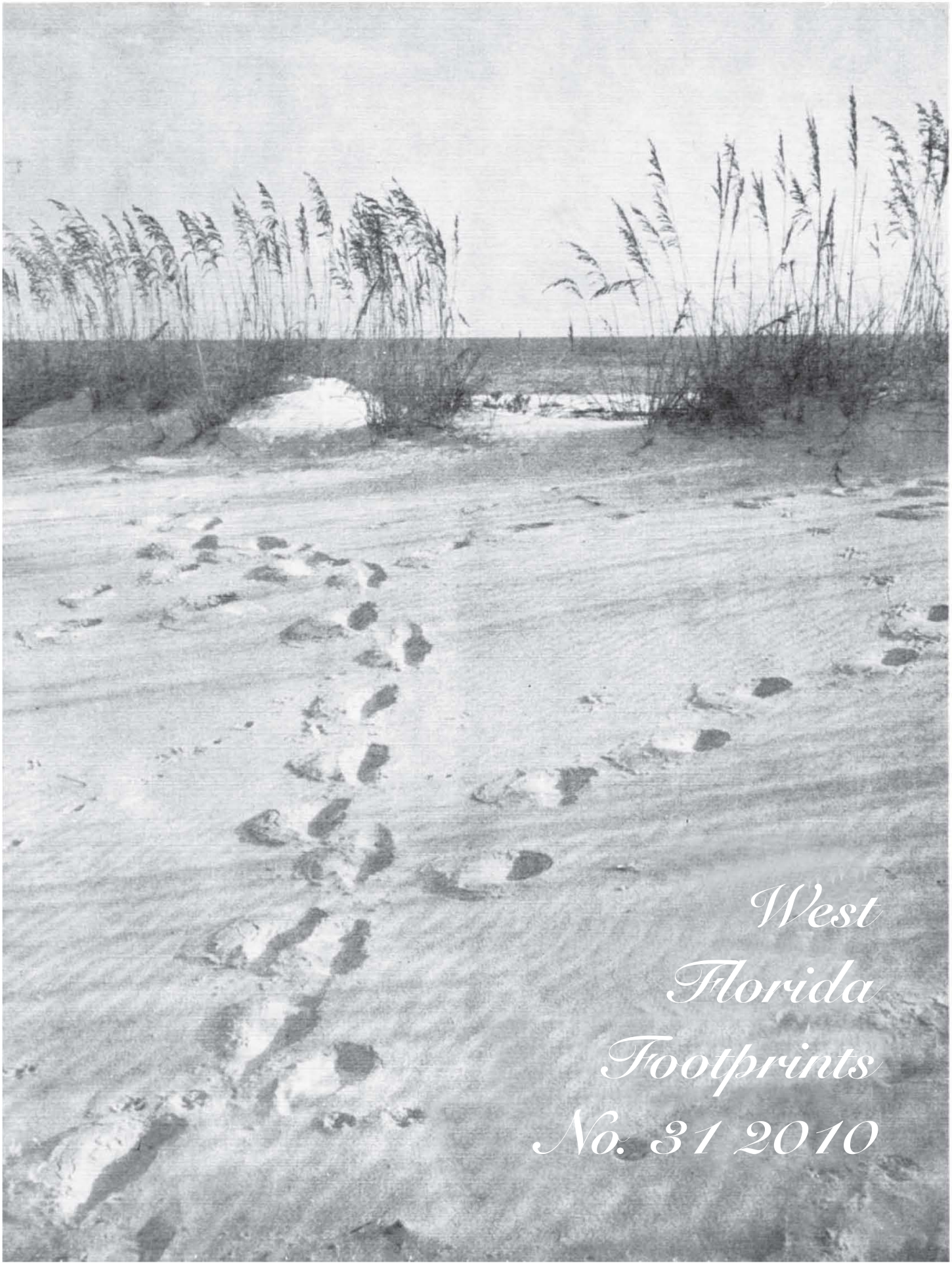

West Florida Footprints

No. 31 2010

West Florida Footprints

Journal of the
West Florida Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 947
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West Florida Footprints **is the annual journal of the West Florida Genealogical Society (WFGS), Inc. It consists of manuscripts and source materials submitted to the Society pertaining to genealogy and local history of West Florida. Please mail or e-mail potential articles for consideration to WFGS, Attn: Editor.**

WFGS assumes no responsibility for transcription, typographical or interpretive errors which may occur in the published articles. Most often, the contents of the articles in this publication cannot be verified; therefore, readers should govern their use of the material accordingly.

The WFGS was formed in 1982 and consists of over 150 members residing primarily in the panhandle of Florida and southern Alabama, or the area known historically as "West Florida." Monthly meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month (except July) at 10:00 a.m. at the West Florida Genealogy Library, 4740 N. 9th Avenue, Pensacola, FL 32504. (Directions: From 9th Avenue, turn east onto College Blvd., then make the first left turn into the parking lot.) WFGS sponsors a conference each year, as well as other special events.

Annual dues are $20.00 per person, or $25.00 for a couple living in the same dwelling. Please remit dues to the WFGS address listed above.

http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flwfgs/index.htm

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Table of Contents

The President's Message ..... **i-ii**
—Cynthia Dean Green

Officers, Directors, Committee Chairmen & Vital Individuals ..... **ii**

In Memory ..... **iii-iv**

An Interview About Hawkshaw **1-3**
—Doris Kersey Buffum, with A.C. Cutts

The Crofton Family of Northwest Florida **4-6**
—Donna Pittman

Benjamin Franklin Kersey Buried in Rushing Cemetery **7-9**
—Doris Kersey Buffum

Walter Robinson Turner **9**
—Doris Kersey Buffum

Thomas Hannah of Pensacola and Vernon, 1831-1903 ..... **10-15**
—Jayne Lipe

Quotes To Note **15**

Parazine's of Pensacola **16-18**
—David L. Talley

John B. Vaughn and Public Health in Florida **19-20**
—John C. Bush

Henry William Brown ~ City Fireman of Pensacola **21**
—Glenda Brown Pace

Tracks **22-29**
—Herman Arthur Merritt (Contributed by Jerry Merritt)

Bob Tales **30-32**
—Harold Augustus (Bob) Suarez (Edited and contributed by Shannon Suarez Abbott)

A New Teacher at Tate School in 1954 ..... **33-34**
—Rebecca Shigley Black

Genealogy Research Advice and Thoughts **35-36**
—David Lamar Gonzalez

Moments I Remember **37-38**
—Janette Fillingim Schiller (Contributed by Suzanne Weathers)

Index of Surnames **39-41**

The President's Message

This has been an exciting year for WFGS with the opening of the new genealogy library in January, a long-time dream of our society.

When I became president, I had a number of personal goals for the society: to increase membership and attendance; to use a *Robert's Rules of Order* format for meetings; to develop a Procedures Manual which would help with indoctrination of new officers and committee chairmen; Getting-to-Know-You forms to find out what types of programs would be of interest, have a list of surnames and areas being researched by members and to have a list of previous offices held to help aid the nominating committee; and to have assigned greeters at meetings. My No. 1 goal was a major conference with a nationally known speaker, which was certainly accomplished with the Elizabeth Shown Mills Seminar in November. Those goals were met or are almost complete at this writing.

A major accomplishment this year was the completion of the two-year project of transcribing and publishing Escambia County FL Marriages 1822-1900 under the able direction of Jerry Merritt with special thanks to Evan Strohl who single-handedly copied all the certificates for the numerous typists and Bruce Rova who saw to the publishing.

We have wonderful people who spend many hours behind the scenes going about the jobs that keep the wheels turning in the society. Bonnie Griffis Lewis collects stories, edits and publishes our annual journal, *Footprints*, and maintains our Escambia County FLGenWeb and WFGS websites. Lee Scott provides us lots of research tips via email and faithfully produces our monthly newsletter, as she has done for many years. Ron Parks and Tara Parks, Hospitality Committee, regularly arrive an hour early at the meetings to make coffee and set out donuts and clean up afterwards. Roy Wilkinson is List Administrator for our WFGS Roots-L mailing list. A super Vice President, Bruce Rova, was quick to take on tasks to relieve the president and handled getting door prizes for the seminar and provided us with interesting programs and put on the "Family History Day – How to Find Out Who You Are" in September. A very competent Treasurer, Janet Myers, keeps the books up to date and provides monthly reports. Likewise, Secretary Debra Nichols does a great job with minutes and always had them done on time. Dorothy Wallace, Book Sales, with help from Clint Morgan, gets out all our publications and sets up to sell at meetings and handles mail orders. Membership Chairman, Yolanda Falzone, faithfully signs in members and guests and keeps her records up to date. Billy Ward has done a great job updating our media equipment and building a cabinet for it.

Sharon Mosley, Pam Watts, Gayle Sweet and Terry Schwartz, along with board members mentioned above, helped with planning and carrying out events, such as the

Seminar and "Who Do You Think You Are" family history day, as well as regular business of the society.

Dedicated West Florida Genealogy Library volunteers are Rebecca Black, Bruce Rova, Jim Turek, Jerry Merritt, Gayle Sweet, Pat Kerr, Priscilla Nobles, Jo McKay, Evan Strohl, Grady Lea, Liz Smith, Terry Schwartz and Gloria Tizzano.

Thanks to them all. It has been a very good year!

—Cynthia Green Dean

Officers

President:	Cynthia Dean
Vice President:	Bruce Rova
Treasurer:	Janet Myers
Secretary:	Debra Nichols

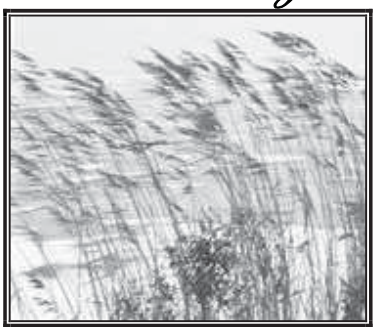
Directors

2009-2010	Pam Watts
	Gayle Sweet
	Terry Schwartz
2010-2011	Tara Parks
	Sharon Mosley (2010)
	Liz Smith (2011)
	Yolanda Falzone

Committee Chairmen & Vital Individuals

Audio/Video:	Billy Ward
Book Sales:	Dorothy Wallace
Cemeteries:	Evan Strohl
Footprints:	Bonnie Griffis Lewis
Hospitality:	Ron Parks
	Tara Parks
Library:	Priscilla Nobles
Membership:	Yolanda Falzone
Newsletter:	Laura Lee Scott
Publicity:	Cynthia Dean
Transcription Projects:	Jerry Merritt
WFGS Website:	Roy Wilkinson
Escambia Co. FLGenWeb:	Bonnie Griffis Lewis
Parliamentarian:	Pete Young

In Memory



Martha Eliza Booker Blackmon

Martha Eliza Booker Blackmon, born January 17, 1920, died Sunday, February 14, 2010, as a result of complications from a stroke.

Martha enjoyed farming, gardening, genealogy, quilting, sewing and cooking for others. She was a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Santa Rosa County Genealogy Society, and West Florida Genealogy Society Member #402. She also loved volunteering at the Milton Library. She was a longstanding member of the East Milton Assembly of God Church.

Martha is preceded in death by her husband, Sherman William Blackmon; parents Emory Booker and Pearl Booker; two brothers, Carlton Booker, William "Bill" (Leathy) Booker; and her beloved sister, Mae Brake.

She is survived by her three daughters, Sharolyn (David) Cook, Margaret (Gerould) Wilhelm, and Kathie Blackmon; five grandchildren, Elisa (James) Ray, Susanne Wilhelm, David Wilhelm, Jennifer (William) Cumbie, and Matthew Cook; four great-grandchildren, Lee, Sarah, and Alex Ray and LaVan Wilhelm; nieces, nephews, cousins and many good friends.

Visitation was February 16, 2010 and funeral service was February 17, at Lewis Funeral Home, Milton Chapel. Burial was in Harold Cemetery, Harold, Florida. The family requested memorials to the East Milton Assembly of God Church, 5174 Ward Basin Road, Milton, Florida 32583 or Covenant Hospice, 5907 Berryhill Road, Milton, Florida 32570.

Adrian Farinas, Jr.

Adrian Farinas, Jr. passed away Tuesday, March 2, 2010 following a stroke. A retired Navy Commander and veteran of World War II, he resided in Pensacola most of his life. He was Charter Member #0074 of the West Florida Genealogy Society.

He is survived by his sister, Dorothy Hellman (Bill); sons, Adrian, III and John (Suzanne); sister-in-law, Betty; nephews, Bill (Karen), Robert; grand-nieces, Kim,

Kerri, Kristin Lucias (David), Katie Givens (Allen); and Bryce Allen and family friend, Donna Crane. He leaves behind many other friends.

Adrian was preceded in death by his loving wife of 63 years, Claire Johnson.

Services were Friday at Bayview Fisher-Pou Chapel, with burial at Holy Cross Cemetery.

Vonceil Shows Baucum ("Pete")

Vonceil Shows Baucum known as "Pete" died October 31, 2010, surrounded by the things she loved the most—her books and her family. She was a longstanding member of the West Florida Genealogical Society, having served as the annual conference chairman on April 5, 2003 and as a member of the Board of Directors from 2003-2005.

Pete was born September 11, 1930 in Jones County, Mississippi. During her education there, she played basketball and made the All State Team. She was the state's record holder for scoring the most points in one game, though, she personally was more proud that she won the state's Best Sportsmanship Award.

She was a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, teacher and dear friend. She was known as a lover of all things antique, was a historian, a genealogist, teacher of Concept Therapy, and a scrap fighter for the betterment of her neighborhood and city.

Pete moved to Pensacola in 1955 from Ellisville, Mississippi to support her children, working at Chemstrand, as it was then known. It was in Pensacola that she wrote and published two books. The first outlined her family history and genealogy. The second was a reference book detailing the range lines of Mississippi. She will perhaps be best remembered for her sense of humor, her generosity, and her attention to detail in whatever endeavor she undertook. Pensacola will remember her as one of the founders and President of the Seville Improvement Board. She also helped found the Pensacola Historic District Property Owners Association, The Pensacola Arts Festival, The Antique Association, and was an avid supporter of the Pensacola Library and our local museums, especially T.T. Wentworth and Christ Church. Her shotgun cottage home was at 326 E. Intendencia Street in the historic district of downtown Pensacola. It was built in 1882. The rear of the building was the first Black public schoolhouse in Pensacola. The three-room addition was added in 1920. Pete completed an historically correct remodeling of her home several years ago.

She is survived by her four children, Cynthia Faith Baucum Ice (Cyndee), her husband Mike, Robert Zachery Baucum (Robby) of Pensacola, FL, Joseph Baucum (Joe) of Hesperia CA, and Dude Hausmann and his wife Kelly of Pensacola, FL; her nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren (with two on the way); her beloved sisters, Hazel Earhard and Bobbie Thomas, and sister-in-law, Ann Shows; and many friends.

An Interview About Hawkshaw

By Doris Kersey Buffum, with A.C. Cutts

I called him one morning and asked if he would be willing to do an interview with me about the little community called, "Hawkshaw" for the WFGS annual journal, *West Florida Footprints.* He was delighted and asked if he could meet me in Seville Square in Pensacola's Old Historical District. Alan C. Cutts, 88 years of age, was better known as "A.C.," and he is the one I interviewed.

His favorite subject is talking about his young years and growing up in the southeast part of Pensacola in a little community known as "Hawkshaw," situated on Pensacola Bay. He loves to reminisce about Hawkshaw and the families that lived there, but he loves to talk about it while sitting in Seville Square. He told me that he would meet me there, but that his niece Tami would be driving him, because he is considered legally blind. Much to his sorrow, he can no longer drive the moss green Ford Mustang that he purchased new and drove off of the dealership floor back in 1967. He still keeps it in mint condition.

As I sat there and waited for A.C. and Tami, I looked at the Old Christ Church and thought about how many things that it had been. When I was a child in the 1940's, it was a Library, but went on to house the Pensacola Historical Society Museum, and now it is back to being a church.

I looked at a monument dedicated to, "All of those who spent their youth in and around Seville Square." A breeze was coming in off of the Bay and I could smell the salt air. It would be the perfect setting for the stories that I was about to hear. The over two hundred year old oak trees in the park have witnessed many changes and could tell their own stories of yesteryear. As I sat there surveying my surroundings, I realized how lucky I was to have been born in a place with such a vast history.

I saw A.C. and Tami coming across the park and I got up to greet them. I met Tami and I hugged A.C. because I had not seen him since the last Reunion that was held in the Park. I guided A.C. to a park bench where we would sit for the interview. Never having done an interview before, I prided myself in doing my homework. I had a list of questions that I wanted to ask A.C.

I asked two questions, both rolled into really one question. I said, "A.C., can you tell me something about the people who lived in Hawkshaw and where the actual boundaries of Hawkshaw were"? That is all it took for A.C. to grab the interview and run with it. I never had to ask another question.

He started off with a slight grin on his face and his blue eyes twinkling, "You see, I was a nosy kid and I was into everybody's business. I knew just about everything that went on in Hawkshaw."

He said that Hawkshaw was a small place, but it encompassed the North, East and South sides of St. Michael's Cemetery on down to the Bay and Muscogee Wharf and up to Gregory Street. Some of the people on 12th Avenue also would consider themselves as living in Hawkshaw.

A.C. went on to tell the story of how Hawkshaw got its name. He told the same folklore that all of the people of Hawkshaw have heard since birth. There was a family named Shaw that lived

in the East End on the Bay in the early 1900's or maybe even before the turn of the century. The Shaw's had a horse-pulled wagon and they would go up into East Hill and hawk their wares such as fish, crabs, shrimp, oysters, or whatever the catch of the day was. They got to be known as the "Hawker Shaw's." The elite of Pensacola would come down into the East End looking for the Hawker Shaw's and thus the name of Hawkshaw was given to the little fishing community down on the Bay near Muscogee Wharf. A.C. said there was also a boarding house that was run by a family named Shaw. I can neither prove nor disprove this. I do know that I once saw a picture of a horse-drawn cart in one of the T. T Wentworth Museum's little booklets. The caption under the picture read, "James Shaw, his wife and daughter hawking their wares in East Pensacola."

A.C. told stories of how he earned money as a kid. He would collect scrap iron in the 1930's to sell to one of the Japanese ships docked at Muscogee Wharf. One of the old-timers of Hawkshaw told him that one day they would come back and throw that scrap iron at us and sure enough they did, he said, "Remember, Pearl Harbor"? He would also collect bottles to get the deposits so that he could go to the Isis Theater located on the corner of Garden and Palafox St.

"You've asked me about the people and where they lived," said A.C., "and I will tell you that they lived all over. Very few people owned their homes, they were mostly renters. The country was going through a depression and everybody had lost everything. If you were paying $8.00 a month rent and the house across the street became vacant and the rent was only $3.00, then you moved across the street to where the rent was cheaper.

In this little community of Hawkshaw there was no color barrier. The Blacks and Whites lived among each other in peace and harmony. Everybody was poor and hunger knows no color. Everyone was trying to scrape by and feed their families. It was not only Blacks and Whites, but also a melting pot of nationalities and they all pulled together. I've heard it said many times by my own grandmother, "We were like one big family and we helped each other out." A.C. agreed.

A.C. and I both remember Anna Bell and Henry Snowball. Anna Bell was a Creole from New Orleans. Henry worked at the Armour Meat Packing Company. Everyone who ever lived in Hawkshaw would remember Anna Bell and Henry. Henry would bring home a box of the soup bones on the days that the meat trucks arrived. There was always enough meat left on the bones to flavor the pot and everybody in the neighborhood had some kind of soup for supper that night. Almost everybody had a garden, or raised chickens, but there was always the Bay with its never-ending supply of seafood.

The only form of Welfare was an occasional government agent handing out beans, rice and Hoover cornmeal, which everyone took because they needed the cornmeal to coat the mullet to fry. The people of Hawkshaw were poor but proud people and they didn't feel that anyone owed them anything.

A.C. talked of his school days at E.J. Wilson School and of Katherine Morrison, the principal and that he spent more of his time in her office than in Ms. Ballard's room (who was his teacher). He said that if anything happened at that school, they automatically assumed that A.C. did it. With that little grin and his blue eyes twinkling, he said, "I picked up more paper on those school grounds than the janitor. I couldn't do any school work if I thought that I heard a mullet jump down in the Bay. I was out the door and down in my boat rowing across that Bay and catching me some mullet."

The fond memories of Seville Square is that of the local businesses doing things to keep the young folks busy and occasionally entertain them to get their minds off of the hardships of the Depression. The local YMCA took the young boys of the area and taught them to box. A.C.'s two brothers were two of those boys, as well as my own uncle. They would take them over to the

Casino at Pensacola Beach and have boxing matches.

In A.C.'s words, the Coca-Cola® Company would sponsor contests for the children of that area. He said, "We would have tree-sitting contests to see who could sit in one of the oak trees the longest." He went on to tell about one of the boys that won the tree-sitting contest. After he had won, he hung down on a lower limb and the Coca Cola® man gave him a case of Cokes and he swung back up into that tree like a monkey with those Cokes. Laughingly, he said, "To this day I could never figure out how he done that"!

A.C. told the names of many of the old residents of Hawkshaw, but for fear of leaving someone out, I will not name all of those people. I will say that if anyone is interested in knowing those honest, hard working people and where they lived, go to the 1935 Florida Census, Escambia County, Precinct 12 and you will find them there.

I was enlightened by A.C. that the street where my grandparents lived, East De Leon Street, was only two blocks long. He also confirmed what my birth certificate reads—that I was born at 17 East Aragon Street. East De Leon Street, not the block of Aragon Street where I was born, no longer exists because Gulf Power sits there today where it once was. He also talked of the much controversial Liberty Street which can also be found on the 1935 Census.

I am going to tell one story because I think it is humorous and I don't think that A.C. would mind. It was also Prohibition and the local bootlegger had a grocery store, but the store was only a front for his still. There were groceries on the shelves but they were mostly for show. If for some reason that they couldn't sell their homemade brew for that day, they would put a sign in the window, "No Bread Today."

It was a most enjoyable morning and I don't think that I have laughed so much in quite a while. Occasionally, A.C. would look down at the recorder and tell a story but ask me not to print it. When I assured him that I wouldn't he would tell of things that I already knew because I had heard it from my own family, but it was a trip down memory lane. The interview came to an end because I could see that he was getting tired. A.C. said it best when he said, "What can I say, Hawkshaw was Hawkshaw and there will never be another." World War II came about and most of the young men either joined up or were drafted. The first young man killed in the war from Pensacola was George Lockwood and he was a Hawkshaw boy.

The War ended the Depression and a whole way of life changed. A.C. still lives in the area. He bought and restored a two story old home in the Historical District. One can't miss it. He painted it pink.

Respectfully submitted to the memory of those who lived in Hawkshaw. I give a great big "Thank You" to Alan C. Cutts (A.C.) for the interview—the main source of information in this article—plus the 1935 Census and some old city maps.

—Doris Kersey Buffum, buffum2@bellsouth.net

The Crofton Family of Northwest Florida

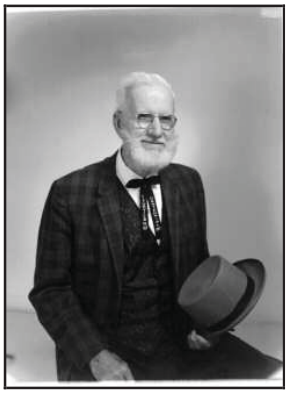
By Donna Pittman, placebow@bellsouth.net

The earliest and only memory of my Grandma Crofton is at her wake. She died in Plant City, Florida on March 14, 1939 and was buried a few days later at Pleasant Grove Methodist Cemetery near Hinson's Cross Roads in Northwest Florida. Of course, she wasn't really my Grandma; she was my great Grandma, but everyone called her "Grandma Crofton." She was only sixty-nine years old when she died, but she had seen and done a lot in her lifetime.

Treasured Picture of Robert R.C. Crofton and Eliza Armindia Crofton

I was almost four years old when she died and I remember that someone held me above her casket. She was a tiny lady with snow white hair, a hereditary trait of almost all the Crofton's. My great Aunt Lizzie, who was her first of fourteen children, always reminded me of Grandma.

Eliza Armindia McPherson was allegedly born in Perdido, Alabama on September 1, 1869. However, this is a fact we have never proven. We are not even sure that McPherson is the correct spelling; it may have been McPhurson. We believe that her father was a soldier in the Civil War and when Eliza was only one year old, she was given to the care of Sampson Johnson, who lived near the Cross Roads. On October 5, 1881 in Vernon, Florida, Eliza married Robert R.C. Crofton. She was just twelve years old.



Lemuel Curtis (L.C.) Crofton

Eliza and Robert R.C. had fourteen children, thirteen of whom lived to adulthood. All fourteen children were born in or near Vernon, Florida. My grandmother, Minnie Lee Pittman, was the fourth child. She was born on June 17, 1887 in Clarksville, Washington County, Florida and died on November 4, 1972. She is buried next to my grandfather, Jefferson Abijah Pittman, in Pleasant Grove Cemetery.

One of Eliza's children was Lemuel Curtis Crofton, fondly called Uncle Curtis when we were children and later "L.C." I have a copy of the "History of the Crofton Family as told by L.C. Crofton." This document provides a very detailed and descriptive account of many of the early days of Eliza and R.C., including their trip to Nacogdoches, Texas by oxcart.

Eventually my grandparents, Minnie and Jeff, returned to Washington County and lived there for many years. It should be noted that they would live in Washington County for a while, move around Florida while Granddaddy sought work and return to Washington County.

One of their many stays in Washington County was during the *Great Depression* of 1929. My Granddaddy was working in the nearby swamps logging trees. Uncle Bob, also known as Uncle Eddie, was living in Palm Beach, Florida when the market crash came. It has been said that he lost everything he had.

One day Uncle Bob showed up at my Granddaddy's place and asked for $0.20 to buy a couple of packs of cigarettes. He reportedly was dressed in a tuxedo and was driving a Jordan Touring Car. The story goes that he cut the sleeves out of his jacket and the legs off his pants and the backend out of the Touring Car and went to work logging trees. (This story was told to me many times by my Daddy, Grover Millard Pittman, fifth child of Jeff and Minnie.)

Another Crofton story is about my Grandmother Minnie and Grandma Crofton. My daddy was born in Vernon, Florida on September 21, 1913. When he was a little over a year old, Grandma came to see my Grandmother. It is said that she was fifty years old, but I believe she was closer to forty-five or forty-six years old. Her hair was completely white and she was "toting" a baby on her hip. That baby was her last child, Carl Cliston, born October 5, 1914.

One of my favorite Crofton stories is about Uncle Curtis. Uncle Curtis graduated from the University of Florida Law School. He was born in Chipley, Florida on November 21, 1917. He married and moved to Titusville, Florida where he had a law practice until he died. Uncle Curtis also owned a beach house on Titusville Beach. When the U.S. Government began purchasing land in this area, Uncle Curtis negotiated the sale of his beach house on the condition that the government transplant his orange trees into town. The trees were bearing fruit. He sold the fruit and lost less than 10% in the transfer. Allegedly, the moon port at the Kennedy Space Center is on the spot of his beach house.

Uncle Curtis was quite a gentleman and a wonderful man. Once he offered to pay my way to Medical School, buy my books and "see you don't starve." I wanted to go to law school, but the offer didn't stand.

All the family looked forward to visiting with Uncle Curtis. He was a story teller supreme. One day, someone taped his story of the Crofton Family. It is a treasure to have this document, not only in a typed form but also on a DVD with his voice.

Two of Eliza and R.C.'s children eventually moved permanently to Washington County, Florida. Today, Minnie Lee and her sister, Lilley Isabelle, have many descendants living in Northwest Florida.

Minnie and Jeff had six children, four of whom lived in Pensacola. Granddaddy operated Pittman Truck Lines which was located in the area now known as "The Indent" on Intendencia Street in downtown Pensacola. For a while, my Daddy drove a truck for the company.

Grover Pittman married Mary Louise Waltz on February 3, 1934. They had two children, Donna (me) and Caroline. Mary Louise Waltz was the third great granddaughter of Marianna Pingrow Bonifay, one of the pioneers of Pensacola.

I realize when we are young we have no idea what will become so important to us in old age. If I had only known then how precious all these folks would become to me, I would have paid far more attention to them and to their lives.

I am very proud of my family ancestors. My interest in genealogy stemmed from my great Aunt Ella Rupert, who married Col. William B. Wright, whose ancestry is another story. Some of the names in my Family Tree are: (maternal) Waltz, De Rioboo, Bonifay, Rupert and Hampton. Of course, on my father's side are the Pittman's, about whom we don't know much, and Crofton's.

One day we hope to find more information about my great grandfather, William Jackson (Jefferson) Pittman and Eliza Armindia McPherson. There are more aunts, uncles and cousins out there somewhere for me to meet.

Minnie Pittman and her Children
House in background was on Alcaniz Street across from the old Pensacola Diary (The Big Bottle)

Grandma Crofton's Funeral, Pleasant Grove Methodist Cemetery

Benjamin Franklin Kersey
Buried in Rushing Cemetery
Born: January 4, 1847 Died: 1914

By Doris Kersey Buffum, Great Granddaughter of Benjamin F. Kersey Sr.

Benjamin Franklin Kersey was born on a farm on a cold January day in 1847 in Eufaula, Barbour County, Alabama, the third child of Doctor Stephen Adkinson Kersey and Mary (?Peace or ?Stewart) Kersey. Ben was a country boy and had only worked on the family farm, but Dr. Kersey educated his children to read and write. According to family lore, Ben was always anxious to read the newspaper that his father would sometimes bring home.

Young Ben was very unhappy with the rumbles of The War Between The States. On May 8, 1862 at the age of 15, Ben walked to Halls Mills, Alabama and joined the 56th Alabama, Cavalry Regiment, Partisan Rangers, Company E. The 56th was brigaded under the command of General Samuel W. Ferguson. During the War, the regiment was sent north to Georgia. It served on the flank of the Army during the Dalton-Atlanta campaign. The regiment did a great service for the Confederate Army and then moved to Tennessee to join with General John Bell Hood where it turned to harass the Union General, William T. Sherman.

They fought in the trenches of Savannah, and operated near Augusta, and only 150 strong, they then moved into the Carolinas and was surrendered at Greensboro, on April 26, 1865.

Ben was wounded at surrender when a Union soldier hit Ben in the head with the butt of a rifle, fracturing his skull and blinding him in his left eye. At the time of this writing it is not known to this writer where the 56th Alabama Soldiers were kept as prisoners of war. Ben's pension papers tell that he was in Georgia when the war ended. The pension papers also tell that Ben did not receive proper medical care for his wounds.

According to Ben's application for the War Pension, he contracted measles, further hindering healing of the wound and the blindness in his left eye. Due to days without food and a very poor diet, he also developed scurvy, which caused Ben to lose most of his teeth.

Benjamin F. Kersey was paroled at the Headquarters of the 16th Union Army Corps, Office of the Provost Marshall, Montgomery, Alabama on May 16, 1865. He had to swear an oath that would not bear arms against the United States of America.

At the age of 18, Ben returned home to Barbour County, where his father Dr. Kersey doctored him but, Ben never fully recovered from the wounds and his illness from being a prisoner of war. According to Ben's Pension papers, he never regained sight in his left eye and the measles left his heart weak.

When Ben returned home to the family farm, there was nothing left of what he had left behind before the War. The Union Army had confiscated the animals and destroyed and burned everything in sight, including the family home. The Kersey family was living in makeshift housing.

On October 31, 1866 Ben married his childhood sweetheart, Samantha Elizabeth Harrell who was born in 1850. Samantha lies beside Ben in death somewhere in Rushing Cemetery. Her death date is not known, due to the destruction of the tombstones.

In 1867 Dr. Kersey sold his practice to Dr. T. J. Davis of Goshen Hill, Alabama. According to family lore, Dr. Stephen Kersey had negotiated with the U.S. Government to doctor the

Seminole Indians in Florida. Later census records find the family, all but Benjamin, in Manatee, County, near Tampa, Florida.

Somewhere near that time frame, the Kersey family packed up and left Alabama. They got as far as Pensacola, Florida and had to leave Ben and Samantha. Ben was in such bad health that he could not travel any farther.

Dr. Kersey and family stayed in Pensacola for as long as they could and then had to leave Ben and Samantha behind with the promise that as soon as Ben regained his strength that he would follow his family to the Tampa area. The 1870 Census finds the family settled in Manatee County, where some of the Kersey descendents still live at the time of this writing.

Benjamin Kersey stayed in Pensacola until August 1905 when President Theodore Roosevelt granted him 148 acres of land on Pensacola Bay, known as Red Fish Point, Santa Rosa County.

The Kersey Family and the Rushing Family land joined, making them neighbors. I do not know how the cemetery became known as Rushing Cemetery. I can only assume that Charles Rushing owned the land where three acres of cemetery once was. The Kersey's and the Rushing's intermarried, making them an extended family.

On July 28, 1936 the State Of Florida Comptrollers Office in Tallahassee sent a Mr. H.T. D'Alemberte an application for the family to receive a Confederate Tombstone for Benjamin Kersey. The tombstone was probably placed in Rushing Cemetery on Ben's grave between 1936 and 1940. It is my belief that the Cemetery was destroyed sometime in the late 1940's or early 1950's.

All of the tombstones were destroyed with the exception of Ben's. It had been placed with the Chase Cemetery tombstones at Ft. Pickens.

I was volunteering with Norman Simon at the Historical Society when I ran across B. F. Kersey's name in a little booklet called, "The Echo," 1980 Edition. It listed Ben as being buried in the Chasefield Cemetery. I got other relatives involved and between us we realized that this was our B. F. Kersey's tombstone, and that it did not belong in a State Park.

We got in touch with other grand-children of Benjamin F. Kersey, who remembered, as they called it, "The cemetery across the Bay." They took us right to the cemetery. That is when we discovered that the other tombstones were missing. The fence had been torn down and so had the name that hung above the cemetery that named it Rushing Cemetery.

We had a battle on our hands because a subdivision was about to be built. The State of Florida got involved. The only way that we could prove there had been a cemetery there was a baby slab and a buried tombstone of Walter Turner (see bottom page 9), b. Dec. 18, 1887 and died Dec. 1933—Ben Kersey's son-in-law. There was much ado about the whole thing. Richard Jernigan, who was cataloging cemeteries for Santa Rosa County, got involved and helped us to establish that there had been a cemetery in this location at one time. The state did award us an 80' x 80' plot to claim as Rushing Cemetery. The family member who had literally taken possession of Ben's tombstone never returned it to Rushing Cemetery.

Learning of this family member's death, I started searching for the tombstone. I found it and had it repaired and in 1998 I returned it to the 80' x 80' plot that the state gave us to use as a cemetery. It does not sit over Ben's grave, nor does it sit side by side with my great grandmother Samantha, or some of their children's headstones, but at least it is back in the vicinity of where it belongs. Ben and his family deserve better.

I am currently working on the names and dates of other people buried in Rushing Cemetery and, hopefully, one day I will get it finished and transcribed for the our new library. There are a lot more people buried there than are listed on a Rock by Ben's tombstone.

The Garcon Point Bridge empties into what used to be Ben Kersey's and the Rushing's land. As I drive across the bridge and know that my family once lived there and thought they would be safely buried there, it tugs at my heart to know that I could not save their final resting place. RIP Grandpa. Maybe one day the other tombstones will be found by a diver on an afternoon dive in the Bay.

Respectfully Submitted In Memory of Benjamin F. Kersey Sr. his family and those buried in Rushing Cemetery.

—Doris Kersey Buffum, buffum2@bellsouth.net

Walter Robinson Turner

The tombstone in the adjacent photo is that of Walter Robinson Turner born December 18, 1887, died December 7, 1933, buried in Rushing Cemetery, Santa Rosa County, Florida. This tombstone was found with the aid of several of Walter's descendants. Walter's son Emmett remembered exactly where the grave was located in Rushing Cemetery and went right to it, even though the tombstone was missing. A careful search of the area found the tombstone buried just beneath the ground under the debris of what was left of the fence to the cemetery. Walter's granddaughter, Sylvia Turner, leaned the tombstone against a nearby pine tree. Pictures were made to document that this was indeed the final resting place of Walter Turner. It took several days to get the proper authorities to come and document that a cemetery once existed on the property. Upon returning to Rushing Cemetery, the tombstone was no longer there. No one knows what happened to it.

—Doris Kersey Buffum, buffum2@bellsouth.net

Thomas Hannah of Pensacola and Vernon—1831-1903: Statesman during War and Reconstruction

By Jayne Lipe, jayne@lipe.ws

Members of the Florida House of Representatives on the Capitol Steps – 1875

Photo from the Florida Legislature's Reference Collection, Call Number Rc00834.

Names of all the men are not known, so Thomas Hannah cannot be identified.

The Hannah Family of Early Pensacola. When Thomas Hannah was born in 1831, his world was in a state of confusion. Twenty years earlier, when Spain governed Florida, his father, Mathew, had sailed to Pensacola from Lincoln, England, to work for the British traders at the House of Forbes, successor to the powerful Panton Leslie Company. Mathew was only 24, but he had been educated at Lincoln College, Oxford, and knew several languages including Spanish. He quickly learned the Creek and Choctaw languages from the Indians who provided deerskins to the House of Forbes, and his English education had prepared him well for translations and company dealings with the Spanish government. Mathew lived through much intrigue and danger during the War of 1812 and the Creek Indian War. All that was over when the Spanish finally left Pensacola and Florida became a United States territory in 1821.

Two years later, Mathew's wife Sarah, fell ill and died, leaving him with a young son. Although he soon met and married a young Spanish girl named Florensa Paula Noverta Vidal, with whom he would have seven more children, times were very hard. After almost a hundred years of profitable operations, the "company" business was failing due to Indian unrest and the new government. In fact, The House of Forbes finally closed its doors in 1830. A few months later, Florensa and Mathew, now unemployed, welcomed their second child. Mathew wrote in the family Bible, *Thomas Hannah was born about 14 miles from Pensacola on the night preceding the 14th of January, 1831.*

All did not go smoothly for the Hannah family during Thomas' early life. His father was no longer employed by the House of Forbes and the school he had established lost many pupils whose families were leaving the area because they feared problems with the Indians. Mathew had three young children and a wife to support. Additional turmoil enveloped the Pensacola area with President Andrew Jackson's attempts to complete the removal of the southeastern Indian tribes from Georgia and Florida to Indian Territory. There was violent resistance from the Indians and a second Indian War began in earnest. Amid all this upheaval, Mathew always managed to set a fine example and emphasize the importance of a good education to his entire family.

Growing up. When Thomas was only a toddler, Mathew Hannah decided to leave Pensacola. He moved his family to Thomastown, Georgia, and later to Columbus. His attempts to start newspapers there were not successful. By the time Thomas was nine; his growing family was back in Pensacola. One of Thomas' childhood playmates was a boy about his age, Isaiah Eiland (I.E.) Allen, whose mother and Tom's were close friends. Several times Tom and Lorensa Hannah stayed with I.E.'s family when traveling back and forth to Bluff Springs to see Mathew who was teaching school there. Both boys were serious scholars and enjoyed each others' company. In later years, Professor I.E. Allen became a teacher and was Superintendent of Schools in Santa Rosa County.

A family of his own. The year 1849 represented a major turning point for Thomas Hannah. He had met the young woman he wanted to marry. She was Mary Shorter, the daughter of a prominent Southern family that had founded Shorter College in Rome, Georgia. Thomas was only 19 and Mary 17 when they married. At the end of the same year, Thomas' father Mathew died suddenly of pneumonia.

The Hannahs move to Vernon. After the great sadness of losing his father, young Thomas and his bride decided to move to Vernon, in Washington County, Florida, to start their family. They had several children in the early years of their marriage. Thomas started out as a merchant, but he soon had an interest in politics, possibly encouraged by his wife's family that included several Alabama lawmakers as well as two former governors of Georgia.

Thomas Hannah, Legislator, and the Civil War years. This was no ordinary time in American politics, as the problems that resulted in the Civil War loomed large over the political landscape. Thomas surely found that politics in the South were difficult during the years before the Civil War, with strong opinions and emotions about issues like secession and slavery circulating in the citizenry. Still, just as the War was getting underway in 1862, he ran for the Florida House of Representatives and won election. He went to Tallahassee as the sole representative from Washington County, beginning a political career that lasted several years during the War and Reconstruction.

It is difficult to tell how or whether Thomas' upbringing might have influenced him when it came to public service at such an unusual time. His father had been involved with politicians in Pensacola, both the Spanish governors and the U.S. territorial government. Mathew had served as tax collector of the City of Pensacola for two years and was appointed twice as the Escambia County Coroner by the governor of the Florida Territory. He also served on several juries, both grand and petit, in the courts of the territory. But he never ran for office.

Thomas' first two terms in the Florida legislature, 1862 and 1863, were served during the Civil War. The meetings were held at the Capitol in Tallahassee, a 200 mile round trip for Thomas. The expenses authorized for him for the 1st and 2nd Sessions of the Twelfth General Assembly (1862) were $165.00 and $106.80, respectively. Some members got a little more, some a little less. Among their first actions in 1862, the legislators exempted themselves from Confederate military service. This protected Thomas, who was 31, from conscription, the law that required white men between the ages of 18 and 35 to serve in the Confederacy's military.

The 1862 session was a very busy one because secession and Florida's joining the Confederate States of America the previous year had required a new constitution for Florida.

Now Florida's legislature had to write new laws that addressed the duties that were left to the States by the new Confederate constitution. Thomas was reelected by Washington County in 1863.

Local leadership in Washington County. By the time of the 1870 census, the Hannah family owned substantial real estate and Thomas Hannah declared that he was a farmer. By this time he was head of a family of ten. His eight children, five girls and three boys, ranged in age from 17 to 2. Actually, Thomas Hannah may have had a farm, but he was a public servant during the 1870s.

In 1872 Thomas was elected a Washington County commissioner. Hannah's fellow commissioners were Walter Gainer, Miles Mountain, and F.W. Edwards. Thomas Hannah was twice elected Tax Collector of Washington County and served from 13 Mar 1874 ad interim until he resigned on 9 Feb 1878. The tax collector's job was hardly the safest position in Washington County. Less than five years earlier, the Tax Collector and his wife had been killed by an armed mob which had risen to prevent the execution of the new revenue laws.

Then, like his boyhood friend, I.E. Allen, of Santa Rosa County, Thomas Hannah was elected to terms as Washington County School Superintendent for 1873, 1874 and 1876. He and the other school board members were paid $2 per day to attend meetings. Thomas and his family were very involved in education in Washington County. His wife, Mary, was a teacher at the Abigail School, and his brother, Phillip Hannah, was a trustee for the Wise Landing School.

In an article, "The Battle over Uniformity of Textbooks in Florida, 1868-1963," Marian Watkins Black wrote:

> The Washington County School Board had selected and supervised the sale of a series of texts as early as 1876. In 1877 Supt. Thomas Hannah reported at length to his county school board on the need for proper books and the failure of parents to provide them, saying, 'Parents are careless and almost indifferent...and seem to think it is sufficient that their children go to school whether provided with books...or anything else, and that he would suggest that some measure be adopted by the board to compell (sic) persons who are able to provide their children with necessary books and those unable be reported by their teachers and provided from the county library.' Again (Hannah) wrote that at one school pupils were destitute of books, and that those on hand were of such diversified character as to make it impractical to organize the school into classes, thus retarding materially the progress of the pupils.

Back to the Capitol During Reconstruction. In addition to all the duties Thomas had assumed locally, he ran for legislative office again. He was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 1873, 1874 and 1875. The Civil War was over and Reconstruction had resulted in a new mix of legislators in Tallahassee. There were now those who were informally called "Carpetbaggers,"—men from the North, many of whom had served in the Union Army.

There were several black members. There were Republicans (split into two factions—Conservatives and Radicals) and Democrats. In 1873 the Republicans were in the majority, but in 1874, for the first time since the end of the Civil War, Democrats won the most seats. That year a powerful organization of crooked Republicans called the Ring had attempted unsuccessfully to prevent the black men who won elections in two counties from taking their seats and the anti-Ring legislators were aware that there could be more trouble ahead.

In 1875, Thomas Hannah was elected to the Florida House of Representatives for his last term. It was a dangerous time. The first business of the Assembly would deal with the

organization of the two houses—holding elections for the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. A week before the meeting, caucuses were held every night in the Governor's office by the Republicans, the Ring counting how every Republican member was planning to vote in the Speaker's and Senate President's elections. These outcomes would affect the Ring's plans to elect the present Governor, Marcellus Stearns, to the United States Senator's position. The Ring's plans and Stearns' name had to be kept secret because most of the anti-Ring legislators disliked him and would never support a plan to provide Stearns with the U.S. Senator's position. The Democrats hoped the earlier attempted frauds by the Ring would in effect make it possible for Democrats, with the help of Black Republicans, to elect their candidates for Speaker, Senate President, and United States Senator.

The Journal *of the Assembly of the State of Florida for the Eighth Session of the Legislature* in 1875 details the election of the Speaker of the House:

> When the Eighth Session of the Legislature began at the Capitol in Tallahassee on Tuesday, January 5, 1875, members were sworn in and immediately proceeded to the election of the Speaker. Four men (there were no women in the Assembly) were nominated and a secret ballot was taken. No one got the required majority so there was no election. A second ballot got the same result, no election. There was a motion to adjourn which barely failed. A third ballot resulted in no election. A motion to adjourn barely passed.
>
> The next day a fourth vote was taken. Thomas Hannah had not been nominated, but received 9 of the 51 votes. There was no majority, so no election. Then there was a motion that Mr. Malachi Martin (the former Speaker) take the chair as temporary Speaker. Martin was very unpopular with the anti-Ring members and the Democrats so a substitute motion that the Assembly proceed to the election of a permanent Speaker was made, and that motion carried. The fifth ballot ensued, which yielded no majority, so no election. The Assembly voted to adjourn for the day.
>
> On Thursday, January 7, there was a quorum of 50 present. Thomas Hannah was nominated by the Dade County representative, Rev. William Watkin Hicks. The sixth ballot for Speaker was taken. Thomas Hannah received 30 votes (60%) versus 19 votes for the second place candidate and was declared Speaker of the Assembly.

Hannah elected Speaker. Thomas Hannah must have been nervous about his victory. Although he was qualified for the position, he came from a small county. In fact, no Washington County legislator had ever been elected Speaker of the House. He was a Democrat. It would be the first time a Democrat had held the Speaker's seat since the end of the War. The situation in the capital city, Tallahassee, was very unsettled, with the corrupt Republican governor, Marcellus Stearns (even called "His Excellency, the Florida Ass" by Ulysses S. Grant) and his Ring henchmen plotting their next moves.

If Hannah was nervous, he did not show it. Immediately after his election, he accepted the victory with humility and confidence by making this short speech:

> Gentlemen of the Assembly, I thank you most heartily for the confidence evidently reposed in me by this election; and in entering upon the duties of the responsible position to which by your kindness I have been elevated, it is perhaps expected that I should say something by way of defining my course as your presiding officer. In doing this, gentlemen, I propose to be plain and brief. While acting as your Speaker I shall try to be impartial in the discharge of my duties, and endeavor to recognize no party, section or class, and shall exert every means in my power to reconcile differences and promote the general good of all. And it is highly important that we should strictly adhere to the rules by which we are to be governed, I shall look to you for aid, and earnestly desire your cooperation in enforcing them to the end that order may be preserved and business despatched (sic), with a due regard for perfection in our work and a speedy termination of the

session. Let us also enter upon a policy of retrenchment, and by reducing the expenses of government as far as practicable, afford relief to our people.

In conclusion, gentlemen, permit me again to thank you for the distinguished honor conferred upon me by this election and to express the hope that your expectations will not be disappointed.

During Hannah's term as Speaker some important legislation was passed. Amendments to bills passed by the former legislature were adopted including one abolishing annual sessions and creating biennial sessions. But Thomas Hannah was serving his term as speaker during troubled times. The elections immediately following his as speaker—those for President of the Senate and the U. S. Senator--were even more hotly contested, involving gunfights among the members and many fraudulent schemes devised by the hated Ring to get the federal office for its leader, Marcellus Stearns. A combination of Democrats and anti-Ring Republicans was able to stop the Ring's plans for good. In his book, *Carpet Bag Rule in Florida*, John Wallace, a black man and a senator, said, *After a session of fifty-two days the two houses adjourned on the 26th of February. This legislature sounded the death-knell of the last carpet bag law-making power in Florida.*

Return to Pensacola. Thomas Hannah did not serve again in the Florida legislature. He returned to his farm in Vernon and turned his attentions back to his wife and nine children for ten years. In 1886 he moved back to his birthplace, Pensacola, and built a large house on the corner of Gregory and Tarragona Streets with 4 downstairs rooms and 3 upstairs rooms. The *Pensacola Commercial* reported that it *will be an ornament to that part of the city.*

The same year Hannah built a two story building on Palafox wharf, opposite the ship chandlery of John W. Bell. *The Pensacolian* said, "The building is to be 25 x 50, and judging from the foundation, which is massive, it is to be built for all time. Mr. Kehee has the contract hence we may look for some pretty work."

Thomas Hannah had some timber interests at Point Washington and, in 1892, he sold 131 acres at Half Moon Bluff for a sawmill site. He was an active member of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Pensacola and remained interested in politics. In 1900 he was endorsed by the *Pensacola Daily News* as a delegate for the Democratic County Convention.

Thomas Hannah's children see success in Pensacola. Thomas and Mary Hannah saw that their children were well educated and had every opportunity. By 1900, William John and Thomas V. were physicians; Phillip Eli was a druggist (and later described himself on a passport application as a Capitalist). The older daughters, Laura and Mary, were educated young women, taking part in a Pensacola women's literary circle of the day, The Nomads, with their sisters-in-law. Florida married a druggist, William Everitt, who worked with her brothers at Hannah Bros. pharmacy. When Thomas Hannah died on 26 December 1903, he and his Mary had been married for 54 years and they and their nine children had lived through interesting and turbulent times in West Florida. Thomas had devoted his many talents and education to serving the public for many years. His unexpected term as Speaker of the House began an unbroken string of 122 years of Democratic speakers. Thomas Hannah was buried at St. John's Cemetery and his children donated stained glass windows to the Pensacola Methodist Church in his memory.

As his family grieved, the older members must have thought of Thomas' father, Mathew Hannah, who had arrived in Colonial Pensacola 98 years before as a young adventurer, and struggled so hard to establish his family during his own turbulent times. And how proud Mathew would have been of all his son's accomplishments in the family's new land—from outstanding local leadership all the way to success as a strong, talented peacemaker during troubled times as Speaker of the House for his young state.

Note: Anyone wishing to see the sources may contact the author directly.

Quotes To Note

In all of us there is a hunger, marrow-deep, to know our heritage, to know who we are and where we came from.
—Alex Haley

In every conceivable manner, the family is link to our past, bridge to our future.
—Alex Haley

To forget one's ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without a root.
—Chinese Proverb

Those who do not look upon themselves as a link connecting the Past with the Future do not perform their duty to the world.
—Daniel Webster

Some family trees have beautiful leaves, and some have just a bunch of nuts. Remember, it is the nuts that make the tree worth shaking.
—Author Unknown

A man who thinks too much about his ancestors is like a potato—the best part of him is underground.
—Henry S. F. Cooper

Parazine's of Pensacola

By David L Talley, dltalley@sisna.com

In researching the Parazine's of Pensacola, I found at least twenty-five different spellings of their name. In this article, I will use Parazine, except in direct quotes from official records. The most helpful records on the earliest Parazine's came from the Catholic Church of New Orleans, and were passed on to me by two Parazine descendants: Patricia Ann Parazine Hector and Marilyn Thomas Hansen.

The record that gives us the most insight into the family is as follows: *Domingo Parisini native of Milan, Italy, son of Carlos Parissini and Martha Supana also native of Milan, Married September 2, 1793, Marcela de Lara, widow of Hipolito Palacios, native of Santa Cruz of Tenerife Canary Islands, daughter of Agustin de Lara and Maria Carsalla natives of Tenerifa. Witnesses: Fr. De Peleoganzalo, Cure of the Church, Joseph de Rueda and Carlos Panguinet.*

In an article entitled "Louisiana's Italian Immigrants Prior to 1870," by Russell M. Magriaghi, he points out that most Italian Immigrants first came to New York and then a few of them moved to New Orleans. He mentions that one of the immigrants was Domingo Parisigny, a member of the Flanders Infantry involved in the campaigns at Mobile and Pensacola.

Other service records indicate that Domingo Parazine arrived in New Orleans around 1774 at the age of 18 years. That date and age was calculated from a service record dated December 1802. In that 1802 service record, his age was given as 46 years and he had been in the Spanish Army for 24 years. The record also mentions that he had participated in the campaigns of Mobile in 1780 and Pensacola in 1781.

At the time of Domingo Parazine's arrival in New Orleans, General Bernardo de Galvez was the governor of the Spanish Colony of Louisiana. He was also the Commander of the Spanish Army. In February of 1780 Galvez led the attack on Mobile. When the British surrendered in March of 1780, Galvez was promoted to Field Marshall and was given command of all Spanish operations in America. The Spanish Army occupied the forts and maintained their control of Mobile. It is not clear, but possible that Domingo Parazine was one of the troops that remained in Mobile.

In March of 1781 a two month siege on Pensacola began. Galvez had ordered troops stationed in New Orleans and Mobile to join in the attack on Pensacola. Domingo Parazine was one of those troops and on May 8, 1781 the British surrendered Pensacola.

Fort Barrancas had been built by the British in 1763. When the Spanish captured Pensacola they constructed their own fortification, called San Carlos de Barranca on the site.

In the early 1800's Domingo Parazine was moved to Pensacola by the Spanish Army and he became one of the earlier settlers of Pensacola. He evidently was active in the community and we have records that prove four of his children also made their home in Pensacola.

Note on Militia Unit of Pensacola:
Officers and non-commissioned officers from the Louisiana Infantry Regiment served as the headquarters unit and cadre for the militia. 1n 1805 those for Pensacola included First Adjutant Antonio Cruzat; Second Adjutant Francisco de Leiva: drummer Antonio de Roxas: First sergeants Domingo Douse, ***Domingo Paragini****, and Juan Dominquez; and corporals first-class Vicente Chula, Romulo Marin and Manuel Carom.*

Domingo's daughter Maria Martha Parazine married Alexandra Posey (Posse) (Pose) of Catalonia, Spain. They appear in the 1820 Spanish Census of Pensacola. Their daughter, Benita married Julian Lavelle, son of Charles Lavelle and Mariana Pingrow Bonifay. The descendants of Benita and Julian can still be found in the Pensacola area under the surnames of Rocheblave, Caro, Commyns, etc.

Another daughter of Domingo, Elena Marta Theressa Parazine married Francisco Touard of Navarra, France. Their descendants also can still be found in Pensacola. The spelling of the name became Touart.

Domingo's son Joaquin Parazine married Leonora Jackson on 2 Jan 1828 in Escambia Co. FL. No records of them having children were found. Joaquin (Juan) Parazine and his brother Luis were two of the signers of a recommendation sent to President Andrew Jackson (Dated 15 Jan 1832) recommending Col. James Gadsden for Governor of Florida.

Domingo's son Luis Constantino Parazine married Maria Bonifay, daughter of Joseph Bonifay Jr. and Maria Delores Gonzalez. Maria was also the granddaughter of Mariana Pingrow Bonifay. Escambia Co. Marriage Records dated 23 Dec 1838 list them as Lewis Parizine & Mary Bonifay. They were married in St. Michael's Catholic Church.

Soon after the marriage of Maria and Luis, records indicate that they became a part of the household of Joseph and Delores Bonifay. Joseph owned land in both Santa Rosa and Escambia counties and made his home in the Gull Point area near the Bonifay Brickyard. Joseph Bonifay Jr. along with his brother Manuel and brother in law John de LaRue owned much of the land around Gull Point.

Joseph Bonifay died in February 1840, leaving Delores as the head of a large family. The 1840 US Census listed only the name of the head of the household, and then gave the age range of those in that household. If you identify the possibilities of those in the household of Delores Bonifay in the 1840 US census, it appears that Luis Parazine, his wife Maria Bonifay Parazine and their first child are in Delores' household. They do not appear anywhere else in the 1840 census.

When the 1850 US Census was taken, the names and ages of all occupants of the household were given. In that census Delores Bonifay is again the head of the household, still in the Gull Point area. Living with Delores were eight of her children, including Maria Bonifay Parazine. Maria's four children; Charles, Francis, Laura and George were also listed. Missing from the list was Maria husband, Luis (Lewis) Parazine. A continued search of the 1850 census found Luis and his brother Joaquin living with Carmelita Posey, age 80, in the Innerarity Point area of Escambia County. Why Maria and Luis were living apart is unknown.

Carmelita Posey has been a mystery to all that have researched the Bonifay – Parazine families. She appears again in the 1870 census as 97 years old and living with James W. and Clara Rocheblave Caro. Clara was the great granddaughter of Maria Martha Parazine and Alexandro Posey. It is apparent that Carmelita was somehow related to Alexandro Posey.

One can only imagine what happened to the family during the ten years between 1850 and 1860. Delores Bonifay, Luis Parazine and some other members of the family must have passed away. Some of Delores and Joseph Bonifay's children married and do appear in the 1860 US Census of Pensacola. Maria (Mary) Bonifay Parazine and two of her children, Charles and George, are listed in the 1860 US Census of Mobile Alabama.

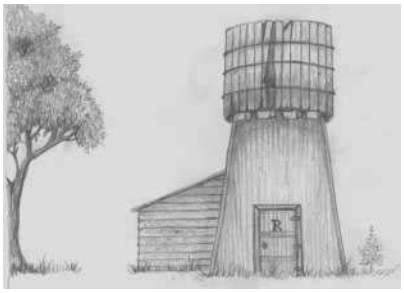
Soon after the 1860 census was taken, the Civil War began and many Pensacola residents left Pensacola for safer areas in South Alabama. After the war, in the 1870 US Census we find Maria Parazine and her son George living in Pollard, Escambia Co. AL. Maria is living with her sister Virginia Bonifay Crary. Maria's son Francis Parazine is also in Pollard, AL. He had joined the Confederate Army around 1863.

Soon after the 1870 census was taken, Maria Parazine and her son George W. Parazine moved back to the Ferry Pass area of North East Pensacola. All of the land accumulated by Maria's father Joseph Bonifay was now owned by other people or had been abandoned during the Civil War. According to abstract records, George W. Parazine obtained a large plot of land from the Pensacola Land Association. That land was located in the area of present day Olive Road and Tippin Avenue. Around that time George met his wife to be, Jemima Farley Everett the daughter of Nathan Everett, a Steam Engine Engineer from New Jersey. Before the wedding, George built a house for his bride to be. The house which was finished in 1874 has been the home of several generations of Parazine's to this date of 2010. Although there have been modification, the main part of the house is still as it was in 1874 and is located at 3345 Parazine Street near Tippin Avenue.

Maria Bonifay Parazine lived with her son George until her death between 1880 and 1885. She is buried in the Robert's cemetery, Creighton Road, Pensacola, FL.

George and Jemima Parazine were the parents of ten children: Charles Francis Parazine who married Alma Beal; Nathan Lake Parazine, who married Georgia Stillman Fairchilds; Margaret Ann Parazine, Laura Ameila Parazine, George W. Parazine Jr.; Zoe Bell Parazine, who married Walker H. Clark; Edward W. Parazine who died at age 2; John E. Parazine, who died at the age of seven months; William Leonard Parazine, who married Jessie Othelia Scott; and Clyde Everett Parazine, who married (1) Katie Bell Gates and (2) Ethel Harvey Jones.

During those years that George and Jemima Parazine were raising their children they made a living as truck farmers. However, several of the Parazine men worked in the booming timber business that sprang up along Escambia Bay. George W. Parazine Sr. passed away on December 13, 1913. At that time, Geroge W Parazine Jr. became the person that would keep the Parazine legacy going. Although George Jr. and two of his sisters, Margaret and Laura never married, they lived out their lives in the house that George Sr. built, and it would become the place that all Parazine descendants would gather from time to time.



In the early 1920's George Parazine Jr. started a dairy business on the property he had inherited from his father. Over the years he added more land and became a successful businessman. The Parazine Dairy delivered milk to many of the residents of Pensacola. The dairy had its own electrical power plant and a water system that featured a large gravity fed water tank. The water tank stills stands near the Parazine house, however, it was heavily damaged by hurricane Ivan.

Parazine descendants have known for generations that they were direct descendants of Mariana Pingrow Bonifay, an early settler of the Pensacola area. Much has been written about Mariana, and a monument honoring her has been placed on East Garden Street near St. Michael's Cemetery.

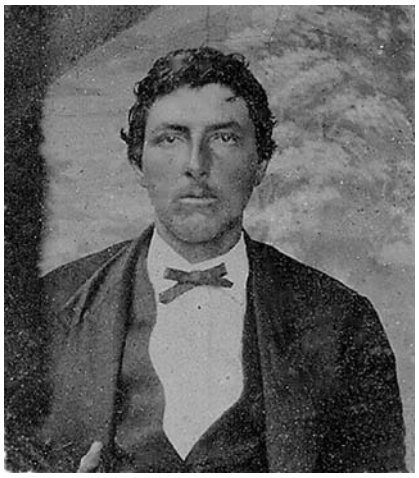
Those Parazine descendents only learned recently that they were direct descendants of another colorful and early settler of Pensacola. An Italian Immigrant by the name of Domingo Parisigny (Parazine). He came to America as a young man and became a career soldier in the Spanish Army. Under the command of General Galvez, his service and participation in the Spanish Army campaigns that drove the British out of the Gulf Coast area is recognized as "qualified" patriotic service by both the Daughters & Sons of the American Revolution.

·Above water tower sketch by Rev. Randolph

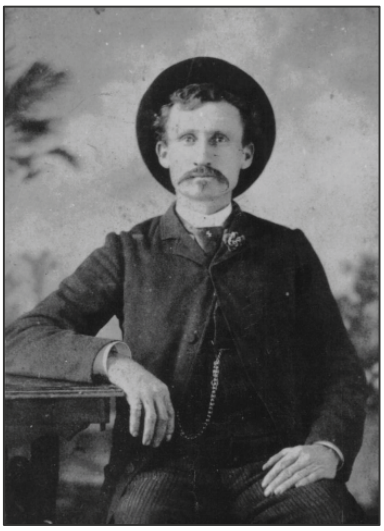
·Author has reunion photo; some of the names of those attending are: Mrs. Georgia Fairchilds Parazine; Margaret Parazine; Mrs. Elizabeth Scott; Geroge W. Parazine Jr.; Laura Parazine; Jessie Scott Parazine; Mamie Parazine Beagles; Bill and Nellie Parazine.

➢ Maria Bonifay Parazine

George W. Parazine, Sr. ➢



John B. Vaughn and Public Health in Florida



By John C. Bush, jbush3838@charter.net

John B. Vaughn was 37 years old when he took his seat as Escambia County's newly elected delegate to the Florida House of Representatives. The legislature convened on February 5, 1889 for a special session called by Governor Francis P. Fleming for the purpose of authorizing and creating a State Board of Health and authorizing creation of county Boards of Health across the state. It was Governor Fleming's first official act after assuming office.

Newly elected members of the House were enrolled, and John B. Vaughn's name appeared for the first of three terms as the Representative from Escambia County. According to information he provided at the time, he was residing in a community named Saltmarsh. John L. Gaskin of Bradford County was elected Speaker of the House, the presiding officer.

The State Constitution of 1885 provided for both a state and county boards of health, but this provision had not been implemented. By 1889 there was public sentiment for complying with the constitution, especially in the coastal counties, where serious Yellow Fever epidemics had broken out in 1886 and 1887. This sentiment apparently was pronounced in Escambia County, and it received Vaughn's special interest. One outbreak in 1874 at Pensacola had caused 354 deaths among the city's 1,400 residents. Federal authorities apparently had threatened to declare martial law and seize the city if effective disease control was not implemented. In response, the Escambia County government established a Board or Committee of Health, headed by Dr. Robert L. Bryans. The committee registered survivors of yellow fever, instituted quarantine lines around the city, and issued "passports" to control the flow of people in and out of the city, in an attempt to restrict the spread of the disease.

During the organizational work of the legislature, a special joint committee of the House and Senate was established to work out and coordinate agreements between the two bodies as each one passed legislation. John Vaughn was appointed to that committee, reflecting his standing as an advocate for the establishment of a Board of Health. He was also named to the House Committee on Public Health and to a procedural committee of the House assigned to assure that the final copy of enacted legislation accurately reflected the actual action of the body. These three assignments put the new lawmaker in a position to exercise considerable influence. Over the next several days a half-dozen separate pieces of legislation needed to establish, authorize and fund a State Board of Health moved swiftly through the legislative process, thanks in large part to the House-Senate Joint Committee on Public Health on which Vaughn served. On February 16, the House took note of their diligence in a special resolution of thanks addressed specifically to the named members of that committee. It was noted that they "have discharged the highly important duties imposed upon them by this house in a most creditable and highly efficient manner, thus relieving this house of much arduous labor in the compilation and enactment of a law tending toward the creation of a State Board of Health."

During the House's consideration of this legislation, Vaughn was frequently on the floor making motions and comments in support of this progressive proposal. In the end, the House and

Senate approved the establishment of a State Board of Health, but were unable to reach agreement on authorizing county boards. That issue would await another day.

Taking the Next Step

The legislature met in regular session on April 2, 1889. Among the first items of business was placing members of various committees of the House. John Vaughn was assigned to three committees: Committee on Fisheries, on Public Health, and on Legislative Expenses. A few days later, a seat on the Committee on Public Roads and Highways was added to his responsibilities.

For the most part, the first two weeks were consumed with organizational matters and political wrangling over issues that, from this distance, are difficult to understand. On April 15, however, John Vaughn offered the first piece of significant legislation for which he was the primary sponsor. Known as House Bill 101, it would "provide for appointment of Boards of Health in the various counties." Once again, he would exert leadership on issues of public health in Florida. His proposed legislation was referred to the Committee on Public Health for review and refinement.

A parallel proposal, Senate Bill 34, was beginning to move through the state Senate and, as it happened, that chamber voted on the matter first. Consequently, Senate Bill 34 was sent over to the House with a request that the House concur in the Senate action. That bill also was referred to the House Committee on Public Health. Because the Senate action was moving more quickly, Vaughn encouraged his committee to consider it first, which they did, but they proposed some minor changes. With those amendments, SB 34 came to the House floor for a vote, and it was approved. Now it had to go back to the Senate for concurrence with the amendments the House had added. Ultimately, a Joint Committee on Public Health, made up of members from each chamber, reached agreement and on May 31, 1889, "An Act Providing for Appointment of Boards of Health in the Various Counties" was passed. Now the public health system for which John Vaughn and others had worked was established.

Sources

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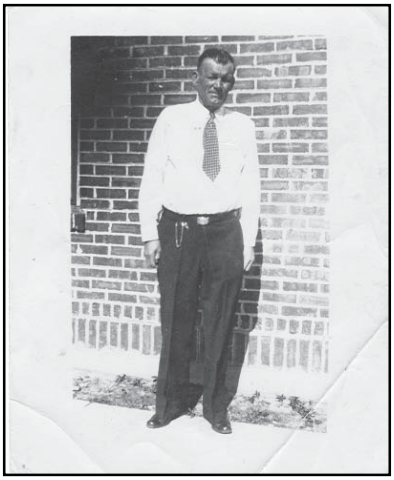
Information provided by Dean DeBolt, University of West Florida, Pensacola where the early papers and correspondence of Dr. Bryan are archived.

JOHN C. BUSH lives in Decatur, Alabama. He is the grandson of John Beasley Vaughn and author of numerous articles about the Vaughn Family of Escambia County, Florida. Email: jbush3838@charter.net

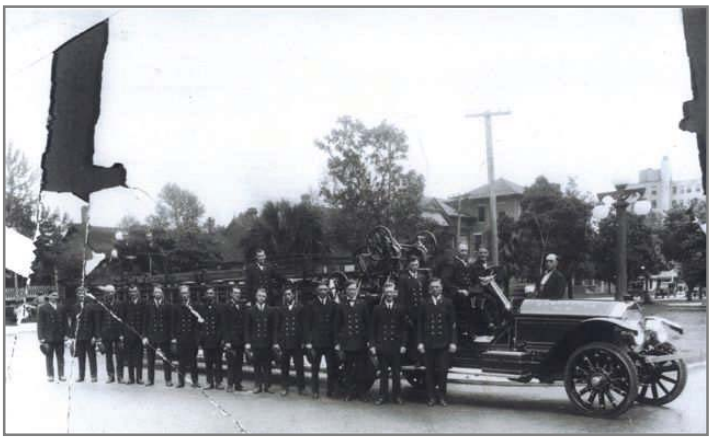
Henry William Brown ~ City Fireman of Pensacola

By Glenda Brown Pace, glendapace1@juno.com



My grandfather, Henry William Brown, joined the Pensacola Fire Department on July 8, 1922 when horses were still being used to pull 'hose wagons' and the first motorized fire truck had been in use about seven years. Pensacola's population was around 38,000 and had about 34 miles of paved streets. By 1927 the fire department headquarters was at 7 South Spring with a station at Commendencia and Zarragossa, where Henry was stationed, one at 1101 North 9th Avenue, and one at 11th Avenue and Chase Street. There were 44 firemen including the chiefs. By 1931 station No. 4 opened at 501 North 'G' where Henry served. Our only family picture of him was made at this location which is a private residence today.

The Pensacola Historical Archives furnished the picture taken in 1924 of a Hook and Ladder truck. Henry is the fourth man from the left. The photo appears to have been taken on Garden Street with the San Carlos Hotel in the background. Maybe someone can verify this. The headquarters were near Spring and Garden Streets.



The department's history goes back over 200 years with volunteer firemen serving the city until the Pensacola Fire Department was formed by the Board of Public Safety on December 31, 1897. One volunteer fire station, called Germania Hall, was formed as early as 1885. Located at the corner of Zarragossa and Jefferson, it became a part of the city fire department and today houses the Quayside Art Gallery.

Walter R. Bicker served as Fire Chief during the 22 years Henry served on the force. Henry retired October 1, 1942. He was a veteran of the Spanish-American War and died in Pensacola in 1944.

This story was finished about 1990 shortly before my dad died. It is an account of one day in the life of two boys in Muscogee about 1916. I suspect all of these events actually occurred; I'm just not sure they all occurred on the same day as in the story. I initially doubted that some of the places described in this story actually existed in Muscogee but have recently met old-time Muscogee residents who have read the story and verify that they recognized all of the places mentioned.

The lighter-than-air period at NAS Pensacola ran from mid-1915 through 1921. During this period, 63 Dirigible Pilots and 15 Balloon Pilots were qualified.

—Jerry Merritt

Tracks

By Herman Arthur Merritt
Contributed by Jerry Merritt

It had been a hot night. I lay wide awake.

Listening. I thought I had heard a noise. Then, there it was again. The soft, easy call of a bob white. It sounded real close, like it might be in the vegetable garden just outside my window. Then it sounded again, but this time there was a flaw in it. I opened the window and looked out. The eastern sky way down low was turning pink, but there wasn't enough light yet to see clearly. Then a low whistle floated across the garden, and a pair of hands reached over the picket fence, and a head popped up. A sprig of red hair sticking up at the back of the head told me it was Zack. In a loud whisper he said to come on out. Closing the window and jumping into my overalls I slipped out the back door.

Zack grabbed my hand and started pulling me along. "Follow me," he whispered. We opened the back gate real easy so as not to make any noise. It had a chain attached to an old iron kettle full of rocks. When you opened the gate the chain pulled the kettle up and when you let go the kettle fell back to the ground pulling the gate shut as it went. When the kettle eased to the ground again, Zack motioned me and started trotting down the hill.

When we got to the hard road he stopped and grinned, his freckles becoming visible in the early morning light. I must have looked puzzled. He pointed toward the ground. "Automobile tracks," he said.

I looked and there they were, the unmistakable print of rubber tires. I had seen them once before so I knew they were real. I asked how he knew they were there. "It came through last night about nine o'clock, but your folks made you go to bed so early you didn't hear it. It made plenty of noise though. I heard it coming across the river bridge. It was moving fast. The two big lanterns on its front were bouncing up and down as it hit the end of the bridge. When it passed my house it had a trail of dust nearly a mile long behind it and I could see a red light shining on its tail end. Boy. You should have heard it - I bet it went a mile every minute." Zack was grinning real hard now. He had one up on me. There was no doubt about it.

I studied the dirt rings on Zack's neck and tried to imagine what the automobile must have looked like trailing dust and throwing light all over the road ahead of it. We followed the tracks on up to the top of the hill being very careful not to ruin them by stepping on them, Zack glorying all the time about being the first to see this rare sight. The sun was peeking up now and

I knew that breakfast would be ready soon so I told Zack to wait for me to eat and I would be right back.

At breakfast I told my Dad about the tire tracks. He smiled. “Yeah, I heard it pass about nine last night. You were already asleep.” Then he told me the State had renewed the cattle dipping law and this was our day to dip so I had better take the old cow up to the vat and run her through. This suited me just fine. Zack and me could take the hard road up there and walk in the tire tracks.

I tied the old cow’s halter rope around my waist and she swayed patiently along behind me as we headed for the dipping vat. By the time we reached the sand beds the tracks were real sharp. While we were studying them, Zack yelled out, “Look. There’s raccoon tracks and look, she had some babies following her. And they go right across the tire tracks. Must have been made just this morning.” Zack straightened up. “They lead over to that ditch there. Let’s have a look.”

I tied the old cow to a pine sapling and we sneaked over and took a look. They were all there - the old mama with her three babies. She was feeling around the edge of the water with her front paws and while we watched, she caught a frog and popped it in her mouth as the little ones were jumping all around her trying to get some of it and making funny little clicking noises.

We watched them for a while then went on to the dipping vat and put the old cow in the chute and I got over the fence and led her up to the entrance and took the rope off and tried to coax her in but she balked. Zack got behind her and pushed, but that just made her sit down. I told him to twist her tail. That got her up. She tried to jump across the vat but landed with a belly buster about halfway, splashing dip all over me. She swam the rest of the way and staggered out swishing her tail and shaking herself. I swung open the gate of the holding pen and she clamored down the ramp and began rubbing against the pine trees and running around through the underbrush.

While I was watching her and wondering what was wrong, my skin, still wet from the dip, began to itch and burn. There was nothing around to wash it off with so I said to Zack, “Let’s get down to the creek. This stuff’s eating me up.” As we were running Zack hollered, “What about the cow?”

“She’ll be home by milking time. Come on.”

I pulled my shirt off so when we got there all I had to do was slip out of my overalls and jump in. I hit the water in a spray of rainbows. The burn and itch stopped as soon as I started rubbing the sand from the creek bottom on my skin.

We took a different trail back to the public road and had just gone a little way when we saw a big pile of pine straw just off the trail. Zack was curious and went over to take a look. He had just started to taking some pine straw off to see what was under it when out jumped a great big old sow and some squealing baby pigs. The piglets charged right between Zack’s legs and before he could do much more than dance around and flap his arms the big pig bowled him over and stood snorting as the piglets circled back and disappeared under the straw pile. When Zack finally got his wits back and began screaming the old sow must have thought it was her babies because she ran back toward them. That gave Zack a chance to scramble up the nearest pine tree. His face was as white as hawk meat. I started laughing at him and the old sow took out after me. I had a

head start and made it up another tree before she hit it with her head and nearly shook me down again. She let out another snort and trotted back toward Zack who was now so high up the pine I could only see his rear end and the soles of his feet.

Shortly, a quiet set in and we began talking through the pine needles to each other while the old sow went from tree to tree grunting and pawing the ground until her babies began to squeal, then she went back and crawled under the straw with them. We decided that this was a good time for us to leave so we slid down to the ground as quietly as we could, eased past the old sow and headed for the road again.

When we got back and found that a horse and wagon had partly ruined our tracks we decided to go on as far as Pierce's Hill anyway and had gone just a little piece when the wagon tracks turned off on a side road and left our tracks in good shape, but when we got to the top of the hill a bunch of old man Pierce's goats were all over the road messing up the tracks. Then we decided to go on down to the railroad crossing at the bottom of the hill and go back home on the railroad tracks which was shorter than going all the way back down the road.

It was getting pretty warm now. The rails were too hot for our bare feet so we climbed down to the pig trail between the railroad and the ditch. The ditch was full of water so we had to walk on the pig trail. I was walking ahead of Zack when he said to wait up.

I stopped and looked back. He was pointing to the other side of the ditch at a small water snake that had a frog in its mouth. The frog was so big that its front and back legs were sticking out of each side of the snake's mouth. As we watched, the little snake turned it around so he had its mouth headed down his gullet and then he started to squeeze. Zack said he bet that little snake would never be able to swallow that frog. It was kicking its hind legs trying to get loose but the snake held on and, little by little, the frog was disappearing as the snake kept squeezing. I looked at Zack. His red hair was stuck to his forehead with sweat and his mouth was working up and down as he watched the snake squeeze and inch its jaws around the frog. Finally the hind legs disappeared. Zack took a long, deep breath like he was tired. I don't know which one had worked the hardest, Zack or the little snake.

It was real hot now as we continued on down the pig trail. The hard packed dirt was burning our bare feet. The path finally headed down across the ditch. When we got in the ditch, the cool water felt so good on our bare feet we decided to walk on down it for a while. There were minnows darting here and there and frogs jumping in and swimming away as we splashed along kicking the cool water ahead of us. Sometimes the small trees on each side met to make a complete cover over the stream like we were in an arbor. Then we came out into the open.

There was one path cut in the embankment leading up to the railroad and another that went up the other side of the ditch that led through some tall bushes that formed a kind of tunnel so low someone would have to crawl on all fours to get through. And straight ahead the ditch widened and got deep and flowed under a short trestle and on down to the creek on the other side. There were lots of pig tracks on both trails leading both ways. We decided to take the one like a tunnel on the left rather than tackle the hot railroad again.

After crawling a short distance the bushes got shorter so we could stand up. We were surprised to see a large, deep pool that could not be seen from the tracks. The banks were caked with mud like the pond had been dug out and at the upper end water boiled up from a big spring. The trail

led around it and continued on up the hill. While I was standing in the trail drinking in this unexpected scene, Zack walked down to the water's edge and picked up a small object and turned around to show me a small squirming alligator. It was letting out some loud chirping sounds and Zack was jumping up and down laughing to beat the band and didn't see the old mama slither off the opposite bank and head across the pond for him. I yelled and pointed. He looked and we both took off up the trail. I stopped at what seemed a safe distance and looked back. Zack pulled up a second later, pale and panting. I pointed to his hand. He still had the squalling baby gator clutched in his fist. He took one look and dropped it like a hot coal and it hit the ground, feet flying, and scrambled back toward the pond throwing dirt every which way. I started laughing and Zack took on a sheepish grin and sat down on a rock to catch his breath.

There were big rocks all around. The further up the trail I looked the bigger they got. The trail wound through them as we went on up but before getting to the top, the trail forked and went over a ridge and down into a valley. At the bottom, in a clearing, a small deer was drinking from a pool at the foot of a sheer bluff that seemed to be almost solid rock. About half way up to the top a small stream flowed out making a waterfall that fell into the pool. This was strange territory for us. We had never seen this place before. As we were taking it all in, the little deer, a doe, looked up and saw us and whirled around and darted up the trail to disappear on the other side among the tall trees and underbrush. Zack looked at me. "Did you see that? Let's go on down to the bottom and look around."

At the bottom the trail was muddy and wet. All around the pool there were tracks; deer, possum, coon, rabbit, wild turkeys, some big cat tracks.

"Bobcat," Zack said pointing to the cat tracks. "I know. My dad showed me some before."

Dragon flies crisscrossed the pool. Honey bees, dirt daubers, and wasps flitted all around the edge drinking and gathering mud and buzzing loudly. We looked up the face of the bluff and along the top huge magnolias hung out over the edge and sweet gum and bay trees, too. The stream of water from the pool crossed the path and continued on down towards the railroad. Thick titi trees grew next to it bordered by big patches of gall berries. I looked at all this, a strange feeling came over me. I was suddenly uneasy, feeling like eyes were staring at me. I looked at Zack. He was staring in the direction of the disappearing stream. Then suddenly he turned to me. "Let's go."

We went back on up where the trail forked and on up the ridge to the top of the bluff where we had seen the big trees. There were lots of dim trails and tracks going in all directions. Taking the most used one we climbed to the top where it leveled off. There were the big trees and scattered beneath them huge rocks, some of them higher than our heads and as big across and as wide as a two horse wagon. The magnolias were in full bloom, their sweet scent filling the air. And patches of huckleberry bushes hid between the rocks, crawling with bees gathering pollen from the blossoms. Zack was wandering around with his head up looking at the magnolia blooms and stepped on a black snake that was sleeping in the sun. He let out a screech that echoed several times down through the little valley. The snake ran right over my feet. I couldn't move. I just stood there with goose bumps and cold chills up my back and neck while Zack leaped around like a coon dog trying to catch blow flies. He never did decide which way to run. After settling down, I noticed a line of bees going and coming from an old dead tree right on the edge of the cliff top. I showed it to Zack.

"Bee tree," he said, going over for a good look.

We saw that there was a hole about half way up to the top with bees all around it. Zack said we had to remember how to get back to this place so we could come back with our dads to get the honey.

We decided it was time to head for home and were fixing to leave when Zack spotted a fresh pile of red sand next to one of the big rocks. We went over for a closer look. There was a hole dug under the rock. Zack said it was a gopher hole and pulled off his shirt and covered it. Then he began to stomp his feet in the sand. I didn't know what he was up to but in a few minutes there was a scratching sound and the shirt was being pushed up off of the hole. In a flash, he reached under it and pulled out a big gopher by his front feet. It was the biggest one I had ever seen.

"Boy, oh, boy. My mom will make some of the best gumbo you ever tasted out of this fellow."

I asked him to explain to me about putting the shirt over the hole to make this critter come to the top so he could grab it. He explained that darkening the hole with his shirt and stomping his feet made the gopher think it was night and one of his own kind was at his front door so he came out to greet him. Some story, I thought, but then there was the gopher for proof. Now all we had to do was carry that heavy critter home.

Before long Zack began complaining about the heat. His face got red and he had sweat so much the dirt rings he always seemed to have around his neck had washed away. He kept getting farther behind. Finally, he stopped and took off one of his overall suspenders and tied it around the critter's leg, turned him over on his hard shell back, and started dragging him like a sled. But that only slowed him down more and I was getting hungry so I went back and we made a loop in his suspender and put a stick through it so we could both pull it to make better time.

When we got to the hard road we had to take turns carrying him because he would not slide on the dirt like he did on the grass. We got to my house just as the mill whistle blew for noon break. Zack said he could carry his prize now so I went on up to the gate and he went on down to his house near the river.

As I opened our gate, my mom called out to wash my hands and come to dinner. At the dinner table I told my mom all about our trip but left out the part about getting the dip all over me. My little brother who was only three listened with wide eyes. Mom had a good laugh about the way Zack had fooled the gopher out of his hole.

After dinner I took my little brother down to the hard road and showed him the automobile tracks and told him how it came roaring across the bridge at night with those blinking lanterns on its front end and how it had passed our house in a cloud of dust a mile long. He came over and asked me to hold his hand and would not turn me loose. I never knew him to do this except when he was afraid so I asked him what he was afraid of. He asked in a whisper if it would come back and get him.

"Will what come back to get you?" I asked.

"The automobile," he whispered.

I laughed and told him there was nothing to be afraid of. When we got back to the house Mom called out that it was time for his nap. I was kind of tired myself and sat down in one of the big cane rocking chairs on the front porch next to his room. Before Mom could get him to bed he had told her this scary tale about the great big automobile that came roaring across the river bridge last night with its big bright eyes blinking and its mile long dust tail. Some story. I went sound asleep in the rocking chair and did not wake up until the afternoon sun got down low enough to shine under the porch roof into my eyes.

Coming up with a start, I rubbed my eyes and blinked. Then I remembered it was time to get busy chopping and bringing in the stove wood, feeding the chickens and gathering the eggs. I was loading the last armload of wood when Zack climbed up on top of the fence and watched me take it in. I said I'd be back in a minute. After I put the ax away, we went out behind the barn yard to one of our favorite places - a patch of short green grass where we could lie on our backs and watch the buzzards come in to roost in the tall dead trees way out in the middle of the swamp. They were sailing in long loops and circles way out over the river looking like small specks of black. Then one by one they closed their wings and came plummeting down faster and faster until I thought surely they would hit the ground this time. Then they would spread their wings to slow down, making a whump and a hiss as the wind caught their wings and whistled through their feathers. Then they came to a flapping halt as they lit on the high tree limbs.

They were still coming in when we heard loud voices talking. We jumped up looking all around but nobody was in sight. Then this clear voice said, "There's the town. We're almost over it."

Looking up we saw this great big orange ball with a basket hanging under it drifting towards us just over the tree tops. As it got closer, I saw two men leaning over the edge of the basket and could see that it was tied to the big ball with ropes. The western sky was turning red now and it made the round ball look like it was red hot. I looked at Zack. His green eyes were as big and round as the ball. I heard one of the men say, "It won't be long now. We better get the hook ready."

They were almost over us now. We could see that there were bags hanging by ropes from the edge of the basket. The men looked down at us and waved. We both stood there like salt pillars. My mouth was so dry I had to lick my lips several times before it would close. And my neck hurt from looking up. It was almost dark now but I could tell the ball was getting lower all the time. I looked up at the house. The lamp was lit and my dad was home but the sun still shown on the big ball as it disappeared over the tree tops.

Zack had left without saying a word. I was flabbergasted. I couldn't believe what had just passed. I started to climb the cow lot fence, but felt too weak so I walked around to the back gate. I could hardly make it up the steps I was shaking so bad. There was no water in the water bucket to wash my hands with so I had to draw some from the well. It was all I could do to wind it up.

In the dining room the rest of the family were already seated. My dad asked me if I was all right and before I could answer my mom got up and came over and felt of my forehead like she does when I am sick and asked if I had eaten any berries, fruit, or leaves of any kind while we were out in the woods today. When I said no, she helped my plate with my favorite, black-eyed peas

and rice, but it made my stomach churn to smell it. I took a bite but it would not go down. I laid my fork down and said that I wasn't hungry and wanted to go to bed so I was excused.

I went to bed, but couldn't go to sleep, couldn't get that big flying ball out of my mind. After a while my dad came in and sat on the side of my bed and felt my stomach and asked if it hurt. I told him about the big ball floating in the air carrying two men in a basket tied to it. He went in and talked to Mom. I heard him say, "This is more serious than I thought."

They talked for a few minutes and he came in with the lamp and put it on the trunk next to my bed and Mom came in with a big spoon and held it over the lamp chimney. Then I knew what it was. I jumped up and said, "That's castor oil and I'm not taking it."

She didn't say a word, just nodded at dad and he held me while she forced my mouth open and poured it down my throat. I was crying, and mad, and hurt. Dad said, "I hate to have to do this but it had to be done."

Mom came over and gave me a gentle hug and pulled the sheet up to my chin saying for me to get a good night's sleep so I would feel better in the morning. Then just as they were leaving there was a big commotion outside our front gate then a hard knock at the door. My dad went out.

There was some loud talking for a while then he came back with two men in blue suits with shiny brass buttons and caps like the one grandpa was wearing in the picture of him when he was a sea captain. They had wide pins with different colored thread wrapped around them and some shiny brass letters that said U.S.N. Dad took the lamp and told me to come with them out to the parlor where he introduced me. One was Lieutenant Sam Moore and the other one was Chief Dunn.

Lieutenant Moore said, "I hear you saw a big ball with a basket hanging from it about sundown."

I was speechless but nodded.

"When it passed over you, did it seem to be losing altitude?"

I said that I did not know if it was losing anything but it was just above the tree tops when it passed our house and was getting lower all the time.

He smiled and asked what direction it was going.

I pointed toward Jennies Creek and my dad said, "North."

Then the lieutenant said to Chief Dunn, "That's our balloon all right. They can't be very far from here."

Dad volunteered to show them the road and asked if I could come along. They nodded yes. I ran and pulled my overalls on over my night shirt and beat them out the front gate.

There was a great, big, long automobile painted a bright red with ladders fastened on each side and all kinds of stuff piled up in it. Lieutenant Moore said to my dad, "This is the fire truck we use in case of emergency."

It must have been very heavy. The back wheels were sunk in the soft dirt making some beautiful tracks. We all got in and went down the hill past Zack's house and up the road toward Jennies Creek. After passing the graveyard the road got crooked and sandy so Chief Dunn slowed down.

I was standing on the floor boards looking through the front window glass. The two lanterns on the front made the road as light as day. I was checking all the tracks. There were tracks all over the place. When we passed by Uncle Ben's I thought I heard a shout but was not sure. Then I noticed some boot tracks. There were two sets of them. One was very unusual, a long and then a short step like maybe whoever made it had a limp. A little further on they disappeared into the woods.

Lieutenant Moore said to me, "Do you think they would have made it past here?"

I said, "No. I don't think they could have made it past Uncle Ben's place."

My dad explained to him that Uncle Ben was an old darky that lived back a ways that had several acres of land just off the road so we turned around and went back. When we got close to his turnoff I saw the boot tracks again. When we got there a man was standing in the middle of the road waving for us to stop. Chief Dunn said excitedly, "That's Olsen."

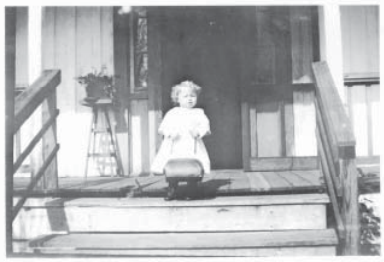
After greeting him they asked where Booth was. He explained that they had landed in a pine tree at the edge of a corn field and Booth fell and sprained his ankle while climbing down. And after securing the balloon they walked to the road and down this far before his ankle bothered him too much to go on and he was at a house just down the lane. When we got there he was sitting on the gallery with his boot off and his foot up. He was in great pain and his ankle was badly swollen. They decided to take him on back to the hospital in Pensacola and come back later for the balloon.

On the way back Olsen and Booth told us about how they had frightened the wits out of Uncle Ben and his wife. "They thought we had dropped in on them from heaven. They wanted to know whose turn it was to go."

Herman Merritt and younger brother Jack in Muscogee

When we passed Zack's house it was all dark. I knew he was sound asleep.

When I finally crawled into bed I felt dead tired but very happy - even with the slight aftertaste of castor oil in the back of my mouth. It had been a good day. Heck, it had been the best day of my life. I was drifting off to sleep thinking about the prize tracks I had to show Zack tomorrow. And what a story I had to tell about riding all over the county in a big red automobile. Then I thought I heard a gurgling noise. I was wide awake. Pushing the curtains back and looking out I saw the eastern sky way down low was a fiery red. There was no noise or anything unusual out in the garden but there was an uneasy rumbling feeling way down in the bottom of my stomach.



Herman's little brother, Jack, on the front porch of their home in Muscogee

Bob Tales

This particular part of the booklet (I've named "Bob Tales,") tells of my father's life during the Depression and I, never having had it quite so rough, have always been amazed at the family's ability to survive in the circumstances.

I live in England now so have not been able to participate in any of your local history societies, although I do a lot of transcribing for our local village - baptisms, marriages and burials dating back to 1560 - and have begun a family tree which includes anyone who has lived in the village and their families. That family tree now has more than 17,000 people!

Dictated by Bob Abbott in 2004, edited and submitted by his daughter, Shannon Suarez Abbott

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[My dad Harold Augustus "Bob" Suarez was born in Pensacola, Florida in 1922. He had an older sister Clara and a younger brother Ellis who was nicknamed "Plumpty." As far back as I can remember, Daddy has told of his amusing and amazing childhood - the hardships and the good times. This is an excerpt from "Bob Tales" – his memories of his early life as recorded by him in his later years.

When your parents stick you with a name like Harold Augustus Suarez, you obviously need a nickname – and quick! Babies, in the 1920s, whether they were male or female, wore dresses until they were several years old. When they began to walk, the hem or tail of the dress often got in the way, tripping them. Then the tail of the dress was shortened or cut off, making it a bobtailed dress. Daddy got his nickname from this bobtailed dress and was called "Bobtail." As Bobtail grew older, this tail, too, was cut off and he was called "Bobbie" and then simply "Bob."]

I was born December 14, 1922, in Pensacola, Florida. My parents were Emily Daline Merchant and Rufus D'Olive ["Bill"] Suarez. I was born in a hospital in Escambia County, Florida; I used to think I was born at home, but I have a birth certificate which said I was born in a hospital.

I started first grade in Pensacola, Florida, at Hallmark School. I think Clara and I both went to school there our first year and our second. Then we moved out to West Pensacola, near where my grandmother and grandfather lived, my dad's parents. When we first moved out there, it was a little dirt road; you turned off this red clay road to just two tracks like a wagon track. Clara and I kept looking for the house. We went back in behind past one place where a man and his wife built furniture out of limbs and trees, kind of lawn furniture. We got in behind there and stopped and Daddy said, "Well, we're here."

"Where's the house?" we asked. There wasn't any house. So we all got out of the old truck and went to work.

Daddy took his ax, went out and started knocking down blackjack oak. We kids hauled them up to where the house was going to be in some big oak trees in there. Daddy took these blackjack oaks and nailed them from tree to tree in the pattern of a house. Grampa put a post in where there wasn't a tree; he had to dig down and plant a blackjack oak and nail to that. We kids went out and started cutting palmettos, palmetto fans, bringing them in. They took those palmetto fans and nailed them to the blackjack oaks in a fan pattern starting at the bottom and going up. The first night I don't believe we got any of the roof on at all.

Bob Suarez, ca. 1932

Bill, Daline, Clara, Bob and Ellis Suarez, ca. 1930

The next day Dad cut more blackjack oak and we laid those across the top limb to limb, and nailed them and tied them with wire. Then we took this linoleum flooring Mother had hauled from the house on Saragosa Street and they rolled that out on the roof and put more limbs over it and another piece of linoleum. That put a roof over the place and we finally got all the outside walls on. I don't remember really if there were windows in it or just openings. I know there weren't any windows but I don't remember if there were any openings other than the door.

That's where we stayed for awhile. And, of course, we went to school. I was going to start the third grade. Clara would have been two years ahead of me so she would have been in the fifth. We took a bus, walking out to the clay road, which was about half a mile. We took a bus and went to Myrtle Grove School.

It was kind of an interesting life. We had some good times and, of course, we had some bad times. But we existed; we ate, and we ate a lot of fish.

There was a creek right down not too far from the house. I know my dad's mother used to come out – Grandma, Grandma Suarez. (It wasn't Suarez back in those days, it was Swaress. I didn't know how to pronounce it the Spanish way, I guess, until I moved to Texas. We were just the Swaress group.) But anyway, we'd go fishing at the little ole creek and catch a bream and bring 'em in and we'd clean 'em – Clara and I and Mama – and cook 'em up. We ate a lot of stuff that was wild back in those days, back in the depression.

We had what they called "gopher" which was actually a land terrapin - and they were big. They were good eating, but they were hard to catch. You didn't catch them out of their hole too often, so you'd find where they were going in and out of their hole. You'd dig a hole and put a piece of tin down in the bottom of it so he couldn't dig out, and down the sides of it, like a five gallon bucket if you had one. Then you'd take a little straw, stuff that was real light, and put across it with leaves, and sprinkle a little sand over it so the terrapin couldn't see it. Then when he crawled into his hole or out of it, he'd step on the leaves-straw-sand and he'd fall in. Daddy'd butcher him and it was real good eating back in those days. It had white meat like chicken and pork; it had red meat like beef. The eggs were real good; of course, they weren't like a chicken egg. They made real good stew or gravy with rice. It wasn't bad.

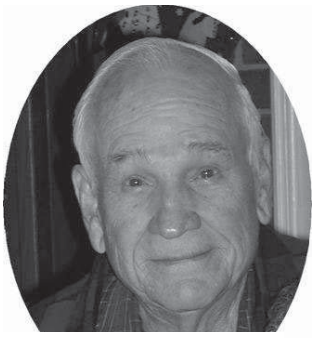
Of course, we had a lot of wild salad stuff you could eat, and greens. Mama used to send us out to pick the young leaves of what they called "poke salad." If you picked them too old, I think they might be kind of bitter; if you eat the berries, they're kind of poison; but the leaves were pretty good. It was (I think) as good as turnip greens or anything else. And then a lot of times Clara and I would pull up the new shoots of the palmetto; press it down with your foot and prise it out, and you could eat about the first inch off of it. Bite it off and it was just like eating the heart of a palm; that's what they would call it now, I guess. But it was still palmetto. You could take one of the big old roots and split it open with an ax, take that stuff out, and it made a delicious salad. Of course, we had a lot of huckleberries, and we picked a lot of blackberries. We had a lot of good times, a lot of happy times, a lot of sad times, but we lived as good as a lot of people did during the depression. Except for the booze Daddy drank. When he was sober, he was a good man; when he was drunk, he was mean. It wasn't too often he wasn't drunk. We existed.

Nobody had anything but iceboxes then; you couldn't keep anything very long. We trapped rabbits and in season you had wild grapes—scuppernongs. They had a thick skin but they were sweet. Once in awhile Mama had a little extra sugar so she could make jelly out of some of them. They had huckleberries. We used to go out to pick huckleberries. There was something that grew on little trees. It took a lot of them to do anything. If you picked for thirty minutes, you wouldn't have a handful; they were so small. Then, of course, we had blackberries. There was always something growing in the woods that helped our diet.

One reason, I guess, I've got good teeth is because I ate an awful lot of seafood when I was a kid. We'd go out on these fishing trips. Lots of times we'd be walking; we didn't have any transportation so sometimes we'd have to walk five or six miles down to the big bayou. You had your quilts to sleep on; you laid right down in the sand. You had a number two washtub. First thing you did when you got there was to gather up wood and you got a fire going. Then you went down and got nice clear water, salt water, and you filled that tub about half-full and put it on that fire. Then you took your scoop-net and you went out crabbing. On the white sand bottom, you could see these blue crab and you'd have to run them down and scoop them up. You'd have a sack, so you'd put them in a sack. When you got a sackful, you took them back and dumped them into this boiling water. It had the salt right in it from the water. We didn't have anything else to put in them in those days. Once in awhile they might have a lemon they'd cut and throw in there, a little hot sauce or something. A few times they had something like that; they didn't have any crab-boil or anything. In the warm months you'd have oysters. You just go down and get oysters and sit there in the water and open the oysters and eat them, fresh oysters.

You also had your little push-net where you would take two forked sticks, cross these two sticks, little boards really, and then you'd put one across the end and nail them together. Then you took an old piece of screenwire, like windowscreen, and you'd put that down on the flat part so that where it crossed, it made a pocket. You also had a little rope, you put a rope on it. We kids, it was hard to push that thing, so we kids would pull it and Daddy would guide it in the grass in the shallow water about 18 inches deep and you would catch shrimp to use for fishbait. Lot of times you'd catch little crabs and little fish. You'd throw them all back in the water. Mama always made sure we didn't leave anything out there to die, that even if it was a mean fish (like a catfish which would sting you) you still threw it back in or got a stick and pushed it back in the water so it would live. You'd take your bigger shrimp, sometimes we caught some pretty good-sized shrimp, and we'd throw them in with the boiling crab and boil the shrimp right alongside them.

Then, of course, you'd go fishing and you'd catch these speckled trout and white trout and brown mullet and mussels and croakers and what have you. Then you cleaned them up and fried those little fellers. We kids would gripe because we had to eat that and the fried cornbread and the boiled crab and the boiled shrimp and the raw oysters. Now if you go out on a Friday or Saturday night and spend $150 for the same meal, you'd think you were doing real good. Back in those days you had to eat it to live; we didn't go hungry. I guess they got enough to stay fat because Mama was always pretty plump. We kids weren't because we were wild Indians and running and always doing something. Daddy stayed pretty active. He could take an ax and knock the top out of a tree and chop it up in about 10 seconds. So when he did work, he went after it pretty good; he was pretty strong.



Bob Suarez, 85th Birthday, 2007

[Bob Suarez died in Texas in 2008. His sister Clara Plylar died in Biloxi, Mississippi, in 2006. His younger brother Ellis died in San Diego, California, in 1998.]

A New Teacher at Tate School in 1954

By Rebecca Shigley Black, reblack1@juno.com

Rebecca Shigley, 1954, Tate School

Graduating from Auburn was an exciting event in itself. I had been at Auburn the last two years of my college life and enjoyed it thoroughly, but to actually finish my degree (after making several changes in my major) was perfect. I finally had that piece of paper in my hand that said I was ready to make my way in a real job.

It's funny, but I did not have the worries that current scholars have of finding a job. We were such a small class of graduating education majors at Auburn that we had already been interviewed and feted as possible employees. I was mulling over offers from such thriving metropolises as Yulee and Carrabelle Florida. Of course, all of them wanted the most for their money. I was asked if I could coach girls' basketball or track—things that in my optimistic youth I thought I could do, even though I had done neither since junior high school.

Fortunately, my roommate had an aunt, Irma York, who was secretary at Tate School in Pensacola and knew of several openings.

Since Tate covered Grades 1 through 12 in 1954, there were elementary school positions to be filled. My roommate, El-Myra Stanley (now Cleiland), and I made a trip to Pensacola that summer to meet Wray Lane, the school's personnel director. We were interviewed and hired on the spot.

We were excited to be relieved of having to look further and, since Florida paid their teachers more than Alabama, Georgia, or Mississippi, we considered Pensacola the best of all our choices.

We both lived in Alabama, El-Myra in Jackson and I in Gadsden, so the first plan was to find a place in Pensacola to live. El-Myra's aunt took us on an apartment hunt as she told us that we didn't want to live way out in Gonzalez where the school was because we were young and single and needed to be in town to enjoy the activities appropriate to our singleness. So she took us to places in East Hill and North Hill. We finally found an apartment at 15 E. Brainard in a house that the two older Misses Lappington's owned and lived in. We had no car but were close enough to walk to town where all the shopping was and also near an A&P grocery store on Palafox.

Our next effort was to secure a ride out to Tate School. This, also, was arranged by El-Myra's aunt with Bill Coleson, one of the teachers at Tate. Every morning, Bill, the high school biology teacher, would pick us up, after he picked up Julian Wilson, another teacher. Bill would talk during the whole 17 miles to Tate and Julian would snooze. Of course, Bill had to know all about our social activities the night before and then tease us unmercifully. But the time did pass quickly on that trip on the old Palafox Highway.

I was hired to teach sixth grade and El-Myra was to be a fourth grade teacher. My class turned out to be in the old canning plant adjacent to the freshly tilled and manured fields. Tate was still transitioning from an agricultural school, so some of the classes were still

related to farming. Our overall principal was Sidney Nelson with Earl Craft coming on board as elementary principal the second year I was there.

After being in the classroom for about six weeks, because of the fruitless effort of the principal to replace a choral/music teacher, I was asked if I wanted to take the job temporarily. Irma York, the secretary, was again responsible for my being recruited, as she knew I played the piano. I thought it would be an interesting experience. Little did I know what an experience it would be! My responsibilities included a 9th grade girls' chorus, a mixed chorus of 11th and 12th graders, 7th and 8th grade general music classes and PTA performances as requested. Although I had helped with children's choruses in college, this was a completely different skill level for me. I lasted until the end of the semester when they finally found a trained music educator to accept and I gladly went back to my sixth grade.

The good things about my switch from elementary to high school were the wonderful support that I got from the other high school faculty members, having a whole planning period during the day, and freedom from monitoring lunch time. All of these were completely different from the constant supervision required of a teacher of elementary students.

Second Grade Class, Tate School, 1956

The next year I was asked if I would be interested in trying another grade and I chose second grade. The school was so crowded, our class was in one of the smaller classrooms, but it proved to be an enjoyable year for many reasons. I met and married Quentin Black, whom I still have after 54 years.

Genealogy Research Advice and Thoughts

By David Lamar Gonzalez, August 2010

Introduction and background: I am a descendant of the Colonial Pensacola Gonzalez and Bonifay Families. In 1967, I started dating a young woman who had the same surname. We knew we were cousins, and as our relationship grew we began asking our parents a few questions about our ancestors. Neither of them knew a lot about earlier generations but we determined that our relationship was distant enough that it would not cause any future hereditary problems, if our relationship became serious. Well, it did! In 1970, I married Martha Ruth Gonzalez. When our twin boys were born in January 1976, I knew that I needed to do "some family research." So, my quest began.

Research Steps: Here are a few things that I did to acquire the information that I felt I needed to make the family connections and expand my family knowledge.

Joining Genealogy Organizations: I strongly advise that you join the genealogical society in areas where you are most interested. I joined WFGS in the late 1970s while I was living in Pensacola. I also joined the Mobile GS for a few years. One of the many benefits was I could ask questions of others and they eagerly provided ideas and suggestions about how I could obtain valuable information. I quickly learned about the importance of vital records and citing my sources as I recorded the data.

Genealogical software: I have a college degree in computer technology and wanted to maintain my data electronically, however, I did not know about any genealogy software for many years. Once I did find out about a few software products, I wanted to ensure that I had the best genealogy software that was available. I choose the best one and painstakingly entered in my data. That took over a year! As these specialty software programs matured and merged, I migrated my data to the one that I consider to be the best. I have used The Master Genealogist (TMG) for about 10-12 years. I love it and still consider it to be the best! If you have not chosen a genealogy software program yet, I strongly encourage you to investigate TMG before you make your selection.

Vital Records: I did not intend it to happen but it just did! By that I mean, I have collected a real research library. Without counting them, I'll guess that my library contains of 200-300 books, factual records, articles, etc. Obviously, some books I go to more frequently while there are many other books that I seldom use.

Marriage Records: I started my research by going to the Escambia County archives and reviewing all of their marriage books. After weeks of spending one to two hours a day on Monday-Fridays, I had copied the names and dates for everyone who married a Gonzalez person in Escambia County, FL. I had a lot of names (of husbands/wives) but had no idea about how or if they were connected to us. Both of my parents were native Pensacolians. When I did not find their marriage record during my initial research, I asked them about it. That is how I learned they had eloped and went to Milton (Santa Rosa County) to get married. Wow, was I surprised! That is when I realized that I would sometimes have to expand my research area. What an understatement.

Census Records: Census records are not the genealogist's Holy Grail but they can provide very valuable information. Many of the older census records have inaccuracies (nick names, birth locations, etc.). However, many valuable things can be determined from that information. In times past, family members often lived in close proximity to their parents and siblings. Multiple generations sometimes lived in the same dwelling.

Birth & Death Records: These records provide a lot of valuable information such as the person's name, date and place of birth, their parents, etc. These are important facts. I strongly encourage you to use documents that contain information from primary sources such as the actual birth or death certificates. WFGS' three volumes of *Escambia County Vital Records* were created this way.

Obituaries: I started collecting death notices (obituaries) from the *Pensacola News-Journal* in February 1976 and have been doing so ever since. While these are secondary sources, they can be a valuable information source. You can often determine family relationships that prove to be helpful when you

obtain more information to confirm it. One of the most important things that I have ever done was to create what I call a relationship diagram for everyone in the death notice on a separate sheet of paper. I staple it to each obit. One of the primary benefits of doing that is I can easily reference many family relationships at a glance. I file these obits and other family articles in folders. I group them as best that I can by using the family names. Using the family tree metaphor, you may consider that to be by family branches. For example, one of my folders has the family names Fisher/Howe/Gonzalez/Bonifay written (in pencil) on it.

Cemetery Records: Cemetery records usually means tombstone dates, inscriptions, etc. Beware that sometimes the names are misspelled; the dates are provided by bereaved survivors and are not always accurate. Even the actual funeral home or cemetery records may have inaccurate birth dates. The death dates should have more creditability because the burial is, obviously, close to the death event.

Other researchers: It is amazing how many people want to exchange genealogical information. That is good and bad. You can quite easily and quickly e-mail questions and replies to people who live everywhere. That is so wonderful! Remember, if someone is good enough to share some of their family research information with you, it is incumbent upon you to keep it secure. Be careful to ensure its accuracy before you include it in your family database.

Pictures: I only started collecting and including pictures in my library a few years ago when a distant relative of mine shared many of his pictures with me. I digitized them and returned the originals to him. Then I started adding them to my database. I found they greatly enhanced my reports and charts. I wish that I had begun doing that many years ago. I now capture or save pictures electronically whenever I can.

Family members/relatives: One of the more important things you can do is to talk with relatives, especially older ones. Ask questions about their parents, grandparents. Maybe you will get lucky and find one who has family information that they want to give to someone like you. It happened to me. I copied the data (ten pages of full names, birth, marriage, and death dates) for several family lines in the Bray, Jernigan, Cobb, Johnson, and Smith families in Santa Rosa County, FL. This was given to me by an elderly lady that I never would have gotten any other way. She was thrilled that I wanted it and I was thrilled to get it.

School yearbooks: Many local libraries have high school yearbooks that go back many years. Those dull school pictures can become great finds. Additionally in times past, many students married one another. You may find the husband and wife in the same book.

Internet Web sites: How do I comment about the many, many genealogy web sites? Some are good. Some are not so good. I value information that I see from genealogical societies and other reputable sources more than other ones. Some people want their family to be connected to famous historical people or various celebrities so they "do just about anything" to make that connection.

Misinformation and Disinformation: Misinformation is false or inaccurate information that is spread unintentionally. It is distinguished from disinformation in that misinformation is simply erroneous, while disinformation, in contrast, is intended to mislead. Don't believe everything you see on the Internet.

Conflicting information: One of the things that I usually give more weight to when I am dealing with conflicting dates is to use the date that is closest to the actual event. For example, the birth certificate may be more accurate for a person's birth date rather than the person's obituary or tombstone. If multiple census records show different ages, I believe the oldest record's age may be more accurate.

Lessons Learned over the last 35 years: I am very picky about the data that I enter into my family database (TMG). Therefore, I check and double check the information that I find from other sources. Remember, primary sources are best but are not always attainable or available. After years of research, I learned there are several different Gonzalez families who have moved into the West Florida area. I had to know something about their family members and relationships (trees) to ensure that I did not confuse their family members with mine. A good example was another David L. Gonzalez who was born in Pensacola the year after I was born there. He was not related to me but at various times it did cause confusion for the both of us. I received calls when his mother passed away, even one from his brother. I received a call when he died and they thought they were talking to a dead person! I hope you see what I mean.

Moments I Remember

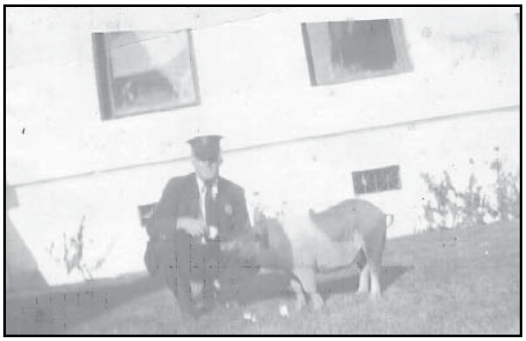
By Janette Fillingim Schiller
Contributed by her niece, Suzanne Weathers, suzannekgw@cox.net

At three and a half years old, I was with my family attending a relative's funeral in a small rural church in north Escambia County. As I was looking out of a small window, I was shaken to see some creatures coming out of the woods near the church. They were all in white clothes and had tall pointed heads. Hoping they would go away, I watched intently but they (about a dozen) kept coming toward the front of the church. By the time they entered the door, I was down on the floor scared to death. Then I noticed they had shoes on like real people and it surprised me. Years later I was told they were Ku Klux Klan members.

It was my 4th birthday and we were at the L&N RR Depot when the great hurricane of 1926 hit. Daddy had to work (he was a police officer), so he left Mama and me there. He would come by and check on us every once in a while. I remember the big glass front door crashing in close by us. Daddy decided to take us on home. When we left the depot Daddy, drove up Davis Street and had to go over big trees across the road. We drove through some peoples' yards to get by, as there was lots of stuff everywhere. It was not raining so much then, but the wind was very, very strong. I remember other storms during my young childhood but we stayed in our own house as it was on high ground on 6th Avenue. Daddy had shutters on the outside of the windows. We could hear the wind howling and trees falling, but we couldn't see outside. We had no lights for days. Again Daddy always had to work, so I was more concerned about him out in the storm than about us at home. Police officers worked 7 days a week shift work and all holidays with 30 days a year leave.

In the 1920's Pensacola had a big Mardi Gras celebration. I remember going to the jail with my parents and watching the parade from the windows. They said I was too young to go out on the street.

When Daddy had to go to court on a day shift, he would sometimes bring me along and I would sit on a bench and watch the proceedings. I would also sometimes follow him into the jail kitchen and the jail cells. The city did not have dog pound, so sick and stray animals were taken to a pen on the north side of the jail. Daddy, being the only farm-raised man on the force, would take care of them. A few of the dogs ended up at our home. Mama's favorite was a fox terrier named "Spot" He had been badly burned across his back. She nursed him back to health and he became a part of our family for 12 years.



Officer Jesse Fillingim in front of Pensacola Police Station, 1930's

Another was "Flossie," a pretty dog, part Spitz and Poodle; she had a broken leg and was picked up by a motorcycle cop. Then there was this pig which grew up in the pound. He was a great pet to my dad and followed him everywhere he could; of course, this attracted a lot of attention.

My memories of the Great Depression are few but strong. My family was considered lucky because my daddy had a steady job and so many did not. I vaguely remember the crash of 1929 when people

were talking about jumping out of windows to commit suicide. "Hooverville" was located on the railroad tracks near Gregory and Belmont around 14th Avenue. Living one house away from Cervantes Street (Hwy. 90), we had many, many hobos asking for food. Mama never let them leave empty handed. It may not have been much, but it was something to fill an empty stomach. One of mama's good friends was well off financially, then suddenly they had nothing and had to move into a small apartment.

There were good times too. Bayview Park was a great place to swim, play and picnic. The bayou had a wharf and a 3 story tall diving tower. There was an outdoor movie theater which had a serial which was continued each week. There was an impressive villain that carried a walking stick with a dagger inside. A boy who lived next door and I decided that another neighbor, an older man who walked with a cane, had the same thing in his cane. We avoided him. He did not like children and forbade us from skating near his home. One day Joe and I were putting on our skates we looked up and he was standing right in front of us. We scampered off the steps and ran for our lives. We went one way and the man went the other.

Floridatown, on the other side of Escambia Bay, was another great spot. It had the only swimming pool in several counties. One night they had a comedy performance by the pool by some local boys, Joe Schiller, Walter Gordon, Bert Delehanty, who were dressed in convict stripes. The elegant Andrew Jackson Hotel had a nice pier for swimming also. The most wonderful dance hall in the area was beside the pool. It had shiny wood floors with glass borders and lights under the glass that you danced over.

The highlight of my summer was a week or day spent at Grandma McCall's in Klondike, west of Pensacola on Eleven Mile creek. I had 3 places to split up my time, Uncle Joe's house, Aunt Mae's and Grandma's, but the creek was the main attraction. Many hours were spent in the crystal clear shallow waters and the white sand bottom and banks. When I was 12 years old I had a neighbor girl as a friend and pal. Her name was Vera. We could pretty much go anywhere on our own. There was a little lake about ½ mile up the creek that I talked Vera into going to. I could swim but Vera could not. I convinced her to try to paddle across using a board to hold onto. She managed to get half way across and went under. I thought about helping her, but she was heavier than I was. I didn't hesitate long and got behind her. Avoiding her flaying arms, I pushed her by the butt up to the top several times. We got near the shore but she still couldn't stand up. It was luck that my older cousin was coming up to repair the diving board, carrying his tools but still fully dressed he saw us and helped us out of the water. We lay on the sand for a while and Vera started to vomit. It was very red so we thought it was blood but I remembered we had eaten watermelon earlier. We were so relieved and made a pledge not to tell anyone about our experience. Years later she was mother of 4 and I was mother of 1 we met at my Uncle Sam's store and she told about how I saved her life.

I remember when Cervantes Street from "O" Street (now Pace Blvd.) to 16th Avenue was paved and became Highway 90. It was a big deal, especially the viaduct over the railroad track from Palafox to Hayne Street. Not everyone remembers when Cervantes Street cut through the park from 15th to 16th streets to Gadsden Street to go across Bayou Texas to East Pensacola Heights. In the early 1950's three residents of East Pensacola Heights, Joe Schiller (my husband) Doug Diamond, and Walter Woodcock, decided to canvass that area and got a petition up to be annexed by the City of Pensacola. That started a lot of big improvements in that community. Streets were paved, street lights installed, gas and sewer lines installed, and more business provided.

INDEX OF SURNAMES

A

ABBOTT
Bob » 30
Shannon Suarez » 30
ALLEN
Bryce » iv
Isaiah Eiland .I. E.) »11,12

B

BALLARD, Ms.» 2
BAUCUM
Joseph (Joe) » iv
Robert (Robby) Zachery » iv
Vonceil "Pete" Shows » iv
BEAGLES, Mamie Parazine » 18
BEAL, Alma » 18
BELL, John W. »14
BICKER, Walter R. » 21
BIGLER, William J. » 20
BLACK
Marian Watkins »12
Quentin » 34
Rebecca Shigley » TOC,ii,33
BLACKMON
Kathie » iii
Martha Eliza Booker » iii
Sherman William » iii
BONIFAY
Delores »17
Joseph »18
Joseph Jr. »17,18
Manuel »18
Maria »17
Marianna Pingrow » 5,16,18
Mary»17
BOOKER
Carlton » iii
Emory » iii
Pearl » iii
William "Bill" (Leathy) » iii
BOOTH » 31
BRAKE, Mae » iii
BRAY » 36
BROWN, Henry William » 21
BRYAN
Dr. » 20
Robert L. » 19
BUFFUM, Doris » TOC,1,3,7,9
BUSH, John C. » TOC,20

C

CARO » 16
Clara »17
CAROM, Manuel »17
CARSALLA, Maria »16
CHULA, Vicente »17
CLARK, Walter H. » 18
COBB » 36
COLESON, Bill » 33
COMMYNS »16
COOK
Matthew » iii
Sharolyn (David) » iii
COOPER, Henry S. F. » 15
CRAFT, Earl » 34
CRANE, Donna » iv
CROFTON
Carl Cliston » 5
Grandma » 4,5,6
Lemuel Curtis (L.C.) » 4
Lizzie » 4
Robert R. C. » 4
CRUZAT, Antonio »17
CUMBIE, Jennifer (William) » iii
CUTTS
A.C. » 1,2,3
Alan C. (AC) » 1,3

D

D'ALEMBERTE, H. T. » 8
DAVIS, T. J. » 8
DEAN, Cynthia Green » TOC,ii
DeBOLT, Dean » 20
de GALVEZ, Bernardo »17
de LARA
Agustin »16
Marcella »16
de LaRUE, John »18
de LEIVA, Francisco »17
de ROXAS, Antonio » 17
de RUEDA, Joseph » 16
De PELEOGANZALO, Fr. » 16
De RIOBOO » 5
DELEHANTY, Bert » 38
DIAMOND, Doug » 38
DOMINGUEZ, Juan »17
DOUSE, Domingo » 17
DUNN, Chief » 30

E

EARHARD, Hazel » iv
EDWARDS, F. W. »12
EVERETT
Jemima Farley »18
Nathan » 18
EVERITT, William » 15

F

FAIRCHILDS, Georgia Stillman » 18
FALZONE, Yolanda » i,ii
FARINAS
Adrian, Jr. » iii
Adrian III » iii
John (Suzanne) » iii
FERGUSON, Samuel W. » 7
FILLINGIM, Jesse » 37
FLEMING, Francis P. » 19

G

GADSDEN, James »17
GAINER, Walter »12
GALVEZ, General »18
GASKIN, John L. » 19
GATES, Katie Bell » 18
GIVENS, Katie (Allen) » iv
GONZALEZ
David L. » 36
David Lamar » TOC,35
Maria Delores »17
Martha Ruth » 35
GORDON, Walter » 38
GRANT, Ulysses S. »13

H

HALEY, Alex » 15
HAMPTON » 5
HANNAH
Florida »15
Laura »15
Mary »12,15
Matthew »10,11,15
Phillip »12
Phillip Eli »15
Sarah »10
Thomas »10,11,12,13,14,15
Thomas Jr. » 10
Thomas V. »15
William John » 15

HANSEN, Marilyn Thomas »16
HARRELL, Samantha Elizabeth » 7
HAUSMANN
Dude » iv
Kelly » iv
HECTOR, Patricia Ann Parazine » 16
HELLMAN, Dorothy (Bill) » iii
HICKS, William Watkin »13
HOOD, John Bell » 7

I – J

ICE
Cynthia (Cyndee) Faith Baucum » iv
Mike » iv
JACKSON
Andrew »10,17
Leonora »17
JERNIGAN » 36
JOHNSON » 36
Sampson » 4
JONES, Ethel Harvey » 18

K

KEHEE, Mr. » 14
KERR, Pat » ii
KERSEY
Benjamin F., Sr. » 9
Benjamin Franklin » 7,8,9
Stephen Adkinson » 7, 8

L

LANE, Wray » 36
LAPPINGTON, Misses » 36
LAVELLE
Benita » 16
Charles »16
Julian » 16
LEA, Grady » ii
LEWIS, Bonnie Griffis » Cvr 2,i,ii
LIPE, Jayne » TOC,10
LOCKWOOD, George » 3
LUCIUS, Kristin (David) » iv

M

MAGRIAGHI, Russell M. »16
MARIN, Romulo »17
MARTIN, Malachi » 13
McCALL, Grandma » 38
McKAY, Jo » ii
McPHERSON, Eliza Armindia » 4,5
McPHURSON » 4
MERCHANT, Emily Daline » 30
MERRITT
Herman Arthur » TOC,22,29
Jack » 29
Jerry » TOC,i,ii,22
MILLS, Elizabeth Shown » i
MOORE
Lieutenant » 31
Sam » 30
MORGAN, Clint » i
MORRISON, Katherine » 2
MOSLEY, Sharon » i,ii
MOUNTAIN, Michael » 12
MYERS, Janet » i

N – O

NELSON, Sidney » 34
NICHOLS, Debra » i,ii
NOBLES, Priscilla » ii
OLSEN » 31

P

PACE, Glenda Brown » TOC,21
PALACIOS, Hipolito »16
PANGUINET, Carlos »16
PARAGINI, Domingo »17
PARAZINE
Bill » 18
Charles »17
Clyde Everett » 18
Domingo » 16
Edward W. » 18
Elena Marta Theressa »16
Francis »17
George » 17,18
George Jr. »18
George W., Jr. » 18
George W. Sr. »18
Georgia Fairchilds » 18
Jemima »18
Jessie Scott » 18
Joaquin (Juan) »17
John E. » 18
Laura » 17,18
Laura Amelia »18
Luis » 17
Luis (Lewis) » 17
Margaret » 18
Margaret Ann » 18
Maria » 17
Maria Bonifay » 17,18
Maria Martha » 16
Nathan Lake » 18
Nellie » 18
William Leonard » 18
Zoe Bell » 18
PARIZINE, Lewis »17
PARAZINE'S » 16
PARISIGNY (PARAZINE)
Domingo » 18
PARISINI
Carlos »16
Domingo » 16,17
PARISSINI, Carlo » 16
PARKS
Ron » i,ii
Tara » i,ii
PINGROW BONIFAY
Mariana » 17,18
PITTMAN
Carolina » 5
Donna » TOC,4,5
Earline » 5
Grover Millard » 5
Jefferson Abijah » 4
Lilley Isabelle » 5
Minnie » 6
Minnie Lee » 4
William Jackson (Jefferson) » 5
PLYLAR, Clara (Suarez) » 32
POSEY (POSSE)
Alexandra » 16
Alexandro » 17
Benita » 16
Carmelita » 17

Q – R

RANDOLPH, Rev. » 18
RAY
Alex » iii
Elisa (James) » iii
Lee » iii
Sarah » iii
ROCHEBLAVE »16
ROOSEVELT, Theodore » 8
ROVA, Bruce » i,ii
RUPERT, Ella » 5
RUSHING, Charles » 8

S

SCHILLER
Janette Fillingim »TOC,37
Joe » 38
SCHWARTZ, Terry » i,ii
SCOTT
Elizabeth » 18
Jessie Othelia » 18
Laura Lee » ii
Lee » i
SHAW » 1
James » 2
SHERMAN, Wm. T. » 7
SHOWS, Ann » iv
SIMON, Norman » 8

SMITH » 36
Liz » ii
SNOWBALL
Anna Bell » 2
Henry » 2
STANLEY (CLEILAND), El-Myra » 33
STEARNS, Marcellus » 13,14
STROHL, Evan » i,ii
SUAREZ
Bill » 31
Bob » 32
Clara » 30,31,32
Daline » 31
Ellis » 31
Grandma » 31
Harold Augustus » 30
Rufus D'Olive ["Bill"] » 30
SUPANA, Martha » 16
SWARESS » 31
SWEET, Gayle » i,ii

T

TALLEY, David L. » TOC,16
THOMAS, Bobbie » iv
TIZZANO, Gloria » ii
TOUARD (TOUART), Francisco »16
TUREK, Jim » ii
TURNER
Emmett » 9
Sylvia » 9
Walter » 8
Walter Robinson » 9

U – V

VAUGHN
John » 19,20
John B. » 19
John Beasley » 20
VIDAL
Florensa Paula Noverta »10

W - X – Y - Z

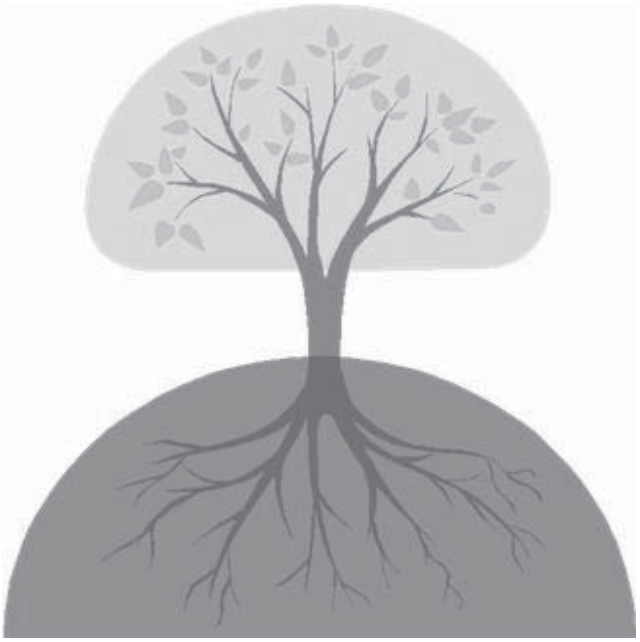
WALLACE
Dorothy » i,ii
John » 14
WALTZ, Mary Louise » 5
WARD, Billy » i,ii
WATTS, Pam » i,ii
WEATHERS, Suzanne » TOC,37
WEBSTER, Daniel » 15
WILHELM
David » iii
LaVan » iii
Margaret (Gerould) » iii
Susanne » iii
WILKINSON, Roy » i,ii
WILSON
E. J. » 2
Julian » 33
WOODCOCK, Walter » 38
WRIGHT, William B. » 5
YORK, Irma » 33,34
YOUNG, Pete » i

Note From the Editor

This is the end of the 2010 *Footprints*. I apologize ahead of time for the probability of errors in the "Surname Index." The publication was searched manually, which means mistakes no doubt exist.

I sincerely hope you enjoy the publication and I thank those who contributed to it. Without the writers and the story-tellers, it would not be possible.

—Bonnie Griffis Lewis



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—An Irish Blessing

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