s hard to be precise concerning the ownership of Bossier Parish plantations between James Gilmer and his second wife, Paulina. Mr. J. T. Manry’s total count of thirteen is about right. Each spouse brought thousands of acres into their 1843 marriage. Some of the land had been formed into plantations, but most was still in the form of raw or underdeveloped tracts. During the marriage, many of these tracts were developed or refined into plantations. Also, additional land was purchased for new plantations or additions to existing ones.

Nearly all purchases of land during the marriage were made by James, including some additions made to Paulina’s Chalk Level and Willow Chute plantations. An exception was Red Chute.

Paulina made additions to land she owned prior to the marriage in developing the Red Chute Plantation. In the case of Gold Point, she had acreage along the Caddo Parish side of Red River, and James bought a tract along the opposing Bossier bank. The two were matched together in forming the Gold Point Plantation. They also partnered in enlarging the Rough and Ready Plantation in somewhat the same manner, as will be told later.

The southernmost of the plantations was the Christiana on the lower stretch of the river. Gilmer sold Mr. John High a half interest in that plantation through the latter's signing of promissory notes. High volunteered to stay on and manage the plantation for eight years at no charge. However, he subsequently relinquished his interest in Christiana back to Gilmer, who cancelled the balance of his notes. The Winston Plantation near the Orchard was occupied and worked by the Winston family, who seemed to have had some kinship to the Gilmers.

Kain Point Plantation was on an irregularly shaped peninsula just above the ferry landing opposite Shreveport (presently the site of Bossier City). The neck of the peninsula was ditched across, placing the plantation on the Caddo side. It would eventually become the Fullilove family's Freestate Plantation, and subsequently the Freestate business district of Shreveport, although it remains a part of Bossier Parish. Above there, the Kingston Plantation adjoined the Buck Hall, another plantation that straddled the Red River. The Kingston itself did not touch the river but was on the broad river plain.

The Egypt and Hurricane Bluff plantations above Benton and Chalk Level below, all between 3,000 and 4,000 acres, also occupied both banks. The Red River was not bridged until the Civil War, and then only by a military pontoon bridge at Shreveport. The divided plantations had their own ferries. Paulina sold her half interest in the Sunflower Plantation soon after her marriage to James Gilmer and did not buy the Cash Point until shortly after his death.

Some properties would not be recognized as plantations until after the 1856 dissolution of the Gilmer marriage and the death of Mr. Gilmer. Two Caddo Parish tracts that went to Paulina became the Wilderness and Boom Bend plantations. James retained large tracts on both sides of the river at Coushatta Bluff west of the Plain Dealing Plantation and a smaller tract near Collinsburg. These would later be formalized as the Coushatta and Woodlawn plantations under his heirs.

In addition to their Louisiana properties, Mr. Gilmer purchased several more tracts of planting land in Arkansas during the marriage. James already had 675 acres of land in Nacogdoches County in East Texas. George R. Gilmer wrote in his 1855 book, *Georgians*, that James was "possessed of one of the largest planting estates in the United States. His crop of cotton the year 1850 exceeded three thousand bags" (bales secured with "bagging").

The Orchard was among the largest of their plantations. Its upland environment made it a desirable location for their home place, and its proximity to James' business center, Collinsburg, was advantageous. Most of their other plantations had residences for the overseer and/or a place to stay while the Gilmers were in residence.

Most of what is known about James Gilmer's Orchard Plantation mansion came from J. T. Manry's October 8, 1932, *Shreveport Journal* article. He described it as being 160 feet in width, with wide galleries around the entire building. They were supported by massive columns turned out of large pine logs. Each column had a hole drilled through it and a four-inch copper tube inserted for drain pipes for the gutters. Manry said that there were no saw mills in the area then, and that tradition differed as to whether the lumber for the house's construction was brought down river from Arkansas by barge or upriver from New Orleans by steamboat. He entertained the notion that it may have been transported by Gilmer's own steamboats, of which he owned two. It is more likely that the lumber was milled by a saw mill in Shreveport, or that he had it "whipsawed" himself, as did his father according to Mr. Manry's first article. He also said that the entire roof was covered with copper sheeting before the shingles were put on, and that the roof's valleys were sheet lead.

Mr. Manry said that the home, "in its time, perhaps even until today, was the most pretentious residence in North Louisiana, or at that time, in the state." Two photographic images of the house in the Louisiana State University Shreveport's Manry Collection show it to be a one-story structure. Quite pretentious for the area, it was not as grandiose as many of the vintage homes in South Louisiana or some in Northwest Louisiana's Natchitoches Parish. Manry's belief that its door knobs were of solid silver would prove to be incorrect.

The front view of the house shows a man standing on the roof and a dozen men and two children in front of the house. Four of the men are sitting on a column that has come off the front portico. Another copy of the same photo is in the possession of James Gilmer's three times great granddaughter living in Kansas, Suzanna (Suzy) Meyer. Suzy's grandfather, John E. Belcher, had written in the margins: "The Orchard 1885 Near Plain Dealing, La (Later Burned) Home of my great-grandfather James B. Gilmer." She gave a copy to the Bossier Parish Historical Center in Bossier City. Mrs. Meyer also brought in a set of the fabled Orchard Plantation door knobs, which were photographed for the history center archives. Much of their silver plating had flaked off.

Rupert Peyton, in his history-based, but not well supported, August 7, 1975, *Bossier Banner-Progress* column piece, attributed the Orchard home's construction to "Uncle George, the Priceless Slave." He wrote that George was loaned by John Hamiter to James Gilmer in the 1840s to help design and to oversee the construction of the Gilmer mansion. He said Mr. Gilmer was so impressed with the result that he offered ten thousand dollars for George, to which Hamiter responded that Gilmer didn't have enough money to buy his talented slave. Peyton wrote interesting articles, but he was known to color outside the lines a bit. In a May 1954 *Shreveport Magazine* article, he propagated the misconception that the Chalk Level Plantation, the name of which had a Swiss-translated derivative, was named for a former owner, "a Mr. Chalk."

Mrs. A. A. Hamiter, in an August 12, 1948, article in the *Bossier Banner*, said of John Hamiter's diversely talented slaves, "One trained as a carpenter was sometimes hired out to the neighbors for two dollars per day." Hamiter's former slave, who took the name George Paysinger, became a local African American community leader and assembled a 500-acre plantation, on which he built himself a substantial home.

The other LSUS archives picture is an angular view of the side and back of the Orchard house. It shows that the rear portico roof has collapsed and its columns are lying on the ground. If the house ever had wrap around galleries, they are not to be seen in this view. A large gathering of families is posing at the rear of the residence. Three men are standing near the corner of the house. Also in the Manry Collection is a clipping from a copy of this photo showing just the three men. On the back is a partial inscription: "January 13, 1901," and underneath that the clipped sentence, "The old man---(mansion)"?

The old house, after being long deserted, finally succumbed to its dereliction, its demise said to have been hastened by the scavenging of the copper from the roof. Its ruins are said to have been burned, probably a few years after the last photograph was made.

The Gilmers had selected for their house site the crown of a hill with gently sloping sides, allowing for drainage in all directions. Manry said that the grounds were landscaped and beautified by a trained artisan, who set out all manner of trees, shrubs, and flowers. Also, that James Gilmer had imported mulberry trees and silk worms from France for the beginning of a silk industry. Manry said that some of the mulberry and ornamental trees were yet standing (1932). Mr. Rodney Bellar, who grew up just down the road from there, remembered that there were still traces of old orchards on the grounds.

Mr. Bellar said that he had determined the approximate perimeter of the Gilmer mansion by locating its brick pier stubs just under the surface. He said that there would be tons of old brick under the ground because the piers were "bell bottomed." Gilmer had excavated down to a solid footing on which he formed a broad base for each pier. As the brick pier foundation was layered up, each tier was narrowed so that when it reached the surface it had been sized down for the above-ground pier.

To summarize a long narrative, James would give the Orchard Plantation up to Paulina, who after the Civil War lost the greater part of it, including the house tract, to mortgage holders. They in turn sold it to the Antrim family's Antrim Lumber Company, the heirs of whom still own the site. (For the details of this, see article, "Orchard Plantation," by this writer in the First Quarter 2004 issue of the Genie.)

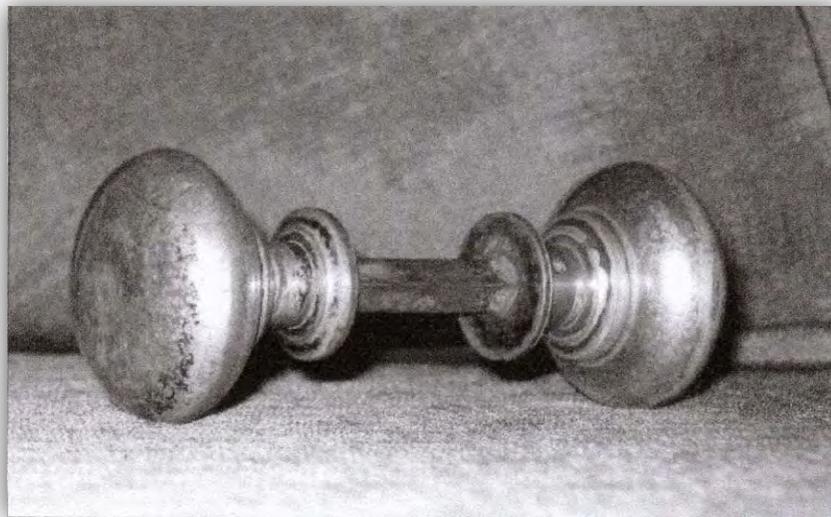
Rodney Bellar reminisced to this writer about the 1940s and 1950s when local gatherings still held holiday picnics under the large trees on the old mansion grounds. Within a stone's throw on the north side of the old house site is another historic site, that of the depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) base camp. Its rude camp quarters are gone, but remaining is the old concrete foundation of its sole intended-to-be permanent building, probably the camp headquarters/administration building.

What seems like a short time ago, the writer took Elizabeth Pickett, a James and Paulina Pickett descendant, and her mother up to the Orchard home site. They gathered some old bricks and dug up yellow jonquil bulbs, the same perennials found in long-abandoned century-old cemeteries, to take back to Florida and Tennessee.

To be continued.....



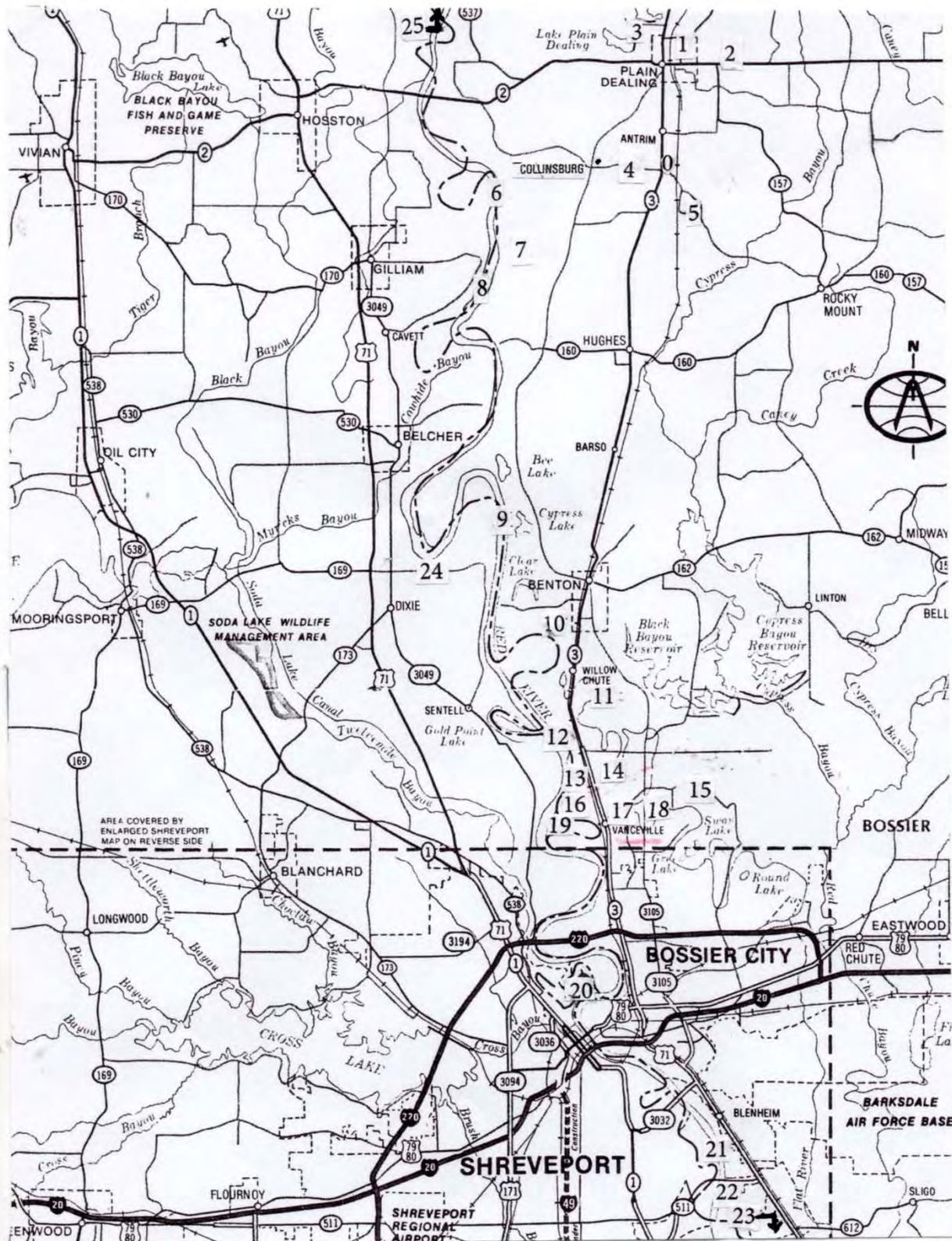
Front view of James and Paulina Gilmer's Orchard Plantation home in Bossier Parish, LA  
(Manry Collection, Louisiana State University Shreveport)



Silver plated door knob set from Orchard Plantation home

(Photo courtesy of Bossier Parish Library History Center and Mrs. Suzy Meyer, James Gilmer descendant) Below is a listing of Bossier and Caddo Parish Gilmer/Pickett plantations depicted in the preceding article. It is keyed to the plantations map on the following page. The Christiana Plantation, probably named for James Gilmer's Christian County, Kentucky birthplace, is on the Red River farther south off the map. The Boom Bend Plantation, also off the map to the north, is believed to relate to an early "boom" placed across the river to hold the Red River Raft above that point. It was only temporarily successful.

1. Plain Dealing	13. Buck Hall
2. Hard Times	14. Kingston
3. Mary and James Sandidge	15. Red Chute
4. Orchard	16. Cash Point
0 Orchard Place Home	17. Shady Grove
5. Winston	18. Bee Bend
6. Coushatta	19. Southside
7. Woodlawn	20. Kain Point
8. Egypt	21. Chalk Level
9. Hurricane Bluff	22. Sunflower
10. Rough and Ready	23. Christiana
11. Willow Chute	24. Wilderness
12. Gold Point	25. Boom Bend



Map designed by Dale Jennings

## Genealogy August Seminar

*Contributed by Jim Johnson*

Our Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association hosted a very successful seminar on August 12, 2017. The seminar was held at the Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Shreveport. The guest speaker for this event was Cari A. Taplin, CG<sup>SM</sup>. Ms. Taplin, a certified genealogist who resides in Pflugerville, Texas, was certified by the Board of Certified Genealogists (BCG) in 2015. She enlightened the audience with a wealth of information on numerous genealogy topics. In addition to Ms. Taplin, we were fortunate to have Barnes and Noble Booksellers with us again this year hosting the book fair. As in years past, their local management team assembled and offered a large selection of genealogy and history books for sale.

Ms. Taplin's first lecture was titled "Using Lists to Find Proof." She explained that "lists" can be associated with a variety of topics and record types, and for the purpose of her lecture, simply refers to any list of names whether arranged alphabetically, geographically, or by an event. Some examples of these lists are censuses, tax lists, directories, petitions, militia rolls, and other lists that serve as tools for proving the identity of our ancestors. She further explained how an analysis of these "lists" can be used to arrive at a conclusion that meets the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS).

The second lecture was "Using Church Records to Find Ancestral Origins." Ms. Taplin stated that each denomination or church has varying degrees of record keeping. Some churches kept very detailed records and some did not. In general, most churches recorded baptisms, marriages, and burials, but in varying detail. Some of these records have been lost or destroyed over time, due to poor preservation methods, fires, floods, or other disasters. Clues to determine an ancestor's religious affiliation may sometimes be found in an obituary, from a gravestone symbol, or in some cases, the cemetery may be affiliated with a particular religion.

In the next lecture, "Canadian Migration Patterns into the U.S.," Ms. Taplin began by discussing a timeline of historical events affecting the colonization and population of Canada. Migration patterns were influenced by a number of reasons. Some European emigrants destined for the United States may have, instead, chosen less expensive passage to Canada, but they later relocated to the United States in favor of warmer weather and better farming conditions. Others were lured away by gold in the West or cheap land in the United States. In addition, some ethnic groups were expelled by the government. Whether they stayed in Canada or later moved on to the United States, records were created and can be found at the Library and Archives Canada (LAC), as well as other repositories.

The last lecture, "From Deeds to Dirt: Case Studies in Analyzing Research with Maps," emphasized the importance of using maps, particularly historic maps, as part of a research plan. A basic understanding of the geography where our ancestors lived and traveled will give a better understanding of why our ancestors did the things the way they did.

Those attending the seminar came from all over the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Ms. Taplin is an excellent speaker and well versed in all facets of genealogy research. She gave a wonderful presentation, illustrating how to make the best use of available tools and records in order to help researchers arrive at conclusions which meet Genealogical Proof Standards.



# Highlighting Our Members

*Contributed by Johnnie Covington*

New member **Diane Long** is a native Shreveporter but now lives in Bossier City. She and her husband, Wayne Crank, work in oil and gas abstracting and leasing. Diane has one daughter, Emma Fargerson. Art is the true love of Diane's life and she'd like to earn her living as an artist. She is also active in conservative politics. Diane would like to learn more about her Tomlinson and Hicks ancestors, especially Thomas Jerome Tomlinson and Grandmother Charlie Hicks.



**Kenneth Hill** of Bossier City is a retired civil engineer and has always been interested in his family's history but only recently has had time to get involved in research. He is married to Patricia Almond, who is interested in learning more about her Almond line as well as the name "Magee." The couple have three children and six grandchildren who are actively involved in sports. Kenneth is their biggest fan. He is interested in learning more about his Cowling and Johnson ancestors as well as the Sovolas. Some of his relatives are from Finland and Sweden and settled in Minnesota. The name "Hill" used to be "Siivonen" but was changed because of the difficult pronunciation and spelling.



**Linda Gibson** lives in Shreveport but was reared in Rayville and Monroe. She is a retired registered nurse and worked at Doctor's Hospital, Schumpert, and LSUMC. Linda is actively involved in politics and volunteers for her church, St. John Berchman's Cathedral, in their mission work. She has two children, five grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. Linda would like to do research on the names Fathere'e and Tharp. She is also very interested in learning more about her biological father, Jimmie Johnson. He reportedly is from Cincinnati but was stationed at Camp Polk right after WWII. She has been told that his military records were burned in a St. Louis fire.



**Christy Dew** now lives in Shreveport but is a native of Natchitoches and frequently visits her family there. She and her mother are members of the St. Denis Chapter of the DAR as well as the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches. Christy graduated from LSU and taught English and Special Education in Bossier and Caddo Parishes, retiring while at Byrd High School. She is interested in learning more about the names Whittington, Converse, Weldon, and Tarver.