

AUSTIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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Austin Genealogical Society
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1942 Christmas card

From the private collection of AGS member Angela Doetsch

From the Editor

Greetings AGS Members,

Sometimes, the search for our past uncovers the dark, dangerous, and mysterious. Sometimes, we uncover tragedy. Even though times may seem tough to us in our present here and now, we have to remember that our ancestors often led even more difficult lives than we can ever imagine. They moved cross-country with nothing more than the clothes on their backs to lands unknown. They built their own homes from timber they chopped down, made their own clothes, and many could not read or write. They lived and died in terrible wars where mothers, daughters, and sons were left to pick up the pieces. They lived in a time without the comforts of modern medicine – dealing with diseases that had no cure. They lived in times of drought and famine, having to depend on the weather to have fruitful crops to survive.

But, they did survive, because we are here. They built our schools and developed sustainable agriculture. They developed vaccines and cures for diseases and improved upon infrastructures and industry. Women fought for their equality and the right to vote. They broke through the chains of slavery, and eventually the right for all humans to be treated equally. They taught their children, and their children's children to survive, just as they had.

We must acknowledge, admire, and remember them for the roads they paved for us both literally and figuratively.

In this issue, you will find stories written about these darker times. You will read about a Civil War soldier and a Texas Ranger – both having witnessed tumultuous turning points of our country's history. You will read about the places where our ancestors cannot seem to let go, seeking revenge for the past; A flower shop where business turned sour, a persecuted woman who roams the cemetery where she is buried, and a man who rides along a lonely stretch of highway – a man that carried out unspeakable acts that would leave a single family torn apart. We have a story of a young man recently returned home from school faced with a tragedy of his own, and a pioneer family of Travis County, their gravesite and homestead lost to time.

I want to thank everyone who submitted the fascinating articles for this final issue of 2016.

Let's remember this holiday season to be grateful for the things we hold dear.

Happy Holidays!



Angela Doetsch

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James Hamilton Harshman

Veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic

By AGS Member Robin Raben

James Hamilton Harshman lived during a tumultuous time in the United States' history and served his country as a volunteer Union soldier during the Civil War. He can be admired and respected for his staying power; according to his military file,¹ he served with the 110th Ohio Volunteer Infantry from the day it was formed until it was disbanded after the end of the war. He married and provided for his wife and their children, and his widowed mother. Reading through the facts of his life, it appears he was a man of integrity and honor.

He was born on 3 January 1842, in Goshen, Indiana.^{2,3,4} He was the only son born to George and Nancy (Monahan) Harshman. He had four sisters: Mary Elizabeth, born 8 July 1840; Sarah Jane, born 14 September 1844; Martha Ellen, born 15 November 1847; and Abigail, born 16 January 1850. His sisters were all born in Ohio.⁵ It is unclear why he was born in another state. By the time James was eight years of age, his family was living in Xenia, Greene County, Ohio. His father was a laborer.⁶

On 2 February 1855, a month after James turned 13 years of age, his father passed away, leaving James as the only "man" in the house.⁷ His father died in Greene County, Ohio.⁸

The Civil War began on 12 April 1861, when James was 19 years of age.⁹

According to a story told and subsequently written by a member of the Harshman family, "James Harshman (father of Martin Kashner) was a little guy. He wanted to fight in the Civil War, but his sisters were afraid for him and hid him in a flour barrel. The next time he got a chance to go to fight, he did. He was paid \$50 to replace someone who didn't want to go (called 'conscriptio').¹⁰ Since he was such a small person, he had an awfully hard time carrying the large guns of the time so he used the ones he found at the battle fields [sic] they came to, and then left them behind to find new ones at the next battle field [sic]. He served with General Sheridan [sic] in the battle at 'Look-out Mountain'."¹¹ More family lore says that his nickname during the war was "Babe."

He married Sarah Anne Morris on 5 June 1861.¹² Sarah was born in 1838 in Indiana.¹³ Their first child, Martin Kashner, was born on 22 December 1861, (before James' military service began) in Ohio. Sarah was pregnant before they married. It is impossible to know whether they would have married otherwise, but we do know that James took responsibility for his child and made Sarah his wife. The rest of the children were born after James returned from the war: son Jesse Lee in 1866 and daughter Emma J. in 1869, (both born in Indiana); daughter Ida May in 1872, and son Frank Wesley in 1876, (both born in Ohio).^{14,15}



**James and Sarah Harshman,
from a family photo collection.
(Year unknown)**

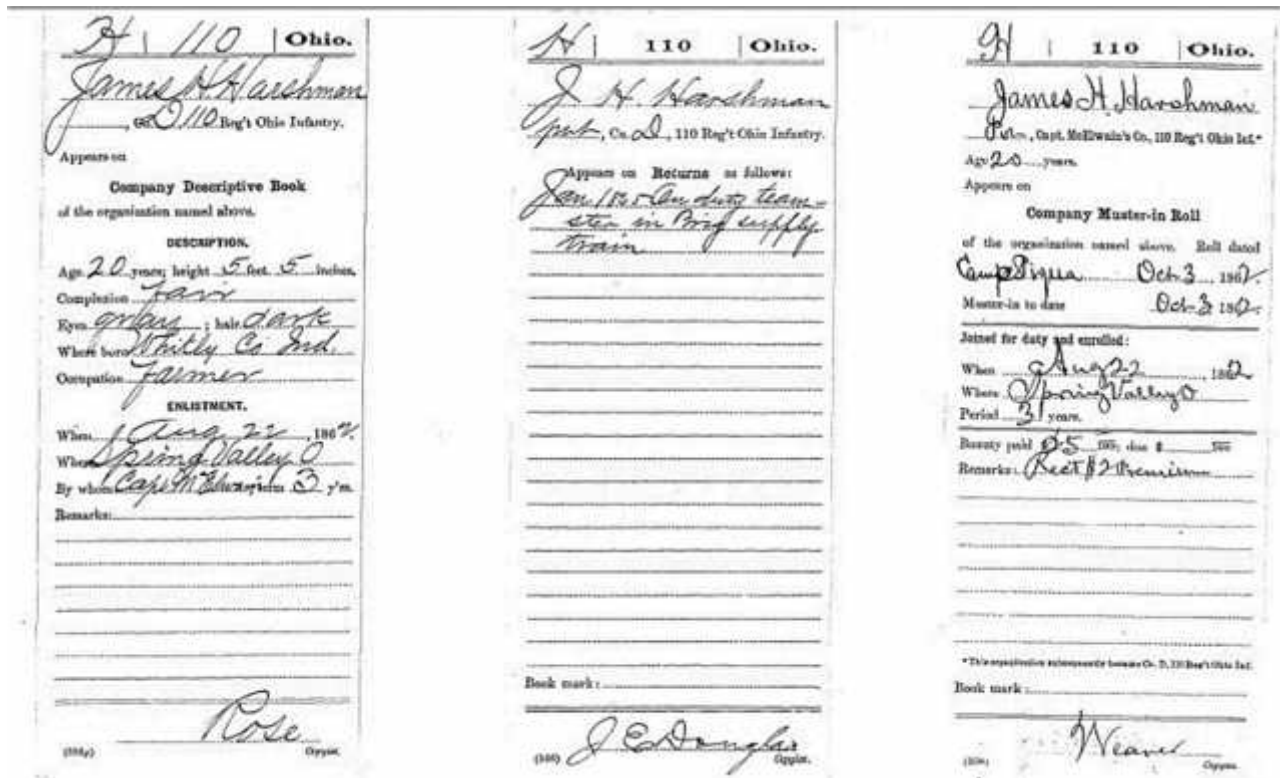
*Photo courtesy of AGS member
Robin Raben*

James served in the Northern army with the 110th Ohio Volunteers. The 110th Ohio was formed on 13 August 1862. James was assigned to Company D which was “mustered in” on 3 October 1862, at Camp Piqua, Ohio, and “mustered out” on 25 June 1865, near Washington D.C. James is described in the Company records for the first time on 22 August 1862, as 20 years of age, 5’5”, with a fair complexion, gray eyes, and dark hair. He is listed as a farmer.¹⁶

According to family stories, James’ sisters kept him from enlisting when he first wanted to, but after he married and he and his wife had a new son, the allure of extra money and excitement of war may have been too much of an enticement for him to resist. It is hard to imagine being in Sarah’s position, a girl of 23 and now a mother and wife, watching her husband go off to war.

James served in Company D from 22 August 1862, to 25 June 1865; the entire span of Company D’s existence. He does not appear to have taken a furlough the entire time of his service. The only time he was not with his Company was in January 1865, where he appears as a “return” having been “on duty team – Sten in Brig supply train.”¹⁷ According to an article about his death written in the Lima News, he had participated in 23 battles during his time in the Civil War.¹⁸

According to his Military file, on 22 August 1862, he was paid a \$25 bounty with a two-dollar premium for his service. At the end of his service on 25 June 1865, he is shown to have drawn \$57.47 for clothing, with the United States owing him \$0.05, and received a bounty of \$25.00 with the United States owing him an additional \$75.00. The bounty system was a program of cash bonuses to entice men to enlist in the army. The system was much abused, and as a result, it was outlawed with the Secret Service Act of 1917.¹⁹



Cards from the Military File for James H. Harshman.

L-R: Labelled “Company Descriptive Book,” this card indicates James’ description, occupation and date/location of enlistment.

Labeled “Returns,” this card indicates that James was sent away and returned from duty on a Brigadier supply train in January 1865.

Labelled “Company Muster-in Roll,” this card indicates payments made and due to James for his service.

The 110th Ohio fought in the engagements listed below:²⁰

Year: 1863					
Engagement	Date	Location	Strength	Casualties	Result
2 nd Battle of Winchester	June 13-15	Frederick County & Winchester, Virginia	U: 7,000 C: 12,500	U: 4,443 C: 269	Confederate victory
New York Draft Riots	July 13-16	New York	Called in by Abraham Lincoln to suppress a civil riot protesting the draft in New York		
Bristoe Campaign	October 13 - November 7	Virginia (multiple sites)	U: 76,000 C: 45,000	4,815	Union Victory
Mine Run Campaign	November 27 - December 2	Orange County, Virginia	U: 81,000 C: 48,000	U: 1,272 C: 680	Inconclusive

Year: 1864					
Engagement	Date	Location	Strength	Casualties	Result
Battle of the Wilderness	May 5-7	Spotsylvania County & Orange County, Virginia	U: 124,232 C: 60 - 55,000	U: 17,666 C: 11,033	Inconclusive
Battle of Spotsylvania Court House	May 8-21	Spotsylvania, Virginia	U: 100-110,000 C: 50-53,000	U: 18,399 C: 12,687	Inconclusive
Battle of Cold Harbor	May 31-June 12	Hanover County near Mechanicsville, Virginia	U: 108-117,000 C: 59-52,000	U: 12,738 C: 5,287	Confederate Victory
Battle of Monocacy	July 9	Frederick County, Maryland	U: 5,800 C: 14,000	U: 1,294 C: 700-900	Confederate victory
Shenandoah Valley Campaign	May - Oct				
3 rd Battle of Winchester	September 19	Frederick County near Winchester, Virginia	U: ~40,000 C: 10-12,000	U: 5,020 C: 3,610	Union victory
Battle of Cedar Creek	October 19	Frederick County, Shenandoah County, & Warren County, Virginia	U: 31,610 C: 21,102	U: 5,665 C: 2,910	Union victory

Year 1865					
Engagement	Date	Location	Strength	Casualties	Result
Siege of Petersburg	9 June 1864 - 25 March 1865	Petersburg, Virginia	U: 67 - 125,000 C: ~52,000	U: 42,000 C: 28,000	Union victory

His pension file gives evidence for some of the battles that he was involved in. His “Declaration for an Original Invalid Pension,” notarized on 3 June 1901,²¹ states:

“That while a member of the organization aforesaid, in the service and line of duty at or near Harper's Ferry in the State of Virginia on or about the [blank] day of Nov. 1863, he contracted rheumatism in his left shoulder, arm and leg, under the following circumstances, our regiment was on a retreat and we had to wade across the Potomac river, and our cloths [sic] thereby became wet, and we had no time to change cloths [sic], but was on a forced march, and our cloths [sic] dried on our bodies, I thereby contracted a severe cold, resulting in rheumatism as above stated.” He further claims “That prior to his entry into the service above named he was a man of good, sound, physical health, being when enrolled a laborer. That he is now wholly disabled from obtaining his subsistence by manual labor and wholly incapacitated from performing any man [sic] labor said rheumatism having resulted in disease of heart.”

The application appears to have been written by a third party, but James’ signature can be seen and is consistent across the many pages included in his pension file.



The image shows a handwritten signature in cursive, which appears to be "James H. Harshman". Below the signature is a circular stamp with the text "PENSION FILE" around the top edge and "JUN 7 1901" in the center. Underneath the signature, there is a printed label that says "(Signature of claimant)".

The pension file includes many notarized affidavits by people who knew James. Of particular interest are those of soldiers that served with him. Toliver P. Heaton was a soldier in company D from 20 August 1862, until 12 July 1865.²² On 9 August 1890, he wrote a letter stating (shown here as written),

“Sir in regards to James H. Harshman’s case I remember of him foarding [sic] the Potomac River at Surjohns Runn VA going to Hancock Md on the retreat from Winchester Va with Genl Millroy [sic]... .”

The Second Battle of Winchester occurred between the 13th and 15th of June 1863 and was the 110th Ohio’s first battle and a defeat for the Union army under Major General Robert H. Milroy. Milroy had chosen to retreat from a numerically superior Confederate force. After this defeat, the Sixth Army Corps (of which the 110th was a part) had been derisively named “Milroy’s Weary Boys.” In a book dedicated to the history of 110th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Thomas E. Pope states,

“...I firmly believe that the nickname should be viewed in a completely different light. Rather than accept the shame usually associated with ‘Milroy’s Weary Boys,’ I believe that the 110th Ohio Volunteer Infantry should wear the epithet with honor. The 110th performed admirably during its service, and on many occasions [sic] the regiment excelled where many others would have failed. In fact, Ohio contributed approximately 175 regiments of infantry and cavalry to the Union armies, with only fifteen Ohio regiments suffering more than one hundred battle deaths. Col. J. Warren Keifer’s ‘Weary Boys’ is among this honored group.”²³

James Durkin was a soldier in company D from 18 August 1862, until he mustered out with the company on 25 June 1863.²⁴ A notarized affidavit provided by him on 26 November 1889, adds that they were on a forced march “from the Rappidan [sic] to Arlington Heights near Harpers Ferry, VA” when James fell into the water. Toliver P. Heaton’s affidavit also refers to this event, stating, “...and during the fall campaign in the Army of the Potomac under Genl Mead [sic] when we crost [sic] the Rappidan [sic] River to Locust Grove I marchet [sic] right by his side.”

The Mine Run Campaign was fought between 7 November and 2 December 1863. Locust Grove and the Rapidan River are near the location of this battle. The Union soldiers would have crossed the Rapidan on their way north from this battle site. Other affidavits in the file refer to the Rapidan River as the location of James’ fall. The Mine Run Campaign appears to be the campaign where James fell into the river and contracted rheumatism which plagued him for the rest of his life.

“[Confederate General] Lee was still positioned east of the creek, in an infamous stretch of trees and tangled underbrush known as the Wilderness, and on the afternoon of November 27, Early’s [Confederate] men encountered Warren’s [Union] Second Corps near Robertson’s Tavern (also known as Robinson’s Tavern or what Confederate forces referred to as Locust Grove). Several Confederate divisions formed a battle line stretching from the Orange Turnpike to Payne’s Farm farther north, and the fighting...seesawed, with neither side able to gain a decisive advantage. That night, during a cold rain, Lee pulled back to the west side of Mine Run and onto the high ground. He now was protected by the Rapidan to the north and by Mine Run to the east.

“[Union General] Meade followed Lee to the creek, but attempted no crossing. Warren moved with some success against Lee’s right on November 29 but ran out of daylight. He urged Meade to launch a full-scale assault from his end of the line the next day, his confidence bolstered by the arrival of two additional divisions. The next morning, however, with Lee’s entrenchments in plain view, he changed his mind. “I would sooner sacrifice my commission ... [than] my men,” he declared. Meade agreed, and echoed Warren’s sentiments in a letter to his wife: “I would rather be ignominiously dismissed, and suffer anything, than knowingly and willfully have thousands of brave men slaughtered for nothing.

“As such, he stayed put until December 2, and then withdrew his Army of the Potomac north.”²⁵

As mentioned above, family stories indicate he was involved in the Battle of Lookout Mountain. The Battle of Lookout Mountain was fought 24 November 1863, as part of the Chattanooga Campaign. Union forces under Major General Joseph Hooker assaulted Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and defeated Confederate forces commanded by Major General Carter L. Stevenson.²⁶ The 110th Ohio Volunteers were not part of this battle. It is unclear how James would have participated, although family stories claim he did.

In researching James’ history, I read several accounts of the hardships of being a soldier in the Civil War. The battles were horrific with unbelievable loss of life and displays of courage. However, even the everyday experiences of the battlefield were filled with hunger, cold, sickness and sustained

marches over hundreds of miles. That James continued to endure for the duration is a testament to his integrity and fortitude.

His pension file also provides some insight into James' movements with his family after the war. A notarized statement made by W. J. Morris, 47 years of age; and Richard Shaw, 56 years of age; dated 8 November 1889, states:

“That they were intimately acquainted with the claimant James H. Harshman, at the time of his return from the Army in the summer of 1865 and know that at that time he was broken down in health, and seemed very stiff in his limbs and complained of Rheumatism.

“That the claimant remained in Greene County, engaged in farming for about two years, or until 1867 when he removed to Elkhart County, Ind. That he returned to Greene County, Ohio in 1872 + continued to reside there for ten years or until 1882 when he took up his residency in Allen County, Ohio. That during his entire residency in Greene County, Ohio, they associated with the claimant, visited him and frequently worked together for one another and offiants [sic] knew that he suffered a portion of each and every year with Rheumatism which seemed mostly to affect his back and left side and shoulder, and disabled him about one third of his time for performing manual labor.”

In the 1870 census record, James is listed as being 27 years of age and living in Elkhart, Elkhart County, Indiana, near Goshen where he was born. Also listed are wife Sarah, 30 years of age; son Martin, eight; son Jesse, three; and daughter Emma, eight months old. James' mother, Nancy, is 50 and is living with them. Also living with them is a young man of 18 years, Ira Manahan. He is most likely a relative of Nancy's. James and Ira are listed with an occupation of laborer and Sarah keeps house.²⁷

In the 1880 census record, James is listed as being 38 years of age and living in Spring Valley, Greene County, Ohio, with his wife Sarah who is 42; their children Martin, 18; Jesse Lee, 13; Emma Jane, ten; Ida May, eight; and Frank Wesley, four. James is a laborer while Sarah keeps house. James' mother, Nancy, is 64 and living with them.²⁸

James' mother died 6 May 1887, when James was 45 years of age, in Spring Valley, Greene County, Ohio.²⁹

In 1890, James is living in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. He is listed on the “United States Census of Union Veterans and Widows of the Civil War, 1890” with a “disability incurred” of rheumatism.³⁰

James' and Sarah's son, Jesse, died in 1896 when James was 54 and Sarah 58.³¹

In the 1900 census record, James is listed as being 58 and living at 119 South Scott Street in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. Sarah is 62. Living with them are son Francis W. (Frank Wesley), 24, and grandson William E. Harshman, 11. James is an Oil Jumper, Francis a day laborer, and William is listed as “at school.” James owns his house although it is mortgaged. Everyone in the house can read, write, and speak English.³²

His "Declaration for an Original Invalid Pension," notarized on 3 June 1901, reveals that James was 60 years of age, 5'2" inches tall, with a fair complexion, blue or gray eyes, and gray hair. He had shrunken 2½ inches in height.³³

James' and Sarah's daughter, Ida May, died in a tragic accident on 20 April 1901. She and a girlfriend were riding in a buggy to a meeting during a snowy, windy night, and were struck by a passenger train as they were crossing the tracks. With the buggy cover up to protect them from the snow and the howling wind they never heard the train. Ida May broke her neck and died instantly, her friend died at the scene. Ida May was 28 years of age, had been married to Henry Ebling for 11 years, and together they had three children. Ida May was buried in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Lima, Allen County, Ohio.³⁴

James died at his home at 119 South Scott Street in Lima, Allen County, Ohio, on 21 November 1908. The cause of death was reported as rheumatism of the heart. James was also buried in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Lima, Allen County, Ohio.



Newspaper headline about the death of Ida May (Harshman) Ebling, James and Sarah's daughter



The Lima News, 21 November 1908, Saturday, Page 1. Found on newspapers.com <https://www.newspapers.com/image/36971711/> 22 August 2016.

After James' death, Sarah received a widow's pension of \$12 per month, commencing 27 November 1908. On 21 September 1916, Sarah sent a letter to the Commissioner of Pensions, Washington D.C., asking for a pension increase.³⁵ Sarah passed away on 8 April 1919, at 80 years of age.³⁶ A notice that a pension check dated 4 June 1919, written to Sarah in the amount of \$75, was returned to the post office because the pensioner had died, is in the pension file with the word

“deceased” written across the envelope. The address was 119 South Scott Street, Lima, Ohio. Another notice states that if she had still been alive, Sarah would have been entitled to \$20 per month, commencing 8 September 1916, as a result of the Revenue Act of 1916 granted to wives during Civil War service.³⁷ Sarah is buried next to James in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Lima, Allen County, Ohio. Beside them are Emma Jean and Frank Wesley.



Harshman family plot in Woodlawn Cemetery, Lima, Allen County, Ohio. Section 25

Top Left: Harshman family marker

Top Right: James’ military marker
(close-up) reads: “GAR 1861 1865”³⁸

Middle Left: marker reads:

“SARAH A.
5-15-1838
4-8-1919”

Middle Right: marker reads:

“JAMES H.
O.V.I. D. 110 REGT.
1-3-1848
11-21-1908” O.V.I. stands for Ohio Volunteer Infantry

Bottom Left: marker reads:

“EMMA J.
9-2-1869
12-2-1939”

Bottom Right: marker reads:

“FRANK W.
10-31-1876
7-21-1915”

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- ¹ Civil War military record for James H. Harshman from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) www.archives.gov
- ² Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795. Berkeley, California. (2710 Cedar Street., Berkeley 94708-2021): Harshman, 1976. Print. This book does not indicate its own sources; it is a goal of mine to one day validate the information with my own research for my family line.
- ³ "United States Census, 1850," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MXQ3-7LC>: 9 November 2014), James H. Harshman in household of Geo Harshman, Xenia, Greene, Ohio, United States; citing family 839, NARA microfilm publication M432 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.) James' birthplace is listed as "Ia" – which is the abbreviation for "Iowa," but perhaps the census taker meant "Indiana?"
- ⁴ "Ohio Deaths, 1908-1953," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X8GP-5JK>: 8 1 December 2014), James H. Harshman in entry for Martin Kashner Harshman, 28 April 1921; citing Shawnee Township (Twp.) Allen, Ohio, reference fn 19360; FHL microfilm 1,991,589. James' birthplace is listed as Tuscowas County, Indiana, on his death certificate. This information was provided by his wife, Anna.
- ⁵ Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795.
- ⁶ "United States Census, 1850," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MXQ3-7LC>: 9 November 2014).
- ⁷ Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795.
- ⁸ Edmund West, comp.. Family Data Collection-Deaths [database on-line]. Provo, Utah, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2001. <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=5771&h=1168565&ssrc=pt&tid=27362040&pid=27556918142&usePUB=true> Accessed 27 August 2016
- ⁹ McPherson, James Dr. *A Brief Overview of the American Civil War: A Defining Time In Our Nation's History*, <http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/civil-war-overview/overview.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>, accessed 27 August 2016
- ¹⁰ Editors note: "Congress approved the first national conscription act on March 1, 1863, which made all white males between 20 and 44 liable for military service...men drafted could provide substitutes or, until mid-1864, avoid service by paying commutation men drafted could provide substitutes or, until mid-1864, avoid service by paying commutation money" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conscription#American_Civil_War
- ¹¹ Personal story typed by Ruth A. Harshman or Harold E. Smith, found in a copy of a book my mother owned.
- ¹² "Ohio Marriages, 1800-1958," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XDND- DMS>: 8 December 2014), James Harshman and Sarah Morris, 5 June 1861; citing Greene, Ohio, reference; FHL microfilm 0535124 V. 1-2
- ¹³ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M8MJ-19C>: 14 July 2016), James H. Harshman, Spring Valley, Greene, Ohio, United States; citing enumeration district 88, sheet 376C, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 1019; FHL microfilm 1,255,019.
- ¹⁴ Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795.
- ¹⁵ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M8MJ-19C>: 14 July 2016).
- ¹⁶ Civil War military record for James H. Harshman from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) www.archives.gov
- ¹⁷ Ibid
- ¹⁸ "Started Morning Fires, Fell Dead," The Lima News, 21 November 1908, Saturday, Page 1. Found on newspapers.com <https://www.newspapers.com/image/36971711/> Accessed 22 August 2016.
- ¹⁹ Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Bounty System," <https://www.britannica.com/event/Bounty-System> Accessed 28 August 2016
- ²⁰ "110th Ohio Infantry," Wikipedia https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/110th_Ohio_Infantry Accessed 28 August 2016
- ²¹ Civil War pension file for James H. Harshman from NARA (100 pages). Invalid Pension dated 15 June 1889, Application #709380, Certificate #504998, Ohio; Widow Pension dated 27 November 1908, Application #908714, Certificate #673496, Ohio. Copy purchased from the National Archives. Pension Index found at "United States General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KDYR-2CZ>: 3 April 2015), James H. Harshman, 1889
- ²² From: Thomas E. Pope. "The Weary Boys." The Kent State University Press. iBooks. This material may be protected by copyright. Check out this book on the iBooks Store: <https://itunes.es/us/xgomP.I>
- ²³ Ibid
- ²⁴ Ibid
- ²⁵ "Mine Run Campaign," Encyclopedia Virginia, http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Mine_Run_Campaign#start_entry Accessed 28 August 2016
- ²⁶ Wikipedia, "Battle of Lookout Mountain" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Lookout_Mountain, Accessed 28 August 2016

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- ²⁷ "United States Census, 1870," Census Place: Elkhart, Elkhart, Indiana; Roll: M593_311; Page: 249A; Image: 163550; Family History Library Film: 545810. Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, Utah, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=7163&h=19218230&ssrc=pt&tid=5788561&pid=24435085320&usePUB=true> Accessed 27 August 2016
- ²⁸ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M8MJ-19C>; 14 July 2016).
- ²⁹ Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795.
- ³⁰ "United States Census of Union Veterans and Widows of the Civil War, 1890," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:K89G-C3F>; 14 November 2014), James H. Harshman, 1890; citing NARA microfilm publication M123 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 338,219.
- ³¹ Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795.
- ³² "United States Census, 1900," Census Place: Lima Ward 3, Allen, Ohio; Roll: 1236; Page: 13B; Enumeration District: 0014; FHL microfilm: 1241236 Web Address <http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=1900usfedcen&h=38648018&ti=0&indiv=try&gss=pt> Accessed 28 August 2016
- ³³ Civil War pension file for James H. Harshman from NARA (100 pages). Invalid Pension dated 15 June 1889, Application #709380, Certificate #504998, Ohio; Widow Pension dated 27 November 1908, Application #908714, Certificate #673496, Ohio.
- ³⁴ "United States Census, 1900," Census Place: Lima Ward 3, Allen Ohio; Roll: 1236; Page: 13B; Enumeration District: 0014; FHL microfilm: 1241236
- ³⁵ Civil War pension file for James H. Harshman from NARA (100 pages). Invalid Pension dated 15 June 1889, Application #709380, Certificate #504998, Ohio; Widow Pension dated 27 November 1908, Application #908714, Certificate #673496, Ohio.
- ³⁶ Harshman, Charles W., C. C. Harshman, and Mavourneen Harshman. *The Harshman, Hashman, Hershman, Hersman Family: A History and Genealogy. Volume II*, pages 794-795.
- ³⁷ Civil War pension file for James H. Harshman from NARA (100 pages). Invalid Pension dated 15 June 1889, Application #709380, Certificate #504998, Ohio; Widow Pension dated 27 November 1908, Application #908714, Certificate #673496, Ohio.
- ³⁸ GAR stands for Grand Army of the Republic.

Sergeant James M. Sanford

My Forgotten Texas Ranger

By AGS Member Robert Richardson

Balaam “Bale” Overton Sanford, my 2nd great-grandfather, arrived in Texas from Tennessee in 1856 and settled in Hill County alongside his brother, James M. “Jim” Sanford. In researching Bale's life, I turned to one of Austin's genealogical jewels, the Perry-Castañeda Library at the University of Texas. There I ran a keyword search on the Sanford surname plus the location where Bale lived – Hill County, Texas. Up popped numerous Sanford citations, but none for Bale. The listings were for his brother, James M. Sanford. One of the documents cited was a University of Texas dissertation which in part described the life and times of James M. Sanford, Texas Ranger.¹

I knew that Bale had traveled to Texas to settle with Jim and his family,² but I had previously not known about Jim Sanford's life as a Texas Ranger. After reading the portion of the University of Texas dissertation I wanted to know more about Sergeant James M. Sanford, so I shifted my focus from Bale to his brother Jim and launched an exploration of the history of my forgotten Texas Ranger.

In genealogy, there are the facts – census records, land grants, marriage and death records, and other similar records – and then there are the stories. Without the facts to lend them credence, family stories can descend into myth – elements of truth embroidered with a fine thread of exaggeration. But, with facts to buttress them, family stories come alive. They become a way for this generation to understand and appreciate the sacrifices and triumphs of generations past.

So it was with my forgotten Texas Ranger, James M. Sanford. The facts were there to support Jim's adventures during the days of the Republic of Texas, a time when Texas' survival sometimes hung by a thread. The stories were also there: stories from his home in Tennessee, stories from a fellow Texas Ranger, and stories from Jim's neighbors in Hill County after he became a Baptist minister.

The facts about Jim's early days were that James M. Sanford was born in 1812 in Rutherford County, Tennessee, not too far from the geographic center of that state. Jim was the first born of John and Lucy Newsom Sanford whose family grew to sixteen children.³ The facts also show that by 1830, the Sanford family had moved to Madison County in Western Tennessee.⁴

Family letters to Bale from his family in Tennessee provide insight into the life of the Sanford family in Madison County. They lived a typical, hardscrabble life as subsistence farmers, gradually improving their situation through the dint of hard labor and their deep trust in God.^{5,6}

The records show that in November 1835, twenty-three-year-old Jim Sanford, married Catherine Sevier, daughter of Major Charles Robertson Sevier of Madison County, Tennessee.⁷

Two years later in the spring of 1837, Jim and Catherine Sanford joined one of Charles Robertson Sevier's sons, George Wallace Sevier, (known as Wallace), to head west to the Republic of Texas. In



**The author's 2nd great-grandfather
Balaam Overton Sanford, ca. 1870**

*Photo courtesy of AGS member
Robert Richardson*

Texas, they were to join Wallace's brother, Charles Eldridge Sevier, who had moved to Texas a year earlier, within a month of the battle of San Jacinto.⁸

Why did Jim Sanford, wife Catherine, and the Sevier boys leave Tennessee for the Republic of Texas?

It turns out that Jim Sanford's departure with the Seviars was a consequence of choosing the wrong side of a bitter conflict between two outsized legends of Western Tennessee, Davy Crockett and Major Charles Robertson Sevier.

In the 1830s, the people of Madison County, Tennessee, had David Crockett as their congressman, and Major Charles Sevier as Madison County's pro-Jackson political boss.⁹

Jim Sanford was a friend of two of Charles Robertson Sevier's sons, Charles E. and Wallace, and his daughter, Catherine, whom Jim married.

The Sevier name was perhaps one of the most recognized in Tennessee. Charles Robertson Sevier's uncle, John Sevier, was a hero of the battle of King's Mountain during the American Revolution and was Tennessee's first governor. Charles' father, Captain Robert Sevier, was with his brother John at King's Mountain and was mortally wounded during the battle.¹⁰

In 1815, Charles Robertson Sevier served under Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans. Charles was breveted to the rank of major by Jackson for leadership and gallantry shown during the battle. Following that, Charles became an ardent supporter of Jackson and Jackson's Democratic Party.¹¹

Charles Robertson Sevier was a giant of a man, well over six feet tall and weighing around 300 pounds. He ran pro-Jackson politics for the Democrats in Madison County, frequently resorting to fist fights to settle political arguments. It also did not hurt that Charles Sevier's house happened to be a key Madison County polling place. During an election, Sevier would “purge the polls” as he called it, by intimidating anyone showing up to vote against his chosen candidate.¹²

The other larger-than-life personality in the area, Congressman David Crockett, was the leader of the anti-Jackson forces in his congressional district and thereby an enemy of Major Sevier. In what became a bitter split with their father, in 1835, Charles E. and brother Wallace sided with Crockett in his bid for reelection.

The elder Sevier used political and physical muscle to guarantee that Crockett's opponent, Adam “Pegleg” Huntsman would be the victor. Not surprisingly, Crockett lost Madison County by a large margin which, in turn, led to him losing the district to Sevier's man, Pegleg, by 252 votes out of 9,000 cast.¹³

Following his loss, Crockett had had enough of Tennessee politics and was ready for new adventures in a new land. He saddled up and headed for Texas. On his way west, Crockett paused in Madison County and stood on the courthouse steps. He turned to a crowd gathered there to see him off: “Since you have chosen to elect a man with a timber toe to succeed me,” he said, “you may all go to hell and I will go to Texas.”¹⁴

Crockett's departure did not heal the bitter split between Charles R. Sevier and his two sons. Estranged from their father, Charles E. and Wallace took Crockett's words to heart. Charles E. left for Texas in the spring of 1836. One year later, in the spring of 1837, Wallace and Jim Sanford pointed their ponies west and headed for Texas. They reached Texas in May of 1837.¹⁵

Texas was poor in cash but rich in land. In July 1838, a little over a year after his 1837 arrival, Jim was granted 1280 acres in Nacogdoches County. Jim then acquired an additional 582 acres in Fannin County and 698 acres in Robertson County around the same time.¹⁶

The first recorded military service for Sanford occurred in 1838 in Nacogdoches County. Sanford and the Seviars were called to service by the Texas militia three times that year. Sanford first joined Captain James Long's 2nd Regiment in August.¹⁷ In October, he served with Captain Whitaker's militia.¹⁸ In November, he joined John Durst's company of mounted gun-men at the village of Mount Sterling in Nacogdoches County.¹⁹

Why Jim Sanford was called to the Texas militia three times during 1838



Jim Sanford's .50 caliber Ledford Plains Rifle, his ammunition bag, and powder horn

Photo courtesy of Mr. Rick Still, Nacogdoches, TX

When Jim arrived in Texas, its continued existence as a Republic was not a sure thing. To the south, the Mexican government with far larger resources and population constituted an ongoing military threat. New settlers in the sparsely populated republic were also under constant challenge by Kiowa war parties from the north, the Comanche from the west, and the Apache striking from the southwest.

In addition to these ongoing threats, in 1838, a rebellion led by Vicente Córdova, once the Alcalde of Nacogdoches, broke out near Nacogdoches. Córdova had maintained contact with the government in Mexico after the Texas Revolution. The Mexican government, while encouraging the revolt, provided little or no material support to Córdova.

Córdova's force was made up of men still loyal to the Republic of Mexico and local Native Americans who felt that the government of Texas had betrayed them. The men still loyal to Mexico resented the growing influx of Anglo settlers, including the Sanfords and Seviars, who now outnumbered the original inhabitants.

The other parties to the insurrection were members of the Cherokee Nation. The Cherokee were largely farmers who had been promised clear title to their lands by Texas if they remained neutral during the Texas Revolution. That agreement was declared null and void by Texas in 1837, in what looked to the Cherokee like a land grab by Anglo Texans.

By mid-August, the number of men in Córdova's force had grown to 400 and they were moving toward the Cherokee Nation to recruit even more followers. Before they could reach the Cherokee homeland, Córdova's force was intercepted and defeated by Texas Militia near present day Seguin. Córdova escaped and eventually made his way to Mexico. Thirty-three leaders of the rebellion were arrested and put on trial for treason. Surprisingly, all were either found not guilty or had their cases dismissed.²⁰

Although Texas Militia, including Sanford, continued to man an outpost at Mount Sterling in western Nacogdoches County, the ongoing threat of attack by Cherokee resulted in the abandonment of the post by the militia. Mount Sterling was completely abandoned by Anglo settlers during 1840.²¹

In 1840, Jim and Catherine were still living in Nacogdoches County with new baby daughter, Elisa.²²

Jim Sanford's life was about to change.

James M. Sanford becomes a Texas Ranger

Jim's wife, Catherine, died in the mid-1840s.²³ In February of 1845, the widowed Jim Sanford enlisted in Captain Thomas I. Smith's Robertson County Rangers.²⁴ By that time, Jim Sanford and Wallace Sevier were living on Richland Springs Creek, which would later become part of Hill County near what is now the Itasca community. It was there the Rangers established a station they named after their captain – Fort Smith.

Buck Barry, who served under Sergeant Sanford, colorfully described his adventures with Sanford in his biography. It is from Buck Barry that we get the clearest picture of the dangerous life of a Ranger in 1845, the final year of the Republic of Texas.

All italicized quotes below are from Buck Barry's biography.²⁵



Ranger Buck Barry served under Sgt. Sanford in 1845

Image of James Buckner (Buck) Barry, ca. 1853, Part of the Lawrence T. Jones III Texas Photograph collection, Southern Methodist University Digital Collections, DeGoyler Library.

This is thought to be the earliest photographic image of a Texas Ranger with Republic of Texas service.

“I joined the little army of the Republic of Texas, numbering two hundred and fifty men, commanded by Major Jack Hays. I was placed in Captain Thomas I. Smith's company that was assigned to the protection of that portion of the frontier between the Brazos and Trinity Rivers, a day's ride above the settlements.

“There were only thirty men in Captain Smith's unit, and he divided his company into three squads. The squad I was with had its rendezvous on the head of Richland's Creek, commanded by Sergeant James Sanford who settled and died in Hill County. He was loved and respected by all the early settlers of the county.

“We had but two positive orders from our captain. One was that each squad would patrol its section of our line every day, running near and along the lower edge of the Cross Timbers and see that no Indians took the settlements by surprise. In case we discovered Indians or their trail going toward the settlements, it was our business to beat them there and notify the minutemen of their coming. Every settler was a minuteman. In fact every man in Texas was a soldier.

“The other special order we had from Captain Smith was to get in no fight or conflict with Indians as he said no dead man could make a report to the minutemen. Never more than three of us went on one patrol at the same time and sometimes only one was sent.”

Later in the chapter, Barry tells of Sanford's squad in attendance at a great council with the tribes of Texas, including the Kiowa and Comanche, to conclude a peace treaty. At that time, the Republic was concluding negotiations with the United States to be incorporated into the union. They also knew that a war with Mexico would be one predictable outcome of that union. Mexico had already formally declared war on the Republic of Texas and had invaded Texas twice in 1842, briefly capturing San Antonio before withdrawing back across the Rio Grande.²⁶ As part of the treaty, one tribe, the Wacos, agreed to release several captives and stolen horses back to the Rangers. At that point, Buck Barry begins his narrative of being on the trail with Sergeant Sanford:

“Two days after the treaty was over, Captain Smith started sixteen of us to their village (author's note: the Waco tribe) with a Delaware Indian, Jack Harry, to act as interpreter for us. A blizzard struck us, together with a snow storm. It was bitterly cold and some of the boys became faint hearted and talked of going back. But our interpreter and guide, the Delaware Indian, who, in the absence of our experience [sic] captain, had very naturally become our acting captain, assisted by Sergeant Sanford, said no. They declared that the snow would help us find them and that they would not travel their women and children though [sic] a snow storm, and that we could overtake them.”

Barry continues his story as the little band of Rangers, led by Jack Harry, close in on the Wacos. It was snowing so hard that the Rangers accidentally rode right into the middle of the tribe's very large camp without realizing where they were; that is until they saw several children running past sounding the alarm. Soon the chief appeared and approached the Rangers. Barry assumed that the chief's warriors were remaining out of sight in their tents preparing their weapons for a fight. After a brief negotiation, the chief retired to discuss the situation with his warriors. The Rangers moved just outside the camp for a couple of days, sleeping in the snow and ice – both the Native Americans and Rangers were immobilized by the ongoing storm. But on the third day, a tense confrontation arose between the outnumbered Rangers and the warriors of the tribe.

Barry tells of the confrontation:

“The next day, their young warriors, principally, (the older ones were holding themselves in reserve in their tents) came out, advanced toward us, warpainted and with their bows strung. Our interpreter told them to go back or they would get into a fight. They laughed at him and asked where his men were who were going to fight?”

“Sergeant Sanford told him [author's note: Jack Harry] to tell them that we had come after the prisoners and horses and we were not going back without them, and that if they did not have the prisoners and horses there when the sun rose the next day we would sell out. We knew that we could kill two of them to one of us and that we would kill their women and children also.”

Jim Sanford's bluff worked – somewhat.

“The next morning, at sunrise, they brought one prisoner and five head of horses. We did not ask further questions, for we well knew that we would have all left our hair among them if the weather had been favorable enough to have removed their women and children to a place of safety.”

Barry concludes the chapter telling of the Ranger squad's struggle to return to Ranger headquarters outside the village of Waco with the one freed prisoner and five stolen horses. On the trail back, Sanford's Rangers barely found enough game to survive. Most of the large game had moved into the timbers to escape the deadly cold weather. The smaller game kept hidden in their dens. It was so cold that the Rangers had to dismount and walk to generate warmth to keep from freezing. As they made their way south to the Brazos, they encountered a saddled horse standing alone on a crest. When they reached the horse they found a settler on the ground frozen to death. Barry noted that the horse froze to death shortly thereafter.

In a minor miracle, they made it back to their headquarters with no losses – men or horses. Upon their return, both Sanford and Barry discovered that their days serving the Republic of Texas had ended. Texas was now a state and the United States Army had begun crossing into Texas to protect the frontier settlements. Captain Smith had received orders from Austin to muster his men out of service.

However, Sergeant Sanford soon found himself back with the Rangers. The war with Mexico began in April 1846. United States troops abandoned the frontier to fight on the Mexican border.



Sergeant Sanford's powder horn showing a star and Nacogdoches

Photo courtesy of Mr. Rick Still, Nacogdoches, TX



Lettering shows: "SGT SANFORD, HIS HORN, MADE SEP 1846, TEXAS MILITIA."

Photo courtesy of Mr. Rick Still, Nacogdoches, TX

Captain Smith was ordered to reestablish a Ranger unit dedicated to protecting the northern settlements just as they had done in the days of the Republic.

On 2 August 1846, Jim Sanford enrolled at Ranger headquarters at the Falls on the Brazos as a private in Captain Smith's Texas Mounted Volunteers. Jim was promoted to Sergeant, probably that September, for there are a series of inscriptions on his powder horn that tell the story: "Nacogdoches," "Sgt. Sanford," "His Horn," "Sep 1846," and "Texas Militia." Sergeant Sanford ended his career as a Ranger mustering out on 17 August 1847, after a year of service.²⁷

Sadly in April of that year, Jim Sanford's old comrade-in-arms, Charles Eldridge Sevier, died in Mexico while serving with Texas volunteers.²⁸

That December Jim married a neighbor's daughter, Miss Mary Jane Weaver, and the couple returned to Richland Springs near Wallace Sevier's farm.²⁹ The 1850 census for newly-formed Ellis County shows Jim and Mary Jane living there with daughter Elisa and a new baby son, James.³⁰

Sometime in the 1850s, Jim Sanford became a Baptist minister. A.Y. Kilpatrick said in his reminiscence about the early days of Hill County, "Elder Sanford preached over this county before any preacher came here."³¹

The now Reverend Sanford helped pastor two churches in Hill County, the Towash Community and Hillsboro.³² Hill County records show him conducting marriages until the year of his death in 1863.

The 1860 Hill County census has Jim and Mary Jane still living near the Seviers. He and Mary Jane had four children, including 21-year-old Elisa, from his marriage to Jim's first wife Catherine. His occupation was listed as Baptist Minister. Living next door to Jim was my second great-grandfather, Bale Sanford, and his family.³³

James M. Sanford was buried in the Sevier Burial Ground near his home in Richland Springs. He was laid to rest near his life-long friend and brother-in-law, Wallace Sevier. That seems both appropriate and good. It was the closing of a circle begun back in Tennessee during the days of Davy Crockett and Major Sevier.³⁴

In researching his life, I found a fitting in memoriam written for James M. Sanford – Texas Ranger and Baptist Preacher. It read:

“He was as brave as a lion, whether facing the savage Indian or fighting Satan for the souls of men.”³⁵

¹ Reese, James V. 1961. *A History of Hill County, Texas to 1873*. PhD. Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin; Austin, Texas, PP 3-10.

² Photocopy of Balaam O. Sanford's account book detailing his expenses and travel in 1856 from Madison County, Tennessee to Hill County, Texas. In the possession of Robert Richardson.

³ B.O. Sanford Family Bible, including the listing of John and Lucy Newsom Sanfords children with births, deaths, and marriages – A transcription is in the possession of Robert Richardson. The bible is in the possession of Ms. Ernestine Sanderson Harris' family.

⁴ 1830 United States Federal Census, Madison County, Tennessee, Page 73, John Sanford.

⁵ Photocopy of original letter by Lucy Sanford from Henderson Station, Tennessee, to her son B.O. and his wife Eliza Ann, dated 9 June 1870. There are several references to attending prayer meetings and worrying that one of B.O. Sanford's brothers was not living a good Christian life. Copy is in the possession of Robert Richardson.

⁶ Photocopy of original letter from E.A. Sanford at Henderson Station to his brother, B.O. Sanford, dated April, 1875, reminiscing about the early days in Madison County and the primitive living conditions they struggled with during those days. Copy is in the possession of Robert Richardson.

⁷ *Op. Cit.*, B.O. Sanford Family Bible.

⁸ Sevier, Cora Bales, 1961, *Sevier Family History: with the collected letters of Gen. John Sevier, first Governor of Tennessee, and 28 collateral family lineages*, PP 418- 426.

⁹ *Ibid.* PP 418-426.

¹⁰ Gates, Capt. T.M., Jackson, Tennessee, Sunday, 10 March 1912; *Major Charles Sevier (A Biography)*. NP.

¹¹ *Ibid.* NP

¹² Secrist, M., 2012, *Madison County, Tennessee: Historical Sketches of the County and Its People; Major Charles Sevier* Unpaginated.

¹³ McCann, Kevin D., 2012, “*The Pegleg Politician: Adam Huntsman of Tennessee*”, BrayBree Press, Nashville, Tennessee, excerpted on Amazon.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Ericson, Carolyn Reeves, 1991, *Nacogdoches – Gateway to Texas, A Biographical Directory*. Ericson Books, Nacogdoches, Texas. Page 334.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Page 10.

¹⁷ Ericson, Carolyn Reeves, North Dakota, *East Texas Militiamen, 1838-1839*. Ericson Books, Nacogdoches, Texas. PP 8, 9, and 65.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Page 14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Page 15.

²⁰ Córdova Rebellion, *The Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/jcc03>

²¹ Mount Sterling, Texas (Nacogdoches County), *The Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hrmnp>

²² 1840 Census – Republic of Texas/Nacadoches County. Page 132: (this was a tax roll)

²³ 1850 United States Census, Ellis County, Navarro District – shows Jim, a new wife Mary, daughter Elisa (age 10), and a new son. *I suspect that Jim became a Ranger after his first wife died. Daughter Elisa would probably have stayed at the neighboring Wallace Sevier home when Jim was on patrol.*

²⁴ Ingmire, Francis. 1962. *Texas Ranger Service Records 1830-1846*, Ericson Books, Nacogdoches, Texas, Page 131.

²⁵ Barry, James Buckner, 1932, new edition, *The Days of Buck Barry in Texas 1845-1906, Chapter 3*, new edition edited by James Greer, short excerpts taken from Google Books online in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107 regarding fair use

²⁶ Mexican Invasions of 1842, *The Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qem02>

²⁷ Spurlin, Charles D., January 1984. *Texas Veterans in the Mexican War – Muster Rolls of Texas Military Units*, Victoria College, Victoria, Texas. PP 176, 209

²⁸ *Op. Cit.*, Sevier Family History, Page 421

²⁹ Swenson, Helen Smothers, 1981, *8800 Texas Marriages 1824-1850, Volume II*.

³⁰ *Op. Cit.*, 1850 United States Census, Ellis County. Page 131.

³¹ Kilpatrick, A.Y., 1910/1963, *Early Settler's Life In Texas*, Reprinted by Texian Press, Waco, Texas, Page 18.

³² Daniel, J.C., 1907, *History of Baptists in Hill County, Texas*, Hill-Keller Frost Co. Printers, Waco, Texas. Page 5

³³ 1860 United States Census, Hill County, Exclusive of Hillsboro. PP 115, 116.

³⁴ *Op. Cit.*, *Early Settler's Life in Texas*, Page 19. *Major Sevier and his son did reconcile. The Major died in Ellis County, Texas, while staying with sons Valentine and Wallace Sevier. Valentine and family had moved to Texas to join brother Wallace in 1850.*

³⁵ *Op. Cit.*, *History of Baptists in Hill County, Texas*. Page 58.



1910 Hallowe'en Postcard

Art and Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. "Hallowe'en."
New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed December 5, 2016.
<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e3-4fe9-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

On the Road: Ghosts of Our Past

October Spotlight: A Special Collection of Ghostly Ancestral Encounters

Contributions By AGS Members:

Joyce Arquette, Ed Cannon, and Angela Doetsch

As genealogists, we spend a majority of our time researching the past. Often, our research leads us down abandoned roads to overgrown cemeteries and to ghost towns previously inhabited by our ancestors. Sometimes, those abandoned places do not seem so abandoned after all.

Do you have an ancestor who is reported to haunt his homeland?

Have you ever have been serendipitously guided in your genealogical research?

Maybe you have visited a cemetery where an ancestor is buried and there have been reports of it being haunted. Maybe even you have witnessed something that cannot be explained.

Maybe there was a time you stayed in a house previously occupied by an ancestor, and you believed it was haunted?

The following stories give us a glimpse into unexplained encounters where the past seems to come alive.

Grandpa and Mr. Bassett

By AGS Member Joyce Arquette

Last summer, the State of Texas installed a historical marker in Center Point, Texas, to honor my great-grandfather, Leander Mosty, his son and my grandfather, Harvey Mosty, and his other son, Lee Mosty, for establishing and maintaining the first nursery and orchard in the State of Texas. Leander Mosty had migrated to Texas from Kansas in 1897 and had seen the need for a nursery and orchard in the area. The initial location was near Kerrville, Texas, along the Guadalupe River. Another branch was opened in Center Point where Lee Mosty lived the rest of his life. My grandfather started Mosty Nursery and Flower Shop in Kerrville in the early 1900s. Later my father, James O. McKnight, a landscape architect from East Texas, married Lee Mosty's daughter (my mother) and became partners with him. I mentioned the historical marker and background of the family businesses because I was reminded of the story my grandfather frequently told about the family ghost, Mr. Bassett.

My grandfather decided to add a flower shop to his collection of greenhouses and nursery. The flower shop was a tile building, and it was necessary to have a large basement to house the furnace. In the cold winters of Kerrville, the furnace was used to heat the greenhouses as well as the flower shop. The flower shop was to have an upstairs display area with a refrigerator for cut flowers, a variety of vases and bowls, and a counter used for making the arrangements. Two offices would also be in the upstairs area. The lower floor was very large, had an enormous refrigerator for extra flowers and storage of bulbs during the winter months, and a large work area for potting, cutting, and other chores for the greenhouse plants.

In the winter, it was often necessary for my grandfather, or my father, to sleep in the basement to monitor the temperatures and start the furnace when it was necessary. A bathroom, large bed, and other essentials were there. There were two sets of steps – one leading up to the display area and the other leading up to the lower work area.

During the building of the basement, one of the workmen was Mr. Bassett. I never knew what his first name was because he was always just referred to as Mr. Bassett in the stories. Apparently, Mr. Bassett

and my grandfather were in some kind of altercation involving money. Mr. Bassett walked off the job, and a short time later he died. The cause of death was never determined but the doctor/coroner for the county listed it as natural causes. A short time later, while sleeping in the basement and awaiting a cold front, my grandfather heard a chair being dragged across the tile floor in the display area above the basement.

My grandfather rushed up the stairs, turned on the lights, and looked at the room. There was a small desk for customers to write cards for the flowers they ordered, and the chair that was used at the desk was not there. He spotted the chair near the front door. He searched the room, the offices, the commercial greenhouses, and then went into the back and looked through the wholesale greenhouses and workrooms. There was no one there.

This happened again from time to time, and the chair would be heard scraping as it was dragged across the floor and would then be found in a strange place. Once it was even found in one of the offices. In the mornings after my father slept in the basement, he sometimes found vases, pitchers, and other decorative containers in places where they should not have been. He also heard strange sounds in the upstairs area but never found signs of a person.

My grandfather swore to us all that he heard the voice of Mr. Bassett acknowledging things he had done and that his actions would continue because he was never paid for his work in the building. Eventually, my grandfather sold the business to my parents and returned to work on his farm. After he left, my father still slept in the basement but never heard another upstairs noise or found any items that had been disturbed. Everyone – family and long-time employees – agreed that Mr. Bassett was the ghost of the basement and had left since my grandfather was no longer there. No more hauntings have happened since that time, but we were always careful and watchful when we went down to the basement.



Mostly Brothers Nursery
Texas Historical Marker

Photo courtesy of AGS member Joyce Arquette

Mary “Polly” Allen

And the Battletown Witch of Elizabeth Daily Graveyard

By AGS Member Ed Cannon



**Grave of Mary Allen
Elizabeth Daily Graveyard, Meade County,
Kentucky**

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=20830743&Pipi=24251355>

*Photo by Barry taken 23 March 2010
(FindAGrave Member #47211053)
Used with permission*

My 3rd great-grandmother was Mary "Polly" (nee Daily) Allen (20 June 1794 – 5 February 1875). She was married to Marshall Allen who disappeared from the records in about 1829. They resided in Meade County, Kentucky.

As best as I have been able to learn about the world of Meade and Hardin counties and thereabouts, documentation can be very difficult to find in the generation or two after the Revolutionary War. A cousin of mine is trying to join the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), and she found that the first ancestor she tried, our 2nd great-grandfather Gabriel Chism (1824-1884), lacks some key documents. She can't prove that he's a son of his parents! When I first started doing genealogy, I found trees that had Gabriel as the son of John and Margaret "Peggy" (nee Tibbs) Chism.¹ Recently, my cousin and I both discovered that we could not find any documentary proof of Gabriel being their son; however, my mother and I are both included in Ancestry.com's "Margaret Peggy Tibbs' DNA circle." If only we could find any documents! Due to intermarriage in the area and lack of sufficient documentation, my cousin is now working on a different line of ours going back to John Wiseman.

The same lack of documentation carries on to my Allen line. Polly Allen and folks from that time are mostly obscure to me. My mother, who is 88, didn't receive very much oral tradition about her ancestors. It sure makes me wish that I had known, 40-50 years ago, how much I would now want to know what my grandparents, her parents, could have told me.

One thing we do know is that Polly is buried in the Elizabeth Daily Cemetery (a.k.a. Graveyard)² in Meade County, deep in Meade County's Lapland Woods.³ I've seen it called "Bet Daily" and "Betsy Daily" Cemetery as well. The interesting thing about this cemetery is that it is said to be haunted by another woman who is buried there – a woman, per local folklore, who was a witch.

The woman's name was Leah Smock (1818-1840).⁴ According to Meade County legend, Leah was said to have been "...a very intelligent, beautiful girl, who knew the magic of herbs and natural cures. She was also thought to possess powerful intuition and maybe had the second sight, or be able to predict through natural or supernatural reasoning."⁵ She must have been greatly feared in her community because in August of 1840, she was burned to death – she was only 22 years old. "She is the only known person to have been burnt [sic] as a witch in the United States."⁶ Since then, there have been numerous sightings of Leah's ghost haunting the cemetery, usually surrounded by a purple haze.⁷



Grave of Leah Smock
Elizabeth Daily Graveyard, Meade County, Kentucky

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=20830722&PIpi=26584083>

*Photo by Barry taken 22 March 2010
(FindAGrave Member #47211053)
Used with permission*

I have not been to the cemetery, but unfortunately, there's said to have been a lot of vandalism to the cemetery, due at least in part to its fame or infamy.

There has been quite a bit written about her, like the book, "*Battletown Witch, Leah Smock, the Evolution of Witchcraft, and the Last Witch Burning in America*"⁸ and now there's even a movie, "*Leah Smock, the Legend Awakens*,"⁹ released in August of this year.

I have not seen the movie or read the book (yet).

¹ Peggy Tibbs's grandfather John Wiseman is DAR patriot A133445

² Elizabeth Daily Graveyard, FindAGrave online:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=cr&CRid=2226929&CScn=Elizabeth+Daily&CSentry=4&CSst=19&>

³ Kentucky Tales of Sorrow, <http://searches2.rootsweb.com/th/read/KY-FOLKLORE-GHOST-STORIES/2001-11/1007050124>

⁴ Leah Smock, FindAGrave online: <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GScid=2226929&GRid=20830722&>

⁵ Haunted Meade County, <http://visitmeadecounty.org/haunted-meade-county/>

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Kentucky Unknown, Facebook.com,

<https://www.facebook.com/681025945276661/photos/a.681027918609797.1073741828.681025945276661/693640450681877/>

⁸ Fischer, Gerald W., 2016, "*Battletown Witch, Leah Smock, the evolution of Witchcraft, and the Last Witch Burning in America*", Acclaim Press, Missouri, <http://www.acclaimpress.com/store.aspx?panel=3&productid=2282&categoryid=1>

⁹ E&L Entertainment Productions, 2016, "*Leah Smock, the Legend Awakens*" <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt5001706/>

Al Lackey

The Blanco County Ghost

By AGS Member Angela Doetsch

“As John approached the hills he noticed, standing on the west side of the road, an apparent hitchhiker. The milk of human kindness not having been curdled by time and experience, John slowed, preparing to stop and pick the unfortunate fellow up. He noticed that the man was an Anglo, that he was unkempt in appearance, and he was wearing a light-blue shirt and tan or light brown trousers. As he approached more closely, he noticed a large stain on the side of the man's shirt and an apparent cut on his neck. "This guy's hurt," he said to himself, and was all the more determined to give the poor fellow a ride-until he noticed something else. In his right hand the man had a knife with a blade about a foot long.”¹



Al Lackey Still Rides the Night

Illustration by artist Bill Strain (used with the artist's permission)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/billstrain/56466798/in/photostream/>

It was 24 August 2015; 130 years to the day that Al Lackey rode his horse along the very same road I was now traveling, not by horse or buggy, but driving along in my Honda. I had traveled this stretch of U.S. Highway 281 from Blanco to Johnson City, Texas, dozens of times before. Growing up in Austin, our family enjoyed annual holiday trips to Fredericksburg for shopping and German food. This part of Texas has always felt comforting – a home away from home. I didn't realize growing up just how much of a part of my own family history this part of Texas truly is.

In 1850, my Lackey ancestors were among the first pioneer settlers of the land in and around the Blanco, Round Mountain, and Sandy communities and what is now known as the Texas Hill Country.² When I first started researching the Lackey branch of my family from my mother's side, headlines like "The Blanco Horror,"³ "He Killed Five People,"⁴ and "Blanco County Tragedy"⁵ started appearing left and right. I also started seeing articles written about the ghostly apparition of a man often seen walking along U.S. Highway 281. All these articles led back to a man named Albert "Al" Newton Lackey.

I was intrigued as my ancestors were from the same place, the same time, and well, had the same surname, and I dove in – head first. I quickly learned that the headlines were all written about a tragic event. Al Lackey (oftentimes misprinted as “Lockie”) had gone on a rampage and murdered six members of his own family in August of 1885. Al Lackey turned out to be the brother of my 4th great-grandfather, Nelson Cilvester Lackey. This would make him my 4th great-uncle. My ancestor died in 1863 during his service in the Civil War at a field hospital in Quitman, Mississippi, and I could never find much else about him. Maybe by researching into this one summer day, something might turn up about my ancestor.

Al owned land in an area called Round Mountain, which is just outside of Blanco and Johnson City, Texas, not far from land that his father and brothers owned. He had married Aley Jane Pruitt around 1866. Aley was the widow of his brother James C. Lackey, who had also died in the Civil War.⁶ By 1880, they had eight living children together and four children by Aley’s marriage to James.⁷ Two more children would be born between 1880 and 1885, bringing the number to ten. In 1885, the children from Aley’s first marriage were grown and living with families of their own. The oldest daughter of their union, Martha (nicknamed “Mattie”), was about 16-years-old.

The tragic events began with reports that lately Al had improper relations with daughter Mattie, who was rumored to be with child. Rumors spread that this was not his first offense and that he had been accused of the same with his stepdaughter Mary. By 1885, Mary was married and no longer living under Al’s roof. It is said that these rumors had been troubling Al’s mind.

That fateful day

On the morning of 24 August 1885, Al Lackey rode out to his neighbor John Green’s house to borrow money. The Lackey’s had a lot of mouths to feed. They were not home. Al went into the house and took Mr. Green’s Winchester rifle. From that single moment, the Lackey family of Blanco would go down in local history.

Al rode out to the home of his brother, Nathaniel Greenberry Lackey, who lived on the adjacent farmland. He hitched his horse and approached the house. He met his brother’s unsuspecting wife with a single shot from the Winchester in hand. His brother’s wife, Isabel Adeline Jackson, would only be his first victim. His brother turned and fled through a field towards the trees. Al chased his brother for nearly 100 yards from the house when Nathaniel tripped and fell. Al pressed the rifle against his temple, and as his brother begged mercy, Al shot him point blank in the head. We know this is how the events unfolded through oral tradition. One of Nathaniel’s young sons (possibly Charles or Joseph) witnessed it all. Charles was 11 and Joseph was only nine years old. The young boy took off running for help towards Johnson City.⁸

Al got back on his horse, and rode off towards the house of Jim “J.C.” Stokes. The Stokes’ homestead was not very far. Along the way, a neighbor named John Nicholson rode up to him. Nicholson must have heard the gunshots and may have been trying to find out what was going on. He may have also witnessed one of the murders and began trying to talk Al out of any further acts. Nicholson tried to calm Lackey and to convince him to ride back home with him. Nicholson followed him all the way to the Stokes house. Al walked up the porch to the house where he shot and killed Mr. Stokes and his wife Lucy both with a single shot from the rifle. J.C. and Lucy were married for 15 years.⁹ They left behind five orphaned children, the youngest not yet five.¹⁰ Al turned to their oldest daughter, Fanny Stokes, who also happened to be Al’s daughter-in-law. Fannie was married to his stepson (and nephew) Charles C. Lackey. She was murdered near or on the front porch holding her one-year-old daughter, Dora. “And when the body was found lying on the floor the baby was asleep against the body covered with its mother’s blood.”¹¹ The papers reported Nicholson to be missing and “probably killed or wounded,”¹² as well, but we now know that he more than likely got back on his horse and rode to Johnson City or Blanco to alert the law of what Al had done.¹³

Al wasn't finished. He rode his horse back to his own home where he shot his 16-year-old daughter Mattie. Al was unaware at the time, but Mattie was not yet dead. Although her wounds were mortal, she would live long enough to identify her father as her killer.¹⁴ He then attempted to shoot his wife, Aley, and young daughter, Lidia Lackey, but by that point was out of ammo, the rifle having only been loaded with six rounds. Al took out his knife, and Aley took off running into a field with her child, towards a thicket of trees. Al pursued with his knife in hand, but she managed to get away. As she hid in the thicket, she witnessed her husband do something unimaginable – Al cut his own throat with his knife. It is believed he did this not as an act of suicide, but rather as a plot to cover up the acts he had just committed. He took his handkerchief out of his pocket and wrapped it around the wound.

At this point, Al began to ride towards Johnson City where he was met by another neighbor named Al Bundick. Al asked him to ride with him. As Bundick rode beside him, he noticed the bloody handkerchief around Lackey's neck and assumed that he was injured. As Bundick raised a hand out to him, Al thrust the knife into his side. After a brutal struggle, Bundick was thrown from his horse (which was killed in the fight) and he was stabbed repeatedly. Amazingly, he would survive the attack, however, badly injured, he would fully recover in the hospital – eager to tell his side of the story.

Six members of the Lackey family now lie dead.

Al mounted his horse and continued his ride towards Johnson City, but was apprehended by two deputy sheriffs along the way. Lackey began to tell them that Al Bundick had murdered members of his family, including his daughter, and had attacked him when he tried to ride to town to notify Sherriff Jackson. What Al didn't know is that he had left behind witnesses to his crimes – his nephew, his two neighbors, his daughter, and his wife. She had more than likely watched him attack Bundick as well. They transported him to the Blanco County jail by ambulance.

A Lynch Mob Forms

At the same time that Al was being taken down the road to the jail, a posse of 50-60 men (and possibly women), comprised mainly of various members of Al's family was formed. The posse was spearheaded by his stepson/nephew, Charles C., nephew James C., nephew Frances A., and Deputy Sherriff, Colvin Pruitt. The deputy also happened to be his brother-in-law (his wife Aley's brother).

On 25 August 1885, the bodies of his victims were laid to rest, side by side, in the Sandy Cemetery in Blanco County.¹⁵

On the evening of August 26th just as the sun was setting, the posse rode into town. The mob arrived at the jail and demanded Lackey's release from the Sherriff's custody. Al did not go quietly. Reports state that he picked up a large cast iron pot from inside his cell, lifted it above his head with almost superhuman strength...ready to strike. Fortunately for the first men to cross the cell's threshold, the pot hit a beam on the ceiling, and the men were able to overpower him.¹⁶



The Old Blanco County Jail

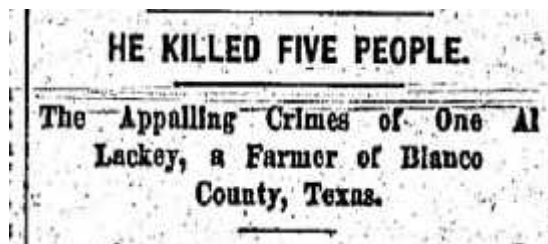
Photo Courtesy of AGS member Angela Doetsch

The posse loaded Al into a wagon and rode a mile outside of town along the old country road that runs parallel to the modern day U.S. Highway 281. There stood two large oak trees – one of which was meant to be the hanging tree for Al Lackey. A member of the posse suggested one tree, but Al quickly noted that the tree selected would not do as the limb hung too low and close to the road.¹⁷ Lackey was said to be a man of large size, being over six feet tall, and weighing upwards of 300 pounds.

They all agreed and chose the 2nd tree.

Before Al was hanged, they asked him to confess his sins, and admit to the ruin of his daughter. He replied that he did not remember anything about it. He was then asked if he had intended to kill more. He replied “Yes, if my cartridges had not given out, I would have killed six others”¹⁸ With that – Al Lackey was hanged.

We will never know who those six remaining were to be.



“He Killed Five People”

Newspaper clipping from the Sterling Standard, Sterling Illinois, Thursday, 3 September 1885, Page 2

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/14783479/?spot=5486168>

Al Lackey’s body was left hanging from the tree, a tree now referred to by the locals as “the hanging tree,” until around noon the next day. His body was spotted by a coach driver delivering the post from Austin the next day, his body swaying ever so slightly from the hanging tree.¹⁹ No one had bothered to cut him down, and none of the Lackey family came forward to claim his body.

He was buried in an unmarked grave in a corner of what is now the Alvin Wegner field on the old Robinson land northwest of Blanco.

Ever since the summer of ’85, the Blanco county locals have reported sightings of his ghost walking up and down the highway. It has even become a prank with the local teenagers to dress up like Al, red bandana and all, and walk the shoulder of the highway during Halloween. If you go to Blanco and even mention the name Lackey, heads will turn. It has now become a part of them, a legend.

We will never know the truth behind what made Uncle Al Lackey snap that day in 1885. Did he have inappropriate relations with his daughters as rumors were told and wanted to silence it all, or were the rumors untrue and was he trying to defend his name? Did he let his temper get the better of him? Is his spirit destined to roam the Hill Country seeking revenge? One thing is for sure if you are traveling along U.S. Highway 281 on a dark night in August, and you see a man with a red cloth around his neck, walking alone along the road, you might want to think twice about stopping, especially if you are a Lackey.

After all, Al is still out there looking for his final six.

¹ Eckhardt, C.F., 2006, *THE GHOST ON HIGHWAY 281 Lackey's Ghost* by C.F.Eckhardt <http://www.texasescapes.com/CFEckhardt/Ghost-on-Highway-281-Lackeys-ghost.htm>

² <http://texashillcountry.com/cities-in-the-texas-hill-country/>

³ The Galveston Daily News, Galveston, Texas, 1885, *The Blanco Horror*, Page 1 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/24072567/?terms=%22the%2Bblanco%2Bhorror%22>

⁴ The Monroeville Breeze, Monroeville, Indiana, 1885, *He Killed Five People*, Page 1 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/36042556/?terms=%22He%2BKilled%2Bfive%2Bpeople%22>

⁵ The Galveston Daily News, Galveston, Texas, 1885, *Texas Rid of a Fiend*, Page 1 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/?spot=3056545>

⁶ James Lackey is said to have died at Sabine Pass towards the end of the Civil War. The author has yet to verify this with documentation.

⁷ 1880 United States Federal Census, Precinct 3, Blanco, Texas; Roll: 1291; Family History Film: 1255291; Page: 346A; Enumeration District: 025

⁸ *Op Cit., The Blanco Horror*, Page 1

⁹ Texas, Select County Marriage Index, 1837-1965

¹⁰ "Texas Probate Records, 1800-1990." 5 March 1888, Number 196

¹¹ Brown, Lee, *Frontier Times*, April 1936, Volume 13, Number 7, *The Lackey Tragedy in Blanco County*, Page 348, Published by J. Martin Hunter, Bandera, Texas

¹² *Op Cit., The Blanco Horror*, Page 1

¹³ The New York Times, New York, New York, 27 August 1885, *Eight Persons Murdered, All Killed By One Man Who Then Tried to Kill Himself*, Page 5

¹⁴ *Op Cit., The Blanco Horror*, Page 1

¹⁵ FindAGrave memorials: Nathaniel Greenberry Lackey #5178421 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=lackey&GSiman=1&GScid=6750&GRid=5178421&>; Isabel Adeline Jackson Lackey#5178428 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=5178428>; Jim C. Stokes #15106245 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=15106245>; Lucy R. Jackson Stokes #15106357 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=15106357>; Fannie Stokes Lackey #5178434 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=5178434>; Martha "Mattie" Lackey #5178442 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=lackey&GSiman=1&GScid=6750&GRid=5178442&>

¹⁶ *Op Cit., The Lackey Tragedy in Blanco County*, Page 349

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Op Cit., Texas Rid of a Fiend*, Page 1

¹⁹ *Ibid*



**Grave of Nathaniel Lackey and wife Isabel
Sandy Cemetery, Sandy, Texas**

*Photo courtesy of AGS member
Angela Doetsch*



**Grave of Jim Stokes and wife Lucy
Sandy Cemetery, Sandy, Texas**

*Photo courtesy of AGS member
Angela Doetsch*



**Grave of Fannie Stokes Lackey and
Mattie Lackey
Sandy Cemetery, Sandy, Texas**

*Photo courtesy of AGS member
Angela Doetsch*

Griff

Section IV: Leaving Home

By AGS Member Glenda Lassiter

Sections I, II, and III of Griff's story were printed in the Winter 2015, Summer 2016, and Fall 2016 editions of the Austin Genealogical Quarterly, respectively.

Griff was born in 1908 near the new town of Jermyn, Texas (founded, 1902). The death of his father when Griff was only six threw the family into a struggle for survival in the barren farmland of north central Texas. With the help of his Grandma Allen's Civil War Pension, Griff's mother raised her four children working in a dry goods store and farming. After graduating from Jermyn High School at age 15, Griff had the opportunity to attend North Texas Normal College in Denton. Section IV describes his trip to Denton in 1924.

Griff (Gordon Oscar Griffitts) recorded his story on audio tapes and left them to one of his daughters, Glenda Lassiter, who is writing his memoir.

Griff's heart was filled with wonder as the car rattled and bumped down the narrow dirt road toward Denton. He looked out at the land where he had spent his life. Here were the fields that he had struggled to farm, where he had cried, laughed, and played, but mainly where he had worked. He understood this land so well. And he knew that when he returned, nothing would ever be quite the same. The thought saddened him a little. He would miss his mother; but as she had told him when he had graduated and turned 16, he would need to see if a teaching certificate could provide him a livelihood since the farm could not. He just gazed outside as the fields of his home slid by the window and into his past.

Griff was crowded into the back seat of the brand new 1924 Ford Fordor Sedan that Mr. Orville Jones had purchased from the dealership in Fort Worth for an amazing \$620.00 with the \$20.00 discount he had gotten. Griff's best friend Dutch Lorenz and the two Jones brothers bounced along beside him, shoulders and knees jammed against each other among the suitcases, flour sack bags filled with dried beans, and buckets of tools that they had not been able to tie with ropes to the top of the car or onto the running boards. Each of the lanky teenage farm boys was approaching six feet tall, and they sat cramped but silent while an enthusiastic Mr. Jones, bedecked in a narrow-brimmed straw hat, chattered away, steering the jolting Ford down the uneven dirt road toward Denton.

Mr. Jones loved his new car. He loved to blast the screeching horn of the car, startling cows grazing in the nearby fields. More than that, he loved to talk about his car, endlessly, to anyone within the sound of his voice.

"You know, she's called a Model T because everyone calls her a 'Tin Lizzie.' Henry Ford could sell them so cheap because he mass produced them on an assembly line. This machine has brought us out of the horse and buggy days to travel in cars run by gas engines," Mr. Jones would say proudly repeating the salesman's patter that he had heard and apparently memorized when he bought the Lizzie.

He would add with a smile, "Ford advertised that you could buy a Model T in any color that you wanted, as long as it was black."

Bragging a little, he declared, "As the only dry goods store owner in Jermyn and for miles around, I felt I could afford to buy the car for the little woman and young' uns to use in Denton. Isn't that right, Vi?" She smiled in agreement.

He had taught his wife and both boys how to drive this amazing invention. Driving a car at any age was quite legal in 1924, as a drivers' license would not become the law in Texas until 1936, and passing a driving test would not be required until 1937.

Jouncing along beside Mr. Jones was his wife, the smiling Mrs. Violet Flora Jones. Griff thought her face looked very pretty for her move to Denton. She felt herself every bit the fashionable Flapper. She was wearing her mail-ordered Maybelline pancake makeup, smartly rouged cheeks, and bright red Helena Rubenstein lipstick shaped into the "cupid's bow" pout made famous by Clara Bow. Her dark eyes, accented by carefully applied eye shadow, peered happily from under her cloche hat. Framing her face were perfectly shaped spit-curls that she had arranged with great attention and concentration.

Griff could not help but notice Mrs. Jones' bare, white, slender arms, gleaming in the sunlight of the crisp September morning as she extended a hand to rest casually on her husband's shoulder while he maneuvered the Tin Lizzy down the road. She had mail-ordered the white sleeveless middy blouse with a broad sailor collar and tie and the pleated navy skirt from the Sears-Roebuck catalog especially for her new life in what she considered the "big" city of Denton. Griff had been a little shocked at her attire that was so unlike the dark long-sleeved dresses with long skirts he had seen her wear in the dry goods store and at church in Jermyn. A woman dressed colorfully and self-confidently was foreign to the farm boy accustomed to the homemade, often flour-sack, dresses his own mother wore.

In addition to being proud of her fashionable aspect, Violet Jones considered herself every bit the modern woman now. She not only had gotten the right to vote just five years before, in 1919, she could drive herself, and was going to live independently in Denton to see to her two boys. Learning to drive had been a much simpler and less uncertain proposition than getting the right to vote. Violet Jones had been quite vocal on the matter of women's suffrage.

She even knew that in 1919, Texas voters had rejected by 25,000 votes, the state constitutional amendment to allow women to vote in all Texas elections. The anti-suffragists in the state had campaigned on a platform claiming that votes for women would mean socialism and black domination in the South. However, that same year the Texas legislature approved the constitutional amendment for women's suffrage, and Texas became the ninth state in the Union and the first Southern state to approve a woman's right to vote.

In addition to holding forth about his car, and honking the Lizzie's horn, Mr. Jones would sing as he drove. "Oh the moon shines tonight on pretty Red Wing," he bellowed out in his loud baritone voice, honking the horn in time to the music. The other five passengers in the car kept time tapping their feet or tapping their hands to the 1907 song about a young Indian girl's loss of her sweetheart in battle. It was a favorite on WBAP radio from Fort Worth, a station that had broadcast music all over the central Texas area since 1922. As the captive but contented audience, the four boys and Vi, bounced along, Orville Jones sang and talked about the wonders of his car on that beautiful fall morning.

Suddenly, their separate reveries and the driver's monologue were interrupted by a loud crash, a crunch, and a jolt as Mr. Jones' car veered off the narrow road and into a shallow ditch.

While the boys in the back seat jostled into each other, yelping in surprise, Griff spotted one of the wooden spoke wheels of the Tin Lizzy rolling down the road without them.

To be continued...

Quilla James and Sarah Hill Nichols

A Travis County Pioneer Spotlight

By AGS Member Kay Dunlap Boyd

“Chapter XVIII – 1857

“New Land Office. – Pursuant to an act of the legislature passed at its session in the winter of 1856, a contract was entered into by the State, through commissioners appointed with Quilla Nichols, for the erection of a fire-proof land office building. This structure was erected in 1857 about 100 yards northeast of the present courthouse, the same now in use. During the progress of the work, by direction of the Committee representing the state, some changes were made in the plans, whereby additional expense was incurred by the contractor. He was assured of compensation therefor [sic] by the State. This was over forty-five years ago; and, up to this time, neither he nor his heirs have received pay. The matter has been litigated, but the decision was unfavorable to the heirs.

“Quilla J. Nichols died about fifteen years ago. He was an old Texian. He married Miss Hill of Bastrop County about the year 1845. They reared a considerable family. Mr. Nichols came to Travis County in the ‘40s, and settled on Slaughter creek, about eight miles south of Austin, near the Old San Antonio stage road. He resided there until his death.”¹

Quilla Nichols built the Old Land Office building, occupied in May 1858, for a cost of \$50,698 (\$39,780 initial cost + \$10,918 added costs for changes made by the architect).

Mr. Nichols submitted two bills as directed by the legislature – One for the initial contracted amount and a second for the additional costs. He was paid the \$39,780 in 1859, and the bill for the additional costs was placed in the hopper to be considered. The \$10,918 amount was later appraised by the state to be \$6,794 and that amount was approved by the legislature to be paid to Mr. Nichols. The Civil War caused his claim not to be approved for payment until 1862. He refused to accept the almost worthless Confederate money that was offered and after the War pressed his case through the courts. The courts said that it was a legislative matter and refused to rule. He then petitioned the legislature in a private bill called a “Memorial,” a copy of which is on file in the Texas State Archives. The legislature said in effect that he had been offered payment once and refused to accept so they did not approve his bill to be paid.

Obituary for Q. J. Nichols.

“Q. J. Nichols, one of the most prominent farmers of our county, departed this life at his plantation, eight miles southwest of Austin, on the San Antonio road, Saturday evening last, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. His name has been identified with many state enterprises, having been the contractor for the old capitol, now in ruins, and the general land office building. He served Texas in her early struggles and in every respect proved himself a good citizen and benefactor to the state. For, several years he had suffered from a severe injury, but no danger was apprehended until Thursday night, when his physician Dr. Reagan, was called. On Friday he sent for his friend Hon. Felix Smith, who found him in a sinking condition, and soon after his many relatives were warned of his dangerous illness, but all that love and friendship could perform failed to stay the hand of death. He leaves a large family and many friends, who mourn his loss. The entire community, with the Statesman, condoles with the family in this their great bereavement.”²

Mr. Nichols died on 29 April 1882, and was buried in this family cemetery which was about 100 yards north of his home. The Quilla Nichols Cemetery was about 50 yards south of Turk Lane. The site was decommissioned as a cemetery when the land was sold and is no longer marked. The wooden headstones were decayed. There were a number of gravesites but the only one confirmed is that of Quilla James Nichols, born 13 December 1822, in Jackson County, Alabama, to Wiley B. Nichols and Celia Hancock. Quilla married Sarah Theodosia (Amelia) Hill about 1846 in Travis County.³ This land is now part of the South Park Meadows Center.

Sarah A. Nichols

The death of Mrs. Nichols, one of the old citizens of this county occurred on 18 April 1920. She was 91 years of age and died of old age. Born in Alabama in 1829, her family later moved to Bastrop. She came to this area in the 1840s. Mrs. Nichols was buried the next day at Boggy Creek Cemetery.

She had been left a widow with the death of her husband almost 40 years earlier. The family lived in the Bluff Springs area south of town. She was laid to rest the next day at Boggy Creek Cemetery.



Sarah Amelia Hill Nichols
"Nov. 12, 1829 Tuscaloosa Co. Al.
Apr. 18, 1920 Travis Co. Tx.
Husband Quilla James Nichols
Dec. 13, 1822 Jackson Al.
Apr. 29, 1882 Travis Tx.
Built Land Office Building
Buried South Of Here On His Land
Near N 30° 09' 44', W 97° 47' 22'
Cemetery No Longer Exists"

This marker which was installed in the 2010 by a family member is in the Boggy Creek/Masonic Cemetery commemorating the life of Sarah

Photo courtesy of AGS member Angela Doetsch



Mrs. Q.J. Nichols headstone
"Departed This Life
4.18.1920."
 Boggy Creek/Masonic Cemetery
Photo courtesy of AGS member Angela Doetsch

¹ Brown, Frank, *From The Annals of Travis County*, page 41

² *Austin Daily Statesman*, 2 May 1882, page 4

³ <http://www.austintxgensoc.org/cemeteries2/nichols.php>

QUILLA JAMES AND SARAH HILL NICHOLS
Travis County Pioneers #16-106 and #16-107
Proven to be in Travis County in 1850 from Alabama

Generation No. 1

1. Quilla James¹ Nichols was born 13 December 1822, in Alabama, and died 29 April 1882, in Travis County, Texas. He married Sarah Amelia Hill in 1846 in Texas. She was born 12 November 1829, in Alabama, and died 18 April 1920, in Austin, Travis, Texas. He was buried in the Quilla Nichols Cemetery.

Child of Quilla Nichols and Sarah Hill is:

2. i. Julia Scott² Nichols, born 4 March 1850, Travis County, Texas, and died 12 July 1912, in Greenlee County, Arizona

Generation No. 2

2. Julia Scott² Nichols (Quilla James¹) was born 4 March 1850, in Travis County, Texas, and died 12 July 1912, in Greenlee County, Arizona. She married John Wheeler Bunton on 8 March 1870. He was born 26 June 1836, in Logan County, Kentucky, and died 4 April 1903, in Safford, Graham, Arizona. They were both buried in the Duncan Valley Cemetery.

Child of Julia Nichols and John Bunton is:

3. i. Anna Carol³ Bunton, born 26 April 1883, in Junction, Kimble, Texas, and died 5 February 1912, in Duncan, Greenlee, Arizona

Generation No. 3

3. Anna Carol³ Bunton (Julia Scott² Nichols, Quilla James¹) was born 26 April 1883, in Junction, Kimble, Texas, and died 5 February 1912, in Duncan, Greenlee, Arizona. She married Henry Robert Martin on 3 June 1905, in Cochise County, Arizona. He was born 29 November 1882, in Taylor County, Texas, and died 13 January 1916, in Rocky Ford, Otero, Colorado. Anna and Henry were buried in the Duncan Valley Cemetery.

Child of Anna Bunton and Henry Martin is:

4. i. Robert Carol⁴ Martin, born 2 January 1912, in Duncan, Greenlee, Arizona, and died 27 May 2006, in Silver City, Grant, New Mexico

Generation No. 4

4. Robert Carol⁴ Martin (Anna Carol³ Bunton, Julia Scott² Nichols, Quilla James¹) was born 2 January 1912, in Duncan, Greenlee, Arizona, and died 27 May 2006, in Silver City, Grant, New Mexico. He married Ione Rose on 12 February 1933, in Hidalgo County, New Mexico. She was born 13 January 1913, in Ashland, Pittsburg, Oklahoma, and died 3 September 2003, in Silver City, Grant, New Mexico. Robert and Ione were buried in the Mountain View Cemetery in Lordsburg.

Child of Robert Martin and Ione Rose is:

5. i. Anna Irene⁵ Martin is living

Generation No. 5

5. Anna Irene⁵ Martin (Robert Carol⁴, Anna Carol³ Bunton, Julia Scott² Nichols, Quilla James¹) married Robert Anderson Wright. They are both living.

Child of Anna Martin and Robert Wright is:

- i. Stacie de Lespine⁶ Wright, living

Pioneer Families of Travis County, Texas

The Austin Genealogical Society will issue a pioneer certificate to those who can prove their ancestors lived in Travis County, Texas, prior to the close of 1880. To qualify for the certificate, you must be a direct descendant of people who lived here on or before 31 December 1880, proved with birth, death and marriage certificates; probate, census and military records; and obituaries and Bible records.

Applications for Pioneer Families of Travis County can be found at:

<http://www.austintxgensoc.org/pioneers/> or

from Kay Dunlap Boyd, P.O. Box 10010, Austin, Texas 78766-1010.

Each application is \$20 and the certificates make nice gifts. You don't have to be a Travis County resident or a member of Austin Genealogical Society, although membership in the Society is another fine bargain at \$20 a year.



The certificate form is titled "Austin Genealogical Society Travis County Texas Pioneer Families Certificate". It features a central graphic of a map of Travis County, Texas, with a blue star in the upper left and a red area in the lower right. The text on the form reads: "This is to Certify that _____ is a descendant of _____ who was living in Travis County, Texas before the close of _____". Below this, there are four lines for signatures and titles: "Certificate No. _____", "Date _____", "President _____", "Pioneer Families Chairman _____", and "Registrar _____". The form is enclosed in a decorative border with floral corner ornaments.

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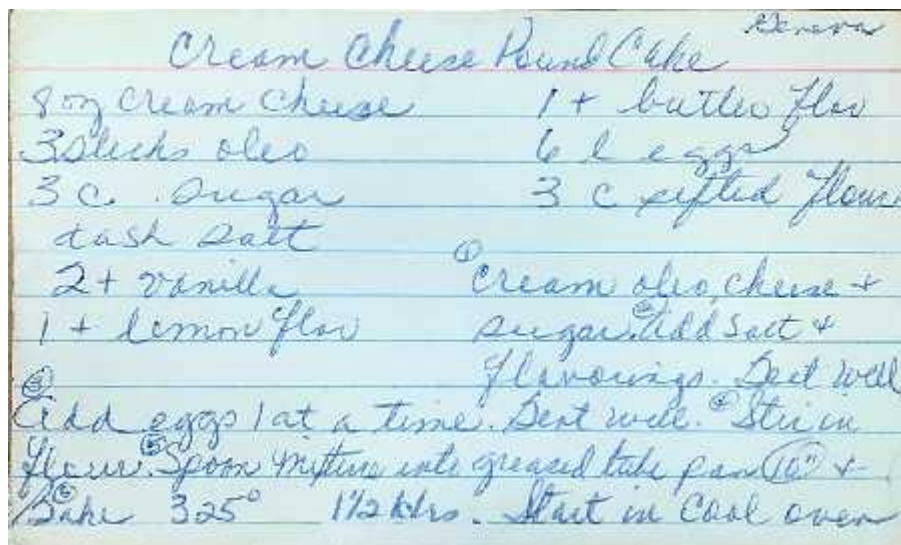
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Memaw's Cream Cheese Pound Cake

From the private collection of AGS member Angela Doetsch

Austin Genealogical Society General Information

PURPOSE: The purposes for which this Society is organized are: To promote an interest in genealogy. To investigate, collect, record, publish and deposit in libraries, archives, and digital or electronic repositories the genealogical and historical materials of Texas, with a particular focus on items pertaining to the City of Austin and/or Travis County. To educate its members and the general public in the use of historical and genealogical reference materials. To support genealogical libraries, archival collections, and access to and preservation of records that will benefit the research efforts of the Society.

MEMBERSHIP is open to all upon payment of annual dues. Classes: Individual: \$20; Family (Two in the same household): \$30; Lifetime: \$500 (\$300 if over age 65.) All classes are entitled to one electronic copy of each issue of the Quarterly and the monthly Newsletter. **After July 1, dues are \$10 for the balance of the year**, but you will receive only the publications produced after the date you join. Membership includes a copy of the annual Membership Directory, which is published each spring.

DUES FOR EXISTING MEMBERS are payable on or before January 1 of each year for the ensuing year. If dues are not received by February 1, membership may be discontinued. Send dues payments to **AGS Treasurer, P.O. Box 10010, Austin, Texas, 78766-1010.**

MEETINGS of the general membership begin at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month except in December. Members are encouraged to come at 6:30 p.m. Meeting Place: **Highland Park Baptist Church, 5206 Balcones Drive.** Take Northland (RR 2222) exit Loop 1 (Mopac.) Go west one block to Balcones Drive, then left in half-a-block. The church and parking lot are on right. Visitors are always welcome. The Board of Directors meets at 5:45 p.m.

CHECK RETURN POLICY: Members and other payees must pay AGS the cost of any returned check (currently \$5) over and above the charge their bank may impose.

AGS QUARTERLY is issued March, June, September, and December. Contributions are always welcome, subject to editing for style and length. The contributor is completely responsible for accuracy and any copyright infringement. AGS assumes no responsibility for the content of submitted material.

SUBMISSIONS for the Quarterly must reach the Editor at P.O. Box 10010, Austin, Texas 78766-1010, or quarterly@austintxgensoc.org by the deadlines below, preferably by electronic means, either in an e-mail or as an attachment to an e-mail. When an electronic version is not possible, typing, handwriting or printing must be in black ink and legible. Months must be spelled or abbreviated, not in figures. Show dates in accepted genealogical style: day, month, and year. Leave 1-inch margins at both sides and at top and bottom, and hand number pages on the back of each page. Carefully check horizontal pages (reading in the 11-inch direction) so that one-inch margins are on top, bottom and both sides so no information is lost in stapling. No 8 ½ x 14 sheets, please. You may submit lineage or family group charts, narratives, memoirs, letters, cemetery inscriptions, Bible records, census data, queries or a combination of material, just so it is not under copyright. **Proofread** and **verify** your material for accuracy and clarity so we will not publish faulty or incorrect data. Consult a recent AGS Quarterly for suggestions.

AGS QUARTERLY DEADLINES: Quarterly submission guidelines and due dates are available on the Austin Genealogical Society website:

<http://www.austintxgensoc.org/quarterly-guidelines>.

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