

# The Genie

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



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

P. O. BOX 4463  
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# *THE GENIE*

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

P.O. Box 4463  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71134-0463

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

The purpose of this organization is:

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



The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association meets on the second Saturday of each month from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the Broadmoor Branch Library, 1212 Captain Shreve Drive, Shreveport, LA

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

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

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

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# Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association

## Board of Directors for 2018

President	Glenda Efferson Bernard	<a href="mailto:glenda646@gmail.com">glenda646@gmail.com</a>
First Vice President	Sonja Webb	<a href="mailto:sdwebb@bellsouth.net">sdwebb@bellsouth.net</a>
Second Vice President	Reed Mathews	<a href="mailto:reedmathews@yahoo.com">reedmathews@yahoo.com</a>
Treasurer	June Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Recording Secretary	Peggy LaCour	<a href="mailto:suzanne.delacour@gmail.com">suzanne.delacour@gmail.com</a>
Editor	Sylvia Powers	<a href="mailto:thegenie.editor@gmail.com">thegenie.editor@gmail.com</a>
Trustee	Barbara Dean Kronenberg	<a href="mailto:bdk@suddenlink.net">bdk@suddenlink.net</a>
Trustee	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Trustee	Johnnie Covington	<a href="mailto:jhcov@aol.com">jhcov@aol.com</a>
Trustee	Sarah White	<a href="mailto:zeagler606@aol.com">zeagler606@aol.com</a>
Trustee	Beverly Bowers	<a href="mailto:bbowers46@gmail.com">bbowers46@gmail.com</a>

## Publications (*The Genie*)

Editor	Sylvia Powers	<a href="mailto:thegenie.editor@gmail.com">thegenie.editor@gmail.com</a>
Distribution	Glenda Efferson Bernard	<a href="mailto:glenda646@gmail.com">glenda646@gmail.com</a>
Compiler	Elaine Johnson	<a href="mailto:elaine.johnson@suddenlink.net">elaine.johnson@suddenlink.net</a>
Exchange Reviewer	Reed Mathews	<a href="mailto:reedmathews@yahoo.com">reedmathews@yahoo.com</a>
Exchange Coordinator	June Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>

## ALTGA Committees

Membership	June Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Publicity	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Programs	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Finance	June Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Seminar	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>
Education	Sonja Webb	<a href="mailto:sdwebb@bellsouth.net">sdwebb@bellsouth.net</a>

## Other ALTGA Key Points of Contact

Refreshments Coordinator	Barbara Dean Kronenberg	<a href="mailto:bdk@suddenlink.net">bdk@suddenlink.net</a>
Refreshments Coordinator	Sarah White	<a href="mailto:zeagler606@aol.com">zeagler606@aol.com</a>
Name Tags	June Scholes	<a href="mailto:jscholez@aol.com">jscholez@aol.com</a>
Reception/Greeter	Suzanne Stimits	<a href="mailto:slstimits@yahoo.com">slstimits@yahoo.com</a>
Website	Jim Johnson	<a href="mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net">jjohnson747@suddenlink.net</a>

Visit our Website: [altgenealogy.com](http://altgenealogy.com)

Visit Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2033769780203514/>

Email us at: [altgenassn@gmail.com](mailto:altgenassn@gmail.com)

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

## President's Message

*Contributed by Glenda Efferson Bernard*

Another year has passed, and we find ourselves at the dawn of another new beginning. As we look back at our last quarter of gatherings, we can smile and recall fondly our memories, think of the people we have met, and revel in the new information we've gained to help us process our family research.

In October, 2018, we closed the long chapter of meeting at the Randle T. Moore Center as we initiated a new "home" for our monthly meetings and short seminars at the Broadmoor Branch Library, a part of the Shreve Memorial Library system; they welcomed us in grand fashion! Our featured speaker was member, Kathryn Benson, who detailed reminders and new steps in breaking down our genealogical brick walls in "Breaking Down a Brick Wall – One Brick at a Time." She shared the importance of collaborating and communicating with relatives, visiting cemeteries, and re-examining records for missed clues. Her entertaining and informative presentation encouraged us to study elements of history during the era being researched. (You will find more about Kathryn's presentation in this issue of THE GENIE). Glenn Moore's Horn Book session was likewise well received, "Security of DNA Data and What You Should Know." Glenn showed a short video which documented information that we all could use regarding DNA data security. He then reiterated important points in the video which he thought were significant.

Jim Jones, a local genealogist who has become more of an expert on the DNA process, was our special guest at the November meeting. Jim's emphasis on his second visit with our group, "DNA Test Results – New Steps," was a follow-up to his presentation from November, 2017, concerning DNA fundamentals. The DNA test-results lecture and its handout were filled with useful information. In fact, there was much more Mr. Jones wished to explain, but time constraints did not permit him to continue. Perhaps he will come again to further extend our knowledge about newly released DNA data.

Also in November, thanks to a generous donation, Dr. Laura McLemore, a certified archivist and head of Archives and Special Collections at Louisiana State University Shreveport, brought two fact-filled lectures to our group. Every one present, of all genealogical levels, appeared to relish learning from Dr. McLemore as she shared, "Preserving a Perishable Commodity: A Practical Guide to Caring for Family Papers." Her handout was well received. In closing her presentation, she encouraged attendees to investigate the many samples of archival containers available for purchase; these are an absolute necessity for the proper preservation of original documents and photos. What genealogist would not love to know these vital tips for keeping our most precious artifacts in the best condition possible?

To wrap up the 2018 year, our association met in December to elect and install our new officers. Leonard Gresens was elected as our new president; Kathryn Benson and Sarah White will lead as first and second vice presidents for the new term. Suzanne Stimits and Sylvia Powers presented a fun and educational game, "Genealogy Feud," and we all indulged in a marvelous Christmas meal! Everyone brought the most delicious meats, casseroles, vegetables, and breads that can be imagined. The desserts were extraordinarily scrumptious! Our many thanks go to everyone for sharing their treats and conversation on this annual occasion.

My personal well wishes to Leonard Gresens as he leads our association forward! It has been a particularly joyous four years for me in meeting so many of our members through emails, articles to *The Genie*, and one-on-one chats at seminars. I cherish my relationship with each one of you! Hopefully these friendly exchanges will continue for years to come as we encounter each other in the library and at future Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association conclaves!

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year to everyone!



*Glenda Efferson Bernard with Christmas Poinsettia*



## Heirlooms Take Center Stage

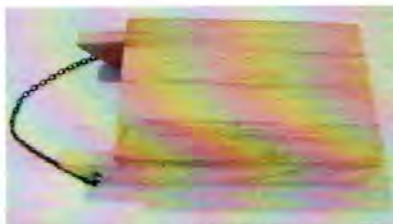
*An article written and shared by member, Ms. Isabelle Woods, of presentations at the Family History Club, Bastrop, LA.*

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### LINEAGE

#### HEIRLOOMS TAKE CENTER STAGE



Above: MR. FREE'S MODEL OF A GROUND SLIDE

Mr. James Free displayed a miniature, wooden, model of a ground slide as his subject for the Family History Club's program of "Show and Tell." Others may also called it a ground *sled*. A ground slide was approximately four feet by six feet and of various heights off the ground. Mr. Free added he had never seen a ground slide in a museum of farming equipment

During the war years, his father worked on a Parish bridge gang replacing deteriorated timbers on wood bridges and discarding them in a pile beside the road. By recycling discarded oak timbers, his father secured a platform of split-cypress across two timbers of oak cut-to-length and hooked with a trace chain. A trace chain came from the horse's collar from a worn-out harness.

In the 1900's, Mr. Free's grandfather purchased eighty acres of land. By the 1930's, Mr. Free's father owned, farmed, and was still clearing some of these eighty acres with an ax, shovel, plow, and a horse. Using manpower was back-breaking work.

The ground slide reduced the likelihood members of the Free family injured their backs while performing certain chores on the farm. Now, everyone easily rolled—not lifted—items

onto its platform. With this slide, they transported wood they cut for the wood stove and for the heater to warm the house.

The slide also reduced the time needed to hitch a horse to a wagon. A horse or mule was easily haltered to a chain attached to the front of a slide. With a horse dragging the ground slide, Mr. Free traveled a least a mile through fields, pasture lands, and the woods down dirt trails a wagon could not.

The slide simplified a task like gardening. When tomatoes and various types of potatoes were harvested, Mr. Free brought this produce to the house on the slide. Here tomatoes, for example, were removed from tubs on the slide and transferred to heated tubs of water. Their skins were removed, canned, and stored. He even scooped up fertilizer with a shovel into barrels on the slide from the barnyard for use in their watermelon "truck patch."

His favorite use of the ground slide was going for a ride as he stood upright on its platform. He chose the trail for riding very carefully. Being upright behind a moving horse, he easily was thrown from the slide if the horse stopped suddenly upon hitting a stump on the path. He had to be ready to make a running start pass the rear of the horse!



A GROUND SLIDE IN USE



## LINEAGE

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Mrs. Jo Ann Bennett shared a scrapbook her mother made for her. Her scrapbooks contained a variety of items—train tickets, her father's Bastrop High report cards, her 1961 Ouachita Parish High School graduation program, her father's funeral notices and cards from attendees, ration books, a 1957 train ticket and a souvenir card of the train to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The Justus family came to Bastrop in 1927 or 1929. Her father, Ralph Justus, and his siblings graduated from Bastrop High School.

The Justus family, as a whole, were known to love to travel. After her parents marriage in Arkansas, they relocated with other Justus family members next to the ocean in Georgia. Here her father worked for a paper mill.

Although eventually moving to Lufkin, Texas and elsewhere, her parents often returned to Bastrop, where Ralph's parents resided.

From Lufkin, Texas, Mrs. Bennett's parents went to Mexico. This was her first ride in an airplane. Her souvenirs of this 1946 trip include a contract ticket as passengers on *Pan American World Airways* for Ralph, Ruth and Jo Ann Justus, a stay at the Hotel Plaza in Laredo, Mexico, a Mexican *peso*, photographs of the paper mill her father was sent to Mexico near Guadalajara to get started and of the crew with whom he worked at a company outing. They resided in Florida after Mexico. Here are copies of two items from her scrapbook:

Right:  
MR. RALPH JUSTUS'  
"PUPIL'S REPORT"  
CARD, BASTROP  
HIGH SCHOOL



Below:  
A 1957 SOUVENIR  
CARD OF HER  
TRAIN RIDE TO  
PHILADELPHIA,  
PENNSYLVANIA



Mrs. Isabelle Woods's heirloom came from her father. On December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked, her father was a civilian employed as an electrician at Shop 51 on the Pearl Harbor Naval Base. He remained missing for three days before her mother was aware he was alive.

Not an avid collector of anything in particular, her father occasionally collected American coins and paper money. Mrs. Woods displayed a specially marked 1942, ten-dollar, bill her father entrusted to her care.

Right:  
FRONT OF  
A 1942  
"HAWAII"  
TEN  
DOLLAR  
BILL



Left:  
REAR OF  
A 1942  
"HAWAII"  
TEN  
DOLLAR  
BILL



She explained that when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the United States Government which governed the "Territory of Hawaii" took a precaution by circulating a special currency in 1942 for use in Hawaii.

"As an economic defense precaution against Japanese invasion and occupation of Hawaii, specially marked U. S. currency was issued there in July 1942, to replace other types in circulation. Distinguished by brown seal and serial numbers, and by "HAWAII" overprints on face and back, such notes could have been declared worthless in the event large numbers of them were captured.

"...the \$5s, \$10s, and \$20 were overprinted examples of San Francisco-district Federal Reserve Notes; .... All notes bear the Julian-Morganthau combination. \*

"By late October, 1944, the emergency monetary conditions were declared ended, and normal currency returned to use in Hawaii, and the Hawaii-overprinted notes went on to do further duty during the occupation of formerly Japanese-held islands in the Pacific." <sup>1</sup>

(\* Mr. William A. Julian was Treasurer of the United States and Mr. Henry Morganthau, Jr., was Secretary of the Treasury.)

Mrs. Martha Glosup resided in Arizona for 22 years and became familiar with artists in the area. One was Mr. Ettore "Ted" DeGrazia (1909-1982) of Tucson, Arizona. He was noted for DeGrazia Dolls of children. He painted them with no faces. He was also known for using pastel colors in his work.



## LINEAGE

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Above:  
DEGRAZIA DOLL



Above: SAGUARO  
FRUIT



Above: KACHINA DOLL

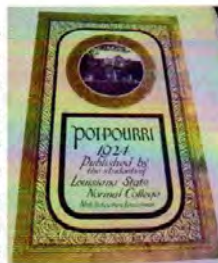
so they can be constantly seen by children. The purpose of this is to help the children learn to know what the different kachina look like..."<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Fay Bowe displayed two annuals called the *Potpourri* from the former Louisiana State Normal College at Natchitoches, Louisiana. Today this is known as Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches, Louisiana. These annuals were produced in 1924 and 1925, when both Mrs. Bowe's mother-in-law and sister attended this college. Many students attended from Morehouse Parish. She mentioned several of their classmates: Mary M. Scott whose

This DeGrazia Doll depicts a young girl equipped to pick the fruit of the saguaro cactus. She has a basket atop her head where she deposits the red fruit picked from a saguaro cactus. She also has a pole with which she harvests the fruit, which is then processed into a jelly. "The fruits cannot be picked by hand, but must be harvested using a pole (often a saguaro rib) 7 to 16 feet ...long to the end of which is attached another pole..."<sup>2</sup>



Right:  
SAGUARO  
CACTUS



Left:  
TITLE PAGE  
OF A 1924  
POTPOURRI



Right:  
VOLUMES  
OF THE 1924  
AND 1925  
POTPOURRI

father, Calvin Guy Scott, was the Editor of the *Morehouse Enterprise* in 1930,<sup>4</sup> Lula Mae Humphrey, Bonita, Dora Bell Norris, Oak Ridge, etc.

Maude "Girlic" Files Zimmer (1905-2003) of Oak Ridge, who wrote books on Oak Ridge, about the South and the local area, was also an alumna of this college.

After she married a "Zimmer," this couple went North. She also wrote newspaper columns. One of her books, *It Takes a Village To Raise a Child*, was about Oak Ridge, Louisiana. In her later years, she returned to Louisiana, where she died. She is buried at the Oak Ridge Baptist Church Cemetery, Oak Ridge, Louisiana.

Mrs. Tumilson presented a future heirloom for her descendants. She displayed an invitation to her 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration on Sunday, February 4, 2018 at 2 p.m. at the Snyder Museum. Mr. and Mrs. Claude and Janice Tumilson were married on February 2, 1967. While doing so, she also invited everyone to attend this event.

Despite an RSVP date of Friday, January 19, 2018, Mrs. Tumilson said she will gladly add anyone desiring to attend to the list of attendees by calling her at (318) 281-3379.

Copies of both sides of her invitation appear below:

Please join us for a  
50th Wedding Anniversary  
Honoring

*Janice & Claude  
Tumilson*

Sunday, February 4, 2018  
at 2:00 in the afternoon

Location:  
Snyder Museum  
1620 East Madison Ave.  
Bastrop, Louisiana 71220

RSVP by January 19, 2018  
at (318) 281-3379  
or email at [jane27love@gmail.com](mailto:jane27love@gmail.com)

No Gifts Please

Happy  
Anniversary  
**50**  
Years together



*Sources:*

<sup>1</sup> Standard Catalog of United States Paper Money by Chester L. Krause and Robert F. Lemke, Robert E. Wilhite, Editor, Twelfth Edition, Krause Publications, Inc., Iola, Wisconsin, © 1993, page 33.

<sup>2</sup><https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saguaro>

<sup>3</sup> Colton, Harold Sellers (1959). *Hopi Kachina Dolls: with a Key to their Identification*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, pp. 5–6 at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kachina>.

<sup>4</sup> Calvin Guy Scott (1877-1965)—1930 United States Population Census, Bastrop, Morehouse Parish, Louisiana, Line 59, Household No. 328, Dwelling 10, Family 10, E.D. 34-21, Page 117, Sheet 1-B, Supervisor's District No. 2, dated April 2, 1930.

*Photographic Credits:*

Page 1: Model of Ground Slide, Report Card, Train Souvenir Card, "Hawaii" Dollar Bill, DeGrazia Doll, Kachina Doll, "The Potpourri" annuals for 1924 and 1925, and the Tumblison's 50th Wedding Invitation by Isabelle Woods, Bossier City, Louisiana..

Page 1: "Ground Slide In Use" Photo from "Assorted Horse-drawn Slides or Sleds-a pictorial display from Qld," at <http://www.aussieheavyhorses.com/HTML/Slides.html>.

Page 3: Saguaro Fruit from <https://allaboutdeserts3.weebly.com/the-saguaro-cactus.html>.

Page 3: Saguaro Cactus from [ezpixels.com/pad/?tag=saguaro-cactus](http://ezpixels.com/pad/?tag=saguaro-cactus).



# Preserving a Perishable Commodity

*Contributed by Sarah Zeagler White*

On November 14, 2018, ALTGA and the Broadmoor Library hosted a workshop featuring Dr. Laura McLemore, PhD, C.A., Archivist, LSU, who presented an interesting and informative program: "Preserving a Perishable Commodity: A Practical Guide to Caring for Family Papers".

Family papers include financial records, letters, legal documents, cards, journals, memorabilia, photographs, and other paper items that we value because they record our history. Dr. McLemore explained that it is important to carefully choose what you want to save and then organize your collection. Your family papers will include 4 general categories:

1. Correspondence: Dr. McLemore recommends keeping old letters in the order the original owner kept them. If there doesn't appear to be any particular order, group them by author and then date.
2. Legal and Financial Records: These documents can be organized by author or institution. In cases where there are only a few records, they can be organized by type. Dr. McLemore recommends not organizing the papers by subject because one document could have several subjects.
3. Bound Volumes: Volumes such as journals, scrapbooks, or volumes of drawings should not be taken apart because the people who created them intended for them to remain intact and valuable information could be lost.
4. Photographs and film: This category requires different storage methods than family papers.

The environmental conditions that can damage family papers include:

1. Humidity and temperature: High heat and humidity can damage materials and should be avoided. An interior closet away from heat, humidity, and light is a good place to store papers. Avoid attics, basements, garages, and areas near bathrooms. The ideal temperature is 60 degrees and a relative humidity of 35%.
2. Pests and dust: Pests such as rodents, roaches, silverfish, moths, and bookworms can destroy papers, photographs, and artwork. Dust, dirt, and environmental pollutants also damage paper. Safe cleaning methods and non-toxic pest control are recommended.
3. Mold: Molds produce enzymes that digest organic materials like paper and books. They also have colored substances that can stain paper, cloth, and leather.



4. **Pollutants:** Pollutants include lead, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, and carbon dioxide. The damaging effects can be seen after long term exposure.
5. **Lighting:** Ultraviolet radiation from the sun or fluorescent lights fades or yellows things such as water colors, manuscripts, photographs, and newspapers. Filters over windows, light bulbs, UV glass, and filter glazing in frames can be used. Dr. McLemore suggests displaying a photocopy of the original item.

**Storage:** Family papers should be stored flat rather than folded or rolled, which can cause creases and warps that weaken the item. Documents that have been folded should be unfolded and stored flat. Papers should be kept in acid-free folders and boxes. Never laminate documents or use tape, post-it notes, rubber-based or starch paste.

**Enclosures:** Documents and photographs should be stored in archival enclosures which will help protect from chemical and physical damage.

**Handling family papers:** Hands should be washed and dried before handling papers and periodically during long periods of working with the items. The oils and salts on fingers can damage paper. Also, hand creams and lotions should be avoided. You should try to avoid writing on the materials, but if necessary, use a pencil and light pressure to write on the back. Wearing cotton or latex gloves while working with photographs and film helps prevent damage. However, some archivists no longer recommend using gloves for photos because of chemicals in the gloves. Avoid eating, drinking, or smoking in areas where the papers are stored or when working with the items. Keep your work area clean.

**Books:** Books should be shelved vertically with similar sized books to prevent warping. An oversized book can be stored flat or shelved vertically with its spine down. To remove books from a shelf, push adjoining books inward and remove the book by the middle part of the spine. Always support the front and back covers when reading a book. When marking a place in a book, don't use paper clips, numerous pieces of paper, or dog-ear a page. Forcing a book to lie flat is also not recommended.

**Storage and Preservation:** Storage shelves should be able to support the weight of the books without overcrowding. Some types of wood, such as oak and chestnut, are not recommended because of off-gassing. Mahogany, walnut, and spruce are better choices. When a book needs support, use flat, soft cotton twill or acid-free polyester film rather than rubber bands, tape, or string. A damaged book can be stored in acid-free paper, a phase box, or a custom-fitted acid-free box.

**Conclusion:** Dr. McLemore stressed that the number one rule is, "Never do anything that you can't undo," and when in doubt, contact a professional archivist or conservator.

# Regarding the Matter of Ghosts . . .

## (and how they relate to genealogy)

by: Ken Dailey, ALTGA member since 2014

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**“I really don’t believe in ghosts – actually I’ve only seen one!”**

Editor’s Note: The author of this article has deliberately left the names of the town and the avenue blank, he said “,,to protect the degree of privacy for the deceased and any surviving friends or family.” I think it lends to the air of mystery. Enjoy! Sylvia Powers, editor.

### ABOUT OUR GHOST

“Logwood” was a mean drunk. Although he was not held in the highest regard by his peers, he had a knack of provoking the on-lookers and turning the most benign call for service into a confrontation. Rarely did a passing police car escape a verbal harangue or an obscene gesture.

### THE PLACE OF OUR GHOST

In the middle 1970's \_\_\_\_\_ Avenue was (and is today) a north/south thoroughfare running south from the downtown area of \_\_\_\_\_, a typical mid-sized Arkansas city located in the south-central part of the state. About midway along this busy street were several blocks known to the locals as “The Front.” The Front was a notorious section consisting of beer joints, suspected gambling houses, industrial buildings, a cheap hotel, and other establishments of questionable virtue. The most volatile of these sat at the top of a small rise in the topography of the area and directly opposite an intersecting street leading to a nearby housing complex.

It was on the southwest corner of this “T” intersection that Logwood typically chose to hang out. The location afforded a good view to the north and south and of all foot traffic in the area.

During a time of social upheaval, high unemployment, and racial tensions, it was common for the city police to be dispatched to the small two-room honky-tonk for a reported assault, a disorderly person, or even an occasional homicide.

From his vantage point across the street, Logwood regularly traversed \_\_\_\_\_ Avenue to interject his inebriated legal opinion into any investigation being conducted by the local police as they enforced local and state ordinances.

Moreover, not limiting his advice to strictly legal issues, Logwood often resorted to provoking his fellows by raising their ire against the authorities and sometimes by direct interference. Conversely, during rare periods of sobriety Logwood could be reasonable and even amicable.

Having established Logwood’s lack of social refinement and his subjugation to demon drink, and the environment in which he existed, I proceed to describe my last encounter with the mortal self of citizen Logwood.

### THE CROSSING OVER

On a bitterly cold Sunday afternoon, I was working as watch commander, and operating with a minimal contingent of patrol officers, each busy with various calls. I responded to a call of “shots fired” on the second floor of the Front’s only hotel.

The hotel was a pre-WWII affair consisting of three floors. The first floor served as a dance hall/bar and was crowded to capacity on any given Saturday night. Further attesting to the general disrepair, the hotel occupants, who rented by the week or month, resorted to stringing thin wires

across the room to hang loaves of bread and other perishables, so as to thwart insects from gaining access to these foodstuffs. One or more hasps and padlocks were installed on the outer door frames to guard against break-ins when residents were absent.

Due to the cold, the streets were mostly deserted, and Sunday blue laws prohibiting the sale of liquor meant that the dance hall/bar would be closed.

I carefully climbed the stairs to the second floor, and upon reaching it, I came upon a grisly scene. Immediately adjacent to the door of a corner room lay the still body of Logwood sprawled on his back. He exhibited a bullet wound to the center of his chest! No one was around.

Having determined that the victim no longer occupied the realm of the living, I took a position to the side of the door of the immediate room and rapped on the door.

Presently, the door opened, and I observed a large man, who upon allowing me access, readily revealed that Logwood had knocked loudly and drunkenly repeatedly on his door. After several warnings to cease and desist, the resident apparently lost patience with the unwanted visitor, again opened the door, and discharged a large caliber revolver into the trespasser.

I arrested the shooter, recovered the handgun, and summoned the coroner.

Perhaps Logwood, in his impaired state, thought he knew the occupant of the room or just wanted to find a warm place. He had paid a great price for his miscalculation. Most folks were not surprised that he had met a violent end.

Reasonably, I concluded that Logwood's name would never appear in police reports again. Privately, I wished he might have some measure of peace in whatever came next.

## **THE RETURN**

Thoughts of and concern about Logwood faded quickly as the business of living progressed.

The following summer, on a hot and bright July noon, I was working out of the Department's detective division. I drove south on \_\_\_\_\_ Avenue, in an unmarked sedan. As I approached the previously described intersection, I scanned the area from habit and consistent with proper procedure. This, of course, included the southwest corner of the intersection opposite the beer joint.

Clearly standing there, in his familiar place, was the visage of Logwood!

Initially all seemed familiar and common, and I registered no surprise. In a fraction of a second, I realized the impossibility of what I had seen. My head snapped back to the corner upon which the apparition had appeared. Nothing and no one was there!

## **AN EXPLANATION?!**

It is interesting, if not phenomenal, how the mind's eye can manufacture the image of things and persons long gone. Habits persist long past their usefulness. Obviously, (presumably?) Logwood had not returned in body or spirit to occupy his once favored haunt, but some memories and/or legacies transcend their mortal existence.

I leave it to the reader to formulate his or her own conclusion. Similar experiences which have no logical explanation have been reported by more than a few.

Now I endeavor to establish some connection of the above to the following.



## SO HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO GENEALOGY?

Ghosts, by whatever name you use for them, in some manifestations, do exist! They haunt me, not in a macabre way, but pleasantly as my memory reminisces of those gone before me.

These particular ghosts exist and are welcome. I can precisely hear voices and inflections of favored uncles and aunts, of my parents, and of absent friends. Within my mind, they exist and live again. Those whom I did not know and now long gone, tell their stories through my family and community research. Sometimes their revelations are dim and convoluted, but then there is the occasional “Eureka” moment when their lost legacy is revealed in clear tones within a discovery.

These specters speak to me each fall, when I crunch through the first heavy frost on the family homeplace where my ancestors first walked in 1900. Each spring I see what they saw in new leaves and smell the same honeysuckle. How many generations of mockingbirds have serenaded since my grandparents listened to them on their front porch?

I am what I am, in large part, because of what and who they were. They (these friendly ghosts) exist through me.

In some measure, all of life’s experiences, good, bad, or indifferent, constitute our being.

Genealogical research is not unlike detective work. Facts and knowledge are merely by-products. Discovery of self is the real prize.

Maybe Logwood really was there! At the least it makes for a good story at Halloween.

The above is a true experience.

Ken served as a law enforcement officer for 24 years with city, county, and state agencies in Arkansas and Nevada and 10 years in private investigations. He taught criminal investigation at the Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy and criminal justice classes for South Arkansas University at the former El Dorado campus.

As he accumulated “war stories” over the years, he realized that no one wanted to hear them.

September 2018



# Highlighting Our Members

*Contributed by Johnnie Covington*

Member **Glenda Bernard** has been the president of Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association for the past four years but will retire from this position soon. She first became interested in genealogy in 1978 when her father asked her for help in finding out more about his roots. His mother had died in childbirth, and he had been reared by a grandmother, so there were some “gaps” that he wanted to fill. He lived in Baton Rouge, but Glenda and her young family lived in Shreveport, so distance made sharing information a problem. Glenda used her “Mothers’ Day Out” weekly in order to go to the libraries and study census records.

Glenda grew up in Baton Rouge and graduated from Istrouma High and later from LSU with a master’s degree. While her sons were young, she was a stay-at-home mom, but when they were older, she returned to teaching. She taught at a number of Caddo Parish schools including Captain Shreve and Broadmoor Middle Lab and retired in 2005 while at Youree Drive Middle School. It was at this time that she joined ALTGA.

Glenda and her husband enjoy travel, and they return to Baton Rouge fairly often to visit with their son and daughter-in-law and three grandchildren who are all involved in sports. Another son and his family live in Shreveport, so they see this fourth grandchild weekly and enjoy attending his many seasonal sporting events. Glenda likes reading history, doing genealogical research, attending genealogical conferences, writing, and watching televised sports.



Member **Jim Johnson** is from Emerson, Arkansas, which is north of Minden. He went to school at Southern State College in Magnolia and received his draft notice his first year there. Rather than being drafted into the army, Jim joined the U.S. Air Force and stayed 30 years before retirement. He worked in transportation and logistics, which is basically shipping and receiving. He had to make certain that the right personnel and the right goods reached the proper destination. Jim was stationed in Spain, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Turkey, and Germany. He now lives in Bossier City with his wife Elaine, who is also a member of ALTGA. Jim and Elaine have traveled to Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana in search of her ancestors. He is interested in learning more about his 95-year-old mother’s maiden name, Broom, which is also spelled Broome. Other family names are Sanders (Saunders), Allen, Johnson, Kea (Key) and Keener. Jim and Elaine have two grown sons. One is a professional musician and works with computers, and his wife works for the DOE; they live in D.C. The other son lives in the local area and is a plumber.

New member **Venita Fountain** is a retired office worker from Emerson Oil, a company which distributes gasoline and oil. Even though Venita is retired, she is very busy. Venita loves to read and is a member of the book club at the Claiborne Parish Library in Homer where she lives. She especially likes historical fiction, biographies, and Christian literature. Venita likes to cook and garden and do cross stitch; she has just been introduced to beadwork. She and her sister, Mary Winn, do many things together and are members of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Arkla Partners, a genealogical group in Homer. Venita is doing research on the names of her eight grandparents: Gathright (Garthright), English, McAdams, Crowley, Barron, Raborn, Joyner (Joiner) and McClung. The latter two, Joyner and McClung, are giving her the most problems. They are her “brick walls.”



Member **Katie French** is from Many, Louisiana, which is in Sabine Parish. She is retired now, after teaching and being a librarian in Caddo Parish Schools for 33 years. Katie likes gardening and reading, especially mysteries. She is a Master Gardner and enjoys her home-grown tomatoes and peppers. She and her husband John enjoy traveling and have been to San Francisco and Highland, North Carolina. They plan to go to Yellowstone next year. Since John had to work in New York City, Katie would go along and tour the city using public transportation, without getting lost even once. The couple has two grown children, a daughter in Lafayette and a son in Shreveport, who has a brand-new baby. Katie said this little granddaughter is her new hobby, and she babysits at least once a week. The whole family is going to New York City next year. They are looking forward to Broadway shows, restaurants, Central Park, the Statue of Liberty, and the site of the Twin Towers. Katie would like to know more about the names Tannehill, Pou, Butler, Sellinger, Davis, Gray, and Graham.



Member **Melissa Elrod** has always loved to read and knew from a young age that she wanted to be a librarian. She chose to go to college at Louisiana Tech because at that time only Tech and LSUBR offered degrees in Library Science. She graduated from Tech with a double major in library science and elementary childhood education. Melissa's first job was teaching middle school at Oil City which she enjoyed. She served as the librarian at Fairfield and retired in 2011 after working at Captain Shreve. Just a few days after she retired, Melissa went to work at Norton Art Gallery as its librarian. Melissa is a Master Gardener, an active member of the Krewe of Centaur, and a member of Alpha Delta Kappa, an international sorority for women educators. Melissa is researching the family names Elrod, Wilkerson, Adams, Winkler, Doncarlos, and Meigs.



# Ruth Remembers A Christmas Memory

Contributed by Ruth Roberts Frank Berlin

LINEAGE

Page 3



## RUTH REMEMBERS A CHRISTMAS MEMORY

©2016 by Ruth Roberts Frank Berlin

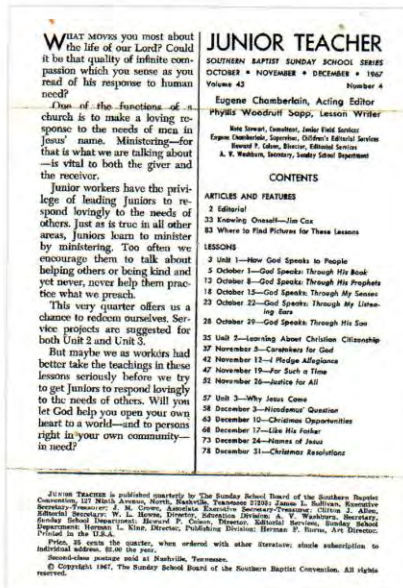
The address on the envelope, "Mr. and Mrs. Ben H. Roberts, Greenwood, Louisiana," was not written in a familiar handwriting. And, the return address, "Tacoma, Washington," was certainly unusual. The postmark was 1950. Who did Mother and Daddy know who lived so far away in 1950?

Recently, when I was at Mother's, I rummaged through some boxes of things she had labeled, "KEEPSAKES." It was from these "keepsakes" that I had come across the stack of letters tied neatly with ribbon and topped with a bow. And, after untying the bow, I discovered the Tacoma, Washington, postmarked letter.

Carefully, I lifted the aged envelope from among the collection of letters; and I withdrew not only a letter, but also something else—a church bulletin! Quickly, I opened the

the front of the bulletin, looked so much like Ruth. Also, the group of carolers reminded me of the many Christmas Eve nights Mr. Roberts went caroling with us. Sincerely, Dorothy Collum."

So, I looked again at the bulletin. This time at the cover and not the content. There was a picture of a group of five



young people standing under a street lamp. They were bundled against the cold wearing heavy coats, gloves, scarves about their necks, and earmuffs over their ears. Their faces were radiant with joy and their mouths were open in song. They were holding a hymnal, and obviously singing Christmas carols. As I viewed the happy group, great and wonderful memories flooded my soul. And this rush of memory was due to, of all people, Dorothy Collum.

Dorothy was the youngest daughter of the preacher at the Greenwood Baptist Church. She lived about three blocks from me; and she was one grade ahead of me in school. Our paths did not often cross.

But, Dorothy Collum! What a fantastic surprise! I would have never guessed Dorothy had been so greatly inspired by those trips around town on cold Christmas Eve nights. We went to every home in the community and sang a carol. As we departed a house, Daddy "heisted" the tune for "Silent Night;" and we were away to another home. And if I had had to list the young people in our annual group of Christmas carolers, I wonder if Dorothy's name would have been included. Yet, here she was, seeing a picture of carolers, thinking of the Christmas Eve nights Daddy led us caroling, and even thinking of me.

Life is filled with so many, many wonderful surprises. Mother was correct in labeling that letter, "KEEPSAKE."

bulletin. I let my eyes skim over the Sunday morning and Sunday evening church rituals looking for a familiar name or something to alert me to why a church bulletin was significant enough to be mailed from Tacoma, Washington, to Greenwood, Louisiana. Then, after not seeing anything that "rang a bell," I decided to read the note which accompanied the bulletin.

"Dear Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, I am sending this church bulletin to you because the girl, in the red coat pictured on

## IN MEMORY OF DALE JENNINGS

Submitted by Sylvia Powers

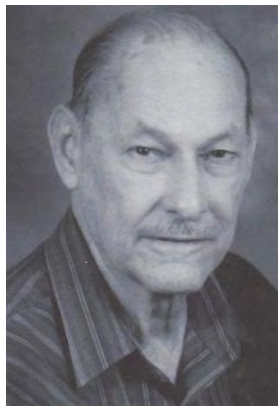
It is with much sadness that I report our friend, Dale Jennings, a long-time contributor and supporter of ALTGA and THE GENIE, passed away on October 8, 2018. I never had the pleasure of meeting Dale in person, but he and I communicated by email several times regarding the articles he submitted to THE GENIE. I knew him as an avid researcher and an accurate writer with much attention to detail. His articles required little editing on my part. As I have been reading what other Ark-la-Tex genealogy members have written about him in the past, I have discovered that he has contributed close to fifty articles since 1994 to our publication. May his memory and the effects of his contributions to Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association continue in our organization for many years to come.

Obituary for Dale Jennings:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/haughton-la/dale-jennings-8018382>

### Dale O Jennings

September 24, 1937 – October 8, 2018



Dale O. Jennings, 81, of Benton, LA, passed away on October 8, 2018. He was preceded in death by his father, George F. Jennings; his mother, Ruth Ace Jennings; his step-mother, Betty Jennings; and his best friend and brother-in-law, William Meider.

Dale was born in Washington Twp, PA on September 24, 1937. His family moved to George West, TX in 1945, and he always considered it his hometown. He lived there until joining the Army in 1959. He retired as MSgt after 20 years of service. He completed his education by graduating from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA. The next 20 years were spent working for Anti-

Pest as a technician.

Dale was married to Larri Hunt on February 28, 1968, and they had two daughters. He was a wonderful father and loved his girls so much. After retiring from his last job, he became interested in researching Larri's family in Bossier Parish, which led him to write many articles about the history of the parish, which were published in the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Assoc. Quarterly, The Geni. He enjoyed sharing his knowledge and helping others in their research. He also wrote a book about his childhood in George West and Live Oak County, TX. Dale was also a big New Orleans Saints fan.

He is survived by his wife, Larri; daughters, Laura Jennings and Shannon Foster (Charles); and his step-daughters, Joani Rowland (Mike) and Suzie Lester (Rusty).

Also, his grandchildren, J.V. Rowland, Alexandra Pike (Josh), James Lester, Loni Lester and Stacy Loe (Brian), and eight great-grandchildren; sisters, Janet Leslie (Bill), Beverly Meider, Nancy White and Sue Canfield (Dennis) and brother, Paul Drake (Elaine).

The family wishes to thank all the doctors and nurses that treated Dale during his hospital stay, especially the people in the ICU at WK Bossier. We are so grateful for the loving care they showed to him and to us. We would also like to thank all our church family for the kind words and prayers. It means the world to us.

There will be a time of visiting with the family and friends from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m., Saturday, October 13, 2018, in Lagniappe Hall, Cypress Baptist Church, Benton, LA.

- **FAMILY**

- George F. and Ruth Ace Jennings, Parents
- Betty Jennings, Step-Mother
- William Meider, Best Friend and Brother-in-law
- Larri Hunt Jennings, Wife
- Laura Jennings, Daughter
- Shannon Foster and husband, Charles, Daughter
- Joani Rowland and husband, Mike, Step-Daughter
- Suzie Lester and husband, Rusty, Step-Daughter
- Janet Leslie and husband, Bill, Sister
- Beverly Meider, Sister
- Nancy White, Sister
- Sue Canfield and husband, Dennis, Sister
- Paul Drake and wife, Elaine, Brother
- Mr. Jennings is also survived by his grandchildren, J.V. Rowland, Alexandra Pike (Josh), James Lester, Loni Lester and Stacy Loe (Brian), and eight great-grandchildren.



*Memories*  
are  
timeless treasure  
of the  
*Heart*



# Family Group Sheets

*Contributed by Sonja Webb*  
(From the July 2018 Hornbook Session)

What is a family group sheet?  
Why use a family group sheet?

Take a little time to study family group sheets. Having them will over time help the family historian better understand the information collected on a family unit.

Family group sheets are an essential tool to organizing family data. The family group sheet gives structure to your information and is a quick reference of a family unit. Family group sheets come in a variety of formats. It's a good idea to review several and decide which one best fits one's personal needs.

Every family group sheet starts with the male. It's called a group sheet because it is a collection of information on a male, a female, and their children. Family historians are familiar with a pedigree chart that starts with an individual then builds out in brackets with each bracket listing the male head of the household first. The family group sheet profiles each male listed on a pedigree chart. The information collected on the group sheet is a valuable record of a male ancestor, his spouse, and their children, which provides the family historian with an overview of the family unit. The family group sheet is the quick reference sheet of a family unit.

The first chart a beginning genealogist fills out is the pedigree chart. This chart is a broad portrait of a family branch. The genealogist's plan is to fill in a bracket on the pedigree chart then for each bracket fill out a family group sheet.

Family Group Sheet

National Archives and Records Administration

NARA's web site is <http://www.archives.gov>

NA Form 14134 (9/11)

Pediaree Chart

There are a few basic rules to filling out a group sheet. First write the **surname** in CAPITAL letters. The **date order** is day, month, year, i.e., 18 Oct 1901. The **place order** is city/township, county/parish, state, country, i.e., Shreveport, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, U.S.A. Always remember to document the sources of information and to be consistent when filling in the data.

There are several family group sheet formats. One needs to study the different formats, and then decide which format is doable for your ancestor information. The following are samples; notice that each has its own unique features.

### 1. Stevenson Genealogy Publications format

- Spaces for detailed information
- Column for listing **sources**
- Front and back for spaces for 11 children if needed

**Family Group Record**

**Husband's name**

Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mar. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bur. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mother \_\_\_\_\_  
 Husband's other wives \_\_\_\_\_

**Wife's name**

Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bur. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mother \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wife's other husbands \_\_\_\_\_

**Children** List each child (whether living or dead) in order of birth

1 Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
 Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mar. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

2 Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
 Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mar. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

3 Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
 Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mar. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

4 Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
 Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mar. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

5 Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
 Born \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chr. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mar. \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Died \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

**Other marriages and necessary explanations**

Write places as: Tyson, Polk, NC or St. Martin, Birmingham, Warwick, Eng.  
 Write name as: Christian Joseph STEVENSON.  
 Write date as: 5 Aug 1988

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 Printed in USA on Acid Free paper

Notice the  
Order:

1. Husband
2. Wife
3. Children

Notice top Right  
Corner:

Record the  
sources of  
information

Husband's name		
Wife's name		
Children - List each child whether living or dead by date of birth		Sources of Information
6 Sex	Name	Source
Birth	Place	
Chc	Place	
Mar	Place	
Dead	Place	
7 Sex	Name	Source
Birth	Place	
Chc	Place	
Mar	Place	
Dead	Place	
8 Sex	Name	Source
Birth	Place	
Chc	Place	
Mar	Place	
Dead	Place	
9 Sex	Name	Source
Birth	Place	
Chc	Place	
Mar	Place	
Dead	Place	
10 Sex	Name	Source
Birth	Place	
Chc	Place	
Mar	Place	
Dead	Place	
11 Sex	Name	Source
Birth	Place	
Chc	Place	
Mar	Place	
Dead	Place	
Other Marriages and necessary explanations		

Do not use for L.D.S. temple submission



## 2. National Archive format

- Horizontal layout
- Column to list Occupations
- Column titled **Other Records** such as Census and Passports
- Back of page column for listing of 15 children, spouses of the children; columns to list death dates and causes

 **Family Group Sheet**

Husband			Occupations	
Name	Date	Place	Occupation	Other
Born			Immigration	
Christened			Naturalization	
Died			Military Service	
Buried			Cause of Death	
Married			Date of Will	
Other			Other Marriages	
Adoption				

Wife			Occupations	
Name	Date	Place	Occupation	Other
Born			Immigration	
Christened			Naturalization	
Died			Military Service	
Buried			Cause of Death	
Married			Date of Will	
Other			Other Marriages	
Adoption				

Other Information (Source: Census, Passports, etc.)

National Archives and Records Administration

NARA's website is [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

NA Form 10135 (2/13)

Children					
No.	Sex	Name	Date		Cause of Death (Cause) Name of Spouse
			Birth	Place	
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

\* = Direct Ancestor

National Archives and Records Administration

NARA's website is [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

NA Form 10135 (2/13)

### 3. Family Tree Magazine format

- Notice the column titled **Sources**.
- It's important to record sources of information on a group sheet for any future reference needs.
- In addition to the birth dates & places for the children, there is a column for their death dates, places & burials
- There is a column for marriage dates, places & spouses of the children.

Family Group Sheet of the **Family** **FamilyTree**

Full Name of Husband His Father His Mother (with Maiden Name) Full Married Name His Birth His Mother (with Maiden Name)		<b>Sources</b> Birth Date and Place Marriage Date and Place Death Date and Place Burial Birth Date and Place Death Date and Place Burial	<b>FamilyTree</b> Birth Date and Place Marriage Date and Place Death Date and Place Burial Birth Date and Place Death Date and Place Burial
Other Spouse(s) (Expanded for Marriage) Birth Date and Place Death Date, Place and Burial Marriage Date, Place and Spouse		Marriage Date and Place Birth Date and Place Death Date, Place and Burial Marriage Date, Place and Spouse	

#### 4. Ancestry.com

- Horizontal format
- Column for death dates & causes for the listed children
- The column for husband & wife provides space for a religious preference

#### Family Group Record



Prepared By \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Preparer \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ancestral Chart # \_\_\_\_\_ Family Unit # \_\_\_\_\_

Husband		Occupation(s)			Religion	
Date—Day, Month, Year		City	County	State or Country		
Born						
Christened					Name of Church	
Married					Name of Church	
Died					Cause of Death	
Buried		Cem/Place			Date Will Written/Proved	
Father	Other Wives					
Mother						

Wife maiden name		Occupation(s)			Religion	
Date—Day, Month, Year		City	County	State or Country		
Born						
Christened					Name of Church	
Died					Cause of Death	
Buried		Cem/Place			Date Will Written/Proved	
Father	Other Husbands					
Mother						

•	Sex MF	Children Given Names	Birth			Birthplace			Date of first marriage/Place		Date of Death/Cause			Computer I.D. #
			Day	Month	Year	City	County	St./Ctry.	Name	Spouse	City	County	State/Country	
		1												
		2												
		3												
		4												
		5												
		6												
		7												
		8												
		9												
		10												
		11												
		12												

NOTE=Direct Ancestor

Form # F106

<http://www.ancestry.com/save/charts/familysheet.htm>

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## 5. Misach Enterprises

- Orderly layout to easily find data on the page
- Space for the parents of both husband & wife
- Space at bottom of page for the preparer's name, address & email

**Family Group Record**

**Husband:** ☐ Full Record

Name	Place	Birth	Place
Death	Place	Married	Place
Other		Mother	
Notes / Sources			

**Wife:** ☐ Civil Record

Name	Place	Birth	Place
Death	Place	Married	Place
Other		Mother	
Notes / Sources			

**Children:**

1. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
2. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
3. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
4. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
5. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
6. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
7. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	
8. Name: <span style="float: right;">Sex</span>			
Birth	Place	Married	Place
Death	Place	Spouse	

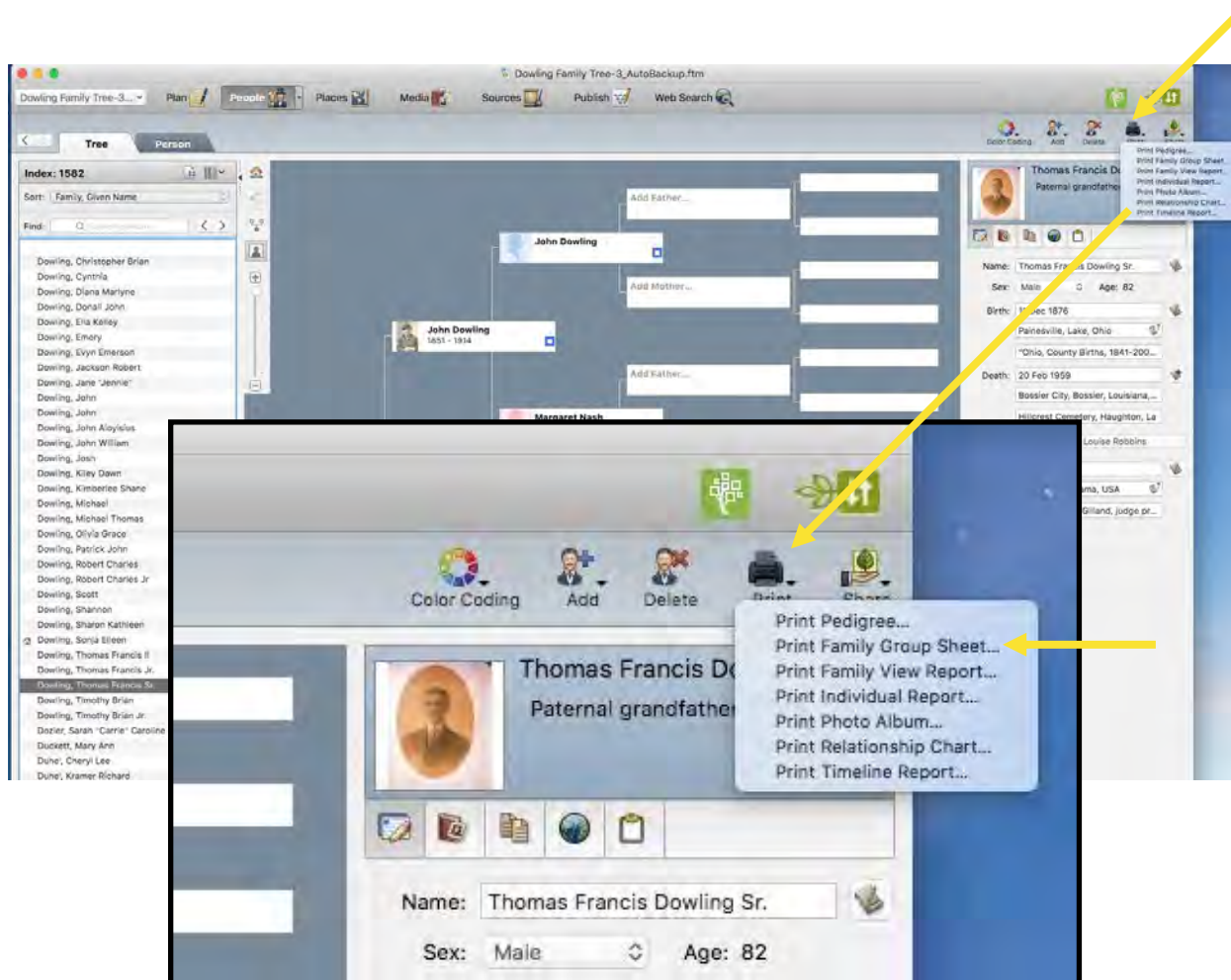
**Preparer's Name:** Email

Address: Phone Cell/Work/Other

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## 6. Family Tree Maker

- Software program
- Menu selection **Print Family Group Sheet**
- Print Family Group Sheet is an important feature of the program.
- In the top right hand corner click on the tiny arrow next to the printer; select **Print Family Group Sheet**
- The group sheet print out is based on the information the user inputs into the program. This is the easiest method to filling out a group sheet if there is ownership of the software.



Family Group Sheets are invaluable tools to keeping research data organized and such a simple means to access a family unit's information. We all should be incorporating Family Group Sheets into our genealogy organization.

## Sources:

Stevenson Genealogy	\$	<a href="http://sgenealogy.com">sgenealogy.com</a>
Family Tree Magazine	email	<a href="http://familytreemagazine.com">familytreemagazine.com</a>
Ancestry	free	<a href="http://supporting.ancestry.com">supporting.ancestry.com</a>
Misach Enterprises	free	<a href="http://misbach.org">misbach.org</a>
National Archives	free	<a href="http://www.archives.gov">www.archives.gov</a>
Family Tree Maker	\$	<a href="http://mackiev.com">mackiev.com</a>





## Leary History – An Introduction

*Contributed by Janine Dunlap, member ALTGA*

William Williams Colbert, Jr. (1927-1985) was the great-grandson of Calvin Leary and wrote the following article in 1960. His original article is held in the Vertical File in Shreve Memorial Library's Genealogy Collection (Broadmoor Branch) and is presented here "as is" in its original format. According to his obituary (published in *The Shreveport (LA) Times* March 5, 1985), he was graduated from LSU and was then employed by United Gas in Shreveport and Houston. He was a single man (no wife or children listed) "vitally interested in the history of North Louisiana." He has co-authored a volume of his Colbert ancestors, *Descendants of William Colbert* and contributed articles to the *North Louisiana Historical Society Journal* and the *History of Bienville Parish*. These materials are located in the Shreve Memorial Library's Genealogy Collection.

Included with this article are an Ancestor Chart for Mr. Colbert's father, William Williams Colbert, and a Family Group Sheet for Calvin Leary and his wife Hepzibah "Hepsey" Loftin. These have been prepared from various sources but with little documentation. However, they can be helpful to the reader in identifying family members mentioned in his article.

For those interested in further information on the Leary and Colbert families, there is a large public family tree on Ancestry.com. **Search** Calvin Leary born 1811 and **look for** the William Colbert tree by debbieleanne\_walser. There are several more trees, some public and some private. There is also some descendant information prepared by Mr. Colbert along with the Leary Family History article in the Vertical File at Shreve Memorial Library.

Following the Leary family information is an article from *The Shreveport (LA) Times* (reprinted with permission of Editor Jeff Gauger). Sheryl E. Sims of Alexandria, VA shares her experience visiting Calvin Leary's plantation home and the family cemetery. DNA testing has shown her that Calvin is her fourth great-grandfather, and his slave Mariah [Moriah] is her fourth great-grandmother. On the Miscellaneous Notes page, Mr. Colbert describes some of Mr. Leary's slaves, including Moriah.

## LEARY HISTORY

Great-grandfather Calvin Leary came to Bienville Parish, Louisiana, (Webster had not been formed) in January of 1850. His Farm Journal, now in possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Georgia Leary Crain, states: "Left our home in Georgia on the 6th day of December, 1849, and arrived at our new home in Louisiana on the 29th day of January, 1850. Expenses from the time we started to the time we stopped \$405.00." The trip was made in covered wagons, bringing along the slaves, household goods, and farm animals. The story is told that when the family neared the location of their future home, night began to fall and they decided to make camp. An abandoned house was spotted nearby and great-grandmother (Hepsey Loftin Leary) was determined to stay under a roof that night. She said she was tired of sleeping in a tent night after night. A herd of goats had been occupying the place and it was a mess, but great-grandmother insisted, so the slaves scoured the place from top to bottom. As soon as it was dry enough, the family moved in and spent the night.

It was necessary to make such a trip during the winter months because the crops had to be harvested and disposed of. One year was usually lost in the move, a crop year that is, since the first spring and summer would be spent in clearing the new land. One hundred acres were cleared the first year they were here. In those days a dense forest of pine and hardwood covered North Louisiana. Game was plentiful and thus food was no problem. Deer were in abundance, and the slaves ate venison as their main source of meat that first year.

Great-grandfather had been a Major in the Georgia militia and was generally referred to as Major Leary. He was an excellent manager of his

plantation, which consisted of over 2,000 acres at one time. The first house he built was of logs, and this later became the bedroom where he slept when the house was added to, the log portion being covered with planks to match the newer part. The place is still standing today, though it went out of the family around 1882 when he sold it and moved to Minden.

Grandmother (Frances Jane Leary Colbert) was only 7 weeks old when they began the trip from Georgia to Louisiana in 1849, and she often called herself a forty-niner. When she was only 3 and 1/2 years old, her mother died, therefore she knew very little about her. There was only one incident which she could actually recall. Her mother was working in the yard one day and was chopping down a small bush which had died. Grandmother ran up to her and got too close to the hatchet she was using. She stopped chopping immediately and cautioned her baby about the great danger in a hatchet. It was enough to impress the child, and grandmother retained that little incident as her only memory of her mother. Grandmother was named for Judge Francis Moore who was a close friend of her father.

Great-grandfather Leary did not remarry until 1865 when his youngest child, grandmother, was 15 years old. As a small child grandmother had slept in a trundle bed beside her father each night. She was the much indulged baby of the family. What her father and brothers did not get or do for her, her grandfather Loftin provided. It is said that great-great-grandfather and his wife (Joel Loftin and Nancy Taylor Loftin) came to Louisiana from Georgia because they could not bear to see their daughter leave them. Grandmother was not at all pleased when her father married again, the widow Branch who had two daughters and a son. She was the former Lizzie Hamilton, sister of Dr. Hamilton of Minden, who, along with Colonel Clint Ardis of Shreveport, had acted as a sort of matchmaker. Her two daughters were Sallie Branch who married



Mr. Cheatham of Shreveport and had no children, and Maggie Branch, who married W. J. Bayersdorffer of Shreveport. The latter was Cashier of the First National Bank of Shreveport and founded the Shreveport Building and Loan, which later became the First Federal Savings and Loan Association. The Bayersdorffers had no children but adopted a girl, Marguerite, who later married Robert Leary. Grandmother later admitted that she had been wrong in opposing her father's second marriage as she was a good wife and a good housekeeper, but as a young girl of 15 her opposition is understandable. There were some, however, who said that extravagant spending by Cousin Sallie and Cousin Maggie and their mother eventually caused great-grandfather to have to sell his place and move into Minden. It is true that his home was used as a summer "hotel" by members of the Hamilton and Branch families. There were also numerous trips to New Orleans, just as in pre-war days, where silk, satin, and velvet was bought by the trunkful. Perhaps it was hard to realize that the prosperous days prior to the war were gone forever.

As already stated above, great-grandfather Leary was a good manager of his plantation, and he always treated his slaves well. In 1860 he had 23 slaves. In fact he was known by many as the model farmer of North Louisiana. He had a fine orchard of apple and pear trees and a large vineyard. He made wine from the grapes, and it was said to be very fine. He had to get a license to do this. There was a cotton gin across the road and southwest of the house where the cotton was ginned and baled. An artificial lake near the house provided plenty of fish. There were all kinds of fowl and animals on the place, providing plenty of meat, milk, and eggs. In addition to the regular crops of staples, there was always a large vegetable garden which provided a variety of fresh green edibles. On all of these crops, animals, and activities Major Leary kept an accurate record. His listing of his cotton production began in 1839 in Georgia

and extended through 1871, with the exception of the war years, 1861-1865, when records are curiously absent. He began keeping a record of the weather in 1859, recording the temperature periodically and noting the hail, snow, rain, tornadoes, etc. In addition to his hogs and cattle, he had sheep and horses, for which he was noted. He had the very best saddle and carriage horses. A winter variety of wheat was raised, and when it was harvested and thrashed, it was bolted in huge silk sheets. In the fall and winter of 1858 he planted 192 acres in the cereal grains, 32 in wheat, 80 in rye, and 80 in oats. The main crop was cotton, of course, and in 1859 he produced 46,070 pounds of ginned cotton which was sold at .0925 to bring over \$4,200. All of these farm notes and records reflect the methodical way in which he carried on the business of his plantation, and no doubt these efforts gained for him the reputation which he enjoyed, that of a model farmer.

Grandmother attended Minden Female College and was graduated from that school in 1865 at the age of 15. She boarded at the school, and her room in the dormitory was always the center of activity. Whenever she wanted to go home a carriage would be sent for her. Little Negroes were always at the gate when the carriage arrived back home and would open it and expect a piece of candy or a favor from her. She always had something for them. When the day arrived for her to go back to school, one of the Negro women who cooked would ask her what she wanted to take back to school - a pie, a cake, a baked hen or turkey or ham - anything. It is no wonder that her room at school had a crowd of visitors all the time!

Grandmother's brother, Jim Leary, was educated at a college in Pennsylvania. He married a Miss Chambers while he was at school, and they came to Louisiana to live. They had a child named Annie. When the Civil War began, Jim and his brother John joined the army - Penn was too young then, but he

joined later. Jim Leary died of measles in Tupelo, Mississippi, during the war. His widow wanted to return to her people in Pennsylvania, so great-grandfather provided her with a carriage and a trusted Negro slave to make the trip to Vicksburg. The city was blockaded at that time, but because she was a Yankee and was returning home to her family, they allowed her to pass through the lines. She arrived safely with her infant child. Annie Leary grew up in Pennsylvania and married a Mr. Orr from Appollo, Pa. Her descendants are living in Pa. today.

As each of his older children married, great-grandfather had provided well for them. He gave them land, carriages, servants, etc. But by the time grandmother married in 1870 things were not as plentiful as before. She told her father she just wanted a quiet wedding as she knew that times were hard. When he wrote out a note to her equal in value to what he had given to his other children, she declined it and calmly laid it on the open fire. Whereupon he said that she would have a big wedding at home - it was the least that he could do, he said. Following the ceremony there was a huge banquet with many in attendance.

Written by William W. Colbert, Jr., December 28, 1960.



## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

The son of Mrs. Lizzie Hamilton Branch was William Branch, who lived in Dallas. His daughter, Lurline, married a Mr. Shearer in Altoona, Pennsylvania. Mr. Shearer was an executive of a large Utility company, and they lived on an extensive estate near Altoona.

Great-grandfather Leary bought the slaves' shoes in large quantities and kept them in a store room under the stairs leading to the upstairs bedroom. They were given to the slaves as they needed them. The shoes were russet in color and were therefore called russets. Grandmother always wanted her daddy to give her a pair of russets, but he never did.

Margaret Colbert Oden (Mrs. S. M. Oden) has in her possession a copper kettle which belonged to Nancy Taylor Loftin, wife of Joel Loftin. It is used to make jelly in because of its ability to hold the heat and cook evenly. Joel Loftin bought his wife a cook stove when they were first made, but she did not want it. She said that food tasted better when cooked in the fire place.

Great-great-grandfather Joel Loftin did not raise any cotton but grew the cereal grains instead. When he died he left \$13,000 in cash. He had a little secretary which he kept his money in, and the pigeon holes were crammed with cash.

Great-grandfather Calvin Leary had a black silk stove-pipe hat which he wore on dressy occasions along with his knee-length black broadcloth cape which had a red plaid wool lining. All of this gave him a very dignified appearance, and his height was boosted by the high hat. In his old age he was very deaf.

When Major Leary's shoemaker went off to the army he remarked that the poor slaves would have to go without shoes that winter. Uncle William Penn Leary, who was then 16, asked if he couldn't learn how to make the shoes. He did and supplied all of their needs that year. He used wooden pegs to put them together. He made the shoes which he wore when he went to the army.

Aunt Lettuce was the Negro woman who worked in the spinning room. She was a great one for begging. Someone once told her that she begged too much. Her reply was that she had learned that "them that asks, gits." Aunt Moriah was called Mammy. Aunt Muddy prepared the food which grandmother took to school. Cicero was the leader of the slaves. When the war was over, they were all called up to the house and told that they were free and free to leave if they wanted to. They talked it over among themselves and said that they all wanted to stay. But as time went by, one by one they left. Daddy Bill lived to be 101 years old. He recalled seeing the Red Coats during the Revolution. He hid behind a tree and watched them. He also remembered the "night the stars fell". In his later years he used to say, "Jes shoot me, Marse Leary. I ain't no mo good." One day he said that when Jim Leary had out his shotgun. Uncle Jim pointed the gun his way as if to do the deed. Whereupon the old Negro shouted, "No, Marse Jimmy. Don't point dat gun dis way. Hit might be loaded and go off!"

Joel Loftin had 16 slaves in 1860. He was very particular with his Negroes. He made sure that they got good Sunday clothes, and a special cook was detailed to prepare their food.

CORNELIUS LEARY of Lenoir Co., N.C., came from Chowan Co., N.C. He died in 1783 in the Revolutionary War and left a wife and 4 children. His wife was Ann Civil Davis, born in Lenoir Co., N.C., on the south side of the Neuse River above the town of Kinston. She died at the age of 82. Their four children:

1. Job Leary - (See Below)
2. James Leary - died when a young man.
3. Dempsey Leary - moved to Georgia, married, and his descendants live there.
4. Susan Leary - married a Mr. Stanly near where she was born. They had 7 children, all of whom are dead. No posterity survives.

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JOB LEARY, son of Cornelius Leary and Ann Civil Davis, was born in 1775 in Lenoir Co., N.C., near the headwaters of the Trent River. He was reared in that county and died in 1839 at the age of 64. He married Jane Cox of Jones Co., N.C. She was born in 1777 and died in 1850 in her 73rd year. She was the daughter of Andrew Cox, who was born and reared in Jones County, N.C., near the Trent River, and a Miss Hollingsworth. The children of Job Leary and Jane Cox are as follows: They may not be in correct order.

1. Nancy Leary - married Oliver Herring of Lenoir Co., N.C.
2. Susan Leary -
3. James Cox Leary - married Mary Davis and died at age 23.
4. Hannah Leary - married Stephen Brown of Jones Co., N.C., son of Samuel Brown and Miss Williams. In 1831 he moved to Georgia. Had lived near Trenton, N.C. Calvin Brown visited his Uncle (alvin Leary in La. just after the Civil War.
5. John Andrew Leary - moved to Dooly Co., Ga., and married a Miss Waters.
6. Ann Civil Leary - married Henry Sandlin of Duplin Co., N.C., and had 12 children, 8 daughters and 4 sons. When Mr. Sandlin died leaving many young children, Calvin Leary went to N.C. and brought Nick and Nann Sandlin back with him to live in his home near Minden, La. Nick Sandlin was the father of John N. Sandlin, U.S. Congressman, and Mack Sandlin, Clerk of Court in Minden for many years. Nick Sandlin married Irene McIntyre, Wm. Penn Leary's wife's sister. Nann Sandlin married a Mr. Culpepper, and had no children presumably.
7. Curtis Leary - moved to Houston Co., Ga., and married Maria Small who had also moved from North Carolina.
8. Calvin Leary - (See Below) born 1811. [Family Group Sheet follows]
9. Elizabeth Leary - married a Mr. Albertson of Duplin Co., N.C. She had one child and died.
10. Job Leary - (See Below) born in 1818. \*\*
11. Jane Leary - married Mr. Albertson (above) after her sister's death.
12. Barbara Caroline Leary - born 1823, married Daniel Spine Brock and lived in Kinston, Lenoir Co., N.C.

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*\*\*Job Leary was born 25 Dec 1818 and was still living in May 1896 in Trenton (Jones Co), NC. In 1850 he married Jane Kinsey, born 1826 and died Sept. 1895 in Trenton. They had eight children, three of whom died young. [from W.W. Colbert, Jr. notes]*

Typed by William W. Colbert, Jr. on June 19, 1958.

**Family Group Sheet****Husband: Calvin Leary**

Born: 1811 in: North Carolina  
 Married: Abt. 1831  
 Died: 1882 in: Leary Cem, Webster Par, LA  
 Father: Job (O'Leary) Leary  
 Mother: Jane Cox  
 Other Spouses: Mariah (Slave), Lizzie Hamilton Branch

**Wife: Hepzibah "Hepsey" Loftin**

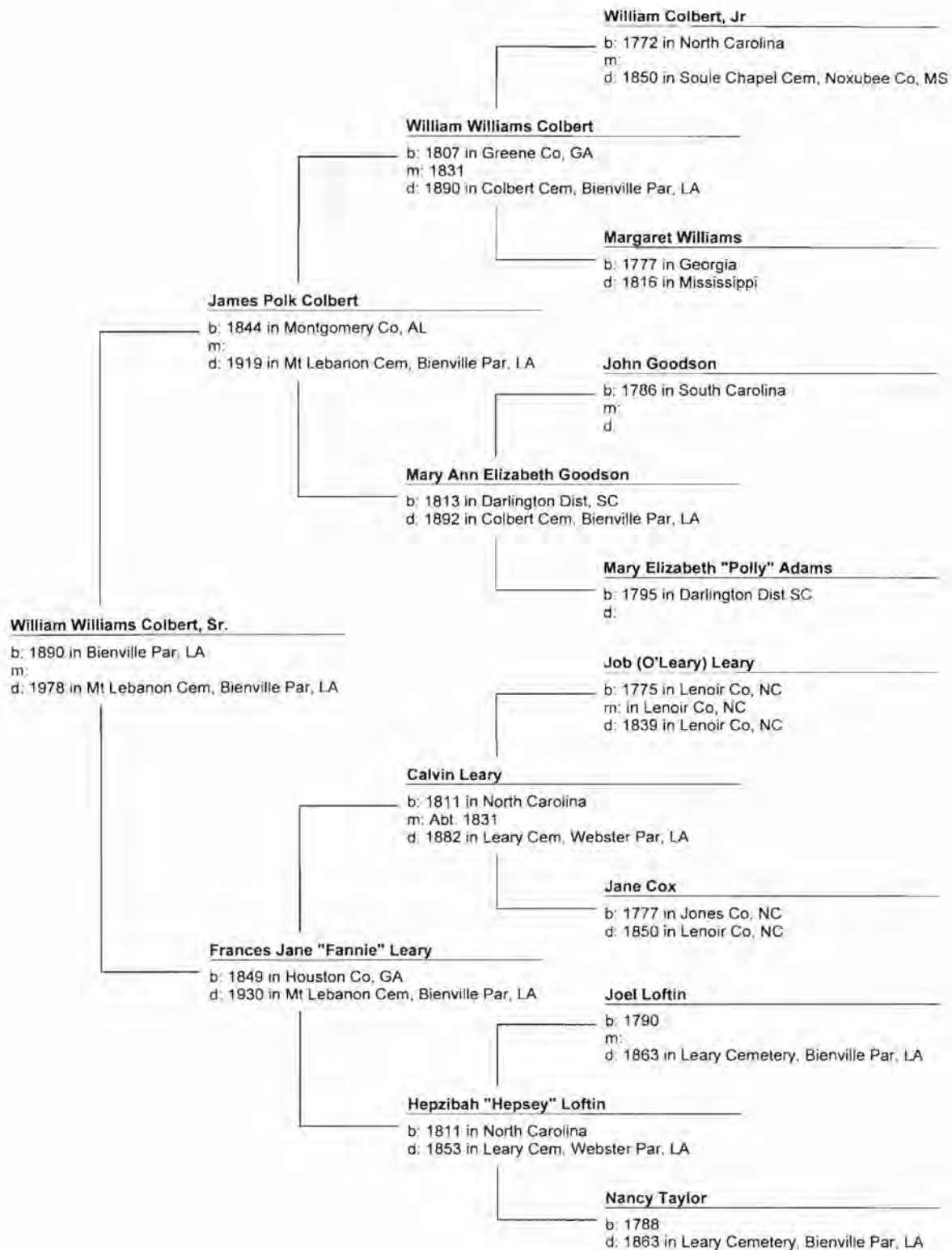
Born: 1811 in: North Carolina  
 Died: 1853 in: Leary Cem, Webster Par, LA  
 Father: Joel Loftin  
 Mother: Nancy Taylor

**CHILDREN**

1 F	Name: Nancy Caroline Leary	
	Born: 1837	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died: 1907	in: Leary Cem, Webster Par, LA
	Married: 1857	in: Bienville Par, LA
	Spouse: George Thomas Ventress	
2 M	Name: James Leary	
	Born: 1839	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died:	in: Lee Co, MS
	Married:	
	Spouse: Nellie Chambers	
3 F	Name: Martha Ann Leary	
	Born: 1841	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died: 1885	in: Mt Lebanon Cem, Bienville Par, LA
	Married: 1858	in: Bienville Par, LA
	Spouse: Casper Nail Ardis	
4 M	Name: Robert M Leary	
	Born: 1843	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died: 1858	in: Leary Cem, Webster Par, LA
5 M	Name: John Calvin Leary	
	Born: 1845	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died: 1900	in: Mt Lebanon Cem, Bienville Par, LA
	Married: 1868	
	Spouse: Annie Dean Smith	
6 M	Name: William Penn Leary	
	Born: 1847	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died: 1930	in: Greenwood Cem, Caddo Par, LA
	Married:	
	Spouse: Flavia McIntyre	
7 F	Name: Frances Jane "Fannie" Leary	
	Born: 1849	in: Houston Co, GA
	Died: 1930	in: Mt Lebanon Cem, Bienville Par, LA
	Married:	
	Spouse: James Polk Colbert	



## Standard Pedigree Tree



## Shadow House restoration reconnects Virginia woman with her roots

Kathie Rowell, Special to *The Shreveport (LA) Times*  
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For Sheryl E. Sims, a visit last year to Denton Culpepper's house while it was still under restoration was a bittersweet experience.

Calvin Leary, owner from 1850 to the 1870s when the property was known as the Sunnyside Plantation, was her fourth great grandfather. Her fourth great grandmother, Mariah, was one of his slaves.

Sims, who lives in Alexandria, Va., and works as a legal secretary in Washington, D.C., found the connection to the Leary family while doing genealogical research in order to become a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. When she came upon information about the house being purchased by Denton Culpepper, she reached out.

"I told him who I was and what I was trying to do and he was trying to help me accomplish that because, of course, he's into history too. He loved the fact that we had made the connection and when I went out there, he was really nice. He not only gave me a tour of the house, but he took me to every African-American cemetery in the area helping me look for Mariah's grave because I didn't know where it was."

While the search for Mariah's grave was unsuccessful, she was able to see Leary's gravesite along with some of his family's.

Being at the former plantation brought on conflicting emotions.

Even with the grim connection to her family, Sims is supportive of Culpepper's effort to restore the property and is happy that he appreciates and shares both the African American/slave history as well as the history connected to the plantation owners who lived there.

"Thanks to DNA, I know both the black and the white sides of that history. I appreciate both sides of it. Am I happy that Calvin was a slave owner, a plantation owner? No. Am I happy that my fourth great grandmother was a slave? No, but that's out of my control. But the two of them are why I'm here.

"I really focus on her in terms of how strong she must have been to have endured legalized rape. She couldn't have said no. To be a slave -- no real comfort, privacy, anything, yet she survived and because she was such a strong woman, I'm here today. Had she been a lesser person, a weaker person, I wouldn't be here."

Sims even took a piece of her family history home with her. Culpepper gave her a slave-made brick. "I treasure that," she said.

## Breaking Down the Brick Wall: One Brick at a Time

*Contributed by Kathryn Benson*

As Homer instructs in his work *The Odyssey*, “It is a wise child that knows his own father.” To know one’s ancestors is to understand oneself. Popular social media groups are flooded with DNA groups of various configurations that promote the identification of family members. We are inundated with information about locating and identifying unknown ancestors. The task is overwhelming and determining a research strategy is difficult. What is one to do?

Perhaps the first step is to reach out to family and acquaintances who probably know more than they realize, who might have a stake in your research, and who are willing to help you in your quest for building a family tree backwards into the past. In my case, I did not reach out to someone, but someone reached out to me. My experience began with a phone call from my first cousin from Tennessee who wanted to meet at Dickinson Cemetery near Hampton, Arkansas, in Calhoun County. Her father had died several years ago, and she wanted to visit his grave site. She briefly mentioned some family pictures that she had been given by her stepmother, offering to bring them so I could look at them. “Sure,” I said.

We met at the cemetery where my mother’s family were buried. Her brother, father, grandfather, grandmother, great-grandfather, and great-grandmother... all there. Of course, I knew my uncle. As a child, I had seen my grandfather a few times, none that I actually remembered. I knew his name. He and my grandmother had divorced in the 1940s, and there had been little contact. We made pictures which I added to Find A Grave and to their profile pages on Ancestry.com. Needless to say, I added many names that were in my direct Wilson line. Along with jotting down the reminder to check with close and distant family, another good tip to add is one to visit actual cemeteries that you know of where at least one relative is buried. There could be many more buried there. I photographed almost every monument in Dickinson Cemetery and worked the pictures into my Ancestry tree.

Then, there are the family pictures. My first cousin had approximately 25 to 30 pictures of the Wilson family that went back several generations. I was astounded. She had not done any genealogical work and knew practically nothing about the identities of those photographed. I started to work on them, based on the knowledge I had gained at the cemetery. The names and faces came together in many cases; some remain unidentified. I linked many of them to my great-grandmother’s Oliver family, putting them again on Ancestry. Some I managed to identify and send to family more closely related to them. These pictures actually helped me to locate living family members I had known nothing about. My network of cousins and family expanded.

Along with the importance of collaborating with family members, sharing information, and reaching out to newly-found cousins, come the significant advantages of having a close relative do DNA testing. Another first cousin did so and allowed me to manage his test results on Ancestry. I have spent many hours scouring our shared matches for a clue to our brick-wall ancestor. Some progress has been made, but this work continues. My plans involve asking a male first cousin to do a Y-DNA test to pinpoint our Wilson ancestor more closely.

Several years ago, when I began this task, I met a family member in Hampton, Arkansas, at the county courthouse. This cousin is the granddaughter of my grandmother's twin brother. Did I know my grandmother was a twin? No. Did I know the name of her twin brother? No. Of course, now I am working on my maternal grandmother's line, another branch of the tree about which I knew next to nothing. My mother told me once, "I think your grandmother was a Sindle." Yes, she was. I have found the Sindles along with my great-grandmother's family the Steelmans.

The clerks at the courthouse allowed us to dig through all of the records we chose, even helping us to make copies and, in some instances, allowing us to take away the actual records. Did you catch that? The actual records... more treasures because I was willing to go to a courthouse and dig for gold. I have the marriage license of my great-grandfather, William Alexander Wilson, and his bride, Missouri B. Oliver. Since then I have gathered more treasures at parish courthouses in Louisiana, but this was my first gold nugget. You may consider this nugget a chipped piece of a Wilson brick.

Now that we realize the importance of collaborating with family members, we must learn to choose external sources on the world wide web. You know [www. fill-in-the-blanks](http://www.fill-in-the-blanks.com). Again the task is daunting, in part due to the large number of sources available, and also due to the necessity of evaluating the value of the source to the task at hand. I suggest hitting the easily accessed and known sites: [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), [Family Search.org](http://FamilySearch.org), [USGenWeb.org](http://USGenWeb.org), [Chroniclingamerica.loc.gov](http://Chroniclingamerica.loc.gov), [Archives.gov](http://Archives.gov), and the list goes on and on. I start with these and then move to state sources. From there I will go to historical societies. I also add the online catalog of public libraries with genealogy departments. Let's not forget the local genealogical associations, such as the Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association, all of which have websites. I enjoy gathering sources; just this small group of websites can keep me busy for days. I recommend keeping a record of websites visited and information found, along with the name of the line you are working with the date of the research. Make full use of available forms to records data. Cite sources for each piece of information. Have I done this? No, but I know I should and wish I had.

Back to the brick wall – I have chipped off a bit of brick and mortar using the online resources, as well as through collaboration with family members. Now it's time to focus on the ancestor by re-examining every bit of information and data available. Look and look again. Learn about the historical background of the birth place and the migration possibilities, scouring records for bits and pieces of information you may have overlooked or misread the first time. Fill in gaps, if possible, with new information. Collect seemingly unimportant sources or possibly incorrect sources. Not all genealogists would adhere to this last suggestion, but it is one that I have found fruitful. I started my own research by wanting to discount information found in a handwritten family history that my Grandfather Wilson wrote for my aunt's school project in the 1930s. What he wrote was shocking, and I still hope to disprove what he stated. I have not found information either to prove the history as false or true, but it has provided me with a historical focus and purpose that guide my search.

After focusing and re-focusing on the most elusive member on the family tree, step around that individual and research siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, and great- grandparents.



Go forward and backwards with your brick-wall ancestor, keeping that person in the middle of all records. Think of a spiderweb. Comb records for information about neighbors, business associates, classmates, friends, and church family. Make lists, folders, and charts, detailing relationships. Consider the value of building alternate trees of suspected connections based upon shared DNA matches on Ancestry or Gedmatch. Broaden your research in a sociological sense with information about the history, economics, religion, education, and geography of your ancestor. Other good sources to find information that will broaden as well as deepen your understanding of the background of your ancestor are Google Books and [books.google.com](http://books.google.com). For a source for migration patterns and historical information, use Google maps or [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com). Many groups of people sometimes migrated together for economic reasons. In this case, land records are helpful. As the country opened to westward migration, groups of people moved southward and westward in search of new land to farm.

Begin at the beginning by returning to your original focus. After making broad parameters around your original brick, probe local records that deal with your ancestor. Understand what information they provide. Think about what they do not provide. Where can you find this information? Many places have valuable information, including online collections and offline records, as well as information to be gathered from trips to libraries, historical societies, and courthouses. The hope is that the broader outline you have drawn around your ancestor will lead back to more definitive and more specific information about that person. Consider the information you have already gathered, and in light of the broader outline you have drawn around your ancestor, decide in what direction you should travel to find more information, perhaps including even another visit to a courthouse, additional online research, or a closer look at DNA matches.

During these procedures, as the information and data are gathered, there is a definite need to organize your research. Conquer the chaos! You may find a file cabinet necessary along with folders, paper clips, manila folders, or a research assistant (just kidding). If you lack an assistant, as do I, Drop Box [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com), Evernote [www.evernote.com](http://www.evernote.com), and a good, old-fashioned file cabinet may assist you in these chores. This is the practical side of research and the least engaging, but one must stay tidy and organized.

So here we are again with this brick, this hard surface, this elusive ancestor, the thorn in our sides. We can create his/her narrative with the bits and pieces of the past that we have learned while researching. We can describe the setting; we can add the characters; we can depict an ordinary day or an exciting event that occurred at that time. We can discuss farming in the south or describe the one room school house of the day. We can sing the old hymns once sung with fervor in the church services. We may learn a poem about a Revolutionary hero. Let's look for pictures of clothes proudly worn or records of orphans at the mercy of the courts. Construct a new foundation, based upon facts. Erect the scaffolds of relatives and neighbors. Roof with pride in past lives and accomplishments and/or disasters. Paper the walls with fond memories and thoughts of the past. Rest well, dear ancestor. Oh, if I could have known you. When we have finished our piece and laid down our pens, join me in writing an article for submission to *The Genie* for publication.

## Cemetery Iconography – Part One

*Contributed by Sarah (Sally) Hamer*



Photo courtesy Barclay Gibson, April 2010

As genealogists, it seems as if we're constantly looking at headstones, trying to find Great-Grandpa George from Virginia or Great-Aunt Dessie, who died in Colorado. There is usually at least minimal information on most stones: a name, dates of birth and death, sometimes an epitaph, and in the best case scenario, there may be some detail which might also give us a deep appreciation of exactly what our ancestors cared about. It can leave a snapshot of a particular moment in their lives that may give us more information than almost anything else. But interpretation of these symbols is everything. Here's a brief – and very minimal – “handbook” on iconography.

Symbols break down into several loose categories. Some are religious, some are connected to an organization or occupation, some have a very specific meaning to an individual, and some are just pretty. Dr. Gary Joiner, Professor at LSU-Shreveport, Director of the Red River Regional Studies Center and a local expert on cemetery iconography, suggests that “sometimes you just have to look at a stone” to see if you can figure out what was in the head of the person ordering it. Sometimes a stone is designed by the person who will be lying under it for eternity, if there's enough warning for said person to do so, but stones can also be made according to the desire of the family members put in charge, as they try to determine what the person who has died would want. This often gives us a chance to scratch our own head as we try to determine what each symbol could mean.

We'll start with religious symbols first. Of course, some are obvious: crosses, stars of David, and angels tell an easy story. But some are more than that. For instance, Mary Bennett Cane lies in Oakland Cemetery, under a highly-decorated Celtic cross “erected, conjointly, by the City and Parish.”



Photo from [www.oaklandcemeteryla.org](http://www.oaklandcemeteryla.org)

Lieutenant Eugene A. Woodruff has a well-deserved crown hung on his cross. He had come to Shreveport to remove the last of the Red River Raft in 1873, when the Yellow Fever Epidemic of that year swept through the populace. He could have left with his men, but he stayed to help and died instead. This stone honors his service.



Photo from [www.oaklandcemeteryla.org](http://www.oaklandcemeteryla.org)

This cenotaph (a marker with no grave beneath) in Greenwood Cemetery is Greek Orthodox with a Jerusalem-style cross and letters. It marks a particular area where many members of St. George's are buried.



Greenwood Cemetery, Shreveport, LA  
Photo by author

This cross is made of iron instead of stone with an urn which symbolizes immortality. The IHS symbolizes Jesus.

One of my favorites is in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Shreveport, where the IHS looks a lot like a different symbol, that of a dollar sign.



St. Joseph's Cemetery, Shreveport, LA  
Photo by author



St. Joseph's Cemetery, Shreveport, LA  
Photo by author



Jewish symbols usually include the Star of David, a menorah, or a picture of the Torah. One of the most interesting is the use of the Hebrew letter “shin.” Part of a Jewish blessing, “May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you,” is not too far away from, “Live long and prosper.”



<http://ourrabbijesus.com/jesus-and-live-long-and-prosper/>



<https://www.kornickandberliner.com/sites/default/files/jewish-monument-8307.jpg>



<https://www.stcharlesmonuments.net/jewish-monuments-and-memorials/>

Angels are a favorite for many people, both children and adults, and are often a grand statement of wealth and/or grief, such as the one at the top of the page, which is on William Scott Youree's grave. (William was the grown son of Peter Youree, for whom Youree Drive in Shreveport was named.) This weeping angel is named “Grief” and was carved from Carrera marble by sculptor Frank Teich. Other angels pray, carry the departed with them to heaven, fly, blow trumpets, carry crosses, or even gather on clouds. Some are cherubs – usually associated with babies or small children – but some seem very stern.



<https://ephemeralnewyork.wordpress.com/tag/cemetery-angels/>



<https://ephemeralnewyork.wordpress.com/tag/cemetery-angels/>



166 best Famous Tombstones and Gravesites images on Pinterest

This one even shows the angel stepping on a demon, who evidently had come to take the soul to hell. Soul 1, demon 0.



Catholic symbology is not really a separate subject from other Christian symbols, but some of the iconography is a little different. These tombs or headstones may have rosaries wrapped around crosses and may have a crucifix or statues of various Biblical figures, such as Jesus or Mary, or of various saints. The one pictured below is St. Anthony holding a child; the tonsure is the indicator of his identity.



Forest Park Cemetery, Shreveport  
Photo by Author



Forest Park Cemetery, Shreveport  
Photo by Author



[www.necropoliscreeper.net/stthomas.html](http://www.necropoliscreeper.net/stthomas.html)



[www.necropoliscreeper.net/stthomas.html](http://www.necropoliscreeper.net/stthomas.html)

This cross is interesting in several ways: it's iron, not stone; it has a crucifix; and it is in the Jerusalem-style, with decorations on the end of each cross bar.

Other, less religion-specific symbols can also be used. For instance, a dove represents a soul ascending to heaven.



Dove on a Tombstone. ©2005 Kimberly Powell

A hand with the forefinger pointed upward shows the way we'd like to go. A forefinger pointed downward doesn't necessarily mean that someone is going the other direction; it can mean "come here now" or "join me here" and is often on the grave of a woman with children.



Kimberly Powell @ 2005



<https://genealogyjourn.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/kelly-john-2-symbol.jpg>

In Part Two, we'll talk about how we honor our military, police, fire fighters, and other dignitaries.