



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Message from the President

I am Bud Greer, great-great-grandson of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. My father is Harold Greer, son of Stansell "Bud" Greer who was a son of A V Greer, seventh child of NHG. I have always been proud of my heritage as a Greer. We as members of the Greer family can take great pride in those who came before us. They were courageous pioneers, soldiers, public servants, missionaries, farmers, ranchers, good parents, etc, etc. They were pioneers on several frontiers all the way from Georgia through the South, to Texas and on to Utah and Arizona. George M. Crosby Jr, an acquaintance of many of the early Greers, once wrote, "The early Greers were real people, the kind that make nations great and become the real sinews of the world's best governments ... They had honor, learning, patriotism, and hearts warm with friendship. May the young make family traditions good."

The NHG posterity now numbers in the hundreds, perhaps thousands, throughout the United States. We welcome each of you as a member of the NHG family organization.

On June 23/24, 1995 the first Bi-Annual NHG family reunion was held at St Johns, AZ where many of the early Arizona Greers lived. We had descendants of NHG from at least twelve states. In the business meeting a constitution was voted upon and accepted. The constitution outlines the duties of officers, calls for a reunion every two years, and sets dues at \$5.00 per year per household family.

Offices and duties are as follows: The President shall preside at reunions and other family meetings; Vice-Presidents will represent each of NHG's surviving children. We need one each from Wilmarth Margaret Greer East and Stephen Decatur Greer lines. Any volunteers or suggestions will be gladly accepted. The Secretary/Treasurer will keep minutes of meetings, inform members of meetings, pay bills, and give a financial report at each reunion. The Historian will keep the President and family Genealogist apprised of family births, deaths, marriages, etc. The Genealogist will keep ongoing research of direct line progenitors and be a resource for family members.

There are many untold stories about the Greers. Please share what you have with others. Jo Greer, our historian, would love to hear from you so these might be heard by others at our next reunion. Also, if you have any announcements or material to contribute to the newsletter, please send the info to Bill Greer or myself. We want to make this newsletter as meaningful and helpful as possible.

I would like to thank Thad Greer, our first president, for getting this organization off the ground. He has done a great job. Also, we appreciate all Jo Greer has done in getting things started. Thanks to all who have helped in any way.

Our second reunion will be held near mid-1997. Date and place to be announced later.

--- Bud Greer

Message from the Editor

This newsletter is furnished as a benefit of membership to each household where there are members of record. For example, a couple and their children will share each issue – but if those children are grown up and have established their own homes, they also will receive issues (providing they have joined the family organization). *If you have not joined* and would like to continue receiving this newsletter, please send your dues to our **treasurer** whose name and address is listed under "Family Officers" on page 4.

Some features of this newsletter are simply informative, but its articles are meant to be *more* than mere genealogical accounts. The intent is to provide an informative and entertaining narrative *history* of our family – who our ancestors were, how they lived, the problems they faced – the nature of their triumphs and their setbacks. In future issues, this space named "Message from the Editor" will be used to present the story of a "featured pioneer" – one of the children of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts – beginning with Gilbert Dunlap, their first-born, and continuing in birth order through Matthew Simeon, the last-born child. After this series of biographies ends, this column – and perhaps the overall format and frequency of the newsletter – will be re-evaluated.

The primary responsibility for the form and content of this newsletter will be mine, but all are welcome to submit ideas, text or illustrations for inclusion where appropriate. And the proposed format need not remain static. Future issues will feature a "Family Forum" on page 3 for letters to the editor and comments on our family or its history. I invite suggestions on how the newsletter may be improved.

Our family is so extensive that significant regional, cultural, and spiritual differences are bound to exist among our many lines. Although Nathaniel and his family were (like most frontier families of the day) of one religious mind, there are significant differences of belief among us descendants today. Out of respect for this inevitable variety, I will strive for a religiously neutral approach in these pages – while realizing that a complete story of our family also requires an examination of our spiritual history.

It is important to provide this newsletter at reasonable cost. Lest the expense of publishing and distributing this newsletter become too great, the amount of paper will be limited so that the weight of each issue can be kept below one ounce.

I look forward to hearing from you.

--- Bill Greer

Nathaniel and Nancy

Nathaniel Hunt Greer was born (it is said) in Jasper County, Georgia on October 26, 1802. His father was John D. Greer, a farmer and stockman, and his mother was Sarah "Sallie" Hunt, said to have descended from Pocahontas. Nathaniel was the tenth child and the last of seven sons, the eldest of whom, named Reddick, had died at the age of 19 just six days before Nathaniel was born. Of Nathaniel's childhood, nothing is known.

Nathaniel wed before he was 20 – we do not know when or where (but there is evidence that in 1820 he moved from Jasper County to a site near the border of Florida). His bride was Nancy Ann Terry Roberts, said to have been the daughter of Thomas Roberts and Susan Elizabeth Lacy, both from southern Virginia. It is claimed that Nancy was born on August 4, 1805 on the northern side of Virginia, in Fairfax County – making her about 16 when she wed – but there is no explanation of why she was born so far from the home area of her parents.

On October 11, 1822, two weeks before his 20th birthday, Nathaniel became a father when Nancy gave birth to their first child Gilbert Dunlap while they were living in Bedford County, Tennessee. How or why they came to be there is a mystery. It has been said that they soon returned to Jasper County to till the soil and raise race horses, but evidence for this is wanting.

On January 30, 1825, Nathaniel was elected Justice of the Peace for DeKalb County, Georgia. Luckily this record survived a courthouse fire of 1842 – or we might never have known of this first incidence of Nathaniel's considerable history of public duty. Just two months before, Nancy had given birth to their second child Willmirth Margaret on November 18, 1824. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that she was born in DeKalb County.

Nathaniel and Nancy's third child Thomas Lacy was also born in DeKalb County. The date was September 2, 1826. The family of five dwelt in DeKalb a good while longer, for as late as July 19, 1828, Nathaniel was at the county seat of Decatur involved in a legal dispute. Not long thereafter, the family moved further west in search of more hopeful circumstances.

By November 28, 1828 when William Reddick was born, the family was living in Troup County, Georgia. The 1830 census listed Nathaniel as the head of a Troup County farming family of 6 males and 2 females. Nancy had just given birth on June 26, 1830 to their 4th son Stephen Decatur, but the identity of the 6th male in the census is unknown to us. Some indication of the family's material prosperity was reflected in the census which recorded their 4 slaves: 1 male and 3 female.

Before long, the family moved across the Chattahoochee into that portion of Alabama occupied by the Creek Indians. Here Nathaniel put up not only a homestead, but also a trading post where he dealt with Indian and pioneer alike. He and his family surely cultivated land, but to what extent is not known. On March 4, 1832, Nancy gave birth to twins Christopher Columbus and Americus Vespucius. Many years later A. V. Greer would record in his memoirs that he and his twin were born in Chambers County, Alabama – but, in fact, the site was Indian land until ceded by the Treaty of Cusseta on March 20,

1832, and the county was not created until later that year on December 18. The first election of county officers was held on the twins' first birthday March 4, 1833; seemingly as a present for the occasion, the voters chose Nathaniel as their first sheriff. Nathaniel had religious responsibilities as well. In May a crude courthouse was built and soon it served as a temporary site of the First Presbyterian Church and Nathaniel was chosen as one of its two original elders.

On April 16, 1834, Nancy gave birth to another son, Dixon Hamlin. Then in May, Nathaniel was in a fracas with county officials which resulted in a fine of \$50 and his resignation. But Nathaniel's continuing popularity with the voters was well demonstrated in the fall of 1834 by his being elected as Chambers County's first representative to the Alabama legislature, which in those years met in Tuscaloosa, a considerable distance from Nathaniel's home. He served one term and then in 1835 again became a private citizen.

In April, 1836 a Creek uprising took place and women and children from all over Chambers County gathered for protection at the county seat of LaFayette. This likely included Nancy and her family which now included Sarah Hunt who was born February 26, 1836. Nathaniel was mustered into the militia for a three-month stint as a private, but he saw no fighting.

By the time Nathaniel was discharged, word had come of historic events in Texas including the murder of a number of Alabama volunteers at Goliad. The new republic now offered free land to those who would help settle its territory. Interest in Texas grew throughout the South and the Greers were not immune to the lure of a more promising future. In Alabama, times were hard due to a national depression. And in Chambers County, an area heavily dependent on a slave economy, conditions became grave as a raging yellow fever epidemic killed one-third of the slave population. Nathaniel's family began making plans to emigrate. The last record we have of the family's presence in Chambers County was on January 27, 1837 when Nathaniel was in LaFayette to attest the sale of his town property. Five weeks later they were in Texas.

Departing Mobile by steamer, the family spent several days in New Orleans until sailing for Texas aboard the *Fannin*. After calling at Galveston, the *Fannin* anchored at Velasco at the mouth of the Brazos River. It was March 4, 1837, the twins' 5th birthday. From Velasco they went up river, searching for rich land that could be bought or rented. They found such land in Washington County and soon were farming.

The family had brought five slaves to Texas and evidence suggests the slaves were well-treated. When a family owned relatively few slaves, it was typical for the whites to work in the fields along side the blacks. In such circumstances the slaves would often be considered virtually as family, and in the Greer household that seemed to be the case. But for some reason unclear to us, perhaps for economic necessity, Nathaniel sold their slave Louisa for \$800 just six months after reaching Texas.

After 16 years of rearing a family of nine robust children –

remarkable considering the childhood mortality of that age – the first of several tragedies befell the Greers in their new home. During 1838, Nancy gave birth to Nathaniel Hunt, Jr. But the infant namesake of his father did not survive, and the exact dates of his birth and death were not recorded.

On September 6, 1838 Nathaniel's petition as head of an immigrant family was recognized when he was awarded a Second Class Conditional Certificate for 1280 acres of land. It was second class, not first, because his family immigrated only *after* Texas independence, and it would remain *conditional* for many years until he at last located and claimed some unoccupied land which he found to his liking.

Nathaniel, who had become a Justice of the Peace for Washington County, would occasionally perform marriages. On October 3, 1839 he presided over a ceremony of special significance as he wed his eldest daughter Willmirth, not quite 15 years of age, to Edwin W. East.

Nathaniel was not content to serve his neighbors simply as a J.P. On November 11, 1839 he was elected to the Congress of the Republic of Texas as a representative from the County of Washington. However, mail delivery had been unsatisfactory for some time and on January 1, 1840 Nathaniel contracted to deliver mail between La Grange and San Felipe, establishing a post office in his home community of Oak Grove. Contracting and farming left little time for political office and he decided not to run in the next election.

The year 1840 brought both joy and tragedy. On June 14 "Mammy", as Nancy had come to be known, gave birth to another son Ira Abner who would soon be called "Abney". Meanwhile Nathaniel's brother James Alexander had left his wife and children in Georgia to obtain a suitable situation in Texas thus enabling them to follow. But disaster struck on October 11 when he died, of unknown causes, while in Montgomery County, roughly 60 miles east of where Nathaniel and Nancy had made their home.

Over the next several years, the Greers bought and sold various pieces of property, speculating on land and migrating up river as the frontier expanded. And as the frontier expanded, so did the family, with the births of Parley Riley on February 17, 1842 and John Irvin on June 14, 1844 and the last child Matthew Simeon on April 15, 1845. Each of the births occurred in Washington County.

By May 12, 1847 Nathaniel had surveyed 1280 acres which he hoped to make his headright. On February 18, 1850, after a mandatory three-year wait to demonstrate his persistence of Texas residence, he was awarded his *unconditional* certificate for the land. Finally, on December 12, 1850, his claim to the land was patented with the Texas General Land Office. But the headright was along Aquilla Creek, roughly 45 miles west of Corsicana – in what was then Navarro County, but later Hill County – and was subject to frequent Indian raids. The family chose to dwell in less dangerous areas until the Indian threat was reduced. About this time Nathaniel, Nancy and their children still living at home, resided in DeWitt County, three miles from

Yorktown. It was during this sojourn that on October 14, 1851 death claimed another child, Parley Riley, for reasons unknown.

The bereaved family soon moved to Milam County, to where the eldest son Gilbert had been farming near the booming Brazos River town of Port Sullivan. "Colonel" Greer, as Nathaniel was by then often called, built a sawmill on the Little River and prosperity ensued. As A. V. Greer wrote, a "good house" was built (no longer the crude cabins they had known) and "the Company did considerable business". But tragedy struck again on February 8, 1854 when A. V.'s twin Christopher Columbus died of pneumonia contracted while deer hunting a week earlier. He was buried near the river, above the sawmill, but on a high elevation.

By the mid-1850s, the Greers had become Mormons. In the summer of 1852, missionaries had arrived in Port Sullivan and before long the family was converted to the new faith. Eventually, another urge to migrate arose, but this time the objective was less material and more spiritual. The land was the Mormon "Zion" and the port was the "City of the Saints" beside the Great Salt Lake. Plans to emigrate took shape in 1854, and the last record we have of the family in Texas was that of February 28, 1855 when Nathaniel attested in Milam County to his recent sale of Washington County land. Other sales had already occurred as the family liquidated its assets and purchased a huge amount of gear and oxen for the journey to Utah. By mid-March, they were on their way.

On June 2 the company of almost 50, under the leadership of Nathaniel's business partner Seth M. Blair, arrived at Mormon Grove on the west bank of the Missouri River about 40 miles upstream from what was then known as the City of Kansas. This staging area soon hosted over 2000 Saints who, like the Greer party, rested their animals and awaited the decision to begin the trek to Zion. On June 7 Seth Blair was retained as president of what was dubbed the 3rd Emigrating Company and more emigrants were assigned to the group.

On June 15 the doomed company set out along the Mormon Trail, ignorant that they carried in their midst the seeds of destruction. Within four days, an epidemic of Asiatic cholera had erupted, with its first victims perishing on June 18. Of this great tragedy, Seth Blair was to record, "In the first 36 hours so many died of cholera that we buried one person every three hrs. The cries of the dying and shrieks of the living presented horrors unimagined. Grave diggers were busy night and day."

Before long, the disease struck the Greers and their kin. On June 22 Nathaniel's son-in-law Ed East, as company clerk, recorded the death of John Greer. The record is silent on his kinship, but it is speculated that he was Nathaniel's son John Irvin whose fate is unremembered in family history. Ed East, who lost several children to cholera, confessed that the rigors of the trip prevented his recording all the events which transpired. His omissions included the death of Nathaniel's son Ira Abner who, according to A. V. Greer, on some unknown date fainted and succumbed to the pestilence.

[turn to *Nathaniel* ... on page 4]

Nathaniel ...

On the evening of the 23rd, Nathaniel showed symptoms of the disease. On the morning of the 24th, the life that had begun far away in the lush hills of Georgia departed this realm of the living while in the midst of the great American prairie. According to family tradition, a coffin was made from a wagon bed and his mortal remains were laid to rest on a hill about a half a mile east of Grasshopper Creek, a tributary of the Nemaha River, in what would one day be Nemaha County, Kansas.

The grief-stricken family would finally arrive in Salt Lake City on September 11, 1855. Destiny had many adventures in store for them, and their tales, including the remainder of Nancy's life, will be related in further issues of this newsletter.

Our European Roots

Future articles in this column (usually placed on page 3) will depict our ancestors' participation in European history. As far as the editor can ascertain, all who were born to the name of Greer, derive from the Griersons of Lag in the Scottish Lowlands.

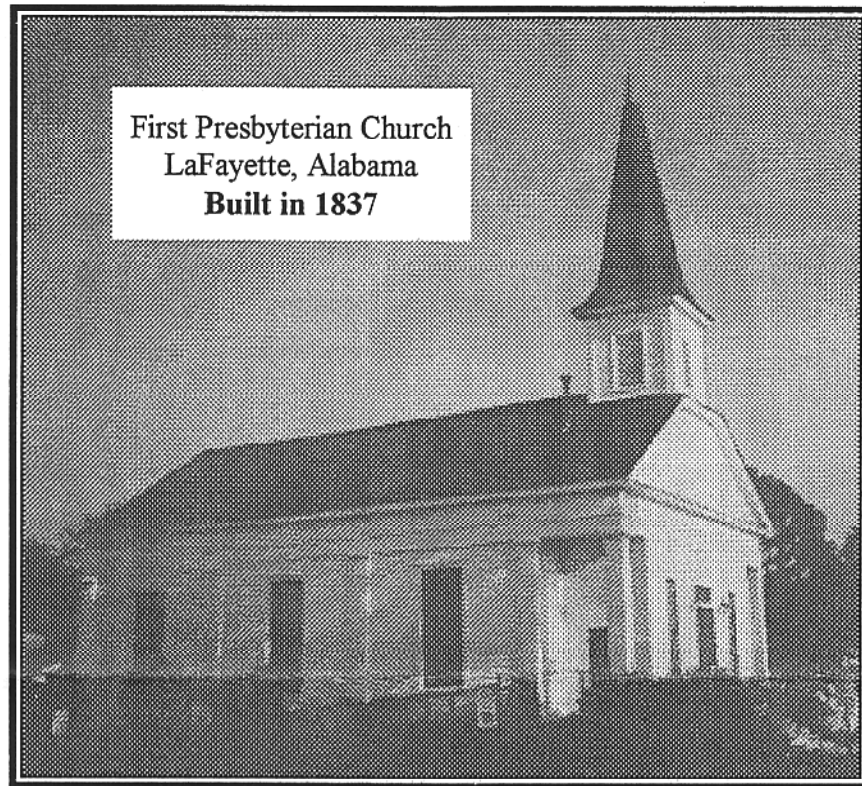
Many of these articles, spanning centuries, will relate our well-established descent from royal houses throughout the European continent – from such figures as Robert the Bruce of Scotland, Alfred the Great of England, Rogenwald of Norway, Henry I of Germany, Saint Vladimir of Russia, Basil I of Byzantium, and Charlemagne of France. Some of these articles will treat of our legendary descent from such sources as King Arthur, Cormac MacArt, Old King Cole, and Constantine, Emperor of Rome.

Announcements

[Use this space to inform the family of unofficial news, notices, etc. of a non-business nature. It is intended to be the means by which *any* family member may alert others about special happenings or other news thought to be of interest to the family.]

A Note to the Descendants of A.V. Greer.

Bud Greer, with the help of AVG Vice-President Nello Greer, is preparing a new marker for the grave of AVG in Provo, Utah. It has been one hundred years since his death on May 3, 1896. His marker may not last many more years after the effects of the weather and of vandals. The cost will be about \$500 – nearly a 50% discount through the Greer Mortuary of Winslow/Flagstaff. Your contribution would be very helpful. Please send to Bud's address on this newsletter. As I study the life of A.V. Greer, I have come to realize that he was a truly great man.



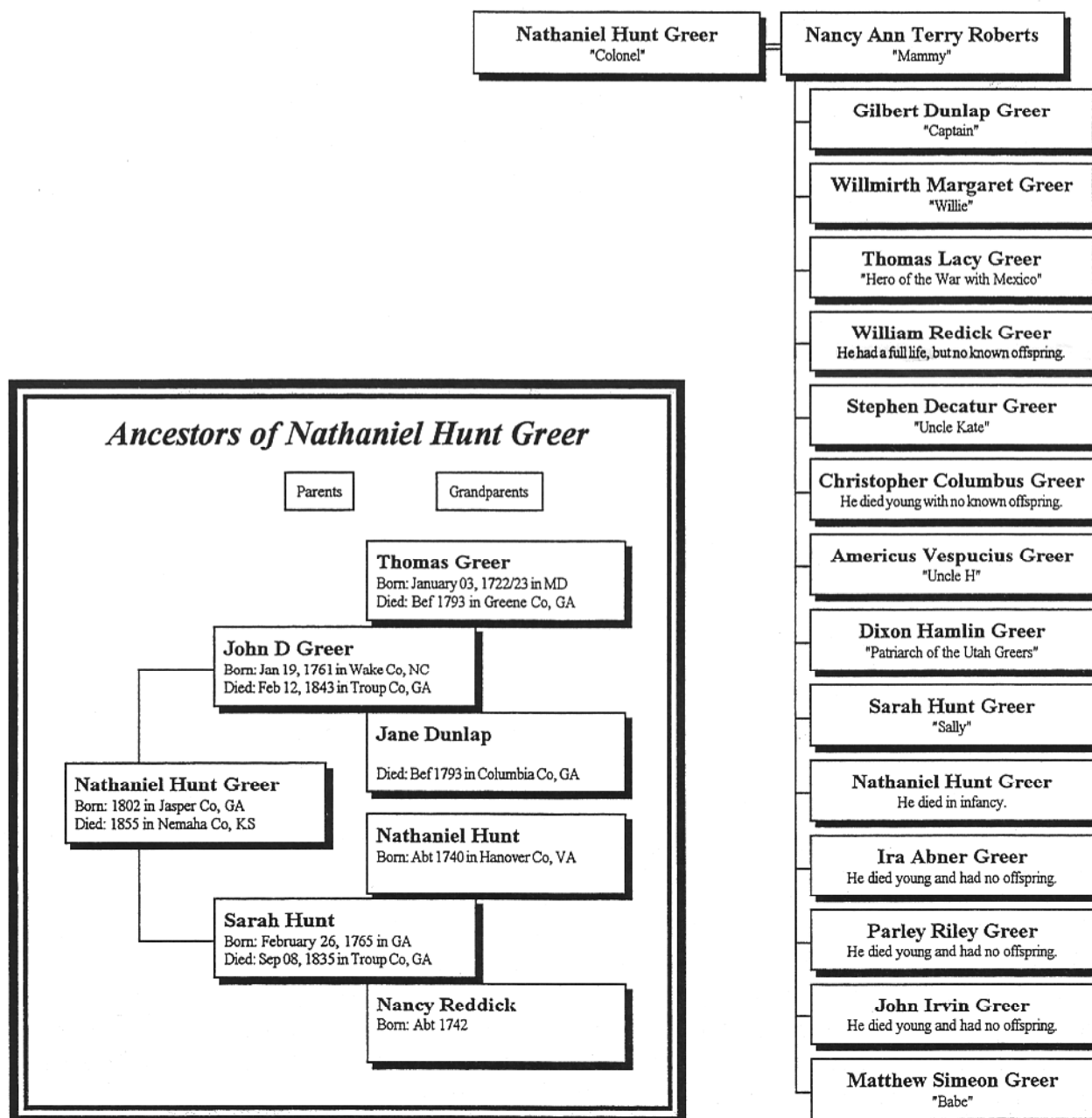
The Church that Nathaniel Hunt Greer Built

The First Presbyterian Church of LaFayette, Alabama was organized in 1835 with Nathaniel Hunt Greer as one of its two founding elders. Before its official formation, the congregation had met in the town's original crude log courthouse which was replaced by a brick structure in 1835. Although the exact date of construction of the church is unknown, the building site was purchased by the elders on November 12, 1836 – the same day that Nathaniel and his brother-in-law Thomas F. Nolan purchased two city lots as investment property for themselves. It would be 2½ months before Nathaniel and his family left for Texas. Thus it is not unreasonable to assume that he was involved in the construction of this impressive building.

The structure is still in use, although its interior has been modified considerably. There has not been a Presbyterian church in LaFayette (pronounced locally as *la-fet*) for quite some while. The building was purchased and preserved by the city many years ago and recently has been used as a public library. In early May, 1996, when this photograph was taken by Nathaniel's great-great-grandson William N. Greer, the building was three weeks away from being moved several yards from where it had rested since its construction. A modern addition was then to be added to the rear of the building – with plans to continue its use as a library.

Nathaniel Hunt Greer's immediate ancestors and descendants are listed below. To the extent that information is available, each will be described in succeeding issues of this newsletter. The siblings of Nathaniel and Nancy are not depicted, but when a consideration of their lives proves useful to understanding our ancestry, they too will be examined. Currently the ancestry of Nancy Ann Terry Roberts is poorly understood, but genealogical research continues.

The Family of Nathaniel and Nancy





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

We appreciated the positive comments from many of you regarding the first issue of *The Greer Way West*. We can't thank Bill Greer enough for the tremendous effort he put forth in time and personal resources to publish this newsletter.

Over 400 copies of the first issue were mailed and the cost of postage, printing, etc. badly depleted our funds. Starting with this issue we will only be able to mail to those families who have paid their \$5.00 annual dues. Please see that the various households in your family have paid their dues. Also, if we have made any errors, let us know. Mail dues or contributions to our treasurer Paul Greer. His address and those of *all* family officers are listed in "Family Officers" on page 4.

Thanks to a number of you who made contributions to the grave marker for A.V. Greer. By the time you receive this, he should have a beautiful new granite marker in place.

Tell us of any suggestions — including how we might help you. And let us know of any untold stories about the Greers.

Abbreviations of Names

Sometimes, as needed, we can save space and publish more information in this newsletter by using abbreviations in place of the names of ancestors frequently cited. Thus, Nathaniel Hunt Greer will be "NHG", his eldest child Gilbert Dunlap Greer will be "GDG", etc. (This was already done in the "Family Officers" space on the last page of the first issue.) For NHG's wife, we will use her first 3 names which yield "NAT" as an abbreviation for Nancy Ann Terry. To make this process easier to follow, we will spell out the name the first time it is used in an issue, then abbreviate it thereafter.

About the Banner Images

The illustrations which bracket the title of this newspaper may be of interest to readers — and in need of explanation.

The stagecoach on the left is typical of those in use in the early 1800s. NHG and NAT probably rode in such coaches. This image was drawn with a Camera Lucida by Basil Hall in the 1820s while he toured the area where NHG and NAT lived.

The steamboat on the right is typical of river boats in use in the early 1800s. Unlike stern-wheelers, the wheel amidships made it easier to negotiate sharp river bends. This particular model was used by the Natchez Steam Boat Company on the Mississippi in the 1810s, but similar vessels would have plied the Alabama River during NHG's day.

Acknowledgments

Most of the following article is supplied by Elaine Rummel, with other information provided by Errol G. Brown. Thanks to them, and to Casey Winn for help with Issue # 1. — Editor.

Gilbert Dunlap Greer

Gilbert Dunlap Greer, the eldest child of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts, was born October 11, 1822, in Bedford County, Tennessee (some say DeKalb County, Georgia). Little is known of his youth — save where his family lived as he was growing up.

Gilbert was 14 when the family sailed to Texas and he was only 17 when the new republic granted him a headright of 320 acres, on December 5, 1839. During the years that the family farmed in Washington County, he would fish along Buffalo Bayou, often selling his catch in the nearby city of Houston. Instead of converting his headright into actual land, Gilbert sold it on October 5, 1846. But he did eventually acquire property, and in 1850 sold 110 acres in Washington County to James Addison Lane, a future father-in-law and long-time friend of the Greers. Mr. Lane had brought his family to Texas around 1846.

On May 14, 1844, Gilbert married Susan G. Carruthers. (Some claim they wed in 1842.) Her ancestry is not known. Although their wedding site is a mystery, we know that their first child, Cassandra (Cassie), was born in Austin, on March 19, 1846. Gilbert and Susan had at least 2 other children: a son Henry (birth data unknown), and a daughter Susanna (Susan or Susie) who was born February 1, 1849, in Washington County.

By 1850 settlements had pushed much further up the Brazos River. Gilbert, Susan and their children accompanied this advancing frontier and about 1851 set up residence in lower Milam County near "Sullivan's Bluffs" where the Little River joined the Brazos. Located just below the falls of the Brazos, this site was at the limit of river boat travel along the greatest river in Texas. In short order, the community created by Augustus Sillaven became the boomtown of Port Sullivan ("Sullivan" being a corruption of the founder's name) with a population of about 200 in 1852. Before long, Gilbert's parents and siblings relocated near him.

On October 13, 1853, Gilbert married Marion Bonita Lane, eldest daughter of James Addison Lane. The little evidence we have suggests that Susan and Marion were what Mormons called "plural wives" — that Gilbert was married to two women at once. Family tradition suggests otherwise; we cannot know

continued on page 2

for sure. On the ill-fated journey to Utah, many died of cholera. Nearly 70 years later, Gilbert's sister-in-law Catherine Ellen Camp Greer recalled that "Gilbert's first wife, Sue, and most of his children died" of cholera on the trail. The toll apparently included daughter Susanna, whose name appears on the migrating company roster, and son Henry, although his name was omitted. Daughter Cassie remained in Texas to be reared by her grandmother. A record of the migration lists Susan Greer's death on June 20, 1855 — placing the wagon train in what would later become Brown County, Kansas. But it is uncertain whether the Susan who died on June 20 was the mother or the daughter.

On August 10, in an area that would later become Converse County, Wyoming, the wagons stopped as Gilbert's remaining wife Marion delivered their first-born child whom they named Margaret. Although little Margaret reached Salt Lake City, she died a few weeks later on October 28. The following winter was terrible and the Greers lost most of their livestock. Gilbert and most of his kin decided to move what was left of their herd back to the milder climate of Texas. Next spring, over Brigham Young's objections, they were on the trail again.

On the return trip, the Greers met a Utah-bound wagon train which included the Lanes (Marion's family) and the Phelps (another allied family). Learning of the harsh Utah winters, the Lanes and Phelps joined the Greers in the return to Texas. The three families re-entered Texas in October and settled in Hill County on what they thought was vacant land. A cabin was hastily erected for Marion who gave birth on December 10, 1856, to Willmirth (Willie) S. Greer. Learning that the land was

not vacant, Gilbert found and (on January 16, 1857, purchased) 320 acres along the Brazos in Bosque County. Here he built perhaps the first stone house in the county, a warm and inviting home in which Marion would give birth to 8 more children.

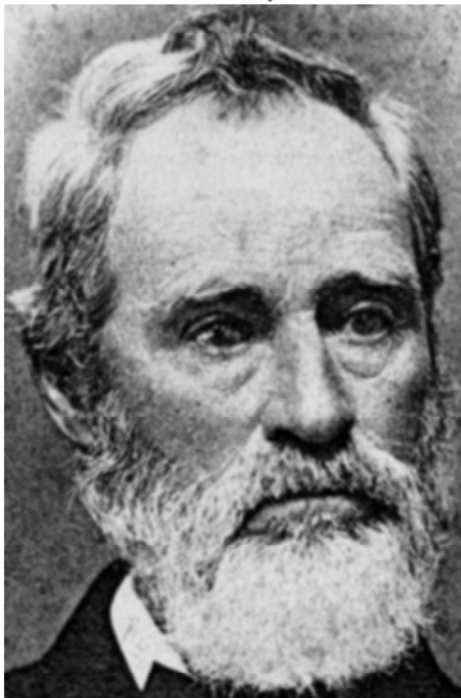
Gilbert served Bosque County as a commissioner and then as a Civil War soldier in Fossett's company of militia. Later he also served in Walker's Division of the 8th Texas Regiment which saw action in Virginia. Afterwards, his nickname "Gil" was often replaced with "Captain" by those who held his military career in high esteem. For many years his estate on the Brazos, known as "Greer Park", was host to hundreds of veterans from all over the state who gathered annually to reminisce of gallant deeds and fallen friends.

Gilbert and Marion's daughter Willie was unsuccessfully courted by Robert J. Sims, one of the many cowboys who drove the great herds along the nearby Chisolm Trail. On October 23, 1875, Willie was at home preparing for her next day's wedding to another man when she was tragically murdered by the rejected suitor who immediately took his own life.

In 1881 the town of Kopperl began on land which Gilbert and his brothers sold to the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad Company. Later, Gilbert donated land for the Kopperl Cemetery where he, Marion, and many of his family would be laid to rest.

Gilbert died on March 12, 1910 and Marion on April 15, 1916. Her stone reads, "The Gift of God is perpetual life Through Jesus Christ our Lord." His reads, "There is a balm for every flower. Farewell we shall meet again."

Gilbert Dunlap Greer



Marion Bonita Lane



Gilbert Dunlap Greer

b. October 11, 1822 d. March 12, 1910

Marion Bonita Lane

b. September 06, 1838 d. April 15, 1916

Margaret Greer

b. August 10, 1855 d. October 28, 1855

Willmirth Sarah Greer

b. December 10, 1856 d. October 23, 1875

Nancy Matilda Greer

b. November 06, 1858 d. February 1935

James Riley Greer

b. September 14, 1860 d. September 01, 1892

Mary Elizabeth Greer

b. March 31, 1862 d. September 09, 1948

Susan Lavina Greer

b. May 09, 1865 d. February 09, 1945

Thomas Addison Greer

b. January 12, 1867 d. March 18, 1947

Luna Virginia Greer

b. August 30, 1870 d. 1928

Emma Victoria Greer

b. May 06, 1872 d. unknown

William Columbus Greer

b. July 09, 1877 d. October 03, 1878

Our European Roots

Lag Tower

Virtually all born to the name of Greer, derive from the Griersons of Dumfriesshire, an important family in the history of the Borders region of the Scottish lowlands. Gilbert Grierson, our earliest ancestor of the name, appeared in historical records in the late 14th century. Several decades later, his progeny had

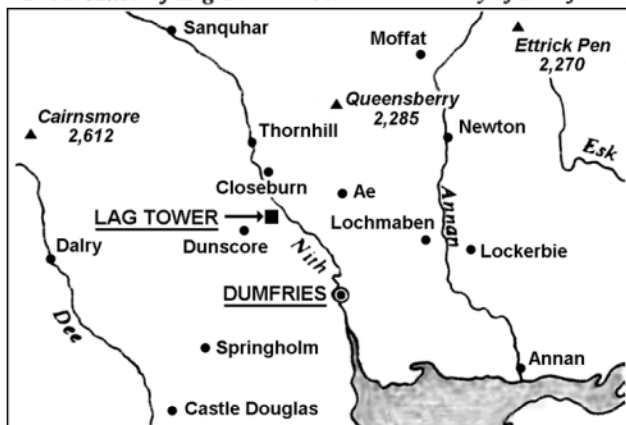


Lag Tower in 1990 ... with the editor in the foreground.

(Above) Photograph of Lag Tower as seen from the north.

(Below) Map showing Lag Tower in Scotland's Borders area.

The location of Lag Tower in relation to the city of Dumfries



sufficient means to erect a defensive tower to which retreat could be made in times of peril. Authorities estimate the tower was built about the year 1460.

It is doubtful that Lag Tower served as a continuous home for the Laird of Lag, but certainly it was used as such on numerous occasions. The last occupant is believed to have been the notorious Sir Robert Grierson who removed to more commodious quarters long before his demise on December 31, 1733. By the then, the structure was considerably dilapidated and was further reduced by fire on an unknown date thereafter.

On July 23, 1919, an employee of the Scottish government surveyed Lag Tower as part of an inventory of historical monuments. His rather dour description of the ruin follows:

"This grim, broken little dwelling is situated on a knoll adjoining the farm of Lag, in hummocky ground surrounded by hills 1¼ miles north-north-east of Dunscore village. The tower is oblong on plan, measuring externally 29 feet 6 inches from north to south and 25 feet from east to west, with walls 5 feet 10 inches thick on ground floor. The entrance, which is in the south wall, opens to the right on a wheel-staircase, 3 feet 3 inches wide, leading to the upper floors. The only window on the ground floor is a narrow slit in the east wall, widely flaunted to the interior; there is no fireplace. There are three storeys above the basement. The first and second floors have fireplaces in the north walls and windows with pointed scoinson arches. The building has not been vaulted. There is a garderobe recess on the first floor at the west end of the north wall, and a lintelled opening at ground level in the north wall communicates with a circular garderobe flue to the second floor. A courtyard wall runs diagonally from the northwest angle for a distance of 38 feet, where it returns southwards 27 feet to an arched gateway 6 feet wide. Against the walls in the courtyard are traces of out-buildings. The tower appears to belong to the 16th century."

Family Forum

[The letters below & on page 4 were edited for length. — Ed.]

Thanks so much for *The Greer Way West*. I really appreciate it. It will be nice to be able to be united, if we ever will be, in having the ancestral names documented so that there will be no question as to where and when they were born etc.

For example: I have had Gilbert Dunlap as being born in Bedford Co. but not Tenn. It doesn't take much to verify localities by using a good atlas. This is much better than taking "Aunt Ellen's" word for it.

I still haven't received anything relative to the Isabella Greer [infant buried in Salt Lake City]. It would be nice to know the exact route the Greers took and the date they were there. Who were the other Greers in Salt Lake City at the same time?

Thanks again for your research and the work done on the bulletin.

I would like to thank you and the other officers of the NHG Family for this fine publication ... I think you and the others who are responsible for this publication are on the right track for helping to keep us members of the family informed.

To me this undertaking of keeping this family history going, seems to be the best approach that I have seen. The quarterly publication is a fine idea, and I am sure if more funds are needed they will be forth coming if you will let us know.

Again, thanks for your fine work and keep up the good work.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the Greer newsletter and am looking forward to the next one. I do have some concerns over what I read and what my grandfather (Thomas Greer) related to me about the trek to Utah. Anything I can do to help — let me know.

I thoroughly enjoyed the first issue and will send information to my brothers and sisters about it. Keep up the good work.

Just a note to say "thanx" for the newsletter. I have always wanted to know about my Greer relatives. My grandmother (Melvina Clay Greer) was my favorite person. She was the eldest daughter of A. V. Greer. Thanx again.

I really enjoyed receiving the first issue of *The Greer Way West*. Please keep these newsletters coming. Thanks so much.

Thank you for the issue of the family periodical of the *Greer Way West*. We would like very much to continue receiving it.

— Genealogy Collection, **Texas State Library and Archives Commission**



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

We sincerely hope and pray that this edition of *The Greer Way West* will find each of you healthy and happy. May this holiday season bring joy to all members of the great Greer family and people everywhere.

During the Civil War, away from home as a Confederate soldier, A. V. Greer, seventh child of Nathaniel Hunt Greer, gave some advice to his youngest brother, Matthew Simeon "Babe": "so live in youth that you blush not in age." This seems like good advice for all of us. As we reflect upon those who came before us we can be grateful that our forebears, NHG and his wife Nancy Ann Terry Robert, were good people of high character and integrity. They were interested in serving others and making people and places better than they found them. They were spiritual people who loved the Lord. Many of their outstanding qualities of character were passed on through their posterity. We of several generations later benefit directly and indirectly from those who came before. May these positive family traditions and qualities be carried on.

A great part of any family organization should be to help memorialize those who came before. We have an opportunity to just that for at least six of the NHG family members who resided in Bosque County, Texas. Please see the announcement on the last page of this newsletter where this opportunity is described. We wholeheartedly support this project and ask for your help.

We are pleased to announce that the **2nd Bi-Annual NHG Family Reunion** will be held in Texas on May 9-10, 1997 in Bosque County, about an 1½-hour drive south of Dallas. As many of you know, the Bosque County area distinguished by the towns of Kimball and Kopperl was where many of the Greers lived over a long period of time. Mark your calendars now. Details regarding the agenda, accommodations, etc. will follow in our March newsletter.

On August 24 a small group of A. V. Greer descendants placed a new marker and rededicated his grave in Provo, Utah. It is significant that 1996 is the 100th anniversary of AVG's death. the marker cost \$560.00 Thanks again to all of you who were able to contribute toward this project. The old marker will be placed near his wife's grave in Amity, Arizona.

May each of you have a happy and prosperous New Year !

Acknowledgments

For much of the following data, the editor thanks the Pima, AZ Library; local LDS staff.

Willmirth Margaret Greer

In DeKalb County, Georgia on November 18, 1824, Willmirth Margaret was born the second child of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts. Shortly before her third birthday, the family moved to Troup County bordering the Cherokee lands across the Chattahoochee River. At age 12 and a half, she brought to Texas childhood memories of several years spent in the verdant hills of Chambers County, Alabama.

After 2 years of Texas frontier life, WMG met Edward Wallace East, an enterprising young man from Tennessee. Bold and pioneering, he had served the new republic for 1 year as a Texas Ranger. Although she was not yet 15 and he was 10 years her senior, they were married by NHG (in his capacity as Justice of the Peace) on October 2, 1839. For his Ranger service, Ed had received a bounty warrant for 1280 acres, but the young couple deferred land acquisition and chose to live on NHG's Washington County property. In addition to farming, Ed helped NHG with his postal contracts with the Republic of Texas.

In 1840 WMG gave birth to their first-born, Sarah Maria Texana. With his new family responsibilities, Ed explored religious issues and in 1842 became a Campbellite, an early name of what would later be called Disciples of Christ. (One wonders if other members of the Greer and East households joined the new religion.)

The next year WMG gave birth to a son, William, and in 1845 to another girl. The second girl (name unknown) was sickly and died in 1847. Then in 1848, Ed and WMG had another, stronger child which they named Nancy. And in the early summer of 1850, Mary Ann was born. On October, 28, 1853, twin girls were born: Mira Caroline and Julia, the last of the East children to be born on Texas soil.

By 1852, the Greer and East households had relocated near Port Sullivan and that summer they first heard Mormonism preached. A year later, Ed and WMG were baptized into the new religion on July 22, 1853. Eventually the Easts were re-baptized on August 12, 1854 as both families felt a growing urge to gather in Zion with their spiritual counterparts. In the early morning of September 11, 1854, WMG experienced the gift of tongues, an event witnessed by many kith and kin. For the remainder of her life, she would demonstrate an extraordinary faith and devotion to her religious community, remarkably so in the face of what was to happen on the trek across the plains.

By early June the Greers and Easts had assembled with hundreds of others at Mormon Grove near Atchison, KS in preparation for the journey to Utah. On the 15th, they headed for the Platte River where the Mormon Trail pointed the way to the Rockies. On the 18th, cholera broke out and the first deaths occurred. The next day WMG lost her four-year old daughter, Mary Ann, to the dreaded disease. By then the company would have been in Brown County, KS. Three days later cholera took WMG's little brother John, and her father NHG two days after that. By June 27, the migrants had reached Marshall County, KS where on that date the Easts' eldest son William was lost to the grim epidemic; he was 12. The wagons rolled on, trying to outdistance death, but in Thayer County, NE on July 4, holiday festivities were replaced by yet more funerals, including that of WMG's seven-year old daughter Nancy.

After the wagon train arrived in Salt Lake City, Ed East (as company clerk) would record, "This closes one of the most arduous journeys ever experienced by the Mormons but few of the incidents of the journey are recorded on account of the cares which were upon me & which were greatly increased by sickness, cholera, measles." The last affliction Ed mentioned — measles — would provide a final torment upon his anguished family. Julia, one of the twins, contracted the measles as the company arrived in Utah. She lingered for a few weeks, but finally died on November 3 and was buried in the Salt Lake City Cemetery, the last victim of the doomed 3rd Migrating Company. At the close of 1855, only 2 of the East's 7 children were alive. Their oldest daughter Sarah went on to wed Seth M. Blair, NHG's business partner who had led the wagons west.

After the terrible effects of the cholera, the Easts replenished their family in Salt Lake City. On October 12, 1856, WMG gave birth to their son, Edward Martin. And on December 30, 1859 another son, Joseph Fielding, was born.

Painting of Willmirth Margaret Greer



Painting of Edward Wallace East



Another daughter, Martha, was born December 27, 1862, but she lived less than a week, dying of the croup New Year's Day, 1863. That tragic loss was followed by another, final one when the Easts surviving twin, Mira Caroline, died "of inflammation" on September 17, 1863.

In the spring of 1864, Ed East took a second (plural) wife, Emma Lundberg. Their union was "sealed" on March 5. Two years later WMG delivered her last child, Thomas Nathaniel, on November 17, 1866. Then in January of 1870, Emma East gave birth to a daughter named Emma. No further record has been found of Emma and her little namesake.

Despite the agony of the plains crossing, the Easts' faith remained intact — even as most of WMG's family returned to Texas the next spring. On October 6, 1856, Ed was ordained a Mormon priest and in the fall of 1869 would go on a mission to the "Southern States." In Salt Lake City, Ed served as County Clerk for 14 years and helped lay the foundation of the great Salt Lake Temple while WMG taught school, wrote poetry, and did church work. In October of 1875, both Ed and WMG were sent on a mission to Texas enabling her to see her family for the first time since before the Civil War. When the Easts moved to Arizona, WMG served as first President of the Relief Society in Apache County (1877-83), and in Graham County (1883-98).

Death came suddenly for Ed East on May 29, 1884 while reading the morning newspaper. WMG continued her steadfast service to church and community before relinquishing her duties in 1898 due to failing health. Her passing on March 31, 1902 was mourned by many grateful citizens and close friends of Pima, AZ where she had lived since 1883.

Willmirth Margaret Greer
b. November 18, 1824 d. March 31, 1902

Edward Wallace East
b. October 11, 1814 d. May 29, 1884

Sarah Maria Texana East
b. 1840 d. 1890

William H East
b. about 1843 d. June 27, 1855

Unidentified Girl
b. about 1845 d. 1847

Nancy East
b. about 1848 d. July 4, 1855

Mary Ann East
b. about July, 1850 d. June 19, 1855

Julia East
b. October 28, 1853 d. November 3, 1855

Mira Caroline East
b. October 28, 1853 d. September 17, 1863

Edwin Martin East
b. October 12, 1856 d. unknown date

Joseph Fielding East
b. December 30, 1859 d. unknown date

Martha East
b. December 27, 1862 d. January 1, 1863

Thomas Nathaniel East
b. November 17, 1866 d. October 16, 1944

Our European Roots

The Rockhall Estate

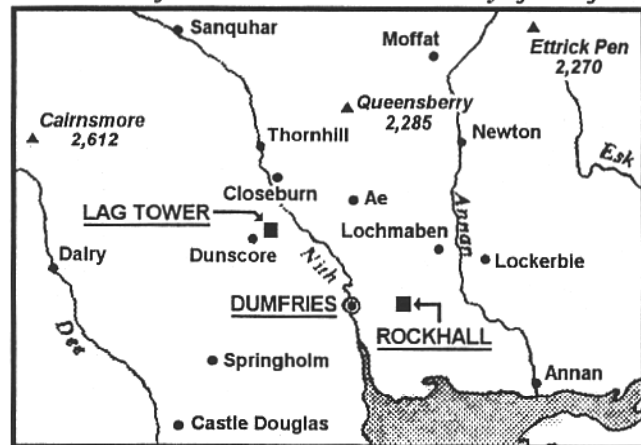
Sometime between 1412 and 1444, this imposing baronial manor (shown below as it appears today) was acquired by our ancestors upon the inheritance of Gilbert Grierson's wife Isobel de Kirkpatrick, Lady of Rockhall (spelled also Rocail, Rokkel, Roukell, etc.) From this strategic site on the commercial and military route from Cumberland to Dumfriesshire, the Griersons managed their extensive properties. Rockhall was the principle family residence for many generations before it, like Lag Tower, passed out of the hands of the "Lairds of Lag" due to declining fortunes of this noteworthy dynasty of the Scottish Borders.



The current structure dates back 2 or 3 hundred years, but rests upon a 15th-century foundation which was likely situated on the original building site. The central turreted tower is the oldest portion, belonging perhaps to the 16th century, and still retains the Grierson coat of arms above its entrance.

For a considerable time, Rockhall was a fortified residence. Documents from as late as the mid-17th century referred to the gate, tower, and fortalice of Rockhall. A fortalice was a perimeter defensive structure that was essentially a fortified wall. Whether staying at the tower of Rockhall or the tower of Lag, the Laird was relatively secure from attack.

The location of Rockhall in relation to the city of Dumfries.



At the close of the 17th century, during the religious unrest known as the "Killing Times", Rockhall became rather famous as the headquarters of the notorious Laird of Lag, Sir Robert Grierson (from whom we do *not* descend). He was known as "The Persecutor" from his ruthless oppression of Presbyterians, called Covenanters, who defied the episcopal government.

The grandson of "The Persecutor" was known as "The Redgauntlet" and was made famous in Sir Walter Scott's novel *Redgauntlet* that treated primarily of the smuggling which was rife along the Solway Firth during the 18th century. Scott got much background information for his tale from his close friend, the fifth Sir Robert Grierson of Lag, who was noted for his longevity, dying in 1839 at the remarkable age of 102.

Several years ago, Rockhall was converted into a charming country hotel which offers comfortable lodging and a strategic location for those touring the Scottish Lowlands. Recently the hotel has been for sale, but the asking price is not known to the editor. Do we have any potential buyers among our readers who would like to restore Rockhall to Greer ownership? If so, please contact the editor for further information.

Update on GDG's 1st Wife

After the publication of *TGWW*, Vol. 1, #2, Thad Greer reported that he had come across a record of NHG's 1st son Gilbert Dunlap marrying Susan G. **Corathus** in Austin, Texas on June 15, 1843.

That spelling of her surname "Corathus" appears unique — unmatched by any surname on any record of any kind at any place. But during that era in Texas and surrounding states, the name **Corathers** appeared many times in many records. It thus appears likely that Corathus is a transcription error for Corathers, where a poorly formed "er" was misread as a "u."

Because of the foregoing development, your editor will record Gilbert's first wedding date as June 15, 1843 and his bride's maiden name as Corathers until strong evidence to the contrary is demonstrated. Research on this and many other issues continues and any further information will be very much appreciated.

Family Forum

[The letters below & on page 4 were edited for length. — Ed]

... Again thank you for your wonderful publication and keep up the good work!

This is an ambitious undertaking, and I admire those of you involved.

I was pleased to receive the June issue of *The Greer Way West*. It cleared up a lot of doubts I had on the family of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. ... I am a descendant of A. V. Greer

I've just followed a good portion of the Mormon Trail through Nebraska and Wyoming, stopping at Independence Rock, Register Cliff, Devil's Gate, South Pass, and the site of the Willie Handcart Monument. Had I read sooner that Nathaniel Hunt Greer had died in Kansas, I would have ventured further east ... I am proud to be a part of the Greer clan and hope I can attend the next reunion.

To Contact the Editor ...

In addition to receiving your physical mail, I can receive your e-mail messages at

I can also receive faxes at

Let me hear from you about family news, questions about family history or genealogy, or comments about any of the many things that you have read in *The Greer Way West*.

— Bill Greer

Our Next Reunion

The 1997 reunion of the NHG Family Organization will be held in Bosque County, Texas — a Brazos River area pioneered by the Greers. It will begin with a welcoming supper the evening of Friday, May 9 and continue throughout Saturday, May 10. Several historic Greer sites will be available to those wishing to see where their ancestors lived. The next issue of *The Greer Way West* will provide details of the exact site, agenda, and recommended travel and lodging arrangements.

Bosque County Memorials

Of Nathaniel Hunt Greer's 8 children who survived to produce offspring, 5 left Utah in 1856 to live for many years in Bosque County, Texas. The 3 who dwelt there for the rest of their lives were Gilbert Dunlap [GDG], Stephen Decatur [SDG], and Matthew Simeon [MSG]. The 2 who lived there for 20 years before moving to Arizona were Thomas Lacy [TLG] and Americus Vespucius [AVG]. (NHG's son, William Reddick, lived out his years in Bosque without marrying or having children.) NHG's widow Nancy "Mammy" also spent the remainder of her life in this location.

Much of the history of these stalwart pioneers and their offspring, happened in Bosque. Now their memory can be preserved through the *Bosque County Collection* in a soon-to-be-renovated building in the county seat of Meridian. Recently, a photograph of TLG (who was county judge for many years) was added to the gallery of county judges on display at the courthouse in Meridian.

For each contribution of \$100, one of NHG's children (and spouse) will be memorialized on a nameplate permanently displayed as part of the historical exhibit. If several descendants in a particular line donate small amounts, it should be easy to amass the \$100 needed to memorialize their ancestor. To participate in this effort, send your check (no amount is too small) to our secretary/treasurer

Wouldn't it be grand if, in conjunction with our reunion next spring, our president were to personally present a check to the *Bosque County Collection* on behalf of **all** of our Bosque County ancestors?



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Ya'all come. We are looking forward to the great GREER Texas reunion of the Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts posterity. The reunion will be held Friday, May 9, and Saturday, May 10, 1997. We chose to have it at this time because of the hot and humid summers in Texas. The area should be beautiful at this time of year. Please read the reunion insert, make copies and pass it along to other family members. REMEMBER TO RSVP.

We encourage you to bring your Greer genealogy and copies of Greer stories to share with others. This is important in helping to unite the family and perpetuate the memory of our Greer ancestors.

At the 1995 reunion, dues were set at \$5.00 per year per household family. To make collections easier, we are asking you to pay \$10.00 for two years between the Bi-Annual reunions. We need your dues in order to produce and mail *The Greer Way West* family newsletter and to cover other basic expenses in administering the family organization. \$10.00 dues paid now will be for the period from the 1997 to the 1999 reunion.

In the December 1996 newsletter we announced the opportunity to memorialize six family members who lived in Bosque County, Texas. This includes Gilbert Dunlap, Stephen Decatur, Matthew Simeon, Thomas Lacy, Americus Vespucius, and their mother Nancy Ann Terry Roberts. For each contribution of \$100.00, one of Nathaniel Hunt Greer's children (and spouse) will be memorialized on a name plate displayed as part of the Bosque County Collection in the county seat of Meridian. Send your contribution to our treasurer whose name and address appears on this newsletter. Identify your check so that it is not confused with dues and we know which family member you are contributing to. We ask that our vice-presidents of the above lines please help pursue this through some of your family members. Let's see if we can collect enough money to complete this at our coming reunion!

See you in Texas!

Bud Greer

Acknowledgments

Much of the following information about the life of Thomas Lacy Greer is taken from the memoirs of Catherine Ellen Camp – as provided by Errol G. Brown.

Thomas Lacy Greer

In DeKalb Co, Georgia, on September 2, 1826, Thomas Lacy Greer was born the third child of Nathaniel and Nancy Greer. By the time he was old enough for school, the family had moved to Troup Co. and then across the Chattahoochee into the Alabama lands of the Cherokee. His earliest memories would have been of his childhood in Chambers Co. where his father was first sheriff and first state representative.

Tom was 10 when the family moved to Texas. He grew to manhood in Washington Co. On occasion, he defended his family and neighbors in the militia we know today as the Texas Rangers, but virtually all such volunteers are unrecorded in history.

In 1846, the Mexican army crossed the Rio Bravo in response to the annexation of Texas into the United States. The U. S. declared war, but many months would pass before it was determined that an expedition to the Valley of Mexico was required to achieve an American victory. A pivotal element of the expedition was Col. Jack Hays' Ranger corps known as the Texas Mounted Volunteers. On May 25, 1847, Tom and his cousin Riley Irvin were among those in Washington County who enlisted in Company G of the 1st Regiment. They assembled in San Antonio and on August 12, left for the Mexican coast by way of Laredo.

Embarking south of Matamoros, the Texans sailed for Veracruz to join the forces of Gen. Winfield Scott. After fighting several skirmishes along the way, the Rangers entered Mexico City on December 6, 1847.

Although the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed February 2, 1848, many Mexicans refused to surrender. On February 17, Tom and 250 other Rangers set out under Gen. Joe Lane in an effort to defeat the rebel factions to the northeast. After winning the town Tulacingo (70 miles NE of Mexico City), the Texans made a 40-mile night march, arriving at daybreak at Zacualtipan. It was in the battle for this town on February 25 that Tom received a near-fatal chest wound, which retired him from the remainder of the war. The bullet was never removed. Tom was awarded a medal for his service and cited for his bravery. Both he and his cousin Riley were mustered out of service on May 1, 1848.

Tom accompanied his family to Port Sullivan and converted to Mormonism. He helped his father in various ways and by the time the decision was made to move to Utah, Tom was well-acquainted with family business. On February 15, 1855 he acted as his father's agent in selling a huge tract of land about a month before the family migrated.

Please turn to page 2

After the deadly trek to Utah, Tom kept books at Blair, Greer, & Bassett – a store mostly stocked by the Greers. Soon the beautiful Catherine Ellen Camp caught his eye and they were wed November 25, 1855. A distant Greer cousin, she was born October 17, 1837 in Dresden, Tennessee.

The Camps had been Mormons for many years before arriving in Utah in October, 1850. They survived persecution in Nauvoo, Illinois and the killing cold on their exodus west.

In mid-June of 1856, most of the Greers began their journey back to Texas, stopping at Bent's Fort where they met "Buffalo Bill" Cody. In Hill Co, Texas, Tom and Ellen lived for the next two years. It was here that their first two children were born: Nathaniel William and Thomas Riley.

Early in 1859 the young family rented a farm along the Brazos in Bosque County and then on August 25, Tom and his cousin Riley Irvin bought 320 acres of Brazos River land some 10 miles further down river. Here a third son was born and was named Gilbert Dunlap after his eldest Greer uncle.

Soon the Civil War was under way and before it ended, all of the Texas Greer men had joined the fight except for Tom who possibly was excused due to the Mexican bullet in his chest. During the war, Ellen gave birth to a daughter, Deseret Diannah, and another son, Richard Decatur.

When the war was over and Texas was on the losing side, social and political tribulation set in. Officials who had Confederate military experience were barred from holding office. Tom's non-combatant status probably was a factor in his being appointed Bosque County Judge, a position he was to hold for the remainder of his residence in Texas.

Tom's family grew: a fifth son, John Harris, was born in 1866, then a second daughter, Oasis Ann, in 1867. But the joy of the arrival a sixth son, James William, in 1870 turned to sorrow with the baby's death in 1871. The next year, Ellen gave birth to their last son, Lacy. Tom had been saddened by the death of Riley Irvin in 1869, then in 1873 Tom and Ellen lost their second son, Thomas Riley, who had been named after Tom's beloved cousin.

Catherine Ellen Camp



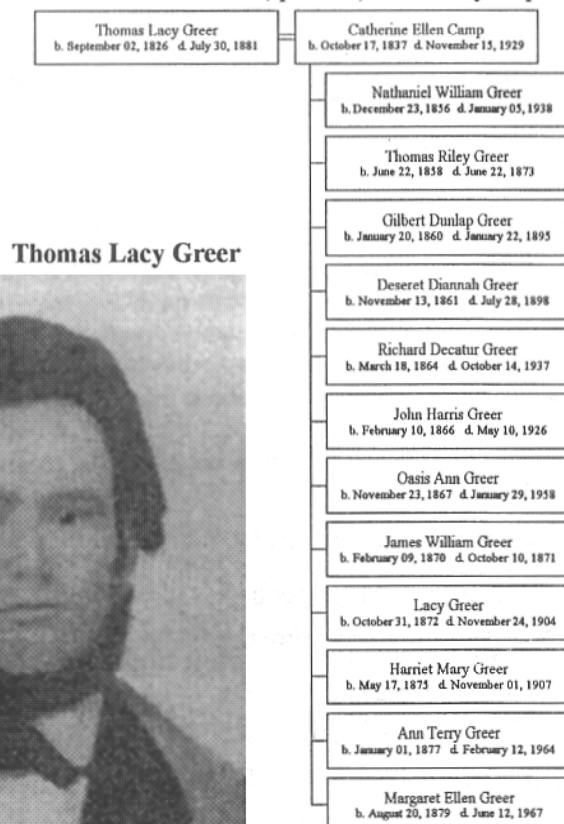
While in Texas, the family herds grew large and strong while Tom made many profitable land deals. Although they longed to rejoin their western kin, both physical and spiritual, the way to Utah was menaced by hostile Indians.

Not long after the birth of Harriet May, the Indian threat abated and in mid-1876 the family finally left the Bosque and drove their herd toward Utah. Sickness struck in October and forced them to winter at Medicine Lodge, Kansas where, on New Year's Day, 1877, a daughter, Ann Terry, was born.

On April 10, 1877, after suffering from thievery and the betrayal of hired hands, they resumed their westward drive. On hearing of rich grazing land in northern Arizona and the need for settlers to strengthen the Mormon community there, the Greers altered course. On September 1 they arrived at Woodruff, Arizona and decided to go no further.

The Greers were welcomed into the community and in 1878, Tom was appointed the first Treasurer of Yavapai County. At Snowflake, on August 31, 1878, he performed the marriage ceremony for his son Nathaniel and bride Martha, a Phelps daughter of long acquaintance.

In March of 1878, as Ellen later recounted, Tom moved a herd onto the "French Ranch" northwest of St. Johns. On December 9, 1878 Tom bought the property which would one day become the hub of a million-acre ranching empire. It was here that Ellen would deliver her final child, Margaret Ellen, in 1879. And it was here on July 30, 1881, that the Mexican bullet from so many years before would finally claim the life of Tom – hero, pioneer, and family inspiration.



Thomas Lacy Greer



Our European Roots

The Capenoch Estate

As early as the 15th century, the lands of Capenoch were owned by one Peter Grersone who held allegiance to the Laird of Lag by virtue of some unidentified relationship. Throughout the 16th century, the estate remained in the family, but was acquired in 1606 (for reasons unclear) by the 9th Lord Maxwell.

On April 6, 1608, Maxwell avenged the feud murder of his father some 15 years earlier, by shooting Sir James Johnstone, Warden of the West Marches. The killing of so prominent a citizen provoked outrage and Maxwell fled to safety on the Continent, but was eventually apprehended, convicted of murder, and beheaded in Edinburgh.

All Maxwell's properties were forfeited and on June 16, 1614, Sir William Grierson, 9th Laird of Lag (and 2nd cousin, once removed, to the murderous Maxwell), obtained charter to Capenoch. On June 26, 1616, a Crown Charter confirmed Grierson's ownership and on November 15 of that year, Sir William granted charter of the estate to his 2nd son, John.

John Grierson of Capenoch failed to produce a male heir so upon his death (prior to 1638) the estate was inherited by his brother James, Sir William's 4th son. Most Greer historians believe this James Grierson was the direct ancestor of Nathaniel Hunt Greer, but proof has not been found.

On June 22, 1655, James Grierson was succeeded by his eldest son John who acquired more property as the years passed. John was succeeded on December 2, 1687 by James, the only one of his ten sons to survive childhood. When this latter James died in December, 1717, he was not survived by a male heir and Capenoch passed out of Greer hands.

Capenoch manor lies among oak-dotted meadows and low rolling hills about six to seven miles northwest of the ruins of Lag. It is some four miles southwest of the town of Thornhill which bestrides the river Nith. The central core of the



Capenoch – as photographed by Paul Greer in September, 1996.

existing structure was originally a keep built by the Grersones during the 15th century. The left portion (as viewed in the photograph above) was added by the Griersons in the 1600s and the right wing was built in the 1700s by the Gladstones who have owned Capenoch since the 18th century.

Could the following be NHG's grandfather?

"Grandfather [Memucan] Hunt had a brother named Nathaniel who went into the army, was gone 7 years and his wife [Elizabeth Wade] supposing him dead, married again. He came back and claimed his wife but she preferred the second husband. He then went to Lincoln Co. [VA] & married again [to Nancy Reddick? – Ed.] and had children, some of whom moved to Shelby Co, TN and to Desoto, MS. This Nathaniel Hunt when old and poor [moved in with] ... his nearest relatives in Granville Co, NC. ... The old man finally took up at Col. William Hunt's ... and there I saw him in 1825. His first wife was still living, a widow, and had considerable property. ... the old man [was persuaded] to call on his first wife and propose a second marriage but she [declined] ... He abandoned the matter and soon afterward died at Col. William Hunt's."

Any thoughts on the above? Let me hear from you. – Ed.

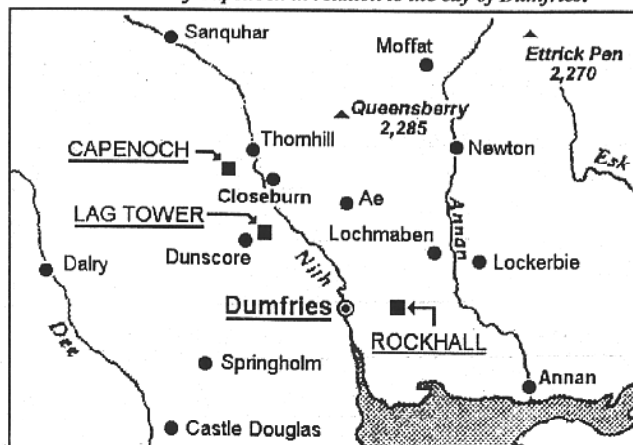
Family Forum

[The letters below were edited for length. –Editor]

Our family newsletter which you have started and print each quarter is much appreciated.

Hope you all are well. The newsletter is wonderful and seems to get better every time.

The location of Capenoch in relation to the city of Dumfries.



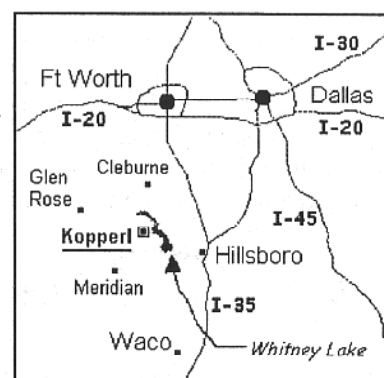
Our Family on the Internet

I subscribe to America On-Line. At the beginning of this year, I accepted their offer of a web page on the Internet at no additional charge! Preparing this newsletter and planning for the reunion, has not left me a great deal time to do much else. Therefore, I have posted material to the page at a relatively slow rate. But soon I expect to have more time (and more technical experience) and thus add to it considerably. If you have access to the Internet, I invite you to visit *Greers West* at "<http://members.aol.com/greerswest>" (less the quotes, of course). I hope many of you will look at the web page, contribute material, and offer comments.

Going to the Reunion?

Ever heard of Kopperl? If you know where it's located, then you're way ahead of most people. But if you're wondering how to get there, the map to the right will locate this little Texas town relative to the Dallas - Fort Worth Metroplex.

If you send the pre-registration form (on the insert sheet) to Bill Greer, you'll receive *detailed* maps by return mail.



Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization — 1997 Reunion in Kopperl, TX

You are cordially invited to the 1997 reunion of the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization. This reunion is being held in the Texas county of Bosque where transpired much of the history of Nathaniel's wife Nancy and five of their sons. Nancy spent the last 30 years of her life in Bosque and is buried near the graves of three of her sons: Gilbert Dunlap, William Reddick, and Matthew Simeon. Two more sons, Thomas Lacy and Americus Vespucius, lived here for 20 years before pioneering other lands in Arizona.

When Lake Whitney was constructed after World War II,

many properties that bordered the Brazos River were condemned by the federal government because they would thereafter lie in the flood plain of the lake. During the reunion you will be able to visit land that Greers pioneered, but passed out of our family's hands due to the lake's construction.

We will enjoy some genuine Texas barbeque, share family stories and genealogical data — and generally have a great time. If you send your pre-registration form by April 18th, I will mail you *detailed* maps, directions, and any additional information that you request or which seems appropriate. — Editor

REUNION AGENDA

Friday, May 9

- 6:00 pm Check-in at the Kopperl Baptist Church annex — the small building behind the church
- 7:00 pm Supper at the Kopperl Baptist Church annex
- 8:00 pm Welcome
- 8:15 pm Poetry written by Nathaniel Hunt Greer at Port Sullivan, TX in 1854
"O Come, Come Away"
"My Native Land Farewell"
- 8:30 pm Songs
- 8:45 pm After-supper socializing — with background guitar music

Saturday, May 10

- Breakfast is the individual responsibility of each guest.
- 10:00 am Business meeting — election of officers — group photo session
- NOTE : It is hoped that all can be present for the business meeting & photo session — later activities are optional.
- 11:00 am Guided and/or independent tours in or near Kopperl:
Kopperl Cemetery — Greer graves, including that of Nancy Ann Terry Roberts ("Mammy" Greer)
Greer Park — homesteads of "Captain" Gilbert Dunlap Greer and "Babe" Matthew Simeon Greer
- 1:00 pm Lunch at the Kopperl Baptist Church annex
- 2:00 pm Guided and/or independent tours of sites a few miles from Kopperl:
The Brazos River ghost town of Kimball — the Chisholm Trail crossing where the Greers traded
Nathaniel Hunt Greer's Hill County land — he patented his claim, but never lived to develop it
- 4:00 pm Genealogy session at the Kopperl Baptist Church annex
- Supper is the individual responsibility of each guest.

Sunday, May 11

- (This is a tentative trip which will occur *only* if sufficient interest exists.)
- 9:00 am Guided, all-day (2-hour drive each way) excursion by private vehicle(s) to the site of the former town of Port Sullivan — the Brazos River port from which the Greers embarked for Utah

Pre-Registration for the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Reunion in Kopperl, TX on May 9–10, 1997

In my party, the number of individuals interested in taking the Sunday excursion to Port Sullivan is _____.

NOTE: The prices below are for adults — children under 12 years of age pay half price.

(All are welcome, but food can be guaranteed *only* for those who pre-register by May 1 using this form.)

Friday supper: \$ 7 — barbequed brisket or turkey, potato salad, slaw, beans, pickles, bread, banana pudding, beverage
or ... \$ 5 — vegetarian meal: all of the above except for the meat entree

Saturday lunch: \$ 3 — sandwich (bologna, ham, or turkey) + cheese (cheddar or Swiss), salad, potato chips, beverage

Beverages available at each meal are milk, iced tea, and both caffeinated and non-caffeinated coffee and soda pop.

(Please consider the meals described above, then on the other side of this form specify the meals you want reserved for your party.)

LODGING OPTIONS

Lakeside Village Resort FM 56 & 927, 4 miles south of Kopperl

A few cottages 2-room units at \$45/night sleep up to 5: kitchenette, b&w TV, shower, 2 double beds & 1 hide-a-bed couch. 3-room units at \$85/night sleep up to 12: kitchenette, color TV, 1 bath, 1 shower, 3 single, 3 double, 1 queen, & 1 hide-a-bed couch. Each unit has dishes for 4. \$5 for each pet, but allowed *only* in smaller, uncarpeted, units. Check-in after 2 pm; check-out by 11 am. The closest lodging to Kopperl (by far), thus deemed the most desirable. **If interested, you are urged to make reservations at once!!!** NOT furnished: towels & wash cloths, linens for hide-a-beds (or for roll-a-way beds available at \$3/night), but with advance notice, Bill Greer can lend you towels.

The Inn at White Bluff (25 minutes east of Kopperl) . . 1002 White Bluff Dr, WB-79, Whitney, TX 76692 — 888-944-8325
A new, very nice lake/golf resort. But it's on the *far* side of the lake. \$59/night and up. The above phone # is toll-free.

A variety of Bed & Breakfasts — \$60 & up (30 minutes west of Kopperl) City of Glen Rose — 817-897-2272
Call the City of Glen Rose for information ... (or Bill Greer can mail you a copy — call him at)

Inn on the River (30 minutes west of Kopperl) 2 blocks from downtown Glen Rose — 800-575-2101
Charming, quaint, but expensive. Has pool & gourmet dining, but *no TV, no phones, no kids, no pets* — \$115/night and up.

The following are on I-35 (that's good) with nice amenities (call 800 #s for \$ & info), but all are 40-minutes east of Kopperl.

Best Western Hillsboro Inn 307 I-35 W. Service Rd, POB 632, Hillsboro, TX 76645 — 800-528-1234

Holiday Inn (Express) Hillsboro 1505 Hillview Dr, Hillsboro, TX 76645 — 800-465-4329

Ramada Inn Hillsboro I-35 & Hwy 22, POB 1205, Hillsboro, TX 76645 — 800-228-2828

OTHER LOCAL AREA ATTRACTIONS FOR INDEPENDENT TOURING

Bosque County Collection (30 minutes south of Kopperl) POB 534, Meridian, TX 76665 — 817-435-6182

These county records and local historical data are on the 3rd floor of the courthouse (*no elevator!*). Open *only* MTT, 10-4.

Confederate Research Center (40 minutes east of Kopperl) POB 619, Hillsboro, TX 76645 — 817-582-2555

This facility has Civil War records of *every* Confederate unit, many artefacts, and much local data. Open weekdays, 9-3.

Dinosaur Valley State Park (35 minutes west of Kopperl) POB 396, Glen Rose, TX 76043 — 817-897-4588

These petrified dinosaur tracks (along side human footprints!) are world famous, cited in numerous textbooks and articles.

Layland Museum (30 minutes north of Kopperl) 201 North Caddo, Cleburne, TX 76031 — 817-645-0940

Many books and artefacts including logs from a cabin located near, but pre-dating, the town of Kimball. Closed Sunday.

Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum (1 hour southeast of Kopperl) . . POB 2570, Waco, TX 76702 — 817-750-8631

Unique items of Bonnie & Clyde, Billy the Kid, Jim Bowie, etc. They will do research, but *only* by mail. Open daily 9-5.

Whitney Lake (immediately east of Kopperl) POB 5038, Laguna Park, TX 76634 — 817-694-3189

This 23,000-acre blue deep water lake offers sailing, skiing, wind-surfing, and superb fishing. It has over 700 RV spaces.

DON'T KNOW WHERE KOPPERL IS LOCATED? SEE THE *MAP* ON THE LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER!

Please identify below the number and types of meals requested, the number of guests, and the name of each guest:

Please reserve for my party: _____ barbeque suppers, _____ vegetarian suppers, _____ sandwich lunches.

I enclose a check in the amount \$ _____ for all meals identified above. My party will consist of _____ guests (named below).

Names of *all* guests in this party (please print): _____

The name of the person submitting this form is (please print): _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Send more information on _____ Bosque Collection, _____ Confederate Museum, _____ Dinosaur Valley, _____ Layland Museum, _____ Ranger Museum, _____ Whitney Lake.

Please complete both sides of this form, then detach and mail it along with a check payable to: William N. Greer, 24 W 775 Geneva Rd, Wheaton, IL 60187.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Warm greetings to all of our greater family—the descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. At our recent reunion, the family organization chose some new officers while retaining most in their respective offices. I, William “Bill” Nathaniel Greer, was chosen to succeed Harold “Bud” Greer as president. I only hope that I can fill the office with some measure of the competence, concern, and thoughtfulness which Bud brought to it. Bud, thank you for all of us!

We also owe a debt of gratitude to Bud's brother who was succeeded as secretary/treasurer by

As I vacated my post of vice-president for the Matthew Simeon “Babe” Greer line, I was ably replaced by my brother

will continue as family historian. And I heartily encourage all of our readers to inform of the various bits of information which will prove so useful to future generations. Please keep her apprized of births, deaths, marriages, and so forth. Jo, keep up the good work!

It was decided that the offices of all the other vice-presidents would continue to be filled by their current officers. I am sure that all of the descendants of the various lines are thankful to their respective vice-presidents.

The new group of officers is listed in the *Family Officers* column on page four of this issue.

About the Banner Images

To distinguish Volume 2 of *The Greer Way West*, the illustrations which bracket the title of this newspaper have been changed—and thus need some explanation.

The sailing ship on the left is typical of those used during the age when NHG and NAT brought their family to Texas. It was on such ships that they sailed from Mobile to New Orleans to Galveston. But it is likely that their final voyage from Galveston to Velasco was aboard a smaller vessel.

Although the Indian experiences of NHG and NAT along the Chattahoochee included some violence, it was mild compared to the savagery perpetrated by the Comanches against the Anglo population in Texas. The arrowhead on the right symbolizes the many years of depredations which NHG, NAT and their children endured while in Texas.

What a Reunion !

We Greers held our first Bosque County reunion in 66 years when we convened in Kopperl on May 9 and 10. We were treated to the hospitality of Ruby and Sam Greer at the Baptist Church where old ties were renewed and many kin met each other for the first time.

The Greers had not assembled in Bosque County since 1931 when 195 gathered near Kopperl at Greer Park—the homestead that was later lost when Lake Whitney was built. This year's event was attended by 88 members from Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Nevada, Texas, and Utah.

After Friday evening's barbeque supper, Bill Greer of Wheaton, IL read poetry

written by NHG in 1854. Then

and took turns entertaining the audience with several songs. A big thanks to

The next day also took several family photographs.

Saturday's events included visits to the Kopperl and Kimball cemeteries, the ghost town of Kimball, and NHG's headright land in adjacent Hill County. A few brave souls also ventured through dense undergrowth in Plowman Creek Park to examine the home site of Gilbert Dunlap Greer whose 1857 land purchase was the first of many parcels acquired by him and his brothers along the western shore of the Brazos.

Food for the reunion was delivered and served by

thrilled the family with precious photographs and keepsakes—several with significant historical value—and one (an old tin type) which is believed by many to be of NHG himself!

Mindful of our Bosque County roots, we presented Elizabeth Torrence with a memorial donation of \$900 to assist the Bosque County Historical Commission with the renovation of its future home in Meridian. Our donation will result in memorials placed there for NHG, NAT, and each of their children whose lines continued to other generations.

On Sunday nearly two dozen of us drove to Cameron and toured the very interesting Milam County Historical Museum. Normally closed on Sundays, the museum was graciously opened for us by its president, Harrison Lanham. Then we drove to the former site of Port Sullivan from which NHG and over 50 others embarked on their ill-fated trek to Utah. After a final afternoon meal, we each went our own way.

All agreed that the reunion was a big success!

William Reddick Greer and His Gold

Most of this information was recounted to the editor, William Nathaniel Greer II, by his father, Matthew Simeon Greer II, who heard it from his father, William Nathaniel Greer I.

William Reddick Greer was born the fourth child of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts on November 18, 1828, in Troup County, Georgia. As far as is known, he never married. Bill took part in the family migration to Utah in 1855, and although he definitely returned to Texas, it is uncertain whether he did so in 1856 with most of his siblings or at some later time. He is said to have left the family at an unknown date and for an unknown period to seek his fortune prospecting gold—it is believed in the California rush of 1849 or the Alaska rush of 1861, but we really don't know.

Research to date has not revealed a military record for Bill although he was of proper age to have participated in the Civil War. Perhaps it was during this time that he was away from the family — prospecting for gold.

On January 18, 1871, Bill and his youngest brother Babe jointly bought two pieces of land from their brother Gil out of his Bosque County property that became known as Greer Park. For the last many years of his life Bill lived at Greer Park, sustaining himself in a manner typical in these parts—a little farming, a little stock raising, a little trading. On January 3, 1875, he sold the 160 acres which he had inherited from his father's patented headright in Hill County along Aquilla Creek—a tributary of the Brazos River.

Bill was more accustomed to solitude than most and kept to himself a lot. Perhaps this was a habit he had acquired during the protracted period of living alone during his prospecting years. Sometimes even his closest family would not see him for days. It was because of his penchant for solitude that the exact date of his death—at 71 years of age—is not known. On February 6, 1900, two of Babe's brothers-in-law went hunting along Plowman's Creek and discovered his frozen body—its beard laden with ice—against a tree at the water's edge. He was buried in the Kopperl Cemetery.

Bill never much trusted banks. Ever since his gold-prospecting days, he had the custom of transacting all his business in gold coin which he kept in a tubular leather container which held a substantial number of coins— totaling perhaps two thousand dollars. Sometimes Babe, short of cash

and needing to make a cotton deal, would ask to borrow money from his older brother, at which point Bill would disappear to some mysterious site in the woods and retrieve his pouch of gold—presumably from a buried location. He would insist that Babe pay him back in nothing other than \$20 gold pieces, because that was what Bill wanted and his pouch was tailored to accommodate just that size coin. Each coin so received went back into the pouch and Bill would then retire into the woods and sequester his money.



After his death, local folks speculated about Bill's cache of gold. For many years thereafter, various local citizens scurried into the woods around Greer Park at odd hours (when best unobserved) to search for the treasure. Eventually, Gil Greer—elderly and wishing to retire and live with his son in the Bosque railroad town of Morgan—sold his farm to Tom Carlisle. (A niece of Gil's married a nephew of Tom's.) Not long thereafter, Tom seemed to prosper a might more than folks thought he should, and some thought that maybe he had found the gold. Nevertheless, speculation continued and so did the sporadic searching.

After the passage of many years and many a dear soul, few remembered the hidden pouch and its precious contents. No one ever found the treasure—or at least admitted to finding it.

In December of 1951, the newly constructed Lake Whitney Dam began to impound water and soon the lower portions of Greer Park—and possibly the site of the treasure—were submerged. To this day, the mystery of Greer's Gold remains unsolved.

The Kansas Monument to NHG et al

At the reunion it was decided that Harvey Greer of Fair Oaks, CA would lead a committee to erect a monument in Kansas near where NHG and so many others died. We hope to get a public site in a nearby town (Marysville or Seneca). Private land nearer the death site is not likely available.

The marker is planned to honor the memory of the dozens who perished from cholera on the trip to Utah in one of the worst tragedies in the history of western migration, ranking with the Donner Party for loss of life. An attempt will be made to involve non-Greer families (and perhaps the Church of LDS) so that costs would be defrayed. We have \$395 so far. Send your donations to our new treasurer, Greg Greer.

Our European Roots

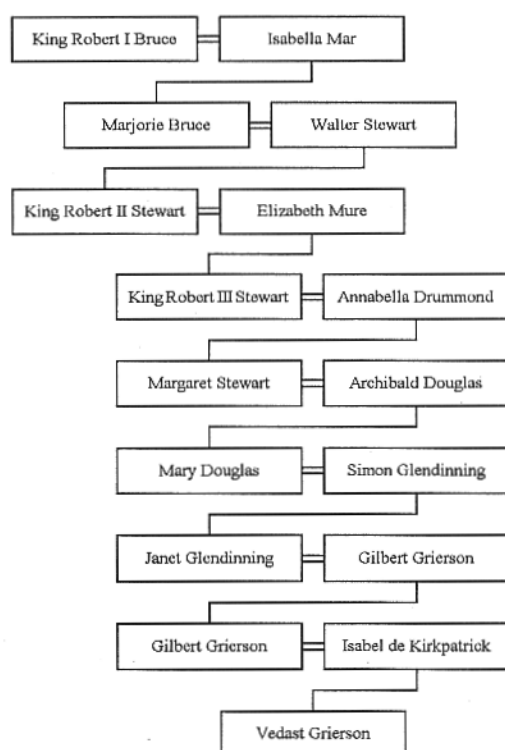
Robert I the Bruce, King of Scots

The Lords of Lag descend from many an illustrious figure in history—and none more dear to Scottish hearts than Robert Bruce. The de Brus family derived from Viking stock and followed “the Conqueror” from Normandy to England. Robert’s forebears acquired vast properties in England and then in Scotland after King David’s coronation in 1124.

Robert’s vacillation in the film *Braveheart* was actually his effort to gain the throne of John Balliol, installed (unfairly, many thought) by King Edward I of England to resolve the interregnum after the extinction of the Canmore dynasty. When Edward ignored Robert’s right to rule, “the Bruce” joined, then led the fight for Scottish independence.

The battle lasted many years during which respite was achieved through Robert’s feigned submission to Edward (while secretly aiding William Wallace). But after the vile execution of Wallace, Scottish nobles rose under Bruce—and crowned him at Scone on March 25, 1306, exactly 10 years to the day after Edward had first attacked Scotland.

The descent from Bruce to our ancestor Vedast Grierson, builder of the Tower of Lag, is shown below (siblings and non-descending spouses are not shown). Twenty generations separate Nathaniel Hunt Greer from Robert Bruce—whom many historians consider to be the savior of Scotland.



After Robert’s coronation, the English armies defeated him and then drove him into hiding on a remote island near Ireland. His wife Elizabeth was imprisoned and three of his brothers executed before he rallied his forces in February of 1307. Finally, on June 24, 1314, he routed the English at Bannockburn and the independence of Scotland was secure.

Through his mother, Robert was the hereditary Earl of Carrick located on Scotland’s western coast and south of Ayr. His family’s traditional Scottish fiefdom was in Annandale, immediately east of Dumfries. The rebellion against Edward caused the family to lose its immense estates in England.

The definitive and readable biography is Ronald McNair Scott’s *Robert the Bruce: King of Scots* published in 1982.

Family Forum

[The letters that follow were edited for length—Editor]

I want to congratulate all of our officers ... a great job they and [Bud] are doing. The news letter is truly fantastic. I look forward to getting it. I am sorry I will not be able to make the reunion in Dallas. New baby problems and time of year.

We want to say ‘thank you’ for all the effort put out in publishing this fine newsletter. We look forward to each issue. Your format is great & it is easy to follow. Keep up the good work.

Just a note to tell you how great the reunion was. We really enjoyed it. Sorry we couldn’t go to the different places on Sunday, but we had to get home. ... I wish my kids could have gone with us, or with themselves. It is a little harder for younger people with families and job obligations to get away for things like this. I paid their dues so they can keep up on things with the news letter.

I want to thank _____ for sending me a Greer family newsletter from time to time, even though I am not a descendant of the line producing the newsletter. I come from Nancy Reddick Greer and Willis Johnson. ... I am sending you \$10.00 for a 2-year subscription to your newsletter. I am very impressed with it. Anything about the ancestors is news about my ancestors, too! As soon as we get our Internet access, I will be visiting the web-site. Thank you and the rest of the Greers.

Announcements

We sadly report that Lacy GREER THOMAS, youngest son of Ann Terry GREER and Charles Barnes Thomas passed away on February 3, 1997, in Palo Alto, CA. He was born January 15, 1921. His mother, the daughter of Thomas Lacy GREER, was born January 1, 1877, in Medicine Bow, KA territory.

Treasurer's Report

Opening balance (October 4, 1995)	\$ 568.17
Deposits	923.00
Withdrawal (to for 1995 reunion expenses)	100.00
Withdrawals (to Bill Greer for newsletters – all of Volume 1)	681.04
Interest (as of May 7, 1997)	14.62
Deposits (at 1997 reunion)	1565.00
Withdrawal (to Bosque County Historical Commission)	900.00
New Balance (transferred from to)	\$1389.75

Note: In addition to the \$900 Bosque memorial, \$395 of our current balance was collected *expressly* for the Kansas monument project described on page 2.

Reunion Booklet — and Revised Pages

A 44-page souvenir booklet was prepared for the reunion and made available for the price of \$3.00 per copy. These booklets were xerographically reproduced and delivered in clear plastic binders from which the sheets could be removed at will.

Those at the reunion will certainly have noticed many errors on several pages in the souvenir booklet which they purchased, but I am happy to report that revised pages are now available! Anyone wishing the corrections need only notify me and I will mail them at no added cost. Sorry for my errors and the inconvenience.

Those wishing to order *complete and corrected* copies by mail, please send me \$3.00 (checks payable to William N. Greer) for each copy desired. At that price I will provide a complete set of sheets and pay the postage—but purchasers must provide their own binders because said binders will not survive the U. S. mail!

Any balance of money which remains after all revisions and extra purchases have been handled, will be placed into the fund for the Kansas monument to NHG et al.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Last February's issue of Arizona Senior World featured an article about one of our most remarkable family members. I thought you would enjoy reading about Pauline Greer McCleve, so I've condensed most of that article below.

"I've had the best of everything. I've been loved, blessed and sheltered. My greatest joys have been my husband, my children, my parents and other dear ones. I couldn't have had a better mother, a loving, truly refined gentlewoman. She never raised her voice. She never gossiped."

"Pauline was born in St. Johns, Arizona Territory on January 11, 1895. She was the sixth child in a family of eleven children, but two boys died in infancy. Her parents were Johanna Kempe and Richard Decatur Greer [the fifth child of Thomas Lacy Greer].

"In 1889, the unincorporated town of Greer was named to honor her great uncle, Americus Vespucius Greer.

"Her parents were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She says, 'When I was eight, my cousin and I were baptized in an irrigation ditch — a pool dug wide and deep enough for that purpose.'

"After living on two ranches, the family moved to a ranch near Holbrook, which is located northwest of St. Johns. The Greers owned a big herd of cattle and horses. While riding the range to keep thieves from stealing their livestock, her father wore two gun belts, and his six-shooters were loaded.

"Later, men owning sheep took over the grazing land so her father quit the cattle business and moved to town.

"Pauline and James Cyrus 'Cy' McCleve met when they attended high school in Snowflake. When Pauline reached 18 and Cy was 21 years old, they were in love.

"The couple married on September 28, 1913. A local judge performed the service. On the following day, the young people boarded a train to Salt Lake City to have a church marriage in the LDS Temple.

"Upon returning to Holbrook, they lived in one-half of the home of Pauline's grandmother for over a year. Then the McCleves purchased property and built a home of their own. In time, the couple had five children.

"Daughter Myrna says her mother was an excellent seamstress. Not only did she make her own wedding dress, but throughout the years, 'my sister and I would describe a dress we wanted, and soon — or the next morning — one of us had a beautiful dress like the one described.'

"For 50 years Pauline owned and operated Pauline's Beauty Shop in Holbrook. During the Great Depression, there was little money so during that period once or twice she advertised 'Permanents — Dirt Cheap.' If a man delivered a big truck load of 'mountain soil' to alleviate the alkali soil in her yard, Pauline would give his wife or daughter a permanent. With good soil, Pauline grew beautiful flowers, often providing flowers for the church and for funerals.

"Pauline organized the Garden Club, Daughters of Utah pioneers, and represented Apache and Navajo Counties on Ladybird Johnson's 'Beautify America Program Committee.' She was President of the American Legion Auxiliary, Woman's Club, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, and Lioness Club. For many years she was the organist at her church.

"She secured installation of safety gates at a dangerous railroad crossing where many had died. She deemed this 'one of my most important contributions to Holbrook.'

"In time Cy, a certified public accountant, had his own business and practiced his creed, 'there is no limit to the good a man can do if he doesn't care who gets the credit.' In 1970, Cy and Pauline were named Man and Woman of the Year by Holbrook Petrified Forest Chamber of Commerce.

"The McCleves sold their property and business and moved to Tempe. In 1978, Cy, 86, died. For the next few years, Pauline lived with son Winston Ray until his death in 1991. She then moved to an apartment in east Tempe.

"A friendly, bright person with an excellent memory, she gathers family history and photos for relatives who have published or are still writing family histories.

"Pauline has traveled extensively, including trips to the South Sea Islands, Alaska, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, the Holy Land, and Mexico."

A noteworthy public servant and pioneer, Pauline has been cited in *U.S. News & World Report* and has also appeared on the Phil Donahue show.

At 102 1/2, she is the oldest of about 900 residents in the Friendship Village senior facility in Tempe. Is Pauline the eldest member of our Greer family?



Stephen Decatur Greer

On June 26, 1830, Stephen Decatur Greer was born in Troup Co, Georgia the fifth child of NHG and NAT. Shortly thereafter — perhaps the next year — NHG led his family across the Chattahoochee into the eastern edge of the Creek Territory and established his trading post.

Cate, as he came to be known, grew up in Texas, mostly in Washington Co. He was a young man of 24 when the family set out for Utah, and two days short of his 25th birthday when he lost his father to cholera. Soon after most of the Greers returned to Texas, Cate met and wooed the daughter of two pioneer heroes: Colonel Philip Howard and Sarah Creth.

Colonel Howard, born in Kentucky, had clerked at the Fort Dearborn trading post that would later become the city of Chicago. He fought in the Black Hawk War under General William Henry Harrison (later President of the United States) before emigrating to Texas in 1833 at the age of 21 to become a Texas Ranger. After helping to win Texas independence from Mexico, he protected settlers from Indian attacks. During the Mexican War, he was Army Commissary.

Sarah Creth, born in Illinois, married John Sherry and emigrated to Texas where he was killed by Indians in 1829. She then wed John Hibbins who, along with her half-brother, was slain in her presence by Indians who then took her and her two children prisoner. A short time later her infant was beaten to death before her eyes, and yet she maintained her reason, escaped, and sought help from a band of Rangers who soon rescued her remaining son. After this nightmarish experience, she wed a man named Stinnett who, while travelling to New Orleans to buy supplies, was murdered by outlaws. By this man she had one daughter who drowned at the age of two. In 1839 she wed Col. Howard by whom she had three daughters, including Cate's future bride. That Sarah survived her ordeals (for which she became famous) retained her sanity and went on to live a productive life as wife and mother is a testament to her amazing courage and

a triumph of human endurance rarely matched in history.

Cate wed Martha Arminta "Mintie" Howard on April 7, 1858. That August he purchased from her father 200 acres where Steele Creek flows into the Brazos River. On this homestead all six of their children were born.

Cate was too young to fight in the Mexican War, but the Civil War was another matter. In the winter of 1863, he enlisted as a cavalry private in Co. E, Mounted Frontier Regiment, Texas State Troops, commanded by Col. J. E. McCord. Later he was in Capt. Henry Fossett's Co. A of Lt. Col. Buck Barry's "Battalion," Texas Frontier Regiment, C.S.A. This service allowed Cate to honor Union sympathies he shared with his father-in-law by protecting the frontier against Indian raids rather than fight his northern brother. On January 8, 1865, his unit was in the Battle of Dove Creek, the most famous frontier engagement of the day. This battle has been recounted in many works on Texas and the War.

During the Civil War Cate was stationed at Camp Colorado where he and Mintie lost their infant daughter, Ellen May, who was buried at the nearby town of Coleman. The rest of their children lived long, full lives.

In 1871 Cate bought 5.5 acres in Meridian, providing the children greater access to schooling. The next year he added 30 acres to their Meridian land. On April 23, 1881, he sold his 160-acre portion of the 1280 acres of the NHG survey.

After farming during his later years, Cate died January 25, 1905 in Meridian — tragically by his own hand, and for reasons unknown — by drinking strychnine. Mintie then lived many years with her widowed daughter, Susan, until passing away in De Leon, Texas, on October 22, 1923.

Stephen Decatur Greer
b. June 26, 1830 d. January 25, 1905

Martha Arminta Howard
b. April 14, 1842 d. October 22, 1923

Sarah Hunt Greer
b. June 4, 1860 d. 1955

Effa Ruth Greer
b. November 3, 1862 d. 1950

Ellen May Greer
b. August 9, 1864 d. September 26, 1864

Susan Virginia Greer
b. February 3, 1867 d. 1961

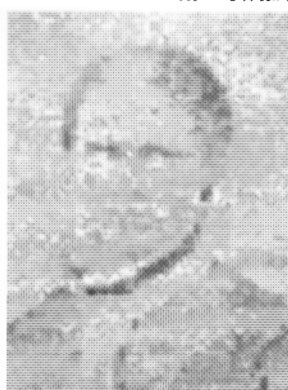
William Penn Greer
b. April 9, 1869 d. 1948

Thomas Lacy Greer
b. December 16, 1871 d. 1955

Stephen Decatur Greer



Martha Arminta Howard



I apologize for the very poor quality of these photographs. If some reader has or knows of better images, please inform the editor who will gladly print them in a future issue.

Our European Roots

The Source of the Name of "Greer"

Virtually all born with the surname of Greer descend from the Griersons of Nithsdale (modern Dumfriesshire) in Scotland. There are dozens of shortened spelling variants, the most common being Grear, Greear, Greere, and Grier. Tradition holds that "Son of Grier" is a direct Anglicisation of the Gaelic "Mac Gregor" [= son of Gregor] and was adopted, through economic necessity, as part of a wide-spread program of subordinating the indigenous Celtic culture to that of the Anglo-Norman nobility which had gained solid control of the Scottish Lowlands by the 14th century.

Family legend has Clan Gregor descending from the eponymous patriarch Prince Gregor, third son of Alpin, King of Kintyre, and brother of Kenneth MacAlpin who united Picts and Scots under one kingdom. But Prince Gregor is unknown to history, and research by Forbes MacGregor, late historian of Clan Gregor, suggests that the true eponym may have been Gregor MacDungal, nephew of Alpin and regent of Strathclyde. It is theorized that Dungal, possibly a brother of Alpin, married Alpin's Pictish widow, and from their union Prince Gregor was born and Clan Gregor derived. In the Celtic system of tanistry, descent via the female line is accorded higher esteem than in the Norman system of primo-geniture — and the Pictish system was even more friendly to enate offspring. Hence, if it were true, that the Gregor clan began as postulated above, it can easily be seen how the politically expedient system of primo-geniture supplanted tanist tradition with the result that actual descent from Alpin's wife was distorted into invented descent from Alpin himself — but the patriarch being Gregor in either case.

The first person of the original surname was Gilbert Grierson who appeared in Nithsdale at the beginning of the 15th century. Gilbert's father is traditionally held to have been Malcolm "the Lame Lord" of MacGregor, allegedly wounded at Bannockburn in service to Robert the Bruce. But Gilbert might only have been a "son" of Malcolm in the sense that all males of the clan are "sons" of their lord; in other words, an overly-literal interpretation of the name MacGregor. Records list Gilbert's father as Duncan whose ancestry is unknown, but who *might* have been a son of the Lame Lord. If so, then Gilbert would have been Malcolm's grandson instead of his son — and this is the theory embraced here. At any rate, Gilbert was allowed to acquire title to land only on the condition that he adopt the surname of Grierson.

Over a protracted period, Clan Gregor had been dispossessed of its ancestral lands primarily in Argyll. This was accomplished partly by Campbell men who married Gregor heiresses then claimed Gregor property by virtue of

primo-geniture, a claim upheld by the Anglo-Norman power of the day. After Robert the Bruce consolidated his control over all of Scotland by the 1320s, forfeited land in the Borders region became available to reward those loyal to the recently restored Scottish throne. Kin of the Lame Lord would definitely be in line for such patronage and eager for new lands as their traditional property slipped further from their grasp. Thus, Duncan or his son Gilbert may well have led a migration of kinsmen to Nithsdale where land was to be had.

Through the years, the name Grierson was often shortened to "Grier," and within a couple of centuries some descendants used the shortened form exclusively. In feudal times consistent spelling was a rarity, and there are many examples of the same individual spelling his own name two or three different ways over the course of his lifetime! Eventually the form "Greer" became popular.

It is noteworthy that the Irish surname Greyrson derives from Grieveson (= son of the Grieve, or Bailiff) and that the shortened variants of Grieve, Grieves, Greeve, Greeves, and Grives were adopted by some Irish Greers who really descended from the Griersons of Scotland. Two plausible explanations are offered as to why these Greers changed their names: One was to appear more Irish and thus escape persecution by the rebellious Rapparees who harassed, and often slew, English and Scottish settlers in the Plantation of Ulster. The other was to further distance themselves from their Gaelic origins and effects of the law which forbade, under penalty of death, the use of the surname MacGregor.

[In the next issue: The Grierson descent from Alpin.]

Family Forum

[The letters that follow were edited for length—Editor]

Please send me the corrections for the N.H.G. booklet we received at the reunion. I am in the process of giving copies of this and other Greer information to each of my children.

Thanks for the wonderfully prepared reunion we enjoyed in Texas. I don't remember when I enjoyed anything so much. It has ... caused me to want to know more about our family.

I am enclosing a biography of "Nancy" in case you don't have it. My wife, , just found it in Salt Lake City at a museum of the "Daughters of Utah Pioneers."

Thanks again ...

Thank you for notifying me of the need to renew my subscription. I enjoy it immensely — especially the historical and European roots.

[Thanks for the kind words on the newsletter and reunion, but I ask readers to send *other* comments & questions! — Ed.]

Surfing the Net

Those readers who have access to the World Wide Web may like to know of various web sites of interest to our pioneer history and genealogical focus. As space permits, I'll mention sites that I've found of particular interest or usefulness. A great one is ...

USGenWeb Project at <http://www.usgenweb.com>



Here you'll find a well organized effort to organize the genealogy materials on the Internet. This project is supported by hundreds of volunteers all across the country. The system is organized by states and counties with each county having a coordinator responsible for maintaining a site of resources which are available for that county. You'll also find files of genealogy records, also organized by state and county. I highly recommend this site as a jumping off place to much data!



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts

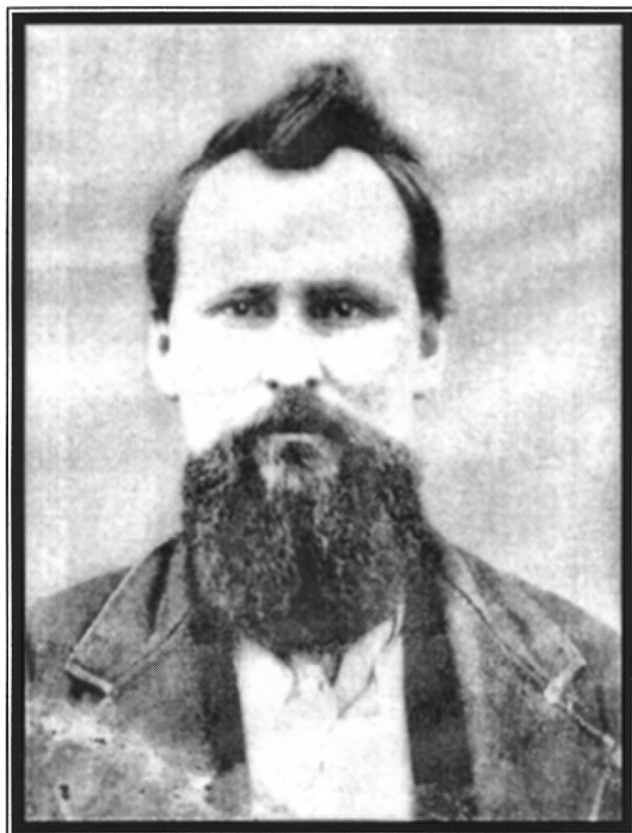


A Photo of NHG !!

This issue features a remarkable discovery that was made at the reunion this past May. The photograph below appears to be the only existing image of Nathaniel Hunt Greer! Several family members compared the newly found photo with one of NHG's son Babe. It was obvious that the two images were of different men although both men were of similar age. Their strong likeness suggested that the much older photograph was very likely of NHG, although no information was found with the picture.

The photograph, one of many that had been passed down through Babe's descendants is now in the possession of [redacted] of Kopperl, TX, who made the find and had a reproduction made of the original. I used some computer techniques to touch up the heavily damaged original, and the restored image is presented below. The restoration has had the arms and lower jacket (the most damaged features) cropped away and the original background removed.

Please excuse the delay of this newsletter. Heavy demands on my time and preparation of these photos are to blame!



Update on GDG's 1st wife

Just before finishing this issue, I was contacted by [redacted] who is researching the Carothers line. From her I learned that Gilbert Dunlap Greer's first wife was Susannah Carothers, daughter of George and Frances Carothers of Washington Co, TX. George left a will dated November 26, 1853 which refers to "Cassandra, daughter of G. D. Greer and Susannah, deceased." Note that my prior spelling of "Corathers" should apparently be "Carothers."

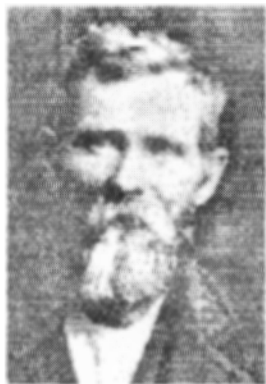
The above information, suggests that Susannah died before GDG wed Marion Lane on October 13, 1853. Thus, my prior speculation about GDG's first wife being a "plural" wife appears incorrect. The theory was based in large measure on Catherine Ellen Camp Greer's recollection that "Gilbert's first wife, Sue, and most of his children died" of cholera on the trek to Utah. Her remembrance, while not explicit, suggested that GDG's first wife actually died on the trip. Apparently the death occurred long before the trip was undertaken, and not necessarily from cholera.

A Photo of GDG's Murdered Daughter

Thanks to [redacted] for providing the photo below (cropped and restored) of GDG's daughter Willmirth Sarah Greer who was murdered near Kopperl, TX, by a despondent suitor just before her wedding to another. This was likely taken shortly before her death on October 23, 1875.



The Amicable Uncle H



Americus Vespucius Greer was one of a pair of twins born to Nathaniel and Nancy on March 4, 1832, in what would soon become Chambers County, Alabama. As a youngster in Texas, he helped on the farm, clerked in several stores, and by the age of 18 was a Ranger scout under Captain James Cross.

In Port Sullivan, Texas, on February 8, 1854, he lost his twin, Christopher Columbus, to pneumonia — the tragic outcome of a hunting trip the week before. His twenty-second birthday, less than a month later, must have been particularly difficult to bear.

Like so many of his family, A.V.—as he was often called—was baptized into the Mormon faith in August, 1854. In 1855 he accompanied his family on the deadly trek to Utah and returned with them to Texas in 1856.

Despite his belief in the Union cause, A.V. enlisted January 16, 1862, in Company H of Young's 8th Regiment of the Texas Infantry. By July his qualities of leadership earned him an appointment as lieutenant. Soon the moniker "A.V." was replaced by "H"—after his company's designation—a nickname he was to wear the remainder of his life. In the spring of 1863, he made captain. On February 20, 1864, he resigned after having served as far away as Virginia.

H's strength of character is ably demonstrated, when with the perils of war all about him, he wrote to his brother Babe on August 24, 1862. In part, the letter reads:

I want you to take good care of what little I have left, and if I should never return I give it to you, not that I think any more of you than the rest, but it is so little that it would not be worth dividing, and I do not think that you have had an equal show with the rest. I want you to be kind and good to your mother and give heed to the counsel of those who are your superior in age and experience ... go to school when you can, try to learn and make good use of your time when about home ... and to use the figure of the poet, "live so in youth that you blush not in age."

Many years later, Gil Greer's daughter Lavina recounted how the family had worried over H's fate as the war wound down. Gil, also a captain, had returned home safely, and both Cate and Babe were home, but nothing was known of H. He had been very regular in writing, but no word had come for a long time. One evening Cate and Minty and Mammy were sitting on their porch, wondering if H had been killed, when Sallie heard their dog growling. She followed the dog to their stile (gate hardware was hard to get) and discovered H climbing over. He yelled at her to go tell her father to call off the dog (which had always disliked H). Sallie, not quite 5, did as asked and Cate, overjoyed, rushed to greet his brother.

On November 2, 1865, H married Polly Lane whose sister, Marion, had wed Gil a dozen years before. After the war, times were rough and goods so hard to purchase that Polly's wedding dress had to be made from a window curtain.



A few years after the war, H sold the 160 acres that he had inherited from his father. It is thought that he had a considerable plantation near the Brazos. Here Polly gave birth to their first four children.

The year after Tom moved his family out west, H decided to follow. By mid-November of 1877, H and his family visited his sister Willmirth in Salt Lake City and then wintered in Wallsburg, UT with his brother Dixon. Later H would move his family near Tom's in northern Arizona and found a community he named "Amity." There, after having two more children, his beloved Polly passed away on November 28, 1882.

H was beloved by all who knew him and more than just family came to call him "Uncle H." His concern for right living and his attention to others was widely known. So highly was "Uncle H" esteemed, that upon his death on May 3, 1896, the town of Greer, AZ, was named in his honor.

Thanks to Pauline Greer McCleve for providing the photos of Uncle H and his wife Polly.

Our European Roots

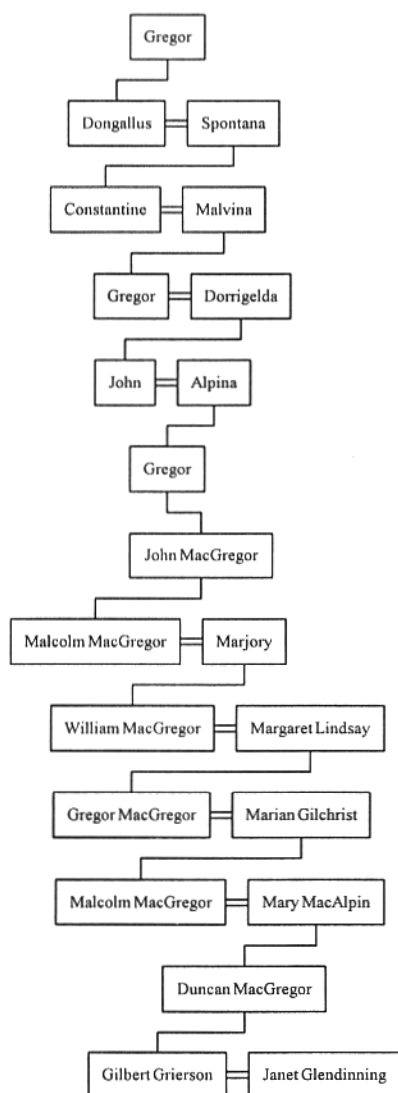
The Descent from Gregor

As related in our last issue, the legendary progenitor of Clan Gregor is theorized to have been the historical Gregor MacDungal, slain at the fortress of Dundurn near Comrie in Strathearn – probably by Pictish priests or their henchmen.

His son Dongallus is said to have died in 900 while in Italy, and Gregor's grandson Constantine died in 940 after marrying his cousin Malvina who also descended from Gregor via a 2nd son Donald, King of Kintyre. Constantine's son Gregor II was Standard Bearer for his uncle, King Malcolm I and died in 961 after siring John who died in 1004. John's son Gregor III became the first Lord of Glen Orchy and he begat Sir John who died in 1113 and was our first ancestor to be known by the surname "MacGregor."

Sir John MacGregor and his first-born male descendants were clan chiefs known as "Lords of MacGregor." John's son Sir Malcolm died in 1164 after siring William who died in 1238. William wed Margaret Lindsay, granddaughter of Henry Galithly, the natural son of William I, King of Scots. In this era the MacGregors were vassals to the Earl of Ross and their right to Glen Orchy was recognized by Alexander II, King of Scots. William's son Gregor died in 1300 after begetting Malcolm the "Lame Lord" – noted for his faithful service to King Robert "the Bruce" at Bannockburn.

It was through Sir John MacGregor, mentioned above, that our ancestors descended from Arthur "the Hammer," King of the Britons, and ruler of Camelot. That descent will be presented in our next newsletter.



Awhile back I promised to print a better photograph of Stephan Decatur Greer, if one turned up. The shot that appears to the right is the best so far — and it was also retouched by your editor. It was thoughtfully provided by Pauline Greer McCleve. Thanks Pauline!

If anyone has or knows of photographs of our ancestors which might be of greater quality than those which have been presented in this newsletter, please contact me and I will squeeze them in when circumstances permit. Many thanks to all for your help — and Merry Christmas to everyone! — Bill Greer

Stephen Decatur Greer





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

I hope this issue finds all of our family members enjoying a healthy, prosperous, and happy year. But as one reads on page four of this issue about our relatives that have recently passed away, it becomes obvious that some of our kin are especially saddened and I am sure that all our hearts go out to them.

I wish to add a special note to the passing of my cousin, Greer Holmes. Many of us who attended last May's reunion in Kopperl, Texas will remember a large number of family photographs that were available for our viewing. Although it was not possible for Greer Holmes to gather with us, he had earlier sent many precious family photographs which he had kept safe and secure for decades. Among those images was that which many of us believe is of Nathaniel Hunt Greer — which you will recall graced the cover of our last issue.

There are other rare photographs out there, waiting to be discovered. I am hoping that someday someone will find a photograph of Nancy Ann Terry Roberts!

About those photos ...

I must apologize for the horrible quality of the photos in our last issue. The xerographic process that is used to produce this newsletter at low cost may be adequate for the occasional photos that are printed which have little detail, but it was obviously unsuitable for the reunion photographs. I plan to redo the photographs in some more acceptable process in our next issue — albeit more costly.

Displaying Family Trees

It has often been difficult to get the family group tree of the featured ancestor to fit well within the available space. Most of you will have realized that such a family tree for Americus Vespucius Greer was missing from last month's issue. It is presented in this issue, but on an extra sheet and larger than previous trees. Also, the tree for Dixon Hamlin Greer appears in this issue on that added sheet. I regret the delay in printing the tree for Uncle H, but hope everyone appreciates the display of information in larger type. As circumstances dictate, such insert sheets will be used with greater frequency.

Our Next Reunion

The next reunion of the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization will be in 1999. But when exactly and where? Plan should begin soon and there are many concerns.

Is it desirable to rotate the site of the reunion so as to involve as many members as possible? The great majority of our members live in the west, and so it seems natural to give preference to that region of the country. But there are also considerations such as sites that have special significance in the history of our family. Here are some options:

Apache County, Arizona. St. Johns is where our organization began and is associated with NHG's son, Thomas Lacy. And the nearby town of Greer is named for Uncle H. However, our 1995 reunion was held in St. Johns and we might wish to visit our sites before returning to the Greer country of Apache County.

Graham County, Arizona. It was in Pima that Willmirth Margaret spent the last 20 years of her life. However, none of our current family members live in this area, and the extent of its facilities and cultural appeal is unknown to me.

Salt Lake City area. All of NHG's surviving children were here at least briefly and several for an extended time. Dixon Hamlin lived in Provo and other nearby sites for the balance of his life. The LDS genealogical facilities would, of course, have much appeal to many of our members.

Bear River area in Utah and Wyoming. NHG's daughter, Sarah Hunt, lived here for almost her entire adult life. And NHG's sister, Nancy Reddick, spent her last years here. Maybe some of our readers can tell us what it's like?

Washington County, Texas. Although our 1997 reunion was in Texas, we met quite a distance from where NHG, his kith and kin pioneered for nearly 15 years during the era of the Republic. Someday we should meet in this historical area of Texas — and it's not that far from Austin. Is 1999 too soon?

Chattahoochee River at the Alabama/Georgia border. Five of NHG's children were born on either side of the river. There is much Greer history here, waiting to be relived.

Jasper County, Georgia. Just an hour's drive southeast of Atlanta, NHG's parents pioneered this area at the end of the American Revolution and for 40 years afterwards. Georgia's historic first capital of Milledgeville is nearby.

Northeast Kansas. Start of the Mormon trail and where NHG and so many of our family perished. But should meet here later — when a memorial is established?

Other ideas? Please let me hear what you think!

Dixon Hamlin Greer

Dixon Hamlin Greer was born April 16, 1834, in Chambers Co, AL, the 8th child of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts. He came of age in Texas and turned 21 while driving the family herd along the Shawnee Trail to Kansas during the migration to Utah. Later he recalled how he foraged for food and wood for his family and how the children often gathered buffalo chips for fuel to cook their meager meals. The Greers reached Salt Lake City on September 10.

As planned by NHG and his partner Seth Blair, the Greer boys opened a store at First South and Main. And soon Dixon met and fell in love with, Harriet Diannah Camp — whose sister, Catherine Ellen — had wed Dixon's brother, Thomas Lacy, soon after the Greers had arrived in the city.

Harriet had been born in Dresden Co, TN, on January 9, 1842, one of 14 children of Williams Washington Camp and Diannah Greer, a suspected cousin of NHG — although no direct relationship has ever been established. Her parents were very religious, reading the Bible often. Her father was a blacksmith who made many tools to help pioneer farmers.

The Camps endured terrific hardships, losing eight children in infancy and childhood. The family converted to Mormonism in Tennessee, was baptized there as a family group, then moved on to Nauvoo. When Harriet was eight, her father provided fifty head of horses and mules for the city's evacuation — which the Camps soon joined. They arrived in the valley of the Great Salt Lake in October, 1850.

In Utah, Harriet grew into a very talented woman, with a lovely singing voice and quite accomplished on piano. She sketched portraits and painted some water colors. After a courtship of a few years, she and Dixon planned to wed, but due to a quarrel, they parted and each married someone else.

Dixon lived in Salt Lake City for about four years, during which time tension with the United States grew — as did hostility toward the Saints. In 1857 U.S. forces were sent to quell the perceived "rebellion" in what was known as the "Utah War." Dixon served for three months in the Mormon militia at Echo Canyon, helping deter the advance of General Johnston's army. The delaying ploy worked and eventually a compromise was reached — and the dispute with the federal government was settled with a minimum of violence.

On February 9, 1858, Dixon married Mary Vernesia Sprouse and a year later they had a son, Dixon Nathaniel. In 1861 Dixon and Mary were in Denver, on their way to visit his relatives in Texas, when Mary gave birth to a little daughter Catherine. Both mother and child died, and Dixon returned to Utah with his small son.

On December 16, 1860, Harriet had married Mark Murphy and on September 23, 1861, had a daughter Nellie. But on December 19, 1862, Mark died.

Harriet and Dixon were reunited and wed February 25, 1864 — and soon made their home in the county of Wasatch, UT. Tragedy hit in 1868 when their second child died, and again in 1875 when one twin was born dead and the other so sickly that he lived only to the age of six. During one week in 1880, two girls died of diphtheria — then a son in 1890.

Dixon and Harriet were both very religious, holding many responsible positions in their church. He was always helpful to family and neighbors, and was very industrious — rising each day before dawn. He followed many and varied occupations in his life, including mail carrier, merchant, farmer, cattleman, and school teacher.

In 1862 Dixon taught school in Heber and in 1864 in Wallsburg where he was the first school trustee and helped to build their first schoolhouse. He was widely renowned for his spelling and vocabulary. Dixon and Harriet were both well educated and had a large cupboard full of precious books. Each child was given the opportunity for a good education.

The contentious relations between the Mormons and the United States probably curtailed Dixon's involvement in the Civil War. But in 1865, Indian troubles forced the Greers to leave their home and crops, resulting in much family suffering. This caused Dixon to enter the military for two years, defending his community during the Black Hawk War.

In 1875, his church sent him to Texas on a mission, but because of illness he came home after only 7 months. While there, he baptized some of his relatives.

His grandchildren remembered him as a jolly man who always had a story to tell. He wore a goatee in his later years. He loved to dance, and was a very good cook. Dixon was especially "famous" for his delicious apple cider.

Life was not always easy for Dixon and Harriet. Their daughter Diana had rheumatic fever, and in her later years, Harriet suffered from diabetes. One of her greatest attributes was her unfailing kindness to and understanding of children, all of whom, her own and others, seemed to adore her. She desired always to improve her mind, an avid reader especially interested in history. She received many family inheritances and always used the money to improve her home — once buying a beautiful piano (the only one in Wallsburg for many years) which she shared with many family and friends.

In 1900, Dixon and Harriet moved to Provo, where they spent their remaining years. There she died July 14, 1908. Dixon died in Provo on July 29, 1918, and was buried beside his wife Harriet in the Provo City Cemetery.

Our European Roots

The Descent from "King" Arthur

Tradition places Camelot in Wales or Cornwall, but few realize that Scotland has long claimed Arthur "the Hammer" as its own. It is unlikely that the truth will ever be known.

Many decades after the disintegration of Roman Britain, the Strathclyde Britons were heroically defended by Arthur – repulsing Teutonic invaders along Hadrian's Wall and Picts along the Antonine Wall. The Roman fortress of *Camelon*, situated between the latter wall and Stirling, may have been the Camelot of legend. Many think the strategic hill at Stirling (*Senaudon* in Medieval French) was the Snowdon of lore.

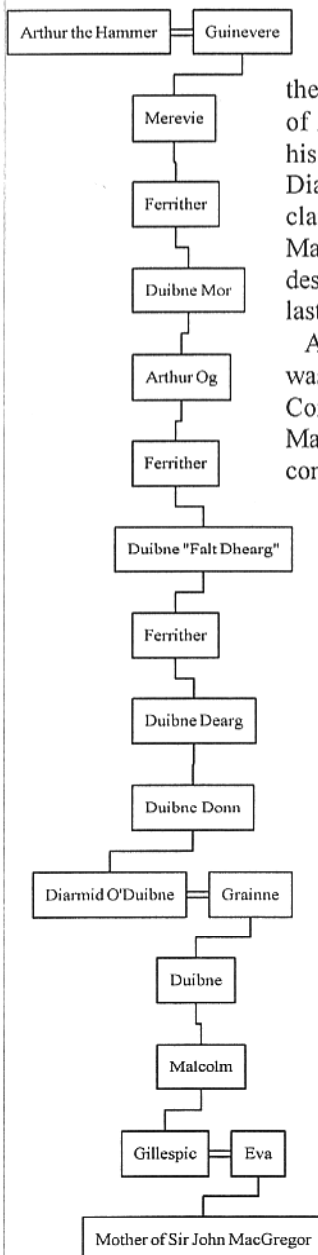
The descent shown to the left was advanced long centuries ago by Clan Campbell. Aside from their names, almost nothing is known of Arthur's progeny from the time of his death in 542 until the era of Diarmid (ca 900) from whom several clans claim descent. The John MacGregor whose mother ends this descent, is the same person specified in last issue's descent from Gregor.

Arthur's father, Uther Pendragon, was alleged to be the son of Emperor Constantine, son of Emperor Magnus Maximus. But historians are unable to confirm these identities due to the confusion during the collapse of Rome and to rival claims to the title by several far-flung officers.

Arthur's Welsh mother, Ygerne, was the great-granddaughter of Old King Coel of nursery rhyme, who ruled from York circa 400 A.D. and was perhaps the last Roman client-ruler to hold the title of Dux Britanniorum.

Guinevere with no historical identity, is alleged in the Scottish version of Arthur to have been a Pictish queen.

To learn more of the Scottish Arthur and the descent shown here, read *King Arthur* by Norma Lorre Goodrich. Although controversial for relying more on literature than history or archaeology, it is just one of many books endorsing the case for a Scottish Arthur.



Kind Words

The Greer Way West is singularly interesting and a very impressive piece of genealogical research.

The Heart of the Bruce

[This is adapted from the *Scotsman*, September 3, 1996.]

As requested on the death bed of Robert the Bruce in 1329, his heart was sent on a Crusade to the Holy Land, but the party of Crusaders were slain by Moors in Spain. The heart was returned to Scotland and buried at Melrose Abbey. His body had been buried at Dunfermline Abbey.

At Melrose in 1921, archaeologists found an embalmed heart in a cone-shaped casket, and believed it was the king's heart. They sealed it in another lead container and re-buried it. Before doing so, the scientists took a photograph of the cone-shaped container, which became one of the few records of the excavation.

The casket was re-discovered August 28, 1996, by experts from Kirkdale Archaeology, who were excavating the chapter house at Melrose Abbey. The heart was encased in an ancient lead casket, which was in turn stored in a more recent container, also made of lead. Measuring 9.25 inches in height by 4.75 inches at its base, it was a plain receptacle for a king's heart, but originally it had been held in an elaborate reliquary. A piece of paper found inside was wrapped about a small copper plaque commemorating the 1921 excavation.

The cone was left unopened, not from fear of biological contamination, but out of decency. A Historic Scotland inspector stated to the assembled media, "We are absolutely resolved that we will not expose the human remains to cameras, simply out of respect and also because it is not very good practice. Be he king or pauper there has to be a level of respect" The casket was held at an undisclosed location until it could be reburied in a new outer container in a special ceremony at the abbey. A competition was to be held to design a memorial stone.

A year and a half later, on February 19, 1998, the "MacBraveheart" web site reported, "It was announced on the news on television tonight that the heart of King Robert the Bruce will indeed be returned to its burial place at Melrose Abbey in time for the summer tourist season. There has been a bit of a controversy on this front as Historic Scotland seemed to be taking forever to finish doing whatever they were doing with the heart."

Surfing the Net

Those readers who have access to the World Wide Web may want to know about David Nash Ford's History Home Page. This English site is especially crafted for those would like to explore the history and genealogy of our semi-legendary ancestor, King Arthur. It is located at ...

<http://freespace.virgin.net/david.ford2/>

Here you'll find a veritable **treasure trove** of material occupying many dozens of pages which present the rich pageant of Britain during the Dark-Ages — with a strong emphasis on the genealogical aspects of its Arthurian characters drawn from literary, historical, and archaeological sources. This site is a real treat!

Another site for those wishing to investigate our Royal Scottish forebears is operated out of Edinburgh by John and Linda Anderson. It is aptly called "MacBraveheart" and although it emphasizes William Wallace, there is other information on associated people such as our esteemed ancestor, Robert the Bruce. The address is ...

<http://www.braveheart.co.uk/macbrave>

I recommend this site not only for its own merits, but also as a jumping off place to much other Scottish data!



The Families of Dixon Hamlin Greer

Mary Vernesia Sprouse

Born: April 8, 1839 in Noxubee Co, MS
Died: January 13, 1861 in Denver, CO

Dixon Hamlin Greer

Born: April 16, 1834 in Chambers Co, AL
Died: July 29, 1918 in Provo, UT

Harriet Diannah Camp

Born: January 9, 1842 in Dresden, Weakley Co, TN
Died: July 14, 1908 in Provo, UT

Dixon Nathaniel Greer

Born: February 15, 1859 in Salt Lake City, UT
Died: August 18, 1916 in unknown site

Catherine Greer

Born: January 13, 1861 in Denver, CO
Died: January 13, 1861 in Denver, CO

John Columbus Greer

Born: February 24, 1865 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: July 20, 1937 in Union, Salt Lake Co, UT

Harriet Diannah Greer

Born: January 16, 1867 in Salt Lake City, UT
Died: January 29, 1868 in UT

William Hamlin Greer

Born: December 29, 1868 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: August 18, 1890 in unknown site

Nancy Ann Greer

Born: December 14, 1871 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: August 11, 1880 in unknown site

Steven Decatur Greer

Born: January 13, 1874 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: May 7, 1961 in Provo, UT

Mark G Greer

Born: December 29, 1875 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: December 23, 1881 in unknown site

James Greer

Born: December 29, 1875 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: December 29, 1875 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT

Sarah Susannah Greer

Born: May 18, 1878 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: August 18, 1880 in unknown site

Margaret Grace Greer

Born: October 31, 1880 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: November 22, 1971 in Salem, Utah Co, UT

Willmirth Jane Greer

Born: January 21, 1883 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: January 26, 1976 in Laguna, Niguel Co, CA

Alice Gertrude Greer

Born: July 2, 1886 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: December 31, 1965 in unknown site



Dixon Hamlin Greer

Harriet Diannah Camp



The Family of Americus Vespucius Greer



Americus Vespucius Greer

Polly Ann Lane



Americus Vespucius Greer

Born: March 04, 1832 in Chambers Co, AL
Died: May 03, 1896 in Provo, Utah Co, UT

Polly Ann Lane

Born: May 01, 1849 in Washington Co, TX
Died: November 28, 1882 in Amity, Apache Co, AZ

Melvina Clay Greer

Born: September 02, 1867 in Kimball, Bosque Co, TX
Died: June 30, 1934 in Colonia Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico

Susan Virginia Greer

Born: July 25, 1869 in Kimball, Bosque Co, TX
Died: February 23, 1951

Sarah Wilmirth Greer

Born: March 30, 1872 in Kimball, Bosque Co, TX
Died: July 04, 1957 in St Johns, Apache Co, AZ

Robert Stansell Greer

Born: June 21, 1875 in Kimball, Bosque Co, TX
Died: March 13, 1920 in St Johns, Apache Co, AZ

James Columbus Greer

Born: March 25, 1878 in Wallsburg, Wasatch Co, UT
Died: June 30, 1910 in Eagar, Apache Co, AZ

Orson Pratt Greer

Born: August 19, 1880 in Amity, Apache Co, AZ
Died: March 21, 1955

This family tree was accidentally omitted from the previous issue. The images of "Uncle H" and Polly are reproduced again — much enlarged — to optimize their graphic quality.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

I wish to thank all of our members for their patience. This issue has been late due to several factors. Several weeks ago I was traveling for a period of one month and could not do any work on the newsletter. I had anticipated this, of course, and started work early so that I could easily meet the June 1st deadline. But then things started to go wrong.

Less than a week after returning from Europe, our home was burglarized and our computer stolen. The thieves made off with all the genealogical work that I had done since mid-January. This included the work that I had started on this issue of the newsletter; records of dues paid and address changes; information submitted for inclusion in the newsletter; and much research. Of course, all of this information was duplicated on a backup disk, but that disk was also stolen! It is fortunate, however, that not all backup disks were taken — or my task of reconstruction would be very hard indeed.

At the same time, the job that I had held for several years underwent changes and I felt the need to resign. The personal difficulties I experienced during this process made it difficult to get anything done of a genealogical nature.

We had been renting a house from my employer, thus when I left that position, we had to seek another place to live. After much searching, a seemingly suitable house was found and a contract agreed upon, but then a home inspection revealed unacceptable problems with the foundation — so the search began anew. But a new home was found and my address is now 62 South Main Street, Glen Ellyn, IL, 60137. I prepare this issue in the midst of changing residences.

I regret that all the problems mentioned above have caused **a further delay in reprinting the 1997 reunion photos !!!** I will strive to get those into the next issue. Please forgive this regrettable but unavoidable delay.

About the Banner Images

The images which bracket the title atop this page for Volume 3 represent the deep conflict and moral dilemma which faced our ancestors as they settled the West. On one hand, religious belief was of paramount importance in their immediate lives — and to this day. There can be no doubt that religion profoundly shaped our destiny. But the preservation of home and family was often accomplished by the necessary use of firearms. The “winning of the West” was attended by both moral conviction and physical force — administered not only from the pulpit, but also from the end of a barrel.

Our Next Family Reunion

The responses I have received indicate a preference for holding our 1999 reunion in Salt Lake City. Dodd Lacy Greer has offered to host the event and he wrote the following:

“The last NHG Family Reunion took place in East Texas, and the previous (and initial) in Arizona. Another venue for the next Reunion in the summer of 1999 could be in Utah.

“Salt Lake City, and surrounding areas, was a major goal for the NHG family in the mid-1850s. And although he died on the trek to Utah, NHG’s family continued the journey, and SLC became an important part of our family history.

“Dodd Lacy Greer, 3rd g-grandson of NHG would be willing and happy to host the ‘99 Reunion. So, what does the SLC area offer the family?” The attractions Dodd cites are:

- ▶ Mormon Pioneer Museum
- ▶ “This is the Place” monument and theme park
- ▶ Historic Wallsburg, town of
- ▶ “Legacy” motion picture
- ▶ Historic Temple Square
- ▶ Scottish Festival & Highland Games
- ▶ Family History Center — world’s largest set of genealogies
- ▶ Burial places of NHG’s sons Dixon and “Uncle H”
- ▶ LDS Church History Museum
- ▶ Fort Bridger on the old Mormon Trail
- ▶ Good accommodations — hotels, motels, RVs, camping

Dodd also suggests the following activities:

- ▶ Excursions to historic sites
- ▶ Family banquet and picnic
- ▶ Information exchange
- ▶ Presentations, stories, etc.
- ▶ Visits to key LDS resources
- ▶ Family recreation spots
- ▶ Scottish Festival — **Greers do a Clan Gregor booth**

This all sounds too good to pass up! It’s hard to imagine a site richer in Greer traditions and historical attractions. We owe Dodd a hearty thanks for his offer to facilitate the event.

Timing of the Reunion: In 1995 we met in AZ in late June, in 1997 we met in TX in early May, and in 1999 it is suggested that we meet in SLC in mid-July. This is because one of the most exciting attractions — the Scottish Festival and Highland Games — are held at that time. And we Greers don’t want to miss the opportunity to faithfully represent our deep MacGregor roots at the Clan Gregor booth.

Sarah Hunt Greer

Sarah Hunt Greer, named for her maternal grandmother, was born the ninth child of NHG and NAT on 26 February 1836, in the Alabama frontier county of Chambers which borders the Chattahoochee River. Sallie, as she was known, grew up and wed in Texas, lived in Colorado and northern Utah, and finally in Wyoming where she died and was buried. A true pioneer, she not only created a fine family, but also helped build homes, till the soil, herd cattle and raise horses. Much to her sorrow, she never lived near a church or a school.

Sallie was a babe in arms when her family migrated to Texas in the spring of 1837. One of the slaves in this group was Mammy Lucy, who cared for Sallie and the other children. Lucy taught Sallie to sew fine seams and stitches — skills which Sallie ably used throughout her many years.

During the war with Mexico, her brother Thomas Lacy and her favorite cousin Snellen Marion Johnson volunteered for cavalry duty. Both were wounded and decorated for bravery.

Snellen's parents were Willis Snellen Johnson and Nancy Reddick Greer, NHG's sister. As a child, his heavy head of black hair and cute round face reminded Nancy of a cub bear so he was called "Cub" by friends and family.

On January 21, 1851, Sallie and Cub were married in La Grange, TX. In 1852 they moved to Port Sullivan where they soon converted to Mormonism. Here their first son died in infancy and was buried. In 1855 they began the trek to Utah.

In St. Louis, NHG paid \$500 for a rare Italian violin and offered it to the first family member who learned to play it. Cub won and played it for years thereafter.

After the bad winter of 1856, Sallie and Cub returned to TX for a new herd of cattle. On the way back to UT their 2nd son was born at Ryow, NM. Later a 3rd son was born near Denver, but died as an infant. Soon the young family relocated to Springville, UT.

On July 26, 1862, Cub wed a 2nd wife, Lydia Rebecca Baker. The polygamous marriage was a trial for Sallie, but soon each wife grew to love the other and her children. Often they shared the same meals and beds.

In 1864, Cub and his wives settled west of Bear Lake, UT. That winter the lake formed a 15-inch sheet of ice that had to be cut for drinking and cooking water. Each day hours were spent gathering and chopping wood to keep fires burning. A bear was killed; it furnished a pelt for warm cover, tender meat, oil to light the cabin, and grease for chapped skin.

In 1865 they moved to Laketown, UT, where Cub's mother taught the first school. In 1869 they pioneered in Medicine Bow, WY, where a son, Thomas Jefferson, drowned in an open well. After operating a toll bridge at Hanns Fork, Cub brought them back to Bear Lake.

In 1876, a dispute erupted over land ownership and Sallie accidentally shot and killed her adversary whom she had intended to merely threaten with gunfire. Sallie

served time for accidental homicide and not long thereafter the family relocated to WY. Later a local historian who knew Sallie, said she was a fine woman whose action was only that of a pioneer woman defending her rights, family, and home.

After Cub's death, Sallie gave up her home at Robertson, WY, and spent her years visiting children and grandchildren eking by on Cub's small Mexican War pension. Sallie was good, kind, and — despite modest means — very charitable to friend and stranger alike. After her daughter, Kate Bullock, died leaving 3 children in need, grandmother Sallie filled in.

In May 1921 while living with her widowed son Willis, Sallie became ill with erysipelas and never fully recovered. Daughter, Mary Bullock cared for her for 4 years in Lone Tree, WY, where Sallie died at the age of 89. She was buried next to her husband, who had been gone 25 years.

Sarah Hunt Greer

Born: February 26, 1836 in Chambers Co, AL
Died: July 30, 1925 in Lonetree, Uinta Co, WY



Snellen Marion Johnson



Snellen Marion Johnson

Born: October 27, 1827 in Hillsboro, Jasper Co, GA
Died: June 10, 1900 in Lonetree, Uinta Co, WY

James Johnson

Born: June 6, 1854 in Port Sullivan, Milam Co, TX
Died: September 18, 1854 in Port Sullivan, Milam Co, TX

Willis Johnson

Born: July 6, 1857 in Ryow, NM
Died: October 4, 1922 in Laketown, Rich Co, UT

Nathaniel Hunt Johnson

Born: September 3, 1859 in Denver, Arapahoe Co, CO
Died: Unknown

Snellen Marion Johnson

Born: January 5, 1863 in Springville, Utah Co, UT
Died: May 5, 1937 in Jackson, Teton Co, WY

Mary Wilmoth Johnson

Born: January 3, 1864 in Springville, Utah Co, UT
Died: May 30, 1940 in place unknown

Nancy Catherine Johnson

Born: March 7, 1867 in St Charles, Bear Lake Co, ID
Died: September 6, 1891 in place unknown

Thomas Jefferson Johnson

Born: March 3, 1869 in Medicine Bow, Carbon Co, WY
Died: November 1871 in Medicine Bow, Carbon Co, WY

Newton DeWitt Johnson

Born: October 23, 1871 in Medicine Bow, Carbon Co, WY
Died: April 10, 1947 in Declo, Cassia Co, ID

Sally Ann Johnson

Born: October 25, 1873 in Laketown, Rich Co, UT
Died: January 31, 1953 in place unknown

John Lycurgus Johnson

Born: April 14, 1876 in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Co, UT
Died: December 24, 1932 in place unknown

Our European Roots

Our Descent from William the Conqueror

Few men in history have had a greater impact on the history of the English speaking people than William the Conqueror, although he himself spoke only Norman. As he rose to power, he was often called "the Bastard" since his father Robert, Duke of Normandy, never wed his mother who is known to historians as Arlette or Herleva.

Upon his father's death in Nicaea (Turkey) in July 1035, William inherited his father's title at the tender age of 8. By the time he was 25, he had wed Matilda of Flanders, lady-in-waiting to Emma, wife of the English King Ethelred the Unready. Then in 1066 he became King William of England after commanding the Norman conquest of England.

On William's death in 1087, his second son, William Rufus, inherited the English throne while his elder brother was on crusade in the Holy Land. Rufus ruled until dying in 1100 when Henry Beauclerc, his youngest sibling and our ancestor, took the crown. King Henry I had many "natural" children out of wedlock, one — by his mistress Lady Isabel de Beaumont — being our ancestor Robert, Earl of Gloucester. Robert led the fight for his half-sister Matilda to place her son on the English throne as Henry II Curthose.

Through Isabel's Norman father, Robert de Beaumont, Earl of Leicester, we descend from several royal figures of ancient and medieval Europe — but a similar claim can be made through her son's wife the Lady Mabel Sinclair, daughter of Robert Sinclair, Lord of Creully and Governor of Caen.

Mabel (also known as Matilda) and Robert begat William FitzRobert who inherited his father's earldom in addition to being Lord of the Manor of Glanmorgan and Cardiff Castles. William married the Lady Mabel de Beaumont (also known as Hawise) who gave birth to Lady Amice who is also known as Amicia and Amicia.

Lady Amice wed the prominent Richard de Clare who, like many of his ancestors, was styled the Earl of Clare, but was primarily the hereditary Earl of Hertford. Upon wedding the Lady Amice, he also became the Earl of Gloucester. In 1196 he gave 1000 marks to King Richard I for livery of the lands of his mother's inheritance. Richard was one of the sureties to the Magna Carta — forcibly imposed on

King John at Runnymede in 1215.

Richard and Amice had one son known as Gilbert de Clare who inherited his father's titles. Gilbert — like his father — was one of the sureties of the Magna Carta. He married the Lady Isabella Mareschal on her 17th birthday. Isabella was the daughter of William Mareschal, Lord Protector of England and the Earl of Pembroke by marriage. A child of this union was the Lady Isabella de Clare who wed the 5th Robert Bruce, then a companion of the future King Edward I of England.

Robert inherited sizeable lands in Scotland from his father, Lord Annandale, and in England from his mother. He was the Sheriff of Cumberland and the Governor of Carlisle. He became a trusted intermediary between the English and Scottish thrones, and one of the most influential men in either country. In 1255 he was one of the Regents of Scotland, and in 1291 one of the 13 claimants to the Scottish throne.

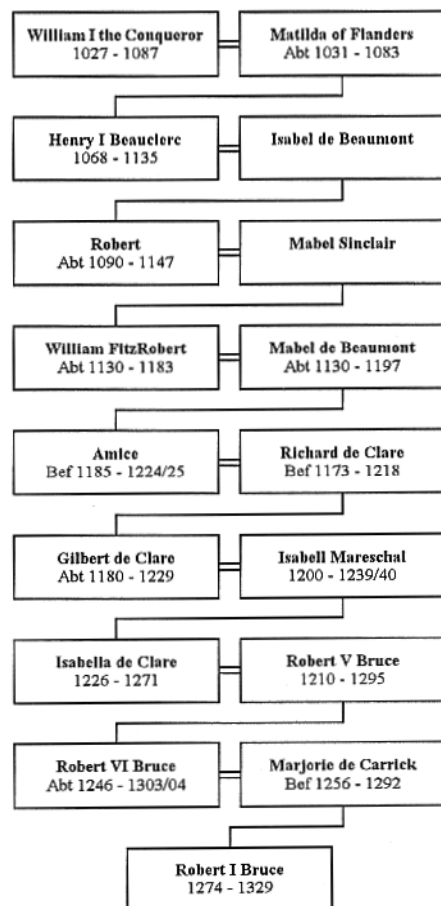
Of him, the Lanercost Chronicle wrote, "He was of handsome appearance, a gifted speaker, remarkable for his influence and, what is most important, most devoted to God and the Clergy. It was his custom to entertain and feast more liberally than all other courtiers and was most hospitable to all

his guests nor used the pilgrim to remain outside his gates for his door was open to the wayfarer."

The eldest son of Robert and Isabella was the 6th Robert Bruce who in 1272 — upon his return from crusading in the Holy Land — wed Marjorie de Carrick (also known as Margaret) daughter of Neil, the 2nd Earl of Carrick and sole direct descendant of Fergus, Lord of Galloway, who under David I, had almost independent power over the southwest of Scotland.

On November 7, 1292, the 6th Robert Bruce was made Earl of Carrick at his father's retirement, but resigned the title two days later to remove to the court of King Erik of Norway, returning to Scotland on his father's death in 1295. Thus it was that the 7th Robert Bruce, son of Marjorie de Carrick, inherited his father's earldom while his father and grandfather lived!

It was this 7th Robert Bruce who became the illustrious King Robert I of Scotland — and whom we discussed one year ago in Volume 2, Number 1.



Updates to the Family of WMG

We thank William L. Ordway for sending us the results of his research including more comprehensive information on the family of Ed East and WMG as follows:

Child of Edward W. East and Willmirth M. Greer	Birth date Death date	Birth location Death location
Sarah Maria Texana East	12-31-1840	Washington Co, TX
	07-08-1890	Provo, Utah Co, UT
William H East	11-17-1842	Washington Co, TX
	06-27-1855	Marshall Co, KS
Jenny East	03-17-1845	Washington Co, TX
	04-08-1847	TX (probably Washington Co)
Nancy East	04-20-1848	Washington Co, TX
	07-04-1855	Thayer Co, NE
Mary Ann East	07-16-1850	Washington Co, TX
	06-19-1855	Brown Co, KS
Julia East	10-28-1853	Port Sullivan, Milam Co, TX
	11-03-1855	Salt Lake City, UT
Mira Caroline East	10-28-1853	Port Sullivan, Milam Co, TX
	09-17-1863	Salt Lake City, UT
Edwin Martin East	10-12-1856	Salt Lake City, UT
	03-30-1930	site unknown
Joseph Fielding East	12-30-1859	Salt Lake City, UT
	04-02-1930	Safford, Graham Co, AZ
Martha East	12-27-1862	Salt Lake City, UT
	01-01-1863	Salt Lake City, UT
Thomas Nathaniel East	11-17-1866	Salt Lake City, UT
	10-16-1944	Safford, Graham Co, AZ
Carl East	1868	Salt Lake City, UT
	date unknown	site unknown



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Thanks again for your patience — like last time, this issue is a bit late. One delay was getting reunion information, another was getting those pesky photos printed. Although an expensive undertaking — costing nearly \$200 — the photos have finally been rendered in a form of acceptable quality. These do not include the snapshot of Stephan Decatur's line: Mardell Rathmell, a great granddaughter; her daughter Jenet Jolly; and Jenet's husband Bob. The reason was not only to keep down costs, but because their photo reproduced rather well when originally printed in volume 2, number 3.

Our Own Miss America



NHG would have been proud when, in 1985, one of his own descendants was chosen Miss America! A great-great-granddaughter of Americus Vespucius Greer ("Uncle H"), **Sharlene Wells** was born in Paraguay, the fifth of seven children, where her parents, Robert Earl Wells and Helen Walser, were on a mission for the LDS.

She spent most of her teenage years attending the American High School in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Sharlene competed in the Miss America pageant as Miss Utah, then earned her bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University — graduating magna cum laude. In 1987, she accepted a job offer with ESPN for whom she covered a wide variety of events including World Cup Soccer, the French Open, College Football, and the Kentucky Derby. Her work has brought her professional recognition including an award for Women's Sports Journalism and an Emmy nomination.

In 1995, Sharlene limited herself to occasional free-lance work — giving priority to raising a family. She still does television appearances and endorsements, and is helping with the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics 2002. She is a member of the National Speakers Association — delighting audiences everywhere. She has also released 2 CDs of Christian music and is the author of a book entitled, *Living In, But Not Of, The World*. She and her husband, Bob, have four children.

Timing Our Next Reunion

Our last issue announced the plan for holding our 1999 reunion in Salt Lake City with offering to host the event. Although the site seems clear, the timing of the reunion is not precisely determined. It has been suggested that we meet at a time to coincide with the Scottish Festival and Highland Games held next Saturday, July 10. But another date — possibly more appealing — has been suggested.

Over 150 years ago, Brigham Young and his initial party of Mormon pioneers arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847. Their arduous journey was the first of many that followed. One company in this vast transcontinental migration was that which included the Greers as prominent members.

The Days of '47 is an annual event, several days in duration, which celebrates and honors the many pioneers who established communities throughout several western states. The prime attraction is a spectacular parade — one of the largest and oldest in the United States — with many floats, bands, horses, clowns, and so forth. In 1999, the parade will be held in Salt Lake City on the morning of Saturday, July 24.

Please let me know if you prefer our reunion coincide with the Scottish festival on July 10 or the Day's of '47 parade on July 24. Next issue we'll announce our most popular choice.

Seeking Graves in Georgia

Wally Taylor — who is a descendant of both NHG and his sister Nancy Reddick — has recently visited some cousins of ours, named Sammons, in Hillsboro, GA. They descend through NHG's elder brother Thomas and are preparing family sheets of all their Greer information. Wally will get copies of the records in their family Bible. They also own and maintain two family cemeteries: one is in Hillsboro, the other in Gladesville (now defunct) with a difficult access road no longer maintained by the government.

In mid-August the Sammons led Wally to the Hillsboro site, and identified its 14 graves including NHG's grand-nephew, Crawford Harrison Greer, Jr. and his wife India. Wally will soon visit the older cemetery where he expects to find the graves of NHG's brother Thomas Greer and his wife Amy Foreman, and those of Thomas's son Crawford Harrison Greer, Sr. and his wife Margaret W. Lawrence. Wally will inventory the graves, and possibly get new information.

The Sammons think that NHG's father John and his wife Sarah Hunt are buried in Troupe County, GA. Wally hopes to go looking for that site in the months ahead.

Matthew Simeon Greer

Matthew Simeon Greer — last child of Nathaniel and Nancy, thus nicknamed “Babe” — was born in Washington Co, Texas, April 15, 1845. His earliest memories would have been of life on their farm just west of Brenham. When only seven, he was baptized into the Mormon faith with most of his siblings while they resided at Port Sullivan in Milam Co.

As child of nine, he is said to have been at the signing of the Bosque County charter under the “Signing Oak” in Meridian on July 4, 1854. If true, this might have been with his father — exploring up the River Brazos, getting a feel for the land west of his Navarro County tract which was surveyed in 1847.

Like his brother Stephen “Cate” Decatur, Babe served in the Civil War as a Ranger on militia duty along the western frontier — primarily guarding against Comanche raids. On April 20, 1863, he enlisted as a private in Capt M. B. Lloyd’s Company E of the Mounted Frontier Regiment, under Colonel J. E. McCord. Soon he joined Cate at Camp Colorado, about 100 west of Kimball. Evidently Babe participated in several scouting exercises because a few days before Christmas of that year, he was ordered home on leave to procure another horse — his existing mount having been “ridden down.”

That possibly ended his service because good mounts were hard to come by during the war — and Col. Buck Barry had issued a Special Order, just two weeks earlier, directing that poorly mounted men were to be excused from service.

On July 5, 1866, he married Susan V. Phelps who died childless of unknown causes. Then on March 25, 1871, he married Sophia Elizabeth Lane, the third Lane sister to marry a Greer brother. Ironically her father, James Addison Lane, was the Justice of the Peace who had performed Babe’s first wedding. The Justice of the Peace for this second ceremony was Henry De Cordova, son of Jacob De Cordova, a good friend of the Greers and the most renowned land developer in Texas.

James Lane had brought his family from Georgia to Texas around 1846, buying land in Washington Co. from Babe’s elder brother Gil in 1850. The Lane family adopted the Mormon faith, but did not start for Utah with the Greers. In 1856 when the Greers returned from Utah to settle in Bosque Co, they met the Lanes on the trail. The Lanes then accompanied the Greers back to Texas.

In 1867, Babe acquired half of his late father’s land from his mother for just \$1.00 due to the affection that she held for him — apparently because he was the youngest and least established of her sons. He would later sell that land, making his lifelong home in Bosque Co. along Plowman Creek where in 1871 he and his brother Bill purchased a site from their brother Gil.

In 1868, Babe began clerking in a store in Kimball, later buying the business. He prospered along with the town. He is also said to have been one of several men

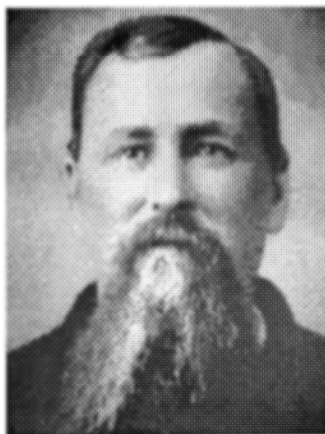
who, each in his own turn, operated the Kimball ferry. Each of these enterprises flourished from the numerous cattle herds that traveled the Chisholm Trail from south Texas to Kansas.

In the late 1870s, Babe sold his Kimball store and moved his family out west near Thomas Lacy and “Uncle H,” but he was unhappy with the Arizona land which he had acquired, site-unseen, and he abruptly returned to Texas. For a while he taught school at some rural site in Hill County; some students crossed the Brazos by boat to attend. At various times he, like many locals, would speculate in land and cotton futures. After the town of Kopperl came into being in 1881, he and a partner opened Porter, Greer, & Co, the town’s first mercantile establishment which he operated until 1896. After his death on June 21, 1915, a local newspaper noted, “He was so well and favorably known here that we do not hesitate to say that he will be as much missed as any man in the whole country.”

After Sophia died on August 4, 1926, her obituary stated, “No one is better known here than she and her family — and have the friendship of every one who ever knew them. To know this good woman was to love her.”

Matthew Simeon Greer

b: April 15, 1845 in Washington Co, TX
d: June 21, 1915 in Bosque Co, TX



Sophia Elizabeth Lane

b: February 14, 1854 in Washington Co, TX
d: August 4, 1926 in Bosque Co, TX

Parley Pratt Greer

b: January 13, 1872 in Kopperl, TX
d: January 26, 1955 in Dallas, TX

William Nathaniel Greer

b: November 24, 1873 in Kopperl, TX
d: November 29, 1951 in Kopperl, TX

Ellen Maude Greer

b: September 5, 1876 in Kopperl, TX
d: December 30, 1958 in Kopperl, TX

Hettie Sue Greer

b: July 15, 1879 in Kopperl, TX
d: July 28, 1943 in Callahan Co, TX

Margaret Boone Greer

b: June 10, 1882 in Kopperl, TX
d: December 10, 1964 in Clifton, Bosque Co, TX

Esther Mignon Greer

b: July 19, 1885 in Kopperl, TX
d: August 15, 1916 in Kopperl, TX

Sarah Wilmirth Greer

b: August 17, 1888 in Kopperl, TX
d: July 12, 1962 in Clifton, Bosque Co, TX

Jetta Mabel Greer

b: September 17, 1891 in Kopperl, TX
d: 1968 in Clifton, Bosque Co, TX

Verna Mae Greer

b: May 31, 1895 in Kopperl, TX
d: January 2, 1981 in Clifton, Bosque Co, TX

Our European Roots

Our Descent from Charlemagne

Charles the Great (Charlemagne), Emperor of the West, was perhaps the greatest figure of medieval Europe — forging disparate hostile tribes into a consolidated state unmatched since the fall of the Roman Empire. He was an amazing leader, a brilliant strategist, forceful statesman, and virile hunter — who nevertheless wept openly at the death of a good friend. His sense of family was rare in monarchs of that era; instead of marrying off his daughters for political advantage, he preferred they remain at home. All of our paths of descent (numbering over 400 — I stopped counting at 200!) flow through his two sons by Hildegard, one of his several wives. One son was Pepin, King of Italy; the other Louis, who was King of Aquitaine before succeeding Charles as Emperor. Lack of space lets us present only the descent shown which ends with King William the Conqueror of England, discussed in our last issue.

Little is known of the succeeding generations until Hubert, Count of Senlis, sometimes called Hubert of Saint Clair from his dwelling at St. Clair-sur-Epte. Legend has it that in 884 a holy man named Clare had been martyred at a hermitage on this land that later took his name — hence the origin of the much celebrated St. Clairs and Sinclairs. Hubert had three children through whom we descend: Sprota (aka Espriota), Beatrice (who married Robert I, King of France), and Herbert II, Count of Vermandois.

Sprota wed William Longsword, 2nd Duke of Normandy, who succeeded his father, Rollo, founder of Normandy. A contemporary scribe wrote that William was “of striking image, tall in stature, with a vigorous mind.” William later wed Leutgarda of Vermandois, but the union was childless. He calmed his land, ruling well until murdered by Arnulf of Flanders during negotiations on an island in the Somme. Two of Sprota’s sons survived him.

Richard the Fearless was nine when his father died. He was quickly imprisoned by King Louis of France who sought control of Normandy through the young duke. Richard escaped, then regained his power with the aid of King Harold Bluetooth of Denmark. In 960 he wed his cousin Emma of Paris, a great-granddaughter of Hubert, Count of Senlis, but she soon died childless. Richard then married Gunnora of Crepon (possibly a Danish princess) by whom he had at least seven children including his eldest son Richard.

As the eldest son, Richard the Good arranged marriages for his sisters and thus increased his influence: Hawisse wed Geoffrey, Duke of Brittany; Emma wed Canute the Great, King of England; and Maud wed Odo II, Count of Blois. We descend through two of Richard’s brothers: Geoffrey, Count of Brionne and Eu; and Malger, Count of Mortain and Earl of Corbueil. King Ethelred of England, with his two sons Alfred and Edward, fled the Danish invasion in 1013 — obtaining refuge from Richard. The duke wed Judith of Rennes (sister of Geoffrey, Duke of Brittany), and after she died in 1017 he wed Estrith, the daughter of Svein Forkbeard, King of Denmark — but they soon divorced, having no children. Of Richard’s eight children, we descend from Margaret and Robert.

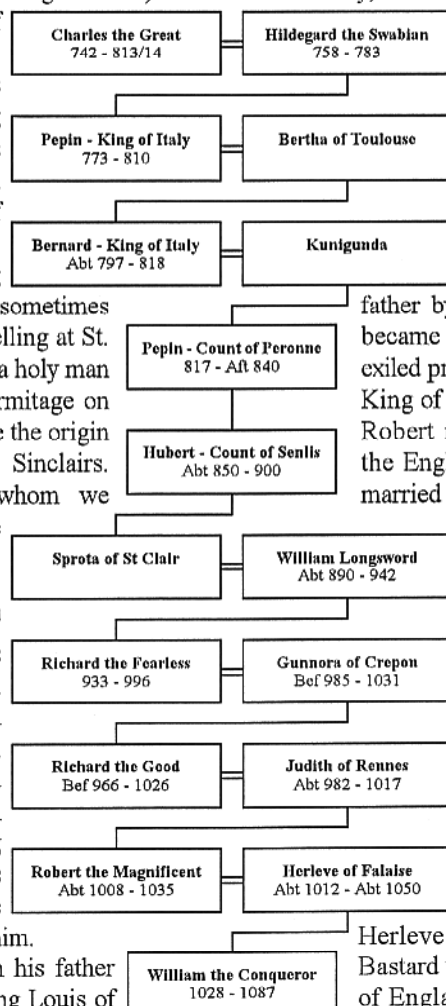
Robert the Magnificent was also called “the Devil” and “the Saint,” by foes and fans respectively. His elder brother (another Richard!) survived their father by one year and died unwed — so Robert became duke. He is best known as the protector of exiled princes and a king-maker — assisting Henry, King of France, regain his throne. For this service, Robert received the Vexin territory. He claimed the English throne, but his invasion failed. He had married his ex-step-mother Estrith (!) but they had

no children and soon divorced. Robert fell in love with a worker in his household named Herleve (aka Arlette), daughter of Fulbert, a tanner in Falaise. Six years after becoming duke, he did pilgrimage to the Holy Land where he was noted for paying the tolls of pilgrims who could not afford to enter Jerusalem. On his way home Robert took ill and died (some say by poison) in Nicaea. But before leaving on the perilous trip to the East, Robert had arranged for his nobles to recognize his natural son by

Herleve as heir to the dukedom. Thus William the Bastard was positioned to become “the Conqueror” of England, as we discussed in our last issue. We also descend through William’s natural sister Adeliza and her second husband Lambert, Count of Lens.

To learn more about Charles the Great, try Susan Banfield’s 1986 book *Charlemagne*. The classic biography by one of his courtiers is *Einhard: The Life of Charlemagne*, translated in 1880 by Samuel Turner, and reprinted several times since. The entire Einhard text is also available online at ...

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/einhard.html>



Maps and Gazetteers on the Internet

The task of finding information about a particular place can sometimes be overwhelming. Just like some distant relatives, county and city boundaries had a habit of not staying put. They moved frequently over the years. Since knowing the exact county name is important when searching for documents about our ancestors, the following Internet sites may make your search easier.

First, visit <<http://www.livgenmi.com/1895.htm>>, the online 1895 Atlas of the United States, which has wonderfully detailed maps of states and counties. It also has gazetteer about communities with such information as population, whether or not a town had a post office, and if the town was served by railroad. Please note that the larger of these maps are *very* detailed and therefore can take a *lot* of time to download since the corresponding image files are quite large.

Then try Odden's Bookmarks at the University of Utrecht in The Netherlands. This site has links to hundreds of maps around the world including early U.S. maps. The address is <<http://kartoserver.frw.ruu.nl/html/staff/oddens/oddens.htm>>. Since the site is in Europe, take advantage of the time differential of several hours and access it leisurely during the evening — when overseas competition is slight.

Need more current maps? Much of the 1990 U. S. Census information can be found for specific locations at <<http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer>>.

Ever wondered what some of these locations looked like from space? Visit <<http://terraserver.microsoft.com/>> for an amazing view from the heavens.

Several years ago, the Getty Information Institute was established — just one of the altruistic projects funded by the late J. Paul Getty. It will provide you with extremely detailed information about places, their latitude and longitude, and some historical information about the place you may be researching. To explore this material, visit <http://www.ahip.getty.edu/tgn_browser/>.

The foregoing information was obtained from ROOTSWEB REVIEW: Genealogical Data Cooperative Weekly News, Vol. 1, No. 13, 9 September 1998, with its main web page address at <<http://www.rootsweb.com>>.

Specific thanks owed to the author of the article, Mr. Stan Carman, Technical Support Supervisor, at the Palladium Interactive, Inc., site at <webstar@palladium.net>.





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Happy holiday greetings! May your family and friends have a merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous new year.

Many of you will recall that our original publishing plan called for each issue to feature a brief biography of one of NHG's children until each child that survived him had been discussed in turn. Last issue completed that effort with Babe, the last of NHG's children. This issue marks a shift in emphasis as we set out to examine the American ancestors of NHG. Hence, this issue features NHG's father, John D. Greer.

After NHG's American ancestry has been explored, we will take a closer look at his wife Nancy and her ancestors. Much more is known about NHG's forebears, so by deferring coverage of Nancy, hopefully more facts will be in hand with which to work when her side of the family is examined.

It may just be that some interesting facts about NHG and our ancestors can only be discovered through an investigation into his siblings. Therefore, to the extent that more light is shed on our lineage, NHG's siblings will also be the subject of future articles.

Records in Northern Ireland

Anyone going to Northern Ireland? Recently genealogist apprized me of holdings in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland including records of the Greers of County Tyrone (Rhone Hill, The Grange, and Tullylagaan), and of Seapark in County Antrim. Just a few are described below.

Our primary family tradition about our immigrant ancestor is that he was a Thomas Greer from Northern Ireland. Proof is lacking, but could it be in one of these Greer archives? ...

Archive D/645— comprising 223 deeds, leases, testaments and various estate papers dating from 1690.

Archive D/1044— about 1000 items correspondence of the Greer family (merchants of County Tyrone), some of which were written to Thomas Greer as early as 1717.

Archive D/2339— papers of the Greers of Sea Park and Tullylagaan including genealogical notes (from about 1600) of the Greer and allied families.

Archive D/4121— a mixture of some 3000 quite disparate documents of personal and estate papers which include leases, accounts, genealogical papers, correspondence, etc. The bulk of the material pertains to the extensive genealogical interests of Thomas Greer of Rhone Hill and comprise wills, marriage certificates, family notes, records of births, pedigrees, etc.

Archive T/1173— about 100 documents including deeds, leases, rentals, and testaments of the Greers of Tullylagaan from 1630, genealogical notes from 1675, and correspondence about family affairs and the linen trade from 1738.

So if one day you find yourself doing research in Northern Ireland, please allow at least a month — and make me copies!

Planning Our Next Reunion

Plans are taking shape for next year's reunion — thanks mostly to the tireless work of Dodd Lacy Greer who will be coordinating events in and around Salt Lake City. Planning thus far provides for the following, although the details will not be decided and published until next March.

Initial activity will begin the afternoon of Thursday, July 22. In addition to a welcome supper, this might be a good day for taking in the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

On Friday, July 23, we occupy a spot in Pioneer Village — a spectacular living museum, enabling us to appreciate many of the various aspects in the daily lives of our ancestors. After a day of exploring Pioneer Village, we will enjoy a genuine chuck wagon supper — possibly followed by a cowboy band.

The centerpiece of the reunion will be the "Days of 47" Parade held the morning of Saturday, July 24, to celebrate and honor the great Mormon migration — one of the largest in the country. It's televised throughout the Rocky Mountain area. That evening we'll have our farewell supper.

Of course, many of our family will want to visit the LDS Family History Center when not participating in the reunion's planned activities. Also in the vicinity, are several National Parks and other attractions — just waiting for you to explore. In the southern parts of the state are Monument Valley, Lake Powell, and the National Parks of Bryce Canyon and Zion. Toward Colorado is the Arches National Monument and on the Colorado border is Dinosaur National Monument. If you venture northward, you can see Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park. Dodd will be pointing out other lesser-known but very appealing attractions.

Two of NHG's sons (Uncle H and Dixon) are buried in nearby Provo — about an hour's drive south of Salt Lake City. Other sites of special interest to our family will be identified to allow you to make your visit a memorable one.

Although an agenda is not yet finalized, the dates and site are firm so you can start planning your trip. Hopefully you can set aside some extra days to fully enjoy the wonderful attractions and amenities in the Salt Lake City area.

John D. Greer

John D. Greer — father of Nathaniel Hunt Greer — was born January 19, 1761, one of as many as 11 children born to Thomas Greer and Jane Dunlap. The site was once reported as Wake Co, NC, but modern research suggests York Co, PA — possibly in the portion later made into Adams Co. John's middle name is uncertain; some think it was David, others believe it was Dunlap, but no record has ever been found to confirm one or the other. Soon after John's birth, Thomas moved the family to Rowan Co, NC. John grew up in this beautiful area that would later be made into Iredell, Co.

When war broke out, Thomas fought for independence, but John was not old enough to fight until 1778 when he enlisted as a private in the SC militia under Col. Anderson. John might also have briefly served, from June 1 to August 2, 1779, in Capt. John Peake's

company of militia, Lower Battalion of Richmond Co, GA, but of this we are unsure. He participated in the reduction of Charlestown and was honorably discharged in 1781. On June 18, 1785, he was paid "Seventy two pounds one Shilling and five pence Sterling for Duty done in the Militia."

After the war, John wed Sarah Hunt, daughter of Nathaniel Hunt and Nancy Reddick — and an alleged descendant of Pocahontas. The ceremony occurred on Sarah's native soil in Edgefield District, SC, on February 14, 1782, just 12 days shy of her 17th birthday.

John and Sarah settled near her relatives in Wilkes Co, GA, where in 1782 the first of their 11 children was born. Nearly 5 years later, on June 19, 1787, John paid Abraham and Hannah Reddick for the 125 acres on which he and Sarah appear to have been living, although by that date it was situated in the newly created Greene Co. (The sellers were very probably Sarah's relatives — quite possibly her maternal grandparents.) Their property bordered the Beaverdam Creek of the Ogeechee River (there are other creeks named Beaverdam). Just a few months later on January 21, 1788, John sold the land — possibly to avoid the new taxes that were soon to be exacted — but John and Sarah continued to live in that portion of Greene Co. from which Hancock Co. was created in 1793.

John and Sarah became well-established in their community. Records indicate that John served on the Grand Jury in September 1797, and again in September 1814. In 1811, he was listed as a Co-Administrator of the estate of a man named James Orrich, and a year later was

called upon to sell that property which was situated in the adjacent county of Putnam.

The State of Georgia grew tremendously as more and more Indian land was acquired, and over the years several lotteries were held to distribute this land to white citizens. In 1805 John qualified (as a married man) for two draws in the state's first land lottery, but both draws were blank. In the lottery of 1820, he was more fortunate — drawing Land Lot 243, Section 13, in Irwin Co. Then in 1832, he drew Land Lot 809, District 2, Section 1, in the newly created Cherokee Co. John kept this last lot, and after his death his son Gilbert claimed it.

We know from the records of the foregoing events that all of John and Sarah's children were born on their land along Beaverdam Creek and that two of their children died there.

According to John's testimony, the family still resided in Hancock Co. at the time of the 1805 lottery. In 1807 Jasper Co. was created and the

family soon relocated there. They probably moved by 1811, when their son Thomas wed Amy Foreman in Jasper Co. — and certainly before 1814 when John performed his jury duty there. The census of 1830 tells us that John and Sarah still resided in Jasper Co. But in the 1832 lottery two years later, John listed his home as Troup Co. (created in 1827) where he would spend the remainder of his life.

John owned slaves — even in his early years along Beaverdam Creek when he owned no land. In 1785 he had 1 slave, in 1788 he owned 2, and a tax digest of 1789 showed 3. The 1830 census listed 8 slaves, and his will of 1840 named 15!

Sarah died in 1835, possibly in Jasper Co. in the home of her son Thomas, but she could have died in Troup Co. where John passed away in 1843, asking to be buried beside his wife. The location of their graves remains a mystery.

Within the last month, I received information from Wallace L. Taylor regarding the Greer Cemetery situated near Mile Marker 5 along the west side of Georgia Highway 83. This road stretches between the towns of Monticello and Forsyth. Wally writes about an unmarked grave:

"We could speculate about who lies in this grave, but may never have proof. It could be Sarah Hunt Greer, the wife of John D. Greer, or it could be John D. Certainly the tombstones are somewhat typical of the type found in some cemeteries that date from say 1825 to 1875. They also seem to be an indication of status as well as wealth. I will be doing further research on the cemeteries of Jasper County."

John D Greer
Born: January 19, 1761
Died: Bef January 20, 1843

Sarah Hunt
Born: February 26, 1765
Died: September 8, 1835

Reddick Greer
Born: December 11, 1782
Died: October 20, 1802

Thomas Greer
Born: December 30, 1784
Died: August 17, 1850

Jane Greer
Born: March 13, 1787
Died: Unknown

James Alexander Greer
Born: October 1, 1789
Died: October 11, 1840

Gilbert Dunlap Greer
Born: October 29, 1792
Died: March 23, 1852

John Greer
Born: March 4, 1796
Died: March 8, 1804

Sarah Hunt Greer
Born: June 10, 1797
Died: Afr 1858

Hannah Greer
Born: May 13, 1798
Died: June 17, 1887

William D Greer
Born: June 18, 1800
Died: March 2, 1852

Nathaniel Hunt Greer
Born: October 26, 1802
Died: June 24, 1855

Nancy Reddick Greer
Born: August 9, 1805
Died: October 9, 1878

Our European Roots

The Kings of Scottish Dalriada

In the 5th century, the kingdom of Dalriada of northeastern Ireland needed more room. For centuries the Irish had crossed the Mull of Kintyre (only 10 miles wide) on expeditions to what they called Alba (and we now know as Scotland.) So the sons of King Erc established colonies in Alba. The eldest prince was Loarn who succeeded his father in Ireland, allowing his brother Fergus to become first king of Dalriada in Alba (circa 498) — in the area eventually known as Argyll.

Fergus the Great had several sons, all born in Ireland, but only Domangart — about whom almost nothing is known — outlived him. Domangart's eldest son and successor was Comgall (aka Coursan) who ruled in Argyll until his brother Gabran succeeded in 537. A MacGregor tradition claims Comgall married Ada, a sister of Aurelius Ambrosius and therefore an aunt of the King Arthur of Camelot.

The Irish colonists had long since been called Scots, and Gabran was the first of much note. He had frequent contact with the Britons south of the river Forth and wed their princess Lleran (aka Lluan) as one part of a peaceful accord. Gabran's relations with the Picts was, however, less harmonious and he was slain in battle by their leader Brude, son of Melcon.

Gabran's successor was Aedan, greatest of Dalriadic kings, who Christianized and greatly expanded Scottish territory. He failed to wrest the Orkneys from the Picts in 580, but later conquered Fortrenn. He then contested Circinn, but was driven back after suffering grievous losses including the deaths of some of his sons. In 583 he was victorious in the Battle of Manann (aka Manau) and then installed his eldest surviving son Arthur over the Britons who lived south of the Forth. Some theorize that Arthur, son of Aedan, became *the* Arthur of Camelot — a possibility reflected in our chart where the mother of Aedan's son Hugh *might* have been Ygerna (aka Ygerne), legendary mother of Arthur, although Hugh could well have had a different mother.

Aedan was predeceased by his son Arthur, but his son Hugh survived, succeeding in 608. Little is known of Hugh save that one annal designated him "King of the Picts."

Hugh I was succeeded by his son Donald the Speckled who continued the Scottish influence over Pictland — two of his sons were identified as Pictish kings. But relations worsened

with the British who later celebrated Donald's death in battle, stressing that his head was devoured by ravens.

Almost nothing is known of the next kings — except the lengths of their reigns — until Aed Finn, one of the more successful of the Dalriadic rulers. He re-asserted Scottish influence in Fortrenn and was known for his laws which would eventually apply in the united kingdoms of Picts and Scots.

Aed's son, Hugh the Poisonous, married his cousin Uinisticc of Fortrenn, a daughter of Fergus (briefly a king of Dalriada) who was a son of Hugh III. From their union was born the celebrated Alpin — whose Pictish name translates as "Son of the Hills."

As a sub-king, Alpin had ruled the peninsula of Kintyre for a dozen years or so before attaining the kingship of Dalriada in 834. On Easter, 837, he struck against the remnants of the Pictish

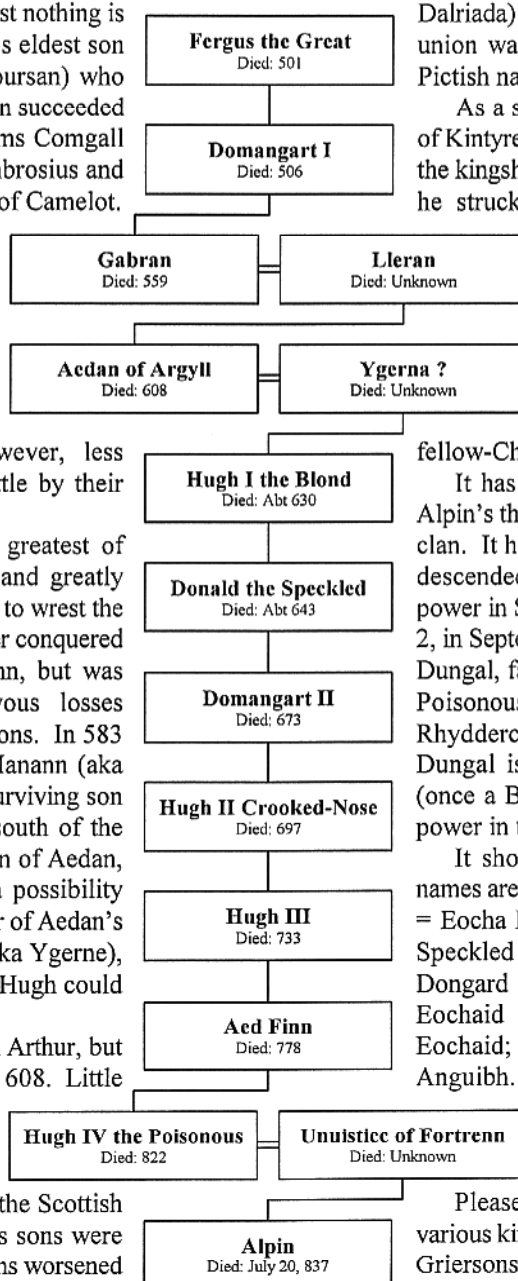
nobility that had been nearly wiped out in a crushing Viking onslaught. Alpin ruled both Picts and Scots very briefly, before being defeated and captured by a Pictish insurgency which beheaded him, with much fanfare, for the sacrilege of attacking fellow-Christian Picts on the holy day of Easter.

It has long been a MacGregor tradition that Alpin's third son, Gregor, was the patriarch of the clan. It has lately been put forward that the clan descended from Gregor MacDungal who held power in Strathclyde — as we related in Vol. 2, # 2, in September 1997. It has been suggested that Dungal, father of Gregor, was a son of Hugh the Poisonous (thus brother to Alpin) or a son of Rhydderch, King of Strathclyde. At any rate, Dungal is known to have ruled in Strathclyde (once a British kingdom) and to have also held power in the Pictish kingdom of Fortrenn.

It should be pointed out that most of these names are translated from Gaelic: Hugh the Blond = Eocha Buidhe or Eugenius Buyd; Donald the Speckled = Domnall Brecc; Domangart = Dongard or Donart; Hugh the Crooked-Nose = Eochaid Rinnamail; Hugh III = Eugene or Eochaid; Hugh the Poisonous = Eochaid Anguibh. Also, most of the dates are shaky;

historical refinements continue. But the line of descent presented here is accepted by almost all historians.

Please see the map on page four to place the various kingdoms. And for our later descent to the Griersons, see Vol. 2, # 3, of December 1997.



Map of Ancient Scotland

The Dalriadic kingdom discussed on page 3 is depicted here in relationship with its many neighbors. To the north and east were the 7 kingdoms of the Picts. To the south and east were the nearest of the many British kingdoms. The Britons were sorely harassed by the expanding Angles of Bernicia who were reinforced from their European homelands.

Aedan ($\frac{1}{2}$ British) ruled in Manau Gododdin where his eldest son Arthur ($\frac{3}{4}$ British) held power once Aedan ascended to the throne in Dalriada. The seat of government in Gododdin was then near the Fife border — where Stirling is today, and the site which some believe was Camelot.

Arthur fell in a calamitous defeat and the Scottish-British coalition was shattered. Eventually the Angles pushed the British out of Scotland and confined them to what we now call Wales. The Arthurian era was over.



This information constitutes a revision and elaboration of that presented last March in Volume 2, Number 4.

Our Descent from King Arthur

Popular tradition places the romance surrounding Camelot in the areas of Wales and Cornwall, but few realize that Scotland has long claimed Arthur as its own. History records several "Arthurs" in Dark-Age Britain, but it is unclear which one is our alleged ancestor — and very unlikely that the complete truth will ever be known. However, there is much evidence to locate Arthur near or north of Hadrian's Wall which has long been the southern boundary of Scotland. Over the years several researchers have favored the idea of a Scottish Arthur as the true object of legend, but it is quite likely that the Arthurian legends known to us are pieced together from the memorable deeds of several persons named Arthur.

Some historians claim that many decades after the disintegration of Roman control, the Britons below the river Forth were heroically defended by a man named Arthur — repulsing Teutonic invaders along Hadrian's Wall in the south and Picts along the Antonine Wall to the north. The Roman fortress of *Camelon*, situated near Stirling, may have been the Camelot of legend.

The prevailing theory that associates Arthur with Scotland is that which equates him with the historically recognized Arthur mac Aedan, and locates his realm in the Dark-Age kingdom of Manau which was situated between the two famous Walls. Arthur of Manau (died circa 600) lived several decades later than the legendary Arthur (died circa 542), but this does not invalidate the case for Arthur of Manau since the legendary King Arthur of Camelot is almost certainly a composite, semi-mythic, figure.

The father of Arthur of Manau was the famous and powerful Dalriadic King Aedan who had the singular distinction of being ordained by Saint Columba. But was King Aedan (the first Scottish monarch to adopt the Christian religion) the same man as Uther Pendragon?

Arthur's legendary father, Uther Pendragon, was alleged to descend from Emperor Constantine, son of Emperor Magnus Maximus. But historians are unable to confirm these identities due, in large measure, to the confusion during the collapse of Rome and to rival claims to the title "Emperor" by several far-flung officers of the crumbling empire. It has been argued that "Pendragon" was not a name at all, but an official designation for a leader which meant something like "Chief Protector." And the term "Uther" is thought to be an epithet which translates roughly as "Terrible" or "Awesome."

Arthur's mother, Ygerne, was said to descend from Old King Coel of nursery rhyme, who ruled from York circa 400 A. D. — and was perhaps the last Roman client-ruler to hold the title of Dux Britanniorum.

Legend has it that Arthur was bewitched by his half-sister — the Celtic priestess named Morgana. Their union produced Modred who, it would seem, did not join his father's conversion to Christianity. Many of Modred's countrymen resisted the abandonment of their traditional Celtic religion and apparently for this reason Modred's rebellion was espoused by many who resented the growing influence of the Church of Rome.

Guinevere, with much-disputed historical identity, is alleged by some to have been a Pictish queen, by others a Celtic princess. A popular theory (adopted here) identifies her with the woman known as Gwenhwyfar ferch Lleudd Eugfran — which has been translated as Guinevere, daughter of Leo de Grance. At any rate, her offspring have been forgotten by orthodox history.

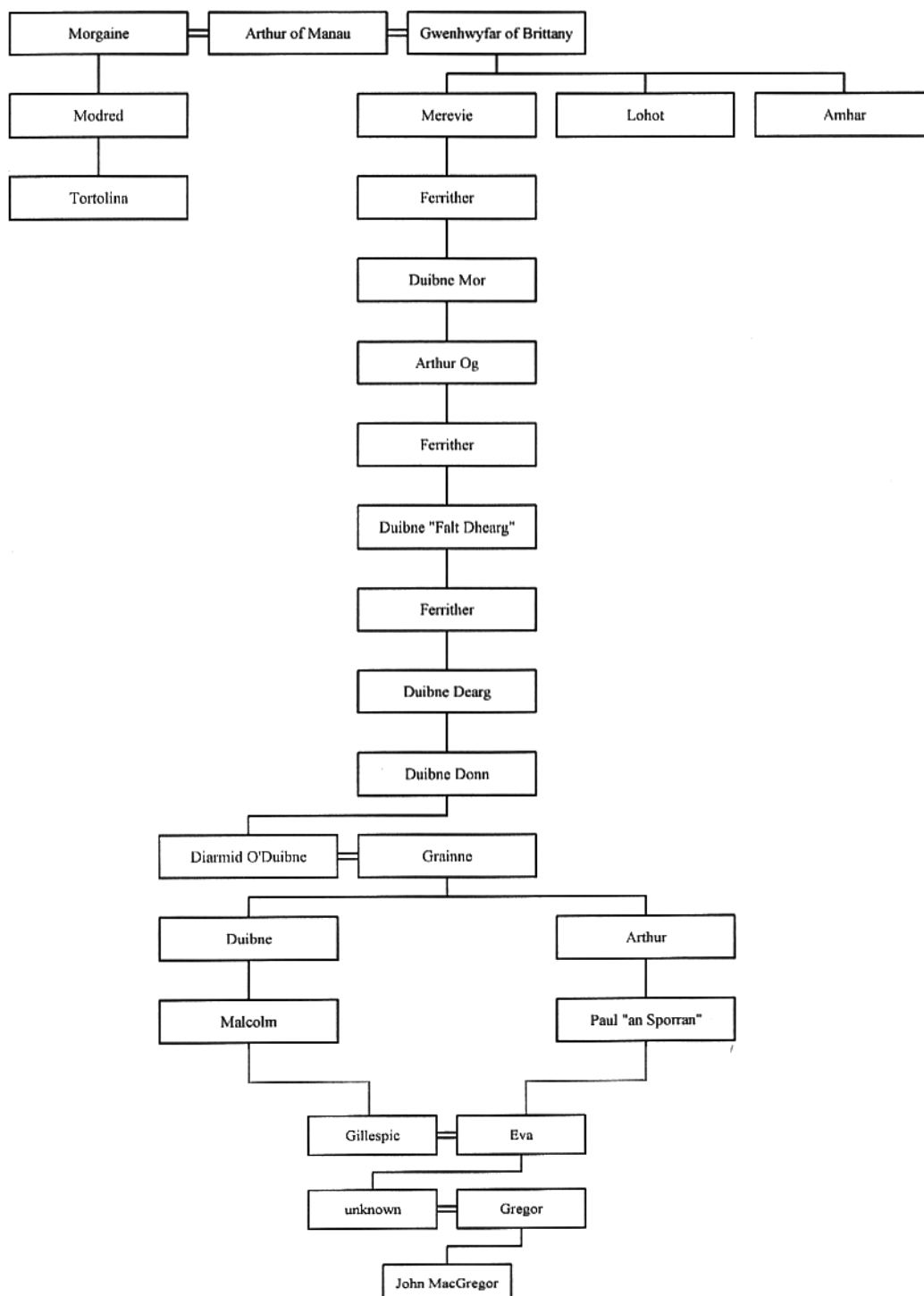
The descent shown on the reverse of this page was related many centuries ago by Clan Campbell — except that the historical identities of Arthur and Guinevere were not explored. Aside from their names, almost nothing is known of Arthur's progeny from the time of his death until the era of Diarmid whose identity is open to challenge and from whom several clans claim descent. The John MacGregor ending this descent, is the same person specified in the descent from Gregor which was presented in Volume 2, Number 3, of this newsletter. Thirty-one generations separate Nathaniel Hunt Greer from Arthur.

To learn more of the Scottish Arthur and the descent shown here, read *King Arthur* by Norma Lorre Goodrich. Although controversial for relying more on literature than history or archaeology, it is just one of many books endorsing the case for a Scottish Arthur. However, it fails to equate Arthur mac Aedan with the Arthur of Camelot — and theorizes that Guinevere was a Pictish queen.

A more recent — and far more controversial — book which champions the claim of a Scottish Arthur is the international best-seller, *Bloodline of the Holy Grail* by Laurence Gardner. Mr. Gardner, a genealogist with unorthodox theories, is the Jacobite Historiographer Royal attached to the House of Stewart. As such, he advocates restoration of a Stewart constitutional monarchy.

Descent from Arthur of Manau to Sir John MacGregor

NOTE: The chart below shows that John MacGregor's maternal grandparents *both* descended from Arthur.





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



The Will of John D. Greer

Last issue featured a biography of John D. Greer, father of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. Page two of this issue presents John Greer's last will and testament. There are several interesting points to be made regarding this document:

First, John Greer had to sign with "his mark"—seemingly incapacitated (from a stroke?)—because there is evidence of his signing properly with his name on an earlier document.

Above "his mark" we find John's will dated November 16, 1840, apparently after he had become seriously ill. Below "his mark" we find he was "late of this county deceased" as of January 20, 1843—when his will was produced for the Troup County Inferior Court by his son and executor Gilbert Dunlap Greer, a distinguished jurist in the adjoining Coweta County. We may thus infer that John died shortly before January 20.

In the lengthy third paragraph, John indicated that several designated heirs were indebted to him—including sons James A. and Nathaniel H. and son-in-law Willis Johnson, all of whom had gone to Texas. John left these two sons' shares of the estate to the respective children of each (thus, bypassing the sons,) but then appoints each son to be guardian of his respective offspring. It is evident from this that James's death in Texas (one month before the will signing) had not yet become known. Perhaps this arrangement was designed to make it easier to probate the will, should the sons in Texas not survive their father. But then John treats son-in-law Willis (and hence, John's daughter Nancy) in a **curiously** different way, not mentioning their several children involved.

In the opening paragraph, John D. Greer proclaims his love for his deceased wife who had "borne to me nine children." But, readers will note that 11 children were identified in our last issue, with Reddick and John both dying young in the opening years of the 19th century. It seems to me that two explanations of this discrepancy are plausible:

- 1) The two omitted sons did not occupy John D. Greer's thoughts as he wrote his will because they had predeceased him—both by roughly four decades. Perhaps he only saw fit to mention his **surviving** children since only they would be relevant to the disposition of his estate.
- 2) Perhaps genealogical findings to date have been in error regarding these omitted sons, and that they were actually the sons of other parents? Comments from readers are invited.

Finally, note that when the will was recorded on March 9, 1843, the list of Inferior Court justices curiously included *another* John Greer whose genealogical identity has not yet been determined, but who apparently was **not** immediately kin to our ancestor John D. Greer.

Our Reunion in July

has done a superb job planning these events (**all free, except where noted!**) to be held in Salt Lake City from July 22 through July 24. Here's a brief overview ...

Thursday, July 22nd

6:00 pm — reserved a spot for us in Liberty Park where we'll gather for pot luck supper and orientation. Try to arrive a bit early to register and enjoy the park. We'll refine our plans with maps, directions, and other assistance.

8:30 pm — We'll attend a rehearsal of the world-famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir in Historic Temple Square.

Friday, July 23rd

9:00 am — Family History Research Workshop in a private room reserved for us at the Family History Center in the ground floor of historic Hotel Utah—an architectural gem.

Noon — In the Hotel, we'll view the hour-long motion picture "Legacy," a 1st-rate, 70-mm film depicting the historic migration to Utah. A block of tickets will be set aside for us.

1:00 pm — Lunch on your own in downtown SLC.

3:00 pm — At "This is the Place" Monument, Emigration Canyon, we'll tour Pioneer Village State Heritage Park—an authentic 1850s town. Our discounted fee will be \$3/person.

6:00 pm — Barbeque supper in the park. We must choose:

- 1) to have the meal catered from a *genuine chuck wagon* at about \$12 per person, or
- 2) serve it ourselves at about \$7 per person.

Either way, the meal will be accompanied by live western music. But **it is important that you let us know** which meal plan you prefer: chuck wagon or on our own. Advise of your choice by phone (801-785-0811), fax (435-623-5821), or email (greernet@uswest.net). We'll go with the majority wish.

Saturday, July 24th

9:00 am — "Days of 47" Parade (see last newsletter)

Noon — Lunch in Cedar Hills Heritage Park (½-hour from SLC) followed by **group photos and election of officers**. Then we'll swap data; a computer and copier will be on-hand.

Throughout the day — the town of Cedar Hills will also offer home-town events, crafts, and activities for all ages.

8:00 pm — We'll have lawn space reserved for us near the amphitheater in Heritage Park for open-air entertainment.

10:00 pm — The finest fireworks display in Utah!

Note that the above is just a *summary*—complete details will appear in our next newsletter to be published June 1.

Most national chains have hotels in the area—but cheaper away from downtown SLC. Nearby to the south is Sandy, Midvale, and Provo; to the north lies the town of Bountiful. Campers can stay at KOA or Good Sam or the Cherry Hill campground and water park. Contact for details, but reserve early—**SLC will be crowded!**

The last Will & Testament of John Greer deceased

I John Greer being of strong mind and memory knowing that man is born to die and after death to judgement and having been blessed with many years know that my time of departure is not far distant and having been blessed with a loving companion who has borne to me nine children and who has been called from me by the hand of providence and having been blessed with a small portion of this worlds goods I feel it a duty incumbent on me to make such distribution of the same as seems meet to me and according to my own will and pleasure and to appoint such Guardians and such Executors as seems meet to me to act each in their sphere and to carry this my last will and testament into effect in all its form— revoking all others heretofore made by me— I do therefore appoint Gilbert D. Greer and William D. Greer my true and lawfull [sic] Executors who is [sic] fully authorized to carry into effects this my will and to settle the same with all my heirs & Guardians according to the provissions [sic] of this my will—

First— I commit and commend my flesh to its mother dust from whence it came to be burried [sic] in a decent manner by the side of my beloved wife companion and my spirit home to God who gave it there to enjoy eternal bliss—

Secondly— That immediately after my death that my Executor proceed to execute this my will by first paying all my just debts and collecting all that may be due me either by note or open account thence to proceed to have all my Estate legally appraised advertised and sold at a credit of twelve months free for all persons to bid who will comply with the terms of sale which shall be small notes with good security, Dave and Fillis his wife and their youngest child shall be sold in one lot the ballance [sic] of my stock of negroes shall be by the appraisalment divided into nine lots as near equal as possible and drawn for by my heirs as follows to Thomas Greer one lot, to Jane Mangham one lot, after deducting out any demand which I now hold or may hereafter hold against James A. Greer at the time of my death out of the one ninth part of my Estate I give and bequeath unto the offspring of Sarah Greer wife of said James A. Greer the ballance [sic] of the aforesaid one ninth part of my estate and I further appoint James A Greer Guardian to said children, and his receipt for the aforesaid share as described to my Executors shall be a sufficient shewing [sic] for the court— To Gilbert D Greer one lot— after deducting out the demand I hold against Absalom Irvin I give unto Sarah Irvin wife of Absalom Irvin the ballance [sic] of the one ninth part of my Estate and Sarah Irvin's receipt for the same shall be a sufficient shewing [sic] to the court— To Thomas F Nolan & Hannah Nolan his wife one lot— after deducting the amount I may hold against William D. Greer I give to him said William D. Greer one

lot— after deducting the amount I hold against Nathaniel H Greer out of the one ninth part of my Estate I give and bequeath unto the offspring of Nancy Greer wife of Nathaniel H Greer the ballance [sic] of the aforesaid one ninth part of my Estate and I further appoint Nathaniel H. Greer Guardian of said children & his receipt for the aforesaid share as described to my Executors shall be a sufficient shewing [sic] for the court— after deducting the amount I may hold against Willis Johnson out of the one ninth part of my Estate I give and bequeath unto Nancy Johnson wife of Willis Johnson the remaining portion of said ninth part of my Estate and Nancy Johnson's Receipt for the same shall be a sufficient shewing [sic] to the court— and the remaining parts of all my Estate both real and personal shall be sold as above described

Acknowledged signed and sealed this the sixteenth day of November in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and forty— in presence of Herndon Haralson, Henry Boyd & Wm M McCutchin.

his

John x Greer

mark

Inferior Court of Troup County sitting for ordinary purposes met in chambers this 20th day of January 1843. Present their Honors James M Peale & Peter W Lesley, Justices

The within last will and testament of John Greer late of this county deceased was this day produced before the above named Justices of the Inferior Court in chambers and duly and lawfully proven upon the oaths of Herndon Haralson, Henry Boyd & William M McCutchin the subscribing witnesses to the same— the same being, produced by Gilbert D. Greer the surviving Executor therein named — W. Wilson C Co

Georgia Inferior Court of Troup County sitting for ordinary purposes March Term 1843— Present their Honors James M Peale, Daniel Ware, John Greer, Justices

The within last will and testament of John Greer late of this county deceased having been produced before James M Peale and Peter W Lesley two of the Justices of the Inferior Court of said County on the 20th day of January in the present year in vacation and then and there duly & lawfully proven by the subscribing witnesses to the same. It is now ordered that the same be admitted to Record this being a regular term of said court— Wiley Wilson C Co

Recorded 9th March 1843 — Wiley Wilson C Co

Our European Roots

Our Descent through Alfred the Great

After the disintegration of Roman Britain (the Age of Arthur) and before the Norman dynasty established by William the Conqueror, several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had coalesced into the greater state that came to be known as England. The stellar figure during the Saxon ascendancy was Alfred the Great, King of the West Saxons—i.e., Wessex.

Alfred's mother Osburga was of royal Saxon blood, as was his father Ethelwulf who had ruled Wessex from 839 until his death in 858. Ethelwulf's father Egbert—threatened in childhood by a rival claimant to power—was placed under the protection of Charlemagne in whose court he dwelt for 16 years. During this exile, Egbert wed Redburga, a sister of Charlemagne, and from this union Ethelwulf was born ca 801—when Egbert regained Wessex, ruling until dying in 839.

Throughout the 9th century, various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were beset by the Danish army branching out of Northumbria. Ethelwulf stalwartly defended Wessex and adjoining states, but the Danes made substantial gains and a fragile peace was made. Four sons succeeded Ethelwulf: Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred, and Alfred who in 853 was sent to Rome where Pope Leo consecrated him to be a future king of the Saxons.

Danish efforts to conquer England resumed and after Ethelred was slain in 871, Alfred was crowned. However, the Saxon cause deteriorated and Alfred was reduced to waging a guerrilla war. But early in 878 he routed the Danes and conquest was averted. In 885 he built a navy to defend the Saxon coast. The next year he forced the Danes from London, fortified the town, and laid the seeds of its future greatness. Eventually, his extensive defensive works secured a lasting peace and the Danish threat abated.

In non-military matters, "the noble Alfred" distilled the laws of Wessex, Mercia, and Kent into a unified code which would later serve all England. He bade all his freemen learn letters, thus creating the most literate nation in the world. He revised the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, produced several works himself, and in his last six years translated five major Latin texts into English.

In 868 he wed Elswitha, a granddaughter of King Wiglaf of Mercia. She shunned matters of state and had many children, several of whom died in infancy. After

Alfred's death, she entered holy orders and lived another six years as a nun at St. Mary's Abbey in Winchester.

Their daughter Elfrida married into the powerful dynasty of the Counts of Flanders created in 864 by the first count, Baldwin Iron Arm. Elfrida's husband was Iron Arm's son Baldwin, the second Count of Flanders, and a grandson of Charles the Bald, Holy Roman Emperor. From their union came Count Arnolph (Arnulf) the Great, the very same man who slew William Longsword, another of our ancestors, as recounted last September in Vol.3, No. 2.

Arnolph wed Alice of Vermandois. Her grandfather was Hubert, Count of Senlis, (also previously noted in Vol. 3, No. 2) who was her **great-grandfather as well** because the union of his daughter Beatrice with King Robert I of France, produced Adela, **Alice's very own mother**. Alice's father (Adela's husband) was Count Herbert of Vermandois.

Arnolph and Alice begat Count Baldwin III who wed Matilda, a daughter of Herman, Duke of Saxony. Their union yielded Count Arnolph II. He wed Rozela (aka Rosalie) of Italy and with her begat Count Baldwin Fair Beard.

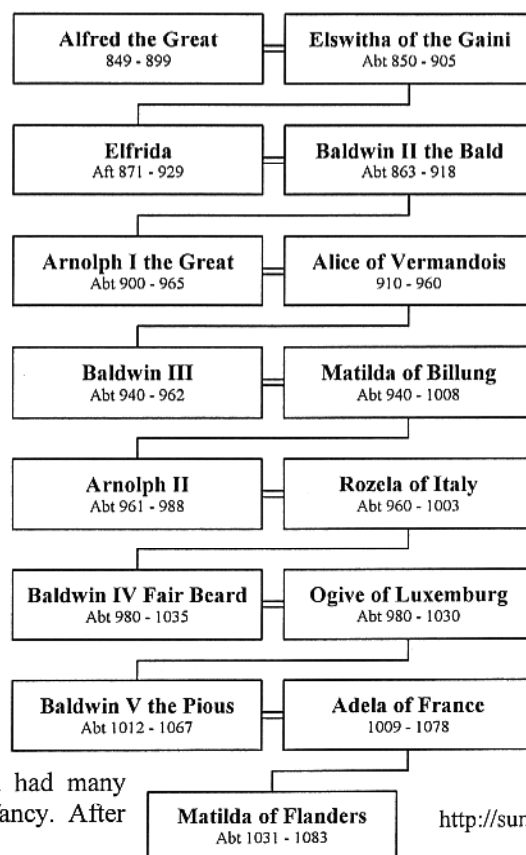
Fair Beard wed Ogive, the daughter of Count Frederick of Luxemburg, and to them was born Count Baldwin the Pious who entered into hostilities with Emperor Otho II and thus acquired Valenciennes and the Isles of Zeeland. Fair Beard added to his Flemish territories by acquiring the citadel of Ghent.

Baldwin the Pious wed Princess Adela, daughter of King Robert II of France, son of King Hugh Capet. The Flanders dynasty continued until becoming extinct in the direct male line in 1119, but our tree branches into the female line with Baldwin's and Adela's daughter Matilda who married William the Conqueror (see Vol. 3, No. 1.)

There are many books on Alfred. A recent one is *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship, and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* by Richard Philip Abels.

A short history of Alfred and other Saxon monarchs is *The Warrior Kings of Saxon England* by Ralph Whitlock.

Fans of the Internet, can access Bishop Asser's contemporary panegyric *The Life of King Alfred* at ...



<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/OMACL/KingAlfred/>

Reunion Data at Our Web Site

Our online members are advised to visit <<http://members.aol.com/GreersWest>> (our web site) for instructions on obtaining additional information by email.

NHG — Real Estate Agent

In the fall of 1825, Nathaniel and two others became agents in a real estate venture — selling lots for a proposed town in northern DeKalb County. They placed the following ad in the September 20 issue of the “Georgia Journal,” published in Milledgeville, which was then the state capitol:

To all such as would wish to live in Town near the Head of Navigation on the Chatahoochie. [sic] Will be sold ... in the town of Mount Vernon, on Friday the 14th day of October next, a number of Lots. The town of Mount Vernon lies on the South East side of the Chatahoochie, [sic] in DeKalb County, one mile from or below the Standing Peach tree, and one half mile from the river ... it lies from 30 to 40 miles above McIntosh's late residence, and from 75 to 100 miles above the Great Coweta falls ... from which place Steam Boats can go to New Orleans, and from the Falls to Mount Vernon Pole Boat navigation will be good. Persons wishing to purchase can even purchase at private sale from the subscribers. (Signed) M.D. Watkins, E. Lynch, Nathaniel Greer, Agents for the Proprietors.

However, the enterprise came to nought as the town failed. The ad's McIntosh reference was to the famed Creek Chief William McIntosh who was very much resented by some of his fellow tribesmen for selling tribal land to the whites. He was assassinated by vengeful Creeks on April 30, 1825, at Acorn Bluff — his large plantation worked by 72 slaves and situated in present-day Carroll County.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



1999 Reunion in Salt Lake City (SLC)

Warm greetings to you all! This will be my final article as president of the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization. By the time of our next issue, a new president will have been selected. Of course, I will continue to edit our newsletter for as long as I can, as long as our resources permit, and as long as our organization wishes it to be published.

I wish this message to be one which urges you to attend the marvelous reunion that has planned in Salt Lake City. When all is said and done, I'm confident that each reunion participant will feel that has designed and will have carried into fruition a delightful and memorable event! I hope that as many of you as possible will be able to participate in this, the last Greer reunion of the millennium!

Please examine *carefully* the general map on this page and the enclosed sheet which bears the specific reunion agenda and a localized and detailed map for each venue for the three-day gathering. Many of you will note that our final plans differ slightly from that originally announced several months ago. However, in virtually all respects, these changes are trivial. The pleasure and enrichment which reunion guests will receive will be just as great as that we initially envisioned.

The gathering will start late Thursday, July 22, in Sugar House Park—not Liberty Park as originally planned. Try to arrive by 6:00 pm, but don't hesitate to arrive early—that will give you more time to visit and refine your individual plans!

We can appreciate that not everyone will be able to attend the first day. That's okay; please come when you can. You will be welcome, even if you only come Saturday.

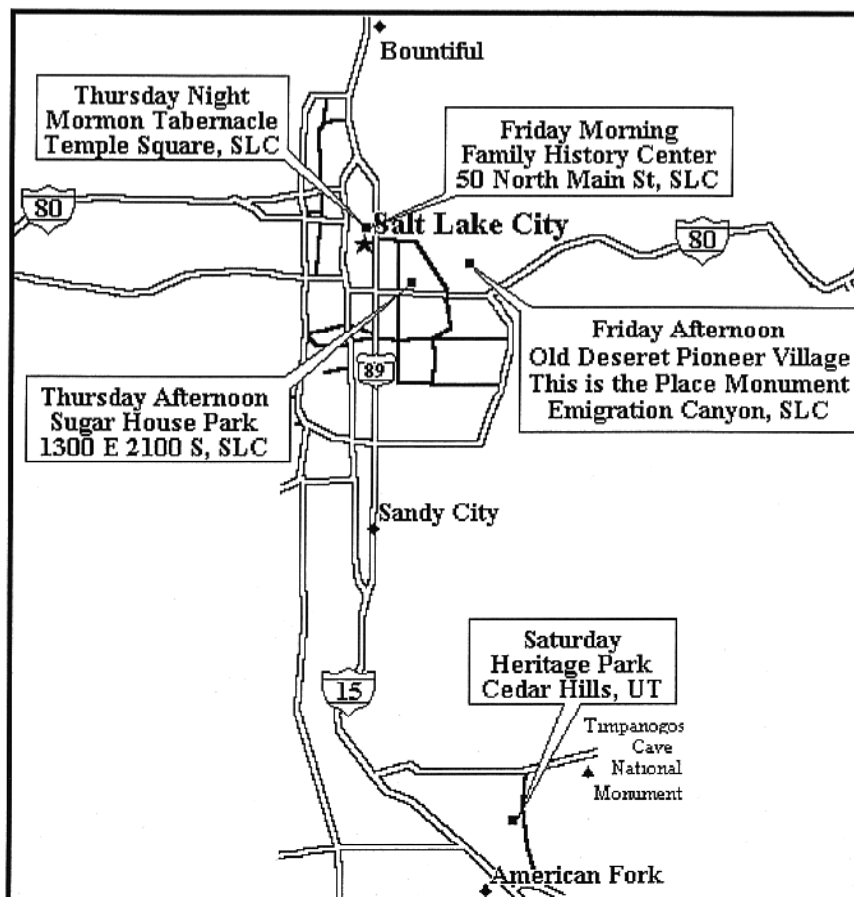
Whatever your own timetable, please have one member of your specific family party complete the detachable form on the enclosed sheet and send it to so that he can plan the amount of food needed.

We had planned to have a group viewing on Friday of the acclaimed film "Legacy," but we couldn't get the schedule to work. Consequently, you are urged to see this cinematic portrayal of the arduous migration of our pioneer ancestors at whatever time works best for you.

has arranged a fine schedule that will optimize the balance between family visitation, genealogy, and site-seeing. Friday afternoon, following a sumptuous barbeque, over three hours are set aside to tour the living museum known as "Old Deseret" Pioneer Village—a faithful recreation of pioneer life.

Saturday will start with the celebrated "Days of 47" Pioneer Day Parade in downtown SLC. The rest of the day in Heritage Park (in Cedar Hills—just south of SLC) promises to be spectacular. There'll be delicious meals, extensive visiting and genealogy exchange, and fabulous fireworks and entertainment. And we hope that *as many guests as possible* can be at the Saturday business meeting and photo session.

Looking beyond the reunion, our genealogical research continues to yield exciting information that will appear in future issues of *The Greer Way West*. Please keep submitting your information, anecdotes, and photos for publication. And thank you all for your unwavering support!



Thomas Greer

As we move backward in our family tree, it is inevitable that our knowledge of people and events becomes less detailed and less reliable. So it is with Thomas Greer, Nathaniel Hunt Greer's grandfather. Tradition holds that Thomas was born in Ireland on January 3, 1723, the son of Thomas Greer and Rachel Morton—but this is dubious. The couple in question *did* have a son named Thomas born August 14, 1731—but he apparently died in childhood, because he was omitted from his father's will of February 14, 1737. Some claim our Thomas was born in MD or PA, but proof is lacking.

Thomas wed Jane Dunlap, perhaps on April 4, 1750, but this date is disputed. One researcher has suggested 1753 and another listed December 10, 1758—but their first child was born (in PA, it is said) on September 9, 1754. Indeed, we are not at all sure about the roster of children that appears on this page. It is possible that not all of these children are properly assigned to Thomas and Jane—and it is possible that some children may be missing from this list. However, the list is likely the best that can be produced at this time.

Thus, it is currently believed that Thomas and Jane had the ten children listed here. This includes two daughters whose names are unknown: one born in PA and married a Higginbotham about 1775—the other born in NC and wed Jonathan Wood.

In the early 1760s, Thomas and Jane moved their family to Rowan Co, NC, where on January 4, 1765, they bought 326 acres from James Tennin for 70 pounds. A month later Thomas witnessed the sale of 300 acres—on a ridge between the Catawba and Rocky rivers—to his father-in-law Gilbert Dunlap. Just three years later, Thomas had nearly doubled the value of his property, selling it on January 15, 1768, to John Miller for 130 pounds.

Within a month, Thomas and his family moved to St. Paul Parish, GA, and took up residence along Uchee creek, about 4 miles from where it feeds into the Savannah river. Next spring, in May of 1769, Thomas—claiming a wife and 9 children—petitioned for a headright of 250 acres. This could have been the land on which they had been living. On October 6, 1772, the petition was granted by Gov. James Habersham and on February 21, 1785, another 150 acres were granted along the Uchee by Gov. Samuel Elbert, bringing the Thomas Greer estate to 400 acres.

Thomas fought for the Revolution, and although it has been suggested that he served in Wake Co, NC, the actual nature of his duty is unknown. In 1777, his GA property was designated part of the newly-created Richmond Co, but the locals continued to call the area

St. Paul Parish for several more years.

In 1781 Thomas was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Richmond Co, and in 1783 he served as Road Commissioner.

In 1783 the state obtained Indian land from which Washington Co. was created, February 25, 1784, to use for military service bounty grants. Later in 1784, Gov. John Houston granted some of this land to Thomas in recognition of his service. On July 20, 1785, Thomas sold 200 acres of it (along Harris' Branch) to Robert Allison.

In 1786 Washington Co. was subdivided and Greene Co. came into being. There, on June 19, 1787, Thomas bought property from Abraham and Hannah Reddick on Beaverdam creek which feeds the Ogeechee river. Five years earlier, Thomas' son John (NHG's father) had wed the daughter of Nancy Reddick. Nancy was very likely kin to the Reddicks who sold to Thomas—perhaps they were her parents.

On October 13, 1787, Thomas sold to James Garrett the rest of his Greene Co. military bounty grant—287.5 acres on Harris' Branch.

In 1790, Richmond Co. was subdivided and Thomas' Uchee creek homestead became part of the newly-created Columbia Co.

It seems that in 1793 Thomas' health began to fail because late that summer he abruptly sold off his remaining property and moved in with one of his children. On September 3 he sold his home along Uchee creek to Peter Stubblefield. On November 7 he sold 287.5 acres along Town creek in Greene Co. to his son Gilbert Dunlap Greer—the first of many descendants to be named after Thomas's father-in-law.

Thomas died soon after that last sale, for on December 11, his son Thomas was named administrator of the estate which was valued at just over 294 pounds on December 17.

Jane apparently predeceased Thomas because she was not among his heirs—indeed, she may even have died in the 1770s since she would have been rather old to bear Thomas' last two children. Possibly the children were born to an unidentified second wife of Thomas, although this is not indicated in the list that appears to the left.

Much of this information is from American Beginnings by David Trimble.

Thomas Greer
Born: 1723 ? Ireland or MD or PA
Died: 1793 Columbia Co, GA

Jane Dunlap
Born: Abt 1725 ? Dumfries, Scotland ?
Died: Bef 1793 Columbia Co, GA ?

William Greer
Born: September 9, 1754 PA
Died: August 27, 1821 Greene Co, GA

unknown daughter
Born: Abt 1756 PA
Died: date and site unknown

Agnes Greer
Born: February 14, 1758 PA
Died: September 5, 1820 Dallas Co, AL

Gilbert Dunlap Greer
Born: Abt 1759 PA
Died: Bef December 11, 1799 Greene Co, GA

John D Greer
Born: January 19, 1761 PA
Died: January 1843 Troup Co, GA

James Greer
Born: Abt 1763 PA or NC
Died: date and site unknown

Thomas Greer
Born: March 2, 1764 NC
Died: Aft 1793 Greene Co, GA

unknown daughter
Born: Abt 1766 Rowan Co, NC
Died: date and site unknown

Elizabeth Greer
Born: Abt 1773 St Paul Parish, GA
Died: date and site unknown

James Alexander Greer
Born: 1779 Richmond Co, GA
Died: date and site unknown

Our European Roots The First Lord of Lag

We earlier noted (Vol. 2, No. 2) that the first person named Grierson was Gilbert who became prominent in Nithsdale at the end of the 14th century. Although Gilbert's father is traditionally held to have been Malcolm "the Lame Lord" of MacGregor, records suggest his father was one Duncan who *might* have been a son of the Lame Lord. Family tradition holds that (ca 1353) Gilbert was born *Gilbrid MacGregor* in the Highlands just north of Loch Lomond, but soon his family moved to where forfeited Lowland land had come available.

The register of rentals of the Lord of Dalkeith records that in 1376 the lands of Laucht in the barony of Tybris were let to Gilbert, son of Duncan. Also, a seal (said to be Gilbert's) attached to a document dated January 8, 1418/19, bears a faint inscription thought to read "Gilbert, son of Duncan."

As early as 1405, the Lag charters listed an undated sale by

"John McRath of Lacht to his kinsman, Gilbert Grersoun of Ard ... to the lands of Lag Bardonane with the pertinents, in the sheriffdom of Dumfries; the said Gilbert to perform the due and accustomed [feudal] services to the superior of the lands."

Another undated charter (as early as 1407) lists a transfer

"by George de Dunbarre, earl of March, to Gilbert Greresoun of le Lag, for [feudal] service done and to be done, of all his lands of le Ard and Tynnroun, ... Owyholme of Dalgarnock, ... Colynholme, [all] lying in the barony of Tybrys, sheriffdom of Dumfries; which said lands of le Ard and Tynnroun formerly pertained to the said Gilbert ...; to be held by the said Gilbert Greresoun and Gilbert Greresoun, his son and heir, and the heirs of their body lawfully begotten, whom failing their nearest lawful heirs male whomsoever of the name Greresoun ..."

The above insistence for heirs named *Greresoun* supports the tradition that Gilbert had to anglicize his name from MacGregor before his ownership would be recognized. It is noteworthy that Gilbert's Christian name is *French* whereas his father's (Duncan) is *Gaelic*. This agrees with the assertion that Gilbert's Celtic heritage was being *Normanized* largely due to the esteem that Robert Bruce held for things French—especially in consequence of Bruce's reliance on Norman knights in the Scots' military triumph over the English.

On December 6, 1408, Gilbert's possession of Lag became official when Earl Henry of Orkney resigned ...

"to his kinsman, Gilbert Greresoun of Ardis, ... all the lands of Lag Bardonane, Bardonane Broachmyherach and ½ merkland of Mains of Melros, within the sheriffdom of Dumfries, which were resigned by the said Gilbert and by Cuthbert McRath; to be held by the said Gilbert, his heirs and assignees, for payment of one pair of gilt spurs at the Castle of Dumfries, as *blench ferm* [token payment]."

Of interest is the kinship of Gilbert to the McRaths of Lag in the first abstract above, but even more so with Earl Henry [Sinclair] in the last. Although the nature of the kinships are unspecified, it is noteworthy that Gilbert was related to such a powerful man as the earl of Orkney who in that era was

almost a sovereign—virtually independent of (and almost as powerful as) the king of Scots. The earl held vast territory extending far beyond the Orkney Islands and included not only land in Nithsdale, but also the barony of Roslin in Midlothian, famous seat of the Sinclairs.

We also note from the foregoing that, whereas Gilbert *occupied* the lands of Lag as early as 1376, it was many years before he secured *ownership*. Early on, he was styled "of Ard[e, is]"—thus, it seems that he owned Ard *before* Lag.

On March 17, 1410/11, Gilbert was still styled *of Arde* when Robert, duke of Albany, Governor of Scotland, signed

"in favor of Gilbert Grersoun of Arde, confirming ... Grant by Sir Patrick de Dunbar, son and heir of Sir David de Dunbar of Cumnok, of [various] lands [in the] barony of Cumnok, sheriffdom of Ayr."

And the earliest record of Gilbert being styled the *lord* of Lag was July 4, 1413, when William McCorrard resigned to

"John de Craufurd, lord of Kyrkandrys of Purtoun, of the 9 merkland called Purtoun and a 40s. land in the Bordland within the barony of Kirkanderys of Purtoun, and a sasine given ... by the said superior to Gilbert Grerson, lord of Lag, and Gilbert Grerson, his son and heir."

On November 9, 1419, Gilbert *the younger* secured a wadset (mortgage) on Nithsdale land. The document read in part ...

"Be it kend till all men be thir presentes lettres me Johan Durand lord of Betuix the Wateris till have wedsette all my landis of Glenschynelle ... lyand within the lordschipe of Glencarne in the schirvedome of Drumfres, till Gilbounne Greresoune my systersone for four and twenti noblis of gold lent me in my grete myster to my raunsoune. ..."

The abstract above belies the tradition held by such authority as *Burke's Peerage* that Gilbert the younger was the offspring of Janet Glendenning. It appears from the above that John Durand was the brother-in-law of Gilbert the elder and uncle to Gilbert the younger who was called Durand's *systersone* (sister's son.) This relationship was again mentioned on September 2, 1440, when Gilbert the younger made out a charter "to his uncle, Thomas Durant ..." There were several Gilbert Griersons and there is no doubt that Janet Glendenning wed one of them, but he was certainly *not* Gilbert the elder. This can be inferred from her appearance in a document as late as 1481 and from the additional fact of her parentage placing her at too late a date to have been the wife of Gilbert the elder.

The foregoing discussion reveals that earlier issues of *The Greer Way West* mistakenly identified our descent from Robert Bruce (and other notables) through Janet Glendenning (Vol. 2, No. 1, Vol. 2, No. 3, and Vol. 3, No. 1.) However, we nevertheless descend from the Bruce through a generation some two centuries later—that of Sir William Grierson, 9th lord of Lag.

Gilbert the elder probably survived into the 1420s, but the date of his death is unknown.

Treasurer's Report of May 1999

Opening balance (June 16, 1997)	\$1,470.42
Deposits and interest	675.47
Withdrawals (to Bill Greer for newsletters—Volumes 2 & 3)	1014.17
New Balance	\$1,131.72

Note: \$395 of our current balance was collected *expressly* for the Kansas monument project—an amount unchanged since the treasurer's report of 1997.

NHG — Investigator of Land Fraud

In 1832 the Creek Indians ceded part of East Alabama to the United States. The terms of the treaty stipulated that the head of each Indian family was to receive 320 acres of land and the chiefs 640 acres. Most of the Indians sold their lands to white land speculators. On December 18, 1832, the Alabama Legislature created ten counties—including Chambers, where NHG was soon elected its first sheriff.

As the sale of Creek lands progressed, it soon became evident that massive fraud was occurring—perhaps the greatest in U. S. history—with many Creeks being unwittingly and unfairly dispossessed of their property. In the fall of 1834, NHG became the first elected Representative of Chambers Co. Subsequently ...

“At the office of George D. Hooper, a justice of the peace in and for the said county, on the 24th January, 1835, appeared Nathaniel H. Greer, Esq., a commissioner appointed by a Committee of Public Lands of the Senate of the United States, to take depositions concerning frauds in the sales of the public lands, and the conduct of the officers authorized by law to superintend these sales; and also concerning the matters referred to in a resolution of the Senate of June 30th, 1834, instructing said committee; who proceeded (in pursuance of said commission) to propound interrogatories and take depositions in an alleged case of fraud in the location of public lands within the county of Chambers.”

Over the next several days, NHG interrogated 26 witnesses and on February 5, 1835, he finished his report. On March 3, 1835, his report became “Senate Document 151” of the second session of the 23rd United States Senate. When his report was delivered to the Senate, it was noted that many commissioners had not filed their reports and in, “some instances the commissioners were threatened with personal violence, to deter them from the performance of their duties; and all who testified were denounced and put in fear by the powerful combinations whose conduct was the subject of scrutiny.” Thus, we can appreciate that NHG's promptness, courage, dedication, and competence were extraordinary.

Understandably, much of NHG's report makes for tedious reading, but it includes something quite interesting to us. At least two of the witnesses were NHG kin: 1) William D. Greer, his next eldest brother; and 2) Willis Johnson, husband of his youngest sister Nancy Reddick Greer. Another witness was William H. House who, in 1836, would be NHG's company commander in the Creek War.

Because the witnesses were compensated for travel from their homes, we know that William D. Greer lived 10 miles from the county seat of Lafayette, and Willis Johnson resided at a distance of 22 miles. Unfortunately, we do not know—from NHG's report—exactly where William and Willis lived, nor do we know where NHG's home was situated.

We can be very proud of NHG's role in investigating the historic fraud that so plagued the transfer of lands from Creeks to the white settlers—events that contributed to the perception (largely true) that the Creek land was “stolen.”



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

I regret missing the reunion and trip to Utah, but my personal schedule just wouldn't permit it. Now it is with great joy and satisfaction that I relinquish charge of our organization into the very capable hands of our new president whose comments follow—Bill Greer ...

Immediately after the reunion, I had to make a trip to Washington to work with the crazies in Congress. And, finally, my family took a brief vacation to California.

I was a bit taken back by being nominated to be the new family president, but I have a hard time saying "no" to friends and family. So, when asked, I said I would be willing, if the family organization wanted me to help out in this way. Those who voiced opinions about the family organization suggested that all other officers be requested to remain as representatives of the various family arms.

As a recap to the reunion activities, it went as planned. The first evening gathering at Sugar House Park was wonderful. There were about 80 people in all, and several were first-timers. I had sent out post cards to all the Greers in the Utah phone books, and about a dozen, who had not heard about us, came and made their connections with us. One such couple live right here in Pleasant Grove and didn't know much at all about us, and we were able to get connected. But, more interesting than we could believe, it turned out that the wife discovered that she was also a direct 4G granddaughter of Nathaniel Hunt & Nancy! What a discovery.

Friday morning at the Family Search Center went well. Some came and were able to make new connections to the family and were able to get the help to find new names, dates, etc. Then, as planned, we gathered at "This Is The Place Monument" and "Old Deseret Village" for a chuck wagon lunch. Many of the folks spread out through the pioneer village and exhibits, but just as many lingered in the pavillion and made new acquaintances and renewed old friendships.

Saturday, after the Pioneer Day Celebration in downtown SLC, we gathered in Cedar Hills for the family meeting. We all introduced ourselves and our families, and each group representative took from a minute to several minutes talking about their ancestors. It was a wonderful afternoon. About 60 people stayed on for this event. We took about a two hour break so people could join in the Cedar Hills Celebrations, or visit, or take a nap in the park, and then we gathered again for dinner. After dinner, many joined the evening events at Cedar Hills. There was entertainment in the open-air amphitheater (of which I was the town MC). Then, at dark, we enjoyed a great firework show, which signaled the end of the reunion.

We really did have a fine time together. Many expressed positive feelings about having plenty to do after investing in travel to SLC. I think, all in all, that it went well, although it was far more work than I thought it would be. I'm glad I did it, and I trust those who came felt it was worthwhile.

Thanks again for the chance to do this for the family, and thanks also for your patience with my recuperation. And, hope [Bill's] recuperation is going well. *[I'm fully recovered; thanks to and others who asked after my health.—ed.]*

The Reunion Photo

Please excuse the delay in getting this issue out. We primarily wanted to include the reunion photo which we're delighted to insert within. Not surprisingly, several people eluded the camera, but most are depicted here. Enjoy!

Trouble in Texas

It is of course quite natural to extol the virtues of our ancestry while minimizing those elements of our history that are less glamorous, noble, or otherwise appealing. Thus, our inclination to focus on the attractive and positive aspects of the life and character of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and his family has been normal and absolutely understandable. Indeed, as we have mentioned in these pages, there is very much about him and his kin in which we justifiably take immense pride.

However, our effort to honor and understand our forebears, to be as complete as possible, needs to include that which we might prefer to disregard or wish never happened. To do justice to their memory, we should honestly confront the historical record and any unpleasant material it might contain lest our cherished memory—based so on incomplete information—be distorted by ignorance or misunderstanding.

It is the aim of this and future issues to examine slurs made against the person and character of our much-beloved patriarch and to argue forcefully in defense of his honor, seeking out whatever facts may support such a defense. Due to the passage of time and the paucity of surviving records, it will be difficult—nay impossible—to accomplish a thorough investigation and arrive at a finding that does complete justice to our subject. But it is my considered opinion that the allegations that were levied against NHG were largely the result of hysteria founded on mis-perception, exaggeration, enmity, falsehood, slander, and libel. I further believe that, while incomplete, there is yet sufficient material in public and private records to exonerate him in any particulars and ably defend his honor in general. In this spirit I relate—beginning on the next page—an account of my research.

Scandal in Texas

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to make a genealogical research trip to Texas. It was my hope to discover more information about the activities of our ancestors from the time they arrived in Texas till their departure for Utah. Questions had occupied my thoughts for several years: Where exactly did the family live during those 18 years? Why had they moved from Washington County to DeWitt County contrary to the migratory trend leading so many people further "up river." I suspected that material could be found that had hitherto escaped notice. My search led me south from Bosque County to Belton, the seat of Bell County. I had earlier reviewed the reminiscences of Uncle H (AVG), in which he wrote the following about Belton and some of its people:

"I worked at the first store in Belton—I also kept store at Spice Woods Springs before Belton was located. I worked there three or four years. I was clerking for T. A. Supple; my favorite school teacher. I was an Indian scout with John Payne, William Smith, Josh Blair, and others. We routed Indians in connection with Capt. James Cross and 8 others. We charged the Indian camps, they ran fast, just what we wanted as we did not want to kill. I recollect eleven buffaloes ran across Nolen Creek, one Sunday—Father Bowls was after them, this was about the beginning of the 50's."

Aside from my general interest in researching Belton, the foregoing passage had always struck me as rather odd because AVG had already grown to adulthood by the time the family had settled in the vicinity of Belton. Perhaps the Greers had been in contact with Mr. Supple before moving to Port Sullivan? Perhaps as very young man, AVG lived apart from the family?

Belton, originally called "Nolandsville," is situated on Nolan Creek, which feeds into Little River, which itself eventually merges with the Brazos at Port Sullivan, some 50 miles ESE of Belton. Bell County was created from Milam County on August 5, 1850. Nolandsville was chosen as the county seat, then renamed and incorporated as "Belton" on January 12, 1852. The only "Spice Wood" that I could find was the Colorado River community of Spicewood—in Burnet County and some 50 miles SW of Belton. Had AVG sojourned there before moving on to Nolandsville?

The public library in Belton is a small building, not surprisingly so since Belton is a modest-sized town of just over 10,000 residents. However, the library offers a much better genealogical section than one might expect—so large that it is housed in its own research and reading room. In the genealogical room, I came across *The History of Bell County*. I opened it up and began to read. For decades, the first four minute books of the County Commissioners Court were thought lost, then in 1966 they were found and so some early county history was recovered to form part of the book I was

holding. As I read a list of the original inhabitants residing at Childers' Mill on the Lampasas River, several names stood out:

Joel D. Blair, 42, from Tenn.

John M. Payne, 24, merchant from Tenn.

William ("Camel-back") Smith, 47, from N. C.

Thomas A. Supple, 23, merchant from N. Y.

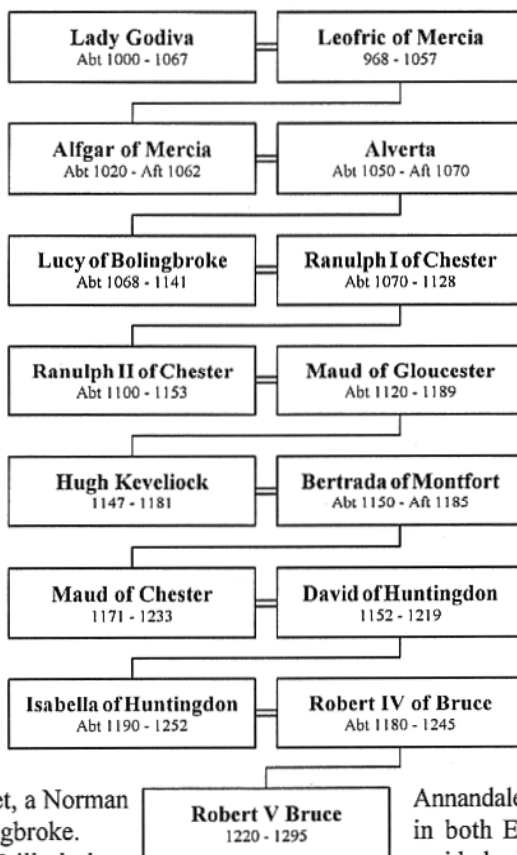
John Bowles, 48, from Miss.

And living on Salado Creek was James M. Cross, 39, from Tenn. (Cross was an original land owner and one of the founding Commissioners of Bell County.) They were all there! Every one of the people AVG had listed—teacher and fellow rangers—were enumerated on the first census of Bell County. But there was no mention among the earliest settlers of any Greers—or for that matter, any Easts, Irvins, or Johnsons. The failure to mention our ancestors is not surprising because AVG reported that the families did not move to the area until 1852, but it would appear from his writing, that AVG was already there. AVG turned 20 in 1852, so it appeared that he had been a student under T. A. Supple before the family located near Port Sullivan.

A list of early Bell County land owners revealed what the 1850 census did not: AVG's elder brother Gilbert and their uncle Willis Johnson owned land in Bell County. Willis had 477 acres and Gil had either 351 or 357 acres (being double-listed—apparently due to a transcription error.)

After I had gleaned what I could from the book, I started to lay it down when something astonishing on page 157 jumped out at me: "The first hearing on *habeas corpus* was that of James Clark and Riley Irwin, charged with the murder of Thomas Trimmier on July 4, 1854. The hearing was before Judge Baylor on June 27, 1855. Bail was refused and the defendants were remanded to the custody of the sheriff who was ordered to confine them in the jail of Bastrop County. That night they escaped from the little Belton jail."

It was common to mistake Irwin for Irvin, and vice versa. It seemed quite likely that the accused man who escaped from jail was Riley A. Irvin, the Greer cousin who was exceptionally close to AVG's older brother Thomas Lacy. Riley and Thomas had ranged together, enlisted together in the Mexican War, and—according to Thomas's widow Catherine Ellen Camp—had only been separated from each other for nine months in their entire lives. Riley had helped save Thomas' life when he was seriously wounded in Mexico. When the Greers converted to Mormonism, Riley did not. He remained a Baptist, even later becoming a circuit preacher in Bosque County. But eventually under the spiritual guidance of his dear cousin, he did convert and it was Thomas himself who baptized Riley in Bosque County on August, 2 1863.



Scandal in Texas — part 1

[continued from page 2]

Were the accused and the intimate cousin and bosom companion of Thomas Lacy Greer really one and the same? Thomas Trimmier apparently was the same Thomas Tremier listed as the election officer for beat 2 when the first elections were held in Bell County. Who was James Clark, the co-accused? What had transpired along the Colorado River in Bastrop County (between Austin and La Grange) on Independence Day, 1854?

Just when I thought I was sewing up some genealogical loose ends, this new information appeared like a thunderbolt. I left Belton and headed for Austin with more questions than answers. I had no idea what I might find—certainly not the shocking information that lay waiting for me in the Texas State Archives.

[*Scandal ...* to be continued in part 2 appearing in our next issue.]

Letters

I am a descendant of Nancy Reddick Greer, who [was] a sister of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. I am writing a book on her descendants and decided to enlarge the book to include more relatives. May I have permission to print the family histories from the Greer newsletters[?] Please invite any of the Greer descendants to send me their family sheets if they would like to be listed in the book. My address is as follows:

Thanks for the great job on *The Greer Way West*—I can't make it to the reunion, but look forward to reading about it.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Thanksgiving and Holiday wishes for all the Greer Clan. I hope this family newsletter finds you all healthy and wealthy in things that matter most. I also hope you have been enjoying a lovely Fall in your locale. Here in the shadows of the everlasting hills, we have witnessed one of the most beautiful Autumns in Utah memory. And winter is close on its heels.

At this time of year especially, and following a wonderful reunion together this past Summer, we should all give hearty thanks to those who have gone before us. Our Greer ancestors paved the way for us in wondrous ways. As I consider the rough hewn legacy our family left for us, I would like to think that their blood runs hot in our veins, and that we would be able to rise to the call of adventure and hard work in the face of adversity.

This past year, through the recommendation of a good friend from Texas, I have discovered the Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *Lonesome Dove*. Now, I am not particularly a fan of the western genre of American literature. But, when my friend, a native son of East Texas, found that our Thomas Lacy Greer was an early Texas Ranger, he couldn't believe that I had not discovered the treasure that is this historical novel.

If you're looking for a great read, and haven't given this one a try yet, you'll be better for the experience of living through the novel the lives of a couple of Texas Rangers in the South of Texas, during the same time period as our grandfather Thomas. I know it has come to mean a great deal to me, and has helped me understand much more about the life and times of our Texas Greer Experience.

If you have found something that has enhanced your knowledge about our family's past and can share it, please pass it on and we'll see that we all can enjoy it with you. We have a wonderfully full history, worthy of recollection. Along with our children we can focus on those things that make us what we are today in so many important ways.

Again, the best of Holiday Wishes to all of you and yours.

I echo sentiments about the good reading to be had in Larry McMurtry's fine novel and add the following: The two Rangers of fiction, Augustus McRae and Woodrow Call, were modeled on Jack Hays and Charles Goodnight. Thomas Lacy served under the celebrated Colonel Hays during the Mexican War and probably knew Charles Goodnight—cofounder of the Goodnight-Loving Trail in New Mexico—because both Goodnight and Thomas lived in Port Sullivan simultaneously in the early 1850s! — Ed.

Scandal in Texas

— Part 2 —

From Belton I drove south to Austin not knowing what I would find. My destinations in the capital city were the Texas General Land Office, State Library, and the State Archives. At the Land Office I found numerous documents concerning the property of NHG and his eldest son Gilbert. But nothing in the information provided any clues about the exact date of the Greers arrival in the vicinity of Belton or Port Sullivan.

The State Library and Archives share a building a few hundred feet from the magnificent Capitol building—both structures therefore being situated near where NHG had served his as a representative from Washington County. The library staff were eager to help and I received fruitful assistance.

Aware of conflicting stories of NHG's public service in Texas, I learned he was a *representative* (not a *senator*) from Washington County. Indeed, the record still existed of who were his rivals for office and what were the vote tallies.

I also learned of his service as a postal contractor and how he resigned his elected seat in order to attend to the difficulties that had plagued delivery of mail in the area. (Later, Elaine Rummel, our vice-president for the Gilbert Dunlap line, would provide me more information about NHG's postal career.)

NHG's third child, Thomas Lacy, also appeared in library material as a combatant in the Mexican War. The record also revealed that Riley Irvin had enlisted, fought beside his cousin, and then was discharged from duty at the same time.

As I reflected upon what I had learned at the Archives, I wondered if more material might yet be found. I consulted with Donaly E. Brice, Supervisor of Library Reference Services. He pointed out that occasionally the Memorials and Petitions File yielded unsuspected facts which might otherwise go unknown; he suggested we search the file for any mention of NHG. I had not even been aware of the file. Mr. Bryce himself conducted the search which took only a short time to discover that, indeed, NHG had submitted a petition to the Texas State Legislature.

I learned that in 1840 NHG had encountered difficulty completing his contract to deliver mail between San Felipe and La Grange, and had petitioned the Republic for relief. This information would help me understand what NHG experienced in his efforts to cope with the hardships of pioneer life in the new republic. But then Mr. Bryce uncovered another petition submitted by NHG in late 1851.

The nature of this last petition was more than unexpected, and much more than remarkable—it was shocking. What the petition revealed was that *NHG had himself been indicted for murder*. Needless to say, I was floored!

A Charge of Murder

From the Memorials and Petitions Files of the Texas State Library and Archives, Mr. Brice had unearthed the following astounding document:

To the honorable Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly Convened, Your petitioner a citizen of the County & State aforesaid, would most respectfully represent to your honorable body, that the unlawful & unjust persecution of your humble petitioner, which commenced in 1849 has been pursued ever since with a vigilance & increasing vengeance, being in the first place charged with crimes of the deepest moral turpitude & of which your petitioner was not guilty, and of which no evidence has ever been adduced (as he believes is known to many of your Hon. body) but upon which charges without one item of proof your petitioner was tried by a mob & sentence of death passed upon him without the privileges of defense notwithstanding the proposition on his part published in the *Texas Ranger* of 31st August 1849, & to which he would respectfully invite the attention of your honorable body. Your petitioner believes that it is known to many of the good citizens of the community that his life has been in constant & imminent danger from a lawless, armed & menacing mob, and furthermore that, there has been no period since the organization of said lawless mob when your petitioner could have had the full benefit of the laws of the land. And whereas at the last term of the Dist. Court in and for said County of Washington a bill was found against your petitioner for the murder of Neil Bowen, on the testimony of one Dennis Harrell (known to be a lunatic) thereby subjecting your humble petitioner to imprisonment, the duration of which is unknown, your petitioner therefore prays that an act be passed by your honorable body authorizing him to surrender himself as a prisoner under said charge to the Sheriff of Burleson County & enter into bond & security in such sum as the Statutes of the State require, or authorize the Dist. Judge to change the venue in said case as your petitioner believes that his life would be in danger were he to surrender himself up to the citizens of Washington County and whereas the counties of Austin & Fayette were concerned in those unlawful, unjust and unmerited persecutions, your petitioner conceives that he is asking nothing unreasonable, but only desires that he may have the benefit of the laws of the land, as he knows of no act of his that should debar or deprive him of the privileges of all citizens of this boasted "land of liberty"

And in granting the prayer of your petitioner he hopes that your Hon. body will be consoled with the pleasing reflection of having done an act of justice towards an unfortunate & much injured man. And as in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray be

Dec 9th 1851

Nath'l H Greer

The petition bore a marginal note indicating that it had been referred to the Judiciary Committee on the same day on which it was filed, but no further record existed of it nor of any response by officials, suggesting that—for whatever reason—the government took no action.

I had come to the library and archives in search of more information about the alleged murder by Riley Irvin only to discover allegation of another murder by our own NHG! Of course, several questions begged for attention: What had transpired in Washington County in 1849? Who was the man reportedly killed there? Who was NHG's accuser? What exactly was the nature of the crime and what events surrounded it? If the crime occurred in 1849, why wasn't an indictment handed down immediately instead of some two years later? What had NHG been doing between that fateful summer of 1849 and the fall of 1851 in the face of the persecution and peril to which he had been subjected?

In his petition, NHG claimed to have written some document which appeared in the *Texas Ranger*, a newspaper published in Brenham, the seat of Washington County. Apparently, this would shed much light on the events of concern. Mr. Brice, his curiosity also raised by the petition, looked for the newspaper, but reported that it did not exist at the State Library and Archives. He suggested that I move my search to the Barker Texas History Center located only a mile northeast of the Capitol.

(The Eugene C. Barker Texas History Center—a division of the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin—is ironically named after a grandfather of one of NHG's descendants! Our own VP for the GDG line, is also the granddaughter of the renowned historian and distinguished professor for whom the center takes its name. Her Texas roots are doubly rich.)

I promptly drove to the Barker Texas History Center and soon found the microfilm reel which included the *Texas Ranger*. Unfortunately, my excitement abated when I discovered that the issue in question had not survived the years. NHG's article was apparently lost without a trace for I found no reference to it nor to the subject of my search in any subsequent issue of the newspaper.

On failing to discover anything more of any usefulness, I returned to Bosque County. But soon, after reflecting on the state of my knowledge and what more I might be able to find out, I resolved to drive to Brenham. My father decided to accompany me to the birthplace of his grandfather, Babe, and the area where NHG and his family spent some dozen years of their sojourn in Texas.

[to be continued in part 3 which will appear in our next issue]

Our European Roots

A Noble Wedding

On November 14, 1412, a wonderful record was made of the marriage on that date of our ancestors Gilbert Grierson, son of Gilbert Grierson of Lag, and Isabel, daughter of Sir Duncan Kirkpatrick of Torthorwald. So remarkable was this document that it was translated from the Latin original and entered in page 232 of the Scottish Register House Charters, and subsequently included in the appendix of The Lag Charters published in 1958. This extraordinary account (nearly 600 years old!) is presented for your enjoyment with all its archaic language and spellings of names:

Many noble and trustworthy persons of either sex and a large number of common people were gathered together at the parish kirk of Dunscore, in the diocese of Glasgow, about the tenth hour of the day, to see marriage contracted between a noble man, Gilbert Grerson, son and heir of Gilbert Grerson, lord of Lag, on the one part, and a noble woman, Isabel, daughter and one of the heirs of a noble man, Sir Duncan, knight, lord of Torthorald, on the other. And there in person before the doors of the aforesaid kirk, a circumspect man, Master John Herde, parson of the parish kirk of Kyrkpatrik, of the said diocese, who had been asked and required by the curate of the kirk of Dunscore to solemnize matrimony between the parties in the usual manner, came down from the altar, decently clad in priestly vestments and having with him certain kirkmen. When the said Master John Herde asked if banns had been proclaimed in lawful manner, the said Gilbert, that is the son, who stated that he was a parishioner of the parish kirk of Treqwer, offered in place of the said banns, letters testimonial under the seal of a religious man, Sir Patrick, perpetual vicar of the aforesaid kirk, whose tenor is as follows:—

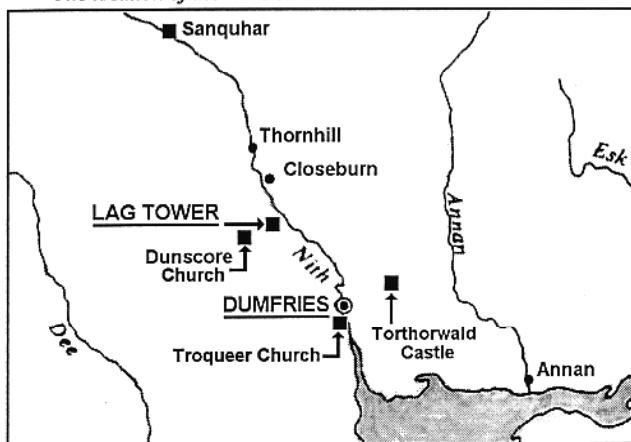
Be it known to all men by these presents that I, Brother (*frater*) Patrick, perpetual vicar of the parish kirk of Troqwer, have proclaimed solemnly on three solemn days within my kirk aforesaid, three banns upon the marriage to be contracted between Gilbert Grerson, son and heir of Gilbert Grerson, lord of Ardis, my parishioner, on the one part, and Isabel, daughter of Sir Duncan de Kyrkpatrik, lord of Torthorald, parishioner of Sanqwar, on the other, and that I have found no canonical impediment. And the said Gilbert may lawfully marry where he pleases. This I make known to all whom it concerns by the tenor of these presents. In witness whereof I have appended my seal to these presents at Treqwer, the 13th day of November, A.D. 1412.

After Master John Herde had read this in a loud and intelligible voice to the whole people gathered there, letters of banns were presented on behalf of the said Isabel, who stated that she was a parishioner of the kirk of Sanqwar, similar in effect to the above and under the seal of Sir John de Fayrle, parson of the said kirk, whose tenor is as follows:—

John de Fayrle, parson of the kirk of Sanqwar, perpetual vicar of Dunscore, greetings in the Lord. Know that I have made three banns in my parish kirk of Sanqwar on three solemn days, between Gilbert Grerson, son and heir of Gilbert Grerson, lord of Lag, on the one part, and Isabel, daughter and one of the heirs of Sir Duncan de Kyrkpatrik, lord of Torthorald, my parishioner, on the other, and that I have found no impediment. And the said Gilbert may lawfully marry the said Isabel. This I make known to all whom it concerns by these presents. In witness whereof I have appended my seal to these presents at Sanqwar, the 12th day of November, A.D. 1412.

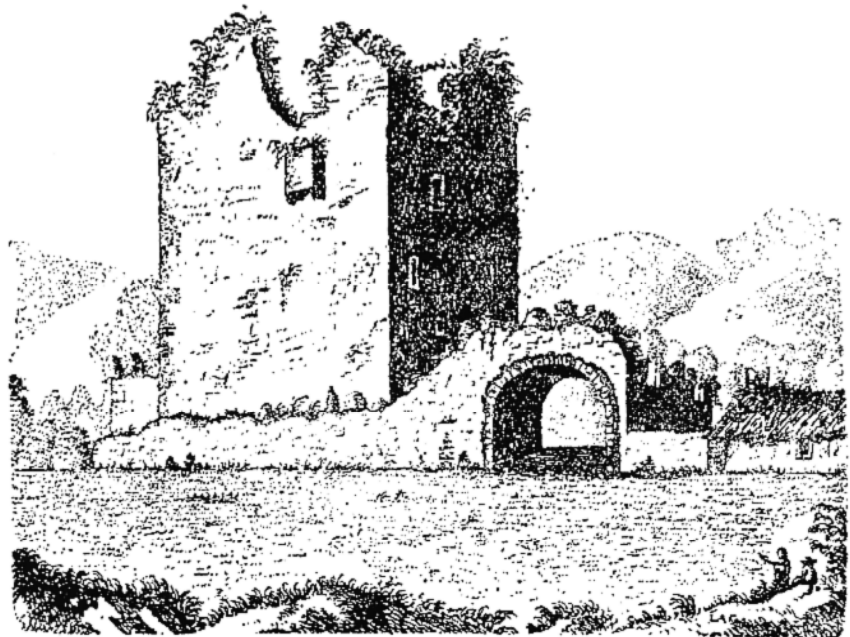
And similarly when all that is set forth above had been expounded word for word in the mother tongue, over and above. Master John Herde charged all the bystanders a first, second and third in the name of Almighty God, calling Divine Judgement to witness, and under pain of excommunication, that if any man or woman there present knew any impediment, cause or occasion, wherefore the said Gilbert and Isabel might not lawfully be joined together in matrimony, he or she should then declare it and make it known. And having waited a certain space of time, and hearing of no impediment, the said Master John then made the said Gilbert and Isabel swear upon God's Holy Gospels to declare and reveal if either of them had given any other cause which might be an impediment to their marriage, and they, touching the Holy Gospels, confessed that they knew of no impediment. At length when the said Gilbert and Isabel had both given their vows *in verba de presenti*, in the usual manner the said Matter John Herde married them in face of Church.

The location of the various sites mentioned in the document.



Lag Castle in the late 18th Century

"This Castle is situated in Glen Lag, about seven miles from Dumfries, amidst dreary wild, steep mountains on all sides, with deep morasses for several miles frequently covered with water. It was the ancient baronial Castle of the very powerful family of the Griersons of Lagg. No tradition remains of the time of it's being built; but from the style, which is similar to most of the border towers, it was with others erected at a very early period, to check the inroads of the English, and secure a safe retreat to our roving chiefs."





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Hillsboro woman may get to see third century

This slightly-edited article on our cousin ran in The Macon Telegraph (December 19, 1999) & was sent in by Wally Taylor.

HILLSBORO—Margaret Sammons was only 2 years old when one century turned over & another stretched out in front of her.

It was not until she was older that she began to understand much about the outside world. News was slow to arrive here, but that was all right. Nothing else around Hillsboro moved particularly fast.

While the Wright Brothers were giving us wings and Henry Ford was giving us wheels, she was busy playing hide-and-seek with her cousins on her family's farm.

While Halley's Comet was passing overhead, and Teddy Roosevelt was walking around with "big stick" diplomacy, Sammons was drawing water in a cedar bucket in the breezeway between the house and kitchen. There was no running water. Everybody drank from the same bucket, too.

She was educated in a two-room schoolhouse and did her homework by the light of a kerosene lamp. There were a clock & calendar in the house, but no real need to ever look at them.

After all, the sun came up every morning and slid behind the tall pines right before bedtime. The seasons kept their rhythm. You could almost set your watch by the train whistles, as they came up the tracks from Macon.

"I always knew when we were going to have company," she said. "I'd have to go out and kill a chicken and dress it."

Margaret Sammons is 101 years old now, one of an estimated 60,000 Americans who are centenarians.

She was born Margaret Greer on Oct. 15, 1898, in a house on the same property where she now lives with her two daughters, Saralyn and Jane. She is practically a cornerstone of Hillsboro Baptist Church, less than a country mile down the road. She joined in 1910 when she was 12 years old and was baptized in a pool near a local cotton gin.

Her father* raised cotton and ran a general store with her uncle. The store was a large, brick structure in downtown Hillsboro—when there was a downtown to Hillsboro. They had to tear down the building several years ago when it threatened to lean too far and fall on another building. It only exists now in the memories of those old enough to remember it.

"Folks used to gather down at the depot when trains came in," she said. "... one of the biggest things to do in Hillsboro."

The family's store sold everything from shoes to cloth to buggy whips and fertilizer. The drummers (traveling salesmen) would come in on the train, bringing orders for items such as candied oranges and apples. If she closes her eyes, Sammons

can almost remember her first taste of salty mackerel imported from far-away places.

"Mother was kin to about everybody over in Monticello," she said. "We would ride in a buggy to visit. About the only paved road around here was over at Indian Springs."

Her mother died when Sammons was only 9, leaving her, as the oldest daughter, to assume all the motherly duties.

Yes, news was slow, but she sure had to grow up in a hurry. There were lots of hardships following the loss of her mother. Sammons remembers her childhood with happy memories, like learning to dance at parties in nearby Round Oak.

"Hillsboro was a nice place," she said. "You could do just about anything you wanted to do. The farthest place we went was to Macon. I remember my first automobile ride was at the Georgia State Fair in Macon. My aunt took us there by train. We paid money to ride, & we all piled in the back of that car!"

She packed peaches one summer and saved enough money to buy a camera. She graduated from high school and attended college at Wesleyan. She studied Caesar and never forgot her Latin. It certainly strengthened her vocabulary and contributed to her fondness for crossword puzzles, something she gave up only recently because her eyes grew too weak to work them.

She married Richard Sammons, a local mail carrier. He died in 1973.

The roots she put down here in the early part of the century have grown deep and strong. She remains faithful to her family, church and the friends who still come by to visit and brag about how Miss Margaret once cooked the best fried chicken in these parts.

Some of them also will ask her why she's always worn a dress. A local seamstress, Miss Susie, who was an old maid, would make Sammons' dresses. She never had a store-bought dress until she went off to college.

[Margaret Sammons ... continued on page 4]

**Crawford H. Greer, son of Crawford Harrison Greer, son of Thomas Greer—eldest of NHG's brothers to survive into adulthood. Hillsboro is south of Monticello, seat of Jasper Co.*

About Our New Banner Images

Our new banner images are the coats of arms of Grierson on the left and MacGregor on the right. Each of these images have an interesting derivation, but space limitation prevents us from discussing them at this time. Please watch for their explanation and description in a future issue.

Scandal in Texas

— Part 3: The Documents in Brenham —

From Kopperl my father and I set out for Brenham in the hopes of uncovering more information about NHG and the events that led to his indictment for murder. We drove south along the western bank of the Brazos—so rich in Greer history—traveling Texas 317 through McGregor which was named after some unknown distant kin. Near Belton where Uncle “H” had clerked as a young man, we took Texas 36 south to Cameron, seat of Milam Co, whose older records had unfortunately been burned. Then into Burleson Co, once the northern part of Washington Co, and to its seat of Caldwell, where a brief records search was unproductive. Further south we crossed the Yegua River—along which NHG had once lived—and entered Washington Co, not far from where NHG had originally settled. We shortly arrived in Brenham.

In 1837 when NHG settled in Washington, the county took in far more land than now, having originally (as the Mexican “Municipality” of Washington) extended eastward almost as far as the Trinity River. It retained its wide borders as a county of the Republic of Texas until December of 1837, when its eastern border became the Navasota River. In 1840 Washington lost much of its northern expanse when the Yegua was made its northern boundary. In 1841 its eastern border was again redefined, becoming the Navasota.

Early on, the City of Washington-on-the-Brazos—located at the confluence of the Navasota and the Brazos—had been the county seat, but on losing half the county territory in 1837 and more in 1840 and 1841, a more central seat was thought desirable. In 1843 the seat briefly moved westward to Mount Vernon (no longer existent)—near NHG’s home at Oak Grove on the eastern watershed of East Fork of Mill Creek. Mount Vernon proved undesirable so in 1844 a new location was chosen “at a high, eligible and healthy place with good water and tolerable timber for building purposes.” The new site, originally called Hickory Grove, had been renamed Brenham in 1843 to honor a local hero of the struggle for independence.

Not long after arriving in Brenham, I was pouring over documents in the courthouse. I found various records pertaining to NHG, but nothing to shed light on his indictment. After a period of searching, the staff in the first-floor records department directed me to the courtroom on the second floor. There, amidst long stacks of old court records in a storeroom behind the bench, the trail came to life.

The bills of indictments from that era seemingly no longer existed, but I did locate the Criminal Court Minutes for the years in question. Although of quite limited information, some insight could be obtained by careful study of the several entries. The indictment for the murder of Neil Bowen—Case Number 136—had been handed down in District Court on September 11, 1851. In Book E, on page 123, I read, “Indictment for murder. Enclosed thereon a new bill. Y. J. Jackson, foreman of the jury.”

On page 179 of Book E, another entry—a writ of *alias capias* [an arrest warrant] dated March 8, 1852—identified Case Number 136 as “Continued & *alias capias* ordered to any county in which defendant may be found.”

In the fall term of the District Court—dated September 13, 1852—I found on page 253 of Book E that Case Number 136 was “Continued & *pluries capias* ordered to Milam County.”

Next spring the case was continued again. On page 324 of Book E, I read that on April 13, 1853, “Case Number 136 continued & *alias pluries* process ordered to Milam County.”

On page 407 in Book E, the next entry for the fall term was simply the terse notation that on October 10, 1853, “Case # 136 continued.”

I moved on to Book F where I found on page 32 another entry—dated April 10, 1854—that again simply reported that Case Number 136 was continued.

That fall, the minutes in Book F, page 134, contained more wording. On October 9, 1854, Case Number 136 was “Around to Milam County for defendant & continued.”

Then for the next spring term, the minutes grew more explicit. On page 231 of Book F, I read that on April 9, 1855, Case Number 136 “On motion of W. W. Battle, Esq, District Atty, a fine of \$50 against Sheriff of Milam Co, for failure to return the *capias* [unreadable] in this cause to him as Sheriff of Milam Co & *capias* no. 2 around to Milam Co., continued.”

But that fall came another terse continuation on page 367 of Book F—bearing the date of October 8, 1855—after NHG had already died in the trail to Utah.

Finally, on April 14, 1856, Case Number 136 was closed. Book F, page 518, observed: “Indictment for murder. This day came the State of Texas by W. W. Battle, Dist Atty, and suggests the death of the defendant. It is therefore considered by the court that the prosecution be abated.”

After exhausting the Criminal Court Minutes, I moved my search to the 3rd-floor attic. There I found many record books in a dismal state of disarray. I explored these for a time, but as the day lengthened, my hopes of finding pertinent information dimmed. Although records were left unexamined, the unorganized nature of the books frustrated any systematic search. I could spare no further time and left the attic and its jumble of decaying documents. The deplorable state of the precious records was lamentable, but nothing else was to be done. Perhaps someday one of our readers might be able to sift through the musty records which I left unread.

My father and I left for home—some questions answered and some not. The indictment had not been located, but I still hoped NHG’s article could somehow be found. Maybe it was reprinted in another paper? I would continue my search, but I was unprepared for the shocking information I would find.

[to be continued in part 4 which will appear in our next issue]

History of the Clan Gregor

In this issue we begin a condensation of the definitive work, History of the Clan Gregor, by Amelia MacGregor. The large majority of her 1898 book does not concern us, but the early chapters detail, more than any other source, the nature of our MacGregor ancestry. We start with her "Introduction" ...

The following contains the eventful chronicles of a Highland Clan, not one of the most numerous or most powerful, but remarkable as occupying a distinct place in the history of Scotland. The narrative may doubtless be considered a record of crime, sometimes tragical, sometimes trivial, yet a careful study of the Race, of the circumstances and of the times, must forcibly bring out many claims for a lenient judgment. Early and native inhabitants of the country, with pride of ancestry and an indomitable spirit, the MacGregors in the fourteenth century found themselves dispossessed of the lands whereon they dwelt, by reason of Charters, instruments inexplicable to them, bestowed upon others. From that time a sense of wrong and of injustice pervaded their minds. Yet they might possibly have been content to maintain themselves on lands held by heritable tacks from the landlords in possession, but for two causes, First, the natural increase in the numbers of the Clan, hemmed up in glens and straths where the means of subsistence were necessarily limited. Secondly, the enmity of certain neighbors determined to dispossess them. In other countries the turmoils of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were equally violent, but the art of war on a larger scale afforded an outlet to the belligerent qualities of their inhabitants, and tended also to decrease the population. The MacGregors without any other channel for their energy, cramped in the means of livelihood, totally ignorant, and goaded by those anxious to profit by their fall, lived by forays and raids. Many other Highland Clans and many Lowlanders did the same, but most of them had more power to make their struggles against each other effective in forcing support from the Government, whereas the Clan Gregor, through the wiles of their adversaries, became the object of the strongest persecution and the most severe penal enactments. Had the opportunity occurred, the MacGregors, as was proved later, would have fought for their Sovereign with devoted loyalty, but they could not easily understand that their personal enemies, through misrepresentations, had become armed with the King's authority. The conflict of 1604 in Glenfruin, in which the Clan Gregor gained a victory, eventually fatal to themselves, against vastly superior numbers, was punished by numerous executions: the Name was proscribed, the men were hunted down with bloodhounds, the women branded on the cheek with a red-hot iron, and yet the Clan clung to the only virtues they knew—courage, endurance and fidelity. Their unquenchable spirit was never broken, and when the time of persecution was over, they revived and brought their noble qualities to a better use.

The article on MacGregor in Sir Robert Douglas's "Baronage," published in 1798, was probably the first accessible history of the Clan, with the exception of the short notice in Buchanan's "History of Scottish Surnames," first published in 1723. Douglas's "Memoir of the MacGregors and the MacAlpins" was written by Sir John MacGregor Murray, Bart., before he went to India in January 1770. Sir John's accuracy both in public and private life was well known; but modern researches, and access to public records, have thrown a different light on some parts of the narrative.

In 1822 the Rev. Wm. MacGregor Stirling, undertook the compilation of a history of the Clan Gregor, for Sir Evan Murray MacGregor, who himself revised the MSS. till he went to the West Indies as Governor of the Leeward Islands in 1832. The work, ably assisted by Mr Donald Gregory, was not finished or ready for publication at the time of Mr MacGregor Stirling's death in 1833, but a great portion has been of infinite service to the present compilation. MacGregor Stirling had collected an elaborate series of Excerpts from the Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, and other Records which were afterwards enlarged, carried forward and critically analyzed, and which embodied every known authentic passage regarding the Clan. These were comprised in three large folio volumes titled "The Chartulary of the Clan Gregor," to assist the history of the Clan, but the deaths of Mr Gregory and Sir Evan put a stop to the work.

The Iona Club, founded in 1833 "to investigate and illustrate the history, Antiquities and early literature of the Highlands," made an arrangement by which the Club acquired the three volumes of the so-called Chartulary*, together with three companion volumes of pedigrees. When the Iona Club was dissolved, Mr W. F. Skene deposited these collections in the Library of the Antiquarian Society, with the stipulation that any papers claimed by the families to whom they related were to be restored. Eventually the six MS. books relating to the Clan Gregor were in March 1890 handed over to Sir Malcolm MacGregor of MacGregor, great-grandson of Sir Evan, on whose daughter the privilege of giving to the Clan the results of former zealous Clansmen's labors now devolves.

One of the objects of the Clan Gregor Society, instituted in 1822, is— "To publish ancient or interesting documents or articles on interesting events connected with, and to compile an authentic history of, the Clan and of the different families belonging to it." In furtherance of this object, the present work has been undertaken at the request of the Society, and with the hope that the facts and traditions here collected will prove of interest to the whole Clan Gregor.

* This title is employed throughout this work, but MacGregor Stirling's Collection cannot correctly be styled a chartulary.

[Margaret Sammons ... continued from page 1]

"I would never wear pants, even to play outside," she said. "My daughters once bought me one of those pant suits, but I never wore it."

She takes great pride in her appearance. Every Friday, her daughters take her to Macon to have her hair done.

Remarkably, she remembers what it was like in the days before Lincoln was on the head of a penny and the Titanic was still considered unsinkable.

"It was a good time to be alive," she said.

Correction

Our issue of last September was wrong in placing NHG's son Gilbert and NHG's brother-in-law Willis Johnson on land in Bell Co, Texas. On a list of early land owners in Bell Co, Gil and Willis are named—which erroneously implies that they owned land there, but in fact they never did.

Instead of the *amount* of Willis acreage, the number 477 identifies a *file number* (on the aforesaid list) for land that actually belonged to a man named James B. Wills. Our Willis had been granted a 640-acre headright (being head of a family) in Washington Co. on September 29, 1845—but he quickly sold it for \$100 to Wills. Then on April 14, 1846, Wills obtained a survey along a tributary of Little River. In 1846 the *Wills* site (not Willis) was in Milam County, but in 1850 it fell in the newly organized Bell Co. Willis was on the Washington Co. census for 1850, and lived there until joining NHG and kin near Port Sullivan in Milam Co. around 1852. The last reference to his residence in Washington Co. was on September 8, 1851, when he witnessed a document there.

Similarly, the two numbers 351 and 357 that pertain to Gil are also file numbers erroneously placing him in Bell Co. On December 5, 1839, Gil had been awarded only 320 acres (being a single man) under Conditional Certificate # 222 by the board of Land Commissioners of Washington Co. Then before said board on October 5, 1846, Gil sold his 320-acre grant to William Connell who thus obtained a new Certificate # 396 for his own later use. Connell subsequently *split* his certificate and sold the halves to men who located in Bell County. One was named Alex J. Dallas and the other was the *same* James B. Wills who bought the Willis headright. Dallas located his 160 acres next to the Wills property as indicated by a survey made for him and dated November 8, 1852.

Apparently sometime before 1852, Gil was the first Greer to settle near Port Sullivan, which remained part of Milam Co. as the borders were redrawn in later years. The exact date of Gil's arrival in Milam has not been determined.

Thus, the three Bell Co. land files in question were for three parcels: two owned by James B. Wills and the third by Alex J. Dallas—but since these headrights were *originally* granted to Gil and Willis, the Texas General Land Office continues to refer to them as the Greer and Johnson headrights. **Gil and Willis never had land in Bell!**

Our thanks to _____ *whose doubt about the Willis land prompted me*
to investigate the discrepancy.

— Bill Greer



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Our Next Reunion

The next reunion of the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization will be in 2001. But exactly when and where? Planning should begin soon as there are many issues to consider.

Most of our members live out west, so it seems logical to give a nod to that part of the country. But there are other considerations such as sites that have special significance in the history of our family. Here are some options:

Chattahoochee River at the AL/GA border. Five of NHG's children were born on either side of the river. Much Greer history is here, waiting for us to explore. For a more extensive reunion with more comprehensive attention to family history (but a much broader geographical area), this site might be combined with ...

Jasper Co, GA. Just an hour's drive southeast of Atlanta, NHG's parents pioneered just east of here at the end of the American Revolution — then lived here for 40 more years. Georgia's historic first capital of Milledgeville is nearby.

Northeast KS. Where the Mormon trail began and where NHG and so many of our ancestors perished. But should we meet here later—when a memorial is erected?

Apache Co, AZ. St. Johns is where our organization began and is associated with NHG's sons, TLG and AVG. The nearby town of Greer is named for Uncle H. However, our 1995 reunion was held in St. Johns and we might wish to visit other sites before returning to Apache Co.

Graham Co, AZ. It was in Pima that NHG's daughter WMG spent the last 20 years of her life. However, none of our current family members live in this area, and its appeal as a reunion site is unknown.

Bear River area in UT & WY. NHG's daughter SHG lived here for almost her entire adult life. And NHG's sister, Nancy Reddick, spent her last years here. But would it work well for a reunion venue? It's also quite close to the site of our last reunion.

Washington Co, TX. Although our 1997 reunion was in Texas, we met quite a distance from where NHG, his kith and kin pioneered for nearly 15 years during the era of the Republic. Someday we should meet in this historical area of Texas lying between Austin and Houston.

Other ideas? Please let us know what you think — *and soon!* ... so that we can announce a preference in our next newsletter!

Clan Gregor History Deferred

Chapter 1 of Amelia MacGregor's book was supposed to appear in our June issue, but instead it has been deferred until September. In this issue, the amount of space devoted to the 1849 developments in Texas is so great and the subject so important that it seemed advisable to assign it a higher priority in our publishing schedule. Basically, the deferral was arranged because the material appearing in this issue must be read as an *uninterrupted* whole—rather than dividing it between two issues.

The Texas Scandal Widens

My research of official records in Brenham had yielded no information about any events in 1849 (alluded to in NHG's petition of 1851) that would place him at variance with the law. The records did reveal that NHG had been indicted in Washington County in the fall of 1851 for the murder of Neil Bowen, but the details of the indictment (including when it allegedly happened) are as yet unknown—and NHG never stood trial. He removed himself from the scene of trouble to friendlier places and eventually died on the trail to Utah while still under the cloud of a three-year-old indictment.

While pondering my next course of action, it occurred to me that some other Texas periodical may have rerun the article which NHG had published in the *Washington Texas Ranger* issue (that no longer exists) of August 31, 1849. I decided to conduct a search of possible newspapers for the missing information and so ordered several reels of microfilm. Eventually, hours of searching the faded print of 150 years began to produce results. I unearthed relevant material, but what I discovered was astounding and absolutely unexpected.

During the summer of 1849 in Natchez, Mississippi—some 300 miles from the scene of NHG's troubles—an incident occurred that would have profound effect on many people in and around Washington County, Texas. A young man named Thomas Short, while attempting to sell a slave in Natchez, was arrested on the charge that the slave had been stolen in Texas.

Two Washington County agents, Dr. Weir and Mr. Ferrel, travelled to Natchez, took Short into custody, and returned him to Brenham for trial. While awaiting his day in court, Short allegedly wrote a "confession" that created a storm of outrage among the local populace when published as an article in the *Washington Texas Ranger*. The story was inflammatory and controversial, and it affected communities beyond Washington County. As a result, soon the article was picked up and re-published in the inaugural issue of the *Texas State Gazette* on Saturday, August 25, 1849.

As you read the "confession," remember that *not everything is as it first seems*. We will see that what initially appears ignoble and damning, can have an altogether different explanation.

The article—presented in its entirety—begins on the next page.

From the Washington Texas Ranger
Confession of Thomas Short.

I was born in the State of Alabama; my parents moved to Texas when I was very young. My father and mother always stood fair, and were regarded as honest people. At a very early period in my life I disobeyed the instructions of my *parents* and took my own course, or rather the plan and course of my eldest brother William Short. Almost as far back as I can recollect, my brother William would pick up little matters, which I kept concealed from my father and mother. About the time my brother married he broke into a store, in company with several others, and one of the articles which my brother took, was a pair of ladies stockings, which he presented to his intended wife; from time to time William went on step by step, stealing small articles, until he got so he could take a horse, or trade for a horse that he knew was stolen. I was gradually initiated into the secret of stealing, and particularly of the necessary item of hiding well, (the difficult part of the profession.) During this time one of my sisters had married Mr. Sansum, who became a member of the party. Some time ago Mr. Sansum took off the irons that were on a Mr. Jackson, convicted for Rape in Fayette County. At or near the same time, Wm. Short, Mr. Sansum, Jas. Crook, Jas. McLaughlin and Alfred O'Bar, decoyed and run two negroes, one the property of Dr. Adkinson, of Lagrange, Fayette county, the other negro, the property of Mr. Cleveland, of Travis, Austin county, and a fine horse of Mr. Norton; after the sales of the negroes, and in the divide, McLaughlin and Wm. Short fell out and quarreled with Crook—he, Crook, had a league of land they wanted, which Crook refused to let them have, and in the quarrel, Crook threatened to disclose them. This alarmed the party, and especially Wm. Short and McLaughlin. After a consultation, it was arranged to kill Crook, who made his home at Wm. Short's; John Marshall and John Rich were to be the murderers. Wm. Short sent me after John Marshall and John Rich to let them know the time. The night appointed, Crook was not at home, but staid in the neighborhood; some men staid at Wm. Short's that night, going up the Yegua after cattle. It rained very hard all night, and Marshall and Rich staid in the bottom, near Wm. Short's all night—(surely the way of the transgressor is hard.) In the morning Wm. Short sent his wife to Mr. Carothers, that she might not witness the transaction. McLaughlin was fearful Crook would not return, and rode some distance in the course that Crook would come, and as soon as he ascertained from a neighbor of Wm. Short's that Crook had gone home, McLaughlin returned in time to give the finishing touch to Crook. I was then instructed how and what to prove, if anything was done at law. I was a witness before the Justices' Court; I was excused in the District Court. Suffice it to say, McLaughlin and Wm. Short were cleared, and Rich and Marshall never tried, which emboldened the party very much at so happy an escape. Divers thefts and outrages were perpetrated from that time until the party arrested have broken a link in the chain that extends from Missouri to Mexico. For the good of society and a duty I owe the

country for many outrages committed against the citizens of this county, I give all the names that I am (or have been, acquainted with, freely and of my own accord, hoping this community will sympathize with me, and at least extend all the leniency they can,—for the time to come, should I ever be liberated, God being my helper, I will live an honest man, and though I know the amount of feeling against me, and that justly, and how little my promises will be believed, I say before God, the Judge of all the earth, that I was entreated, threatened, and finally forced into crimes of the darkest sort. Annexed are the names as I learned them:

Maj. Moore, of Crockett—deals in counterfeit coin.

Rev. Nathan Shook—makes land certificates, has the seal and everything necessary for the same. I saw Parson Shook making out some land papers at Short's—he then went out on the Guadalupe, where Mr. McPeters stole a fine mare belonging to Mr. Estill, and swapped her to Parson S. for a likely gray mare, also stolen property. Short went to the Guadalupe with Shook, and they returned together; Shook slept until midnight, and left my brother's since when I have not seen him. He preaches a first-rate sermon, I hear: I know he makes a *good* land title. At or near Crockett are three Longs (no connection of Maj. Long, who sometimes sports the turf with Mr. Guy Stokes.) At or near the same place are two Pearsons: these men receive and trade on stolen horses, and assist in harboring and running off negroes.

Nathaniel Greer—often applied to Wm. Short to be a full partner, who with Wm. Short and Jas. McLaughlin made arrangements to steal, run off and sell a lot of mules belonging to a gentleman in Brenham. I never heard of James Cox stealing any property, nor do I believe he would steal more than a gun barrel, but Cox has been consulted in all *deep planning*; is a gentleman of experience, and his judgment and advice have ever been as the highest authority for the party. I learned from Short that Cox could sell land patents to great advantage abroad, and could pass half-eagles, without the least suspicion. It is said he passes as "Parson Cox," when a night's lodging can be had for the name. Short informed me that Cox and Greer, in company with one of the men from Crockett, laid a plan to carry off a negro from their neighborhood, and that they sent to Brenham for liquor to brighten their ideas, and that the man from Crockett started the next morning before day with the negro—whose boy he was Short did not tell me. Thomas Irvin went to A. J. Griggs, near Jacksonville, with Wm. Short—and in justice to Mr. Irvin I will here state, he had claims against one of the Messrs. Jackson that served to keep down suspicion. Wm. Short informed me that Irvin and himself had made a fine saddle, and that Irvin had agreed to harbor and secrete any negroes that Short would send him, until the time arrived to run them off.

Confession of Thomas Short — continued

James McLaughlin—was the father of all and every kind of stealing, passing counterfeit coin, and murdering. He says he commenced early in life and run many risks of life. McL. informed the party that, whenever they went into a general negro-stealing they would be detected. His prediction has been fulfilled: justice has overtaken them, and McLaughlin's race has been run. I learn he was anxious some honest man should raise his children.

Enos Cooper—hired and paid to Wilson Small a \$100 horse to kill a Mr. Elkins, who married a sister of Beverly Pool (formerly Mrs. Hawk.) Cooper sold some of Parson Shook's land certificates, and, I was informed, assisted in starting Mr. Hill's negro; also, in stealing Robert Moore's mare for the negro to ride. I am sure he is one of the clan.

Mr. Grigg gave me the name of Mr. Carmean as being one of their party, but I do not believe it, for Mr. Grigg did not like Mr. Carmean, and often spoke hard of him to me, which was never done among the party alone.

Mossy Boren aided and gave comfort and lodging to the party, and would do anything James Cox asked him to do. Boren occasionally exchanged for stolen horses, and will pick up little matters when he has the chance.

Louis Boren and Orland Sap passed counterfeit money and stole horses; they are the men that received Mercer Hill's negro from A. J. Grigg, Wm. Short and Enos Cooper, and brought said negro boy Joe to me at the Star Hotel at Galveston, where I was in company with Mr. Agery, our general agent for Texas—Mr. Agery and John Ford came to Wm. Short's at La Grange, and proposed a general association, by connecting certain points and carrying on a general negro and horse stealing, and counterfeit money passing arrangement. Brother Wm. Short informed them that Col. Taylor, being near the Round Top House, would start shortly to Alabama, and that he would take about seven thousand dollars with him to buy negroes, and that Mr. Bostick himself and one or two other gentlemen would have him killed for the cash, which would enable the company to organize and to go into active operations; but in case Taylor did not start in a short time, the company would steal, run and sell negroes in order to have funds to start on. My brother William was to keep the Star Hotel, Mr. Agery was to run a schooner on the Gulf, between Galveston and New Orleans, and a Mr. Jones was to be general agent at New Orleans: was to keep his boarding house and run a boat on the Mississippi river. McLaughlin, Wm. Short, A. J. Grigg, Greer and Cox, were to arrange the plans and decoy the negroes. Boren, Sap, Whitley, O'Bar, Crownoves and several others, were to run negroes from the interior to Galveston, and at a proper time Mr. Agery, with his schooner would convey them to New Orleans, deliver them to Mr. Jones, who, when convenient, would send them up the Mississippi river and have them sold, all of which was to be done *through their own line*, in order to evade detection. Alfred O'Bar was considered a poor hand to sell negroes, as he had run the boy Sam, belonging to a German gentleman near the Colorado river, by land to Red River, thence he took water and went up the mouth of the Ohio river; the boat had freight to discharge on the Ohio side, and while discharging freight Sam stepped off the boat, learning his foot was on free negro soil; Mr. O'Bar ordered him to return to the boat; Sam

informed Mr. O'Bar that he was on free soil, and hinted to him to keep quiet or he would disclose on him. Mr. O'Bar readily saw his situation, and returned home, (fortunately meeting one of the party, who furnished him with funds to get home on.) A little wiser for his trip, though not much enriched by the speculation.

About this time the party were informed of the decamping of a yellow boy, the property of Mrs. Schneider, and two other boys, the property of a Mr. Roberts or Robertson, of Fayette county, and a boy, the property of Rocky Williams. Where the negroes went, I do not know. Some time this last season a Mr. Carrington, overseer for Mr. Hill, carried off a woman slave and two children to Mexico; he said the children were his own. About the first of May, Carrington was in the Colorado Bottoms, and it was believed he was after more negroes. It would have been an easy matter to have taken him, and Hill had offered \$500 reward for his (Carrington's) apprehension; but as the party never interfered with men in their own line of business, Carrington was left uninterrupted. Brother William informed me that James and Samuel Miller passed counterfeit money, traded for stolen horses, and occasionally stole a few cattle. They live on the road leading from Bastrop to Caldwell, Burleson county. Wilson Small married a daughter of James McLaughlin, who is since dead; Small received a horse from Cooper to kill Elkins, but failed to do so; I think him cowardly: I know him to be *low* and *mean*; I saw him shoot a sow, the mother of several young pigs, the property of James Holt—he cut the sow in pieces and fed McLaughlin's dogs. He is mean enough to do any kind of stealing; he passes counterfeit money and runs stolen horses: in short, he is a *mean thief*. Judge Kelsaw lives on or near the Guadalupe, and stands fair in the community. He had the promise of Wagon Master and Paymaster in Gen. Worth's Division to El Paso de Norte; our company were to furnish him with counterfeit gold to pay off the teamsters, and he was to divide the profits with our agents. The Judge is quite conversant with all the plans of the company, and assists in carrying out our measures.

Joe Arrington follows gambling, picks up a horse occasionally, passes counterfeit gold with considerable dexterity, sells Shook's land certificates, and is in possession of all the plans of our party.

Bird Smith is a constant associate with Arrington, engages in the same acts that Arrington does, and knows our plans in general.

Wm. Short, my poor unfortunate brother, has engaged in every species of crime, led a miserable life, died a disgraceful death, and thus far I learn his body has been exposed a prey to the wild wolves and vultures. He it was that first led me into stealing, and after I had commenced could not withdraw for fear of my own life, as death was the penalty for disclosure.

Mr. Smith on the Guadalupe is an associate with McPeters, and engages in every species of crime common to the party.

Mr. Haley lives on the Beedi, near the Trinity river, and engages in every species of crime to which human beings are accessible. Haley is counted smart, too smart to be caught.

[continued on the back of this sheet]

McLaughlin said Beverly Pool would do to depend on, was acquainted with all the ropes, but is too lazy to engage in active operations. For reasons to myself known I retain the names of men—men with respectable families—men with daughters grown—men who might to shun the party as they would shun the cholera, plague or pestilence. These men do not steal, nor do they partake of stolen property, but they tell the thieves where to find their neighbors property, and willingly see and know that that property is gone from the owner forever, and lie about not knowing what has become of it. Then there are men who will feed the thieves, and that too in thickets, and that will notify them of an approaching danger, and at the same time occupy the name and standing of honest men and good and quiet citizens. Young as I am, I have seen them on their knees at preaching, I have heard them pray, I have seen them partake of the Lord's supper, and that same night entertain men that they knew were thieves.—Wonder not that when I saw and learned these things, that I was the more easily led astray. Imagine a Preacher of the Gospel with plenty of counterfeit coin—the State Seal forged, and forging Land Patents: and the same man, in the same saddlebags, carrying counterfeit coin, forged seal, Bible and Hymn book—one day forging claims for land, the next in the pulpit thundering the terror of the law on wicked men.

I learned the location of two mints for counterfeiting gold coin—one 15 miles above Brownsville on the Rio Grande, where coin can be had at fifty cents on the dollar to change off and trade to the Mexicans. The other mint is near 15 miles from Crockett in a cane brake or thicket bottom, and Moss Moore general agent—he furnishes the coin at 50 cents on the dollar.—The present coin are eagles and half eagles, well executed, the engraving is elegant, equal to any of the genuine American coin; one acquainted may tell it from the color being a shade brighter than pure gold; the weight corresponds, or nearly so, there is only from 1 to 2 grains difference in the half eagle; the eagles are the precise weight, and will have deceived many, and a good many have gone into the banks at New Orleans; they resist the tests of acids, being a plate of pure gold, but in order to apply the plate correctly, the color is partially changed. The quickest way to detect them is to examine the edge, where a line or division may be discovered in the center of the edge. Arrangements were made for the implements for coining silver in Fayette county, and two young men whose character for industry and honesty stood above suspicion, and still stands so, were to manufacture the article to the order of Mr. Bostick and others.—Mr. Agery was to keep a supply at Galveston, and Mr. Jones at New Orleans, and many others whose names I do not now recollect, were to keep a supply on hand to buy negroes, horses and other property. The old agents informed me of the extent of the party, their wealth, power and number, which was represented to me to be about 400. One of the necessary qualifications to become a good member, was a willingness to swear a lie to save another member's life; any member refusing to do so, was dismissed: penalty, silence or death. About the first of May last, I called at McLaughlin's on my way to Galveston; I asked McLaughlin for a horse to ride the trip, he told me he would loan me a horse until I could find one, and that I was a poor rogue if I could not find a horse. I started from McLaughlin's shed in the morning and soon found a large bay horse hobbled with a grass rope; I turned McLaughlin's horse loose, and started on the other horse. I never

felt so reckless in my life—now started on the *bold ocean*, regardless of consequences. I am sorry the owner of the horse was so ill able to spare him; the horse was the property of Mr. Wm. Cole, living at Round Top, on the Brenham and La Grange road, is regarded as an honest man, has a helpless family dependent on his exertions for support. I rode the horse to Houston and sold him for \$15. I learn the owner has got the horse again. I then went to Galveston, where I met Mr. Agery and Mr. Ford. I went to inform them that Mr. Johnson and Smith, alias Boren and Sap, were to be there shortly with two negroes. I remained there eight days, when Boren and Sap came and brought Mercer Hill's boy Joe. The next day Mr. Agery wrote me a bill of sale purporting to be from William H. Rice, of the town of Gonzales, county of Gonzales, to William Smith. I objected to taking the bill of sale under the name of Smith, but the negro did not know my true name when I left home. I did not know that I was to take the boy; in fact, I was only sent to inform Agery that the negro or negroes would come. At the urgent request of Mr. Agery, I started to New Orleans with the negro, and Agery promised to start the next day.

When I arrived at New Orleans, I stopped at Robinson's boarding house, and so far as I know, a good man. The next day Mr. Agery arrived and stopped at another place: he then sent me to sell the negro, but the police kept such a watch, Mr. Agery thought best to send me up to Natchez; encouraged me by informing me he had sold many, and that the people of Natchez were so eager to buy young negro men, that they would scarcely ask my name. Encouraged by so smart a man as Mr. Agery, with my tongue well fitted for a green boy of 18 years, I consented to go, but when I learned the amount of cash he could start I was near backing out. I was satisfied that Agery was afraid of himself and would not be seen except in a certain portion of the city. When the time arrived for me to go, \$6 was all the cash we both had, barely enough to pay our way, deck passage, (rather low for a negro trader.) I arrived in Natchez in the night and went to Mr. White's tavern (under the hill.) The next day I offered the boy for \$750 to Mr. Wilson: he said if he liked the boy when he talked with him he would give me my price. Imagine my dear reader my feelings, my reputation, yea my liberty, yes, perhaps my life depended on a single word, and that word to come from a simple and perhaps faithless negro. All Texas, all the money in the United States would poorly pay those moments of anguish: Just as I dreaded and expected, I was betrayed in a few moments: I was waited on by officers, my bill of sale asked for, my name, my residence and a thousand other questions, and a polite invitation to walk to the court house; my face, my actions, all embarrassed, soon told the tale for me. I was informed that I had stolen a negro: I cursed the fates, I cursed the den of thieves; ah, there is the voice that spoke quick as thought, those cursed wires stretched on those poles—oh my God! my feelings!

I could now see what disobedience, to my own dear parents had done for me—my father, little did you think your son would come to this!—oh my mother I am glad you are gone to your peaceful grave—this would break your heart—your son published to the world a thief. Heaven spare me and Heaven preserve all young men from such a fate—from the court house to the Jail—reader did you ever hear the lion roar; did you feel

Confession Concludes

the earth quake; were you ever in a storm at sea; well, it all is nothing compared with my feelings when the bolt was turned and I an inmate of the prison walls. I passed a sleepless night, miserable past description—ruined! ruined! ruined! The next day I called for paper and wrote to Texas, that letter was intercepted, tho' I did not know it, I looked for assistance; (sworn to assist each other to break open prisons, if detected.) Surely, I thought, that the giant Agery will come to my assistance. Not so; they wont do to depend on. Imagine my surprise, I heard strange voices without—I recognized the jailor's voice. Can it be at last they have come to my rescue; my heart beat high—the door opened—familiar faces, but prisoners. I recognized the face of Dr. Weir, and with it I received the information that the whole party were disclosed—one Grigg arrested—Boren and Sap pursued, and I could take my choice to stay at Natchez for trial or go to Brenham. I readily consented, provided that I could have a trial at law. Dr. Weir and Mr. Ferrel pledged their honors that such should be my case; and now reader, I am in irons in Brenham jail, guilty and depending on the sympathies of the community from whom I deserve none. Let my fate warn among men from keeping evil company. Parents, control your sons, or they may fail as I have done. I have no father and mother to sympathize with me; no brother to aid; poor and penniless, without a decent supply of raiment; an orphan boy, 18 years, who, from keeping bad company, and that of an elder brother, is now destined for the State prison, and perhaps for life. Ye that have sons, I ask your sympathy; those who have young brothers, I caution; Jurors (citizens of the county I have injured,) in inflicting the law of your country, (the laws that I have trampled under my feet,) I beseech you spare me—I ask, I beg, I pray, you act with all that lenity consistent with your oath, your honor and your country's cause, and let come what may, from this time forward, I will lead the life of an honest man.

THOMAS SHORT

In the same Texas State Gazette issue, appeared the

Confession of A. J. Grigg.

Grigg was taken while communicating with Dr. Rogers' negro in the back of his field, which is most elegantly situated for such private interviews. He anticipated sending two negroes; the time came but only one negro, Mercer Hill's, the other failing to comply, which led to Grigg's detection, after which he confessed he had sent Hill's negro to Galveston by Orland Sap and Lewis Boren, to deliver to Agery, one of the prime movers in the clan. Agery was to pay two hundred dollars in good money, or \$100 in spurious, for the delivery of each negro. Also, that A. had rented the

Star Hotel in Galveston, and Bill Short was to be proprietor. Further, the clan had a mint for coining money on the Rio Grande, above Brownsville; they conveyed the money to Galveston and deposited it at the Star Hotel, where any of the clan can get the money at 50 cents on the dollar in good money. Agery controlled the mint, and none of the clan knew exactly where it is; he says it is not proper, according to the improved plan, that they should know, from the fact that all arrangements heretofore conducted upon different principles have been broken up: hence the impropriety of too many knowing the precise location of the mint. There are 40 cents of good money in each dollar, the charge for coining 10 cts., which makes the 50 cts., it being so well arranged that it is extremely difficult to detect it; he also states that when mixed with good gold the difference cannot be observed even by himself. He also implicates the following persons as being attached to the clan:

Wm. Hewitt—dealt in counterfeit money, and was engaged with him in a lot of stolen cattle.

Geo. Carmine—handles counterfeit money, has \$1000 on hand, also steals cattle.

Ja's Cox and Nat. Greer—advisors and planners of all the rascality the clan was guilty of, and harborers of stolen property all it can be gotten off.

Ja's McLaughlin—was the father of and took a hand in all kinds of villany common to the clan, though he was opposed to stealing negroes, from the fact that they could *talk*: he had no disposition whatever to handle anything that could talk.

Wm. Short—was McL.'s right-hand man: also, James Crook and D. D. Richie (now in the Louisiana Penitentiary) carried Mr. Cleavland's and Dr. Adkinson's negroes and sold them, 45 miles from Shreveport, for \$1140,—this was in April, 1847. They obtained a bill-of-sale in the following manner:

Getting out of danger, one of them remained behind, and overtook the other at some town on the route and presented him with a note of large amount for the payment, had a big fuss, finally compromised by selling the negro to satisfy the note, and receiving the balance in counterfeit money, having a bill-of-sale witnessed before a notary. Also, said the clan was about to establish crossing on all the rivers of Texas. Their plan was to approach a ferry after night, cross the negroes, then call for the ferryman and cross over themselves, so as to allay all suspicions against them should they be charged with stealing negroes.

Ara Harris, poor fellow—was smarter than all of us. He handled counterfeit money all his life, but never passed it but to one of the clan. In '47 he bought of McLaughlin a large bay mare which he paid \$200 in counterfeit money for,—*Kentucky Bank*. This transaction took place at Washington. So soon as McL. received the money, he presented the landlord with a \$10 bill, who observed he did not have the change, but would step across to the grocery and get it, which he did, and paid McL. the balance in good money.

Here Grigg's "confession" abruptly ends. See page four for a brief assessment of these two articles.

Reaction to the “Confessions”

Preposterous! Our NHG a supposed criminal! Was he truly a participant in forgery, thievery, slave-running, and murder? Was he one of the “advisors and planners of all the rascality the clan was guilty of”—a principle architect of an interstate gang of some 400 members? I don’t think so!

The odious document purporting to be the “confession” of Thomas Short is very suspicious—far too literate and cultured to have emerged from the pen of the youthful thief who was the product of the limited schooling available in the 1840s Texas frontier. Indeed, it was recently observed in the *Handbook of Texas Online* (a joint project of The General Libraries at the University of Texas at Austin and the Texas State Historical Association) that Thomas Short “then sixteen, ostensibly wrote a vivid and imaginative confession, surprising in light of his youth and education ...” More information about the nefarious family to which Thomas Short belonged can be found online by first accessing ...

<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/index.html>

... then doing a search for Thomas’ father, John Short.

Grigg’s article was clearly not a “confession.” It did not even pretend to be in his words, but was at best a paraphrase composed by another hand. It is quite possible that Grigg was illiterate but even so, to have qualified as a “confession,” any statements which he made ought to have been reported verbatim. But since this was not the case, his deposition must have inevitably given rise to an *interpretation* where the accuracy of his remarks became suspect.

You will probably have recognized in the lengthy “confession” a couple of other names: Thomas Irvin and Mr. Carothers, both kin to NHG. Thomas Irvin was doubtless NHG’s nephew Thomas G. Irvin, one of the sons of Sarah Hunt Greer and Absalom Irvin. We are less sure of the identity of the Mr. Carothers. He was almost certainly kin to Susanah G. Carothers, wife of Gilbert Dunlap Greer. The exact relationship is unknown, but a good guess would be her father, George Carothers. Carothers appears to have been involved only in a very incidental way, but Thomas Irvin is alleged to have been an accomplice in illegal activity.

There are numerous reasons for believing the allegations against NHG to be false, but a finding of his innocence requires a careful scrutiny of evidence which thus far has been only partially revealed. A thorough exploration of the facts—some obvious, others quite subtle—will be accomplished in future issues. To do this, much space will be allocated to the effort so that NHG’s innocence will be clearly established prior to our next reunion.

Of the various reasons that will be brought forward in the near future to support the innocence of NHG, one will be the response made by NHG after these allegations were leveled against him. This response is the long-sought missing article which NHG wrote and then published in the *Brenham Texas Ranger* on August 31, 1849.

In our next issue—NHG responds!



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Next Reunion to Be in Texas

Greeting to all. I hope this edition of the NHG Family Newsletter finds each of you well and experiencing a wonderful summer. Here in the Great Basin of Utah, we've had the hottest summer in 50 years! Lots of wild fires, wind and sun. But, to the best of my knowledge, the Greers continue to thrive here in the Intermountain West.

After polling the several family group representatives, the choice is in for the place of our next family reunion. By an overwhelming majority vote, the choice is Washington County, Texas.

Although there are advantages to any one of many other venues, East Texas offers a great opportunity for the family to see and experience much of what helped shape our family's legacy. We all have been influenced in our life because of our forefather's experience in Texas.

We look forward to putting together a fine couple of days along the Brazos River area of East Texas. A few good folks have offered to help plan and carry off the upcoming event. We welcome all in the area (and out of the area as well) who would be willing to assist in the effort to create a truly memorable reunion.

Recognizing the fact that summer time in Texas can be nothing but Hot, some have suggested that we meet early in June. The dates, the time, the exact place and itinerary will take shape over the next few months. We plan to leave enough time to plan the best way for the most part of us to get there and perhaps enjoy a special trip, each in our own way, to arrive in the Washington County area.

Clan Gregor History Resumed

Readers will recall that two issues ago we began some excerpts from Amelia MacGregor's *History of the Clan Gregor*. In our last issue, the space intended for our second installment was instead allocated to the lengthy "Confession of Thomas Short." Now we resume our treatment of Miss MacGregor's monumental work on the loose inserted sheet as we present Chapter I—which treats of the early origins of the clan.

A brief explanation of our coverage is warranted. Miss MacGregor's text is only slightly edited to fit in available space. Her original work had extensive footnotes, many of which are

of little interest to us in our presentation. Furthermore, in our treatment, those notes which *do* interest us have been converted to endnotes, instead of footnotes, and consequently renumbered. The notes retained here have, in some cases, also been edited for brevity and relevance.

Chapter II will appear in our next issue.

The Texas Scandal Continued

Our last issue, featured the lengthy, defamatory and unsubstantiated "Confession of Thomas Short," very probably produced by the pen of Dr. John R. Weir. It also included the briefer, but equally unsubstantiated, "Confession of A. J. Grigg"—obviously not written by Grigg (aka Gregg or Griggs).

This issue features the long-sought article by NHG which constituted a rebuttal against the allegations levied against him by whomever produced the "Confession of Thomas Short." We also include another "confession" attributed to one Orland Sap and another rebuttal: that of Beverley Pool, a man who defends NHG and whose involvement in these affairs will later contribute to our finding of NHG's innocence.

NHG Responds

The search for the article written by NHG led eventually to microfilmed reels of the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* which was the first newspaper to achieve a degree of permanence in Texas. A year and a half before NHG emigrated to the new republic, the newspaper was begun in San Felipe by Gail Borden who later invented condensed milk and founded the Borden Dairy Company. A month after NHG and his party landed in Velasco, Borden moved the paper via the famous river boat *Yellowstone* to Houston, where it was publishing when it reprinted NHG's article on September 27, 1849. (Borden had, by the way, sold his share of the newspaper in June 1837.)

NHG's article originally appeared in the *Brenham Texas Ranger* on August 31, 1849. And the "confession" of Thomas Short originally ran in the same newspaper on August 17. We therefore observe that some two weeks had elapsed between the publication of the allegations against NHG and the subsequent publication of his response.

During that interval, public hysteria—ever a stranger to truth and reason—had erupted and forced NHG to flee for his life. He was certainly not the only man afflicted by the public insanity, but he was one of the lucky ones in that he escaped with his life. The same cannot be said for others.

NHG's impassioned and compelling response that was reprinted by the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* is now presented in its entirety on the next page ...

FELLOW-CITIZENS :— I have taken up my pen to address you on a subject never anticipated by me: I have frequently reflected on many positions in life, that I might occupy: but the present is one entirely unexpected. From the grossest falsehoods that ever engendered themselves in the bosom of depraved mortals, I am presented to the world as a manager and planner for a set of thieves and assassins, the most low and vile that the world has ever produced, and *ex parte* testimony, or no testimony at all: for the statement of Gregg and Short contained in the Ranger of the 17th instant, is certainly the most absurd and contradictory statement that I have ever seen in the whole course of my life; and, being at a distance from the scene of operations, I knew nothing only as I see it in the paper that I above allude to, being drove for safety from civilized society, from my family and property, to these northern wilds, seated on the brink of a rivulet, without a companion save a lonely dove that occasionally calls to partake of the limpid stream, and spend a few moments near me; with a mind almost destroyed, and never having in my life attempted to write a piece for the press, and knowing my inability, under any circumstances, I felt greatly embarrassed at the undertaking; but I hope my fellow citizens will divest themselves of prejudice, and examine the subject impartially, but I am fully assured from the present state of things, that there are some amongst them to which the language of the poet will readily apply, "convince a man against his will, he is of the same opinion still." Fellow-citizens, where are my rights under the state of things? rights for which my father battled in the days that "tried men's souls," yes, often I heard him on a long winter's night recount the history of our wrongs and his sufferings, which were extremely great; the language of the poet has beautifully portrayed the last years of his life—

"The war-worn soldier kindly bade to stay,
Sat by the fire and talked the night away;
Wept, o'er his wounds and tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won."

In silent watches of the night I observed from my secluded retreat, through a clear sky, the glittering stars that I was accustomed to behold from my father's dwelling: they recalled the scenes of my boyhood the days of peace and happiness once so delightful; and when I further reflect on my course in this, my adopted State, that I have endeavored to raise a family useful to their country, and that my eldest son, at the age of eighteen years, assisted in planting the lone star on banks of the Rio Grande, and that my second son assisted in bearing the star-spangled banner triumphantly beyond the city of Mexico, in the mountainous retreats of the guerillas, and returned to my humble house bringing an ounce ball on his lungs, from which he can never recover. That I have regularly paid all dues to the support of my country—I am then led to reflect on the course pursued toward me—and my cup of bitterness is full to overflowing; and what is the testimony against me? none but what any of the individuals persecuting me under it would take exceptions, even against the vilest slave on their plantations, provided it was on the oaths of these men, and would be able to invalidate it and screen them-

selves from punishment. No, fellow-citizens, their oaths would not collect a six bit! account against the most humble individual in this whole community. Go my neighbors of Brenham, and see Thos. Short and talk with him: this statement as published is certainly not his, and I am satisfied that Capt. McDade, the sheriff, will take a pleasure in waiting on you, as I have a better opinion of him than to believe that he would assist in the persecution of any man wrongfully. I beg your attention to the statement of Gregg: it is a sweeping assertion, and placed in such shape that it can't be fairly met. Ask Mr. Gregg's neighbors if they ever saw me in his company, or at his house. I never was in his immediate neighborhood since he has lived there and he never was at my house in his life, and there is none of my neighbors, I believe, but will do me the justice to say, that they never saw him there, nor saw me in his company in life. I will further offer to you the testimony of Mr. Theo Supple, who lived with me the last year, who will inform you that he never saw one of those men at my house, or in company with me during his living there, except McLaughlin, who was there only three time during the year, and then but a few minutes at each time: the second, on his way for a doctor, and was sick with the mumps, and Mr. Supple went for him and he returned immediately home to his sick family; the third and last time, with his horse sick, on his way from Brenham. To those not knowing Mr. Supple, I will say, he is a young man of unimpeachable integrity, beloved and respected by all who know him.—There is but one item in all these confessions that is a fact, and that is the circumstance of sending to Brenham for liquor to brighten our ideas. Mr. Cox called at my house late in the evening on his way to Mrs. Fuller's, to hire a boy from her, as he needed him at his mill, and requested my company, and asked me if I had any spirits: I told him no, but I would send and get some. I accordingly called my boy Jim, and sent him to Brenham, and fell in with him as we left Mrs. Fuller's, and I don't recollect at this time, whether our ideas were brightened or blunted by the operation; but I recollect that we and the boy Jim all drunk together, and enjoyed ourselves very well, and saw no boy but my own, nor any neighbor of mine lost any boy. No, fellow-citizens, there has been about two negroes stole from my neighborhood since I lived here, and one of them was mine, and it passed off like a sunny evening after an April shower. Finally, fellow-citizens, I challenge any individual in the wide extended State, from the Sabine to the Rio Grande, to say, if he can, that I ever injured him one dollar, or attempted any such thing; and if I could say as much of some of them that are spoken of as men of the first grade, it would be hundreds in my way. I beg leave to be informed by the editor of the Ranger, what tribunal that a man is to apply to establish his innocence, as I had been informed that this matter had been before the most August and sovereign tribunal of the land; and if it was to be a matter of investigation before an inferior tribunal, I would by no means be willing to admit any thing proved by such testimony as is laid down. I will close by begging the serious consideration of my fellow-citizens to this, to me an all-important subject.

NATH. H. GREER.

The Editors of this State friendly to the cause of justice, truth and innocence, will please give the above a place in their paper.

N. H. G.

Another "Confession"

Confession of Orland Sap.

He was introduced to the clan by Bill Short,—at last was induced to join, from the flattering accounts which he received of him relative to the clan. He was informed that there were about 400, in a flourishing condition, and able to effect anything so far as murdering, *were in*: was told should he divulge anything, death was his fate. The next talk he had with Short he was asked if he had done anything for the cause? He replied no; was told if he did not prove more active he would be disbanded from the clan. His first acquaintance with Grigg was at Short's house. Grigg came up near night with his horse covered with sweat: Short introduced him to Sap and Boren. After sitting a few minutes, Grigg took Short out, and conversed a few minutes. Returning, S. said: "boys, we have a pretty little snap for you. 'Ah! what is that?'" they replied. Grigg said that there were some dam'd rascals in his settlement that did not like him much, and he had two negroes ready to carry off and sell. Boren and Short readily agreed to the proposition, the time and place appointed. The time came: Short, Boren, Sap and Grigg were assembled, awaiting the arrival of the negroes: but, from some cause, the negroes failed to meet according to appointment Bill Short advanced Grigg a yoke of oxen worth \$30 on the negroes. They appointed a second meeting. The assembled were Sap, Grigg, Boren and Enos Cooper: but one negro appeared, which was Hill's, on foot. The negro having no horse, Grigg told him to go to a fine mare of Robt. Moore; they hemmed her in the corner of Moore's fence; Cooper had her by the collar, borrowed Sap's knife, cut the bell off, and pocketed [sic] the knife. Boren and Sap proceeded with all haste to Galveston, delivered the negro to Agery and Tom Short, and returned in haste. They swapped the mare to a Mr. Hammon, who was on his way to Galveston, for a pony, receiving \$10 to boot. The pony was carried by Bill Short 5 miles beyond La Grange, and deposited with a friend. After they returned there was considerable excitement among the citizens. Short and McLaughlin believed it was advisable to have some of them who were most active killed off in order to allay the excitement. Boren and Sap were called on to execute the bloody deed; they were to get \$300 to kill Mr. Ledbetter; they were to ride up after night, call him out and shoot him down, and make their way off, bearing in mind not to drop anything that would detect them in the murder.

Messrs. Townsend, McIntyre, Ferrel and others were to receive a similar benefit: i. e. they were to be assassinated by some of the clan. Times were rather ticklish for them—several companies were in pursuit of them, and kept them dodging; nevertheless they broke into a store in Travis and took what goods they wanted. After a few days they stole two fine horses from Major Frampton; also a mare of Dr. Key, which they left on the prairie near Rutersville, with her mane and tail shaved. The following names are attached to the clan:

Enos Cooper,	Thomas Hughs,	James Cox,
Nat. Greer,	Dennis Herald,	Bill Ragins,
Bird Smith,	Frank Shelburn,	Bill and Tom Short,
Jos. Arrington,	John Marshall,	W. Sansum,
— Brown,	Paul Breeding,	Clay Davis,
A. Bostick,	Bill Hewitt,	Two Pearsons.

And Another Rebuttal

To the Public.

McLaughlin said Beverly Pool would do to depend on—was acquainted with all the ropes, but is too lazy to engage in active operations.

This, fellow-citizens, purports to be the confession of Thomas Short, so far as my name is used; and I must here take occasion to express my astonishment at so lengthy and well written a document emanating from one so very young, and almost entirely an idiot; but he seems capacitated to lay down principles in morality and ethics not to be exceeded by the most learned and rigid moralist of the present day. But, fellow-citizens, notwithstanding all this may be said of it in truth,—examine it on another ground, and it is certainly the most inconsistent and contradictory mass I ever saw put together in my life, and shows more partiality and prejudice than anything of the kind ever presented to the public; and the base presumption of it ought to be indignantly frowned upon by every intelligent and thinking man in the State. I do not make these remarks for the purpose of wholly exonerating myself, for, in all probability, is as much truth contained in the statement about me as many others, but it seems to me the saddle is on the wrong horse. I will, therefore, endeavor to explain the facts, to which I will with pleasure be qualified at any time.

James McLaughlin called at my house some time after he was acquitted of the murder of Crook, and told me of the unbounded and unabating friendship, on his trial, of Dr. John R. Weir, and the interest he had taken in arranging a jury for the same; and that Weir spoke to him of me, and asked him if I would do to depend on, in case he was convicted, to make a key that he could turn him out. He told him he thought I would. He then stole the key and took an impression on sole leather, and had every thing in ready in case of conviction. Furthermore, the language is not McLaughlin's; as this by-word "was acquainted with all the ropes" was not his, as I have conversed with several, since I saw it, of his acquaintance, and they have no recollection of ever hearing him use the words. Probably the citizens of Brenham have heard it before they saw it in print. There is one other part of the subject to which I would call the attention of the public—that is, the partiality for those men with grown daughters, and those praying men—the very men, it seems to me, that should have been exposed; but they had respectable families. Has not Mr. James Cox as respectable a family as any in the State, and you see his name unnecessarily used. It seems that a repetition is delightful. Is not Esq. Greer's family respectable? I lived in their neighborhood, and I never heard the contrary.—Oh, Prejudice, Falsehood, and Persecution, hide your heads, for the days of your prosperity are numbered.

BEVERLEY POOL.

August 27th, 1849.

The "Confession of Orland Sap" first appeared in the Washington Texas Ranger then was reprinted in issue No. 1 of the Texas State Gazette on Saturday, August 25, 1849. Pool's rebuttal is taken from the September 22, 1849, issue No. 5 of the Texas State Gazette.

A Brief Analysis of NHG's Article

NHG's response revealed the torment and despair, his "mind almost destroyed," which had overtaken him and yet he protested eloquently, in the parlance of the day, the calumny which had disparaged his honesty and impugned his character. His castigation of his accusers and his remonstrances against his neighbors who had so readily turned on him were delivered with vigor and indignation.

He explained how he had been "drove for safety from civilized society, from my family and property, to these northern wilds, seated on the brink of a rivulet ..." Where exactly had he taken refuge from the mob? Studying his article, the words seem to suggest that perhaps he had written them from his headright land in what was then Navarro County and that the rivulet of which he wrote was the headwater of Aquilla Creek which bordered his property near present-day Hillsboro.

Laying aside for the moment the harrowing circumstances which had befallen him, we glean some interesting insights from the piece. Here we find cherished mention of his father's recounting the War of Independence, and we note how the poetic words which follow the reminiscence give solid evidence of NHG's erudition. NHG's reference to the "peace and happiness" of his boyhood speak well of his parents and of his upbringing. And then we marvel at some nuggets of information about his own children.

We learn that Gilbert Dunlap Greer, his "eldest son, at the age of eighteen years, assisted in planting the lone star on banks of the Rio Grande ..." Since GDG was born in October 1822, it appears that 1841 was the year in question. However, it appears likely that NHG, in his troubled state of mind, mis-remembered the year that his son who—we now know—was among the 700 volunteers who marched to the Rio Grande in October 1842 as GDG was turning 20. This was the celebrated Somervell Expedition which was a "showing of the flag" ordered by President Sam Houston in retaliation for Mexican raids that had occurred earlier that year.

We also note the pride and pain that NHG felt in how Thomas Lacy Greer, his "second son assisted in bearing the star-spangled banner triumphantly beyond the city of Mexico, in the mountainous retreats of the guerillas, and returned to my humble house bringing an ounce ball on his lungs, from which he can never recover." That bullet eventually claimed TLG's life some 33 years later.

And lo! Here is mention of the "testimony of Mr. Theo Supple, who lived with me the last year ..." Readers will recall that Supple was the favorite teacher to whom AVG referred in his memoirs which figured in our remarks in Vol. 4, No. 2, of September 1999. NHG echoed his son's sentiments when writing that Supple was "a young man of unimpeachable integrity, beloved and respected by all ..."

A final observation is how NHG's recollection that "we and the boy Jim all drunk together, and enjoyed ourselves very well ..." indirectly suggests to us the affable relationship that NHG had with his slaves. It would be hard to assert that the Greers were harsh or even indifferent toward their slaves when here we have evidence of how NHG readily shared liquor with his slave Jim.

We will, of course, in future issues of this newsletter return to NHG's writing and that of others to address in detail the offenses so unjustly imposed upon him. But for now, let us note in closing that we have now learned the reason for our ancestors' departure from the county of Washington to that of DeWitt where, as AVG wrote in his memoirs, "We spent most of one year ... Think this was in 51." NHG and his family moved for self-preservation and peace of mind.

In our next issue we will present additional findings and the many reasons why NHG must be declared innocent of the charges levied against him.

History of Clan Gregor — Chapter I [only slightly edited for length]

Early Origin

THE renowned ancestor to whom we look as the Founder of our Race was King Gregory, who reigned from 878 to 890. No documentary evidence can be adduced to prove descent from a source so remote; and allusion to it is not made here as to an established historical fact, but because the tradition has been constantly handed down that Gregory, of the race of Scotland's early kings, was the ancestor of the Clan which bears his name.¹

Modern authorities on early Scottish History state that Ciricius, or Girig, or Girg, afterwards known as Gregory, whatever may have been his connection with Alpin's Royal line, was not King Alpin's son. According to the most trustworthy chronicles, his father was Dungaile, or Dungalus, grandfather of Run, King of the Britons of Strathclyde, who married the daughter of Kenneth M^cAlpin. After the death of Aedh, or Heth, the last of Kenneth's sons, Eocha, son of Run, was placed on the throne of the Picts, and another king, Girig, was associated with him as his Governor. It is recorded that he liberated the Scottish Church from various secular exactions, in gratitude for which good offices the later chronicles, connected with the Religious Houses, afterwards revered him as Gregory the Great, a Ruler of remarkable wisdom, as well as a successful Commander.²

It may be frankly confessed that, where even the most prominent historical characters are involved in considerable uncertainty, it must be impossible to trace the lineage of the Clan through the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries with any certainty. Such an attempt was indeed made in a "Latin History of the Alpinian Family, formerly in the Scots College at Paris, and recovered from it by David Mallet" the Poet, who died in 1765. It is exceedingly unlikely that the date of this history, now undiscoverable, can have been earlier than the seventeenth century, before which time, the History by Hector Boece (1570) had given rise to much spurious tradition; but it is probable that there may have been threads of truth woven into the more elaborate narrative. It may be interesting to give a list of the generations, as enumerated in the article on MacGregor, in Sir Robert Douglas's "Baronage," based, in the early part, on this Latin document, of which Sir John MacGregor Murray possessed an authentic copy, although no trace of either the original or the copy can now be found.³

Two very old MacGregor pedigrees have been brought to light since Douglas's "Baronage" was written; one occurs in an ancient Gaelic parchment MS., dated 1467,⁴ which contains genealogies of most of the Highland Clans. In this document, the Clan Gregor is deduced from Fearchar Fada, King of Dalriada, of the Lorne line, who reigned in the early part of the eighth century, through a certain Anrias connected with the Earldom of Ross. This pedigree has been printed in full in the "Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis," and again in "Celtic Scotland," vol. iii. From these works it is here transcribed in Gaelic and in English.

"Genelach Clann Grigair. Maelcolaim ic Padruic M^cEoin ic Grigair ic Donch M^cMaolcolaim ic Gillacrist M^cFearchar ic Muiredaig ic Ainreas M^cCormac ic Oirbertaig ic Fearchair M^cFearchair fada ic Fearadaig fin:—

Malcolm, son of Patrick, son of John, son of Gregor, son of Duncan, son of Malcolm, son of Gillchrist, son of Ferchard, son of Murdoch, son of Annreas, son of Cormac, son of Airbertach, son of Ferchar og, son of Ferchar fada, son of [King of Dalriada of the line of Lorn, early part of eighth century.] Feradach finn."

Dr Skene holds that, previous to the eleventh century, this document is of no authority. His own theory is that, "previous to the thirteenth century, the Highlanders of Scotland were divided into a few great tribes, which exactly corresponded with the ancient earldoms, and that, from one or other of these tribes, all the Highlanders are descended" ("Highlanders of Scotland," vol. ii.).

The other ancient pedigree is to be found in a MS. Latin Chronicle, chiefly an obituary, composed by Sir James MacGregor, Dean of Lismore, in the sixteenth century, and containing a genealogy of John MacGregor of Glenstray, dated 1512. With regard to this list of ancestors (to be given later in detail), Dr Skene remarks:—

"Besides the genealogy of this Clan contained in the Irish MS., Dean MacGregor furnishes us with one which may probably be viewed as the native tradition. In it Gregor, the eponymus of the Clan, has a different ancestry, and his pedigree is taken up to a certain Aoidh Urchaidh, or Hugh of Glenurchay, which, as Glenurchay was an old possession of the MacGregors, may be viewed as the native tradition and more probable descent. The usual calculation would place him in the end of the twelfth century, but the Dean connects him at once with Kenneth McAlpin in the ninth century,⁵ and thus the supposed royal descent of the MacGregors must be relegated to the same category with the descent of the other Clans from the Kings of Dalriada."

"To the great tribe of the Moravians, or 'Men of Moray,' belong, in the main, the clans brought in the old Irish genealogies from the Kings of Dalriada of the tribe of Lorn, among whom the old Mormaers of Moray appear The group containing the M^cNabs, Clan Gregor, and M^cKinnons, appear to have emerged from Glendochart, at least to be connected with the old Columban monasteries. The Clans, properly so called, were thus of native origin; the surnames partly of native and partly of foreign descent."⁶

It would seem unavailing to discuss at further length the question of the origin of the clan, always reckoned in the past as the "Siol Alpin"—the old motto, "S Rioghail Mo Dhrèam," "My tribe is royal," will suffice as a memorial of our traditions. We may now pass on to a period when the family history begins to be more distinct.

At the outset it may be desirable to recall circumstances which, although well known, require to be borne in mind, rightly to comprehend the subsequent position of the Clan Gregor, their difficulties and struggles.

Amongst the continental nations there arose, in the early Christian centuries, the institution of feudalism. To protect themselves against hostile armies of foreigners, or against assaults by enemies of their own nation, the principal men turned their houses into fortified castles, and agreed with the peasants to protect them and their families on condition of their surrendering themselves entirely to their liege lord or suzerain. The sovereign gave land to his nobles on condition of military service to himself, with a certain number of their men; the nobles adopted some of their less powerful neighbours, and gave off portions of land to them on similar conditions, thus establishing a system of mutual advantage between the lord who granted protection, the vassals who gave their military service in return, and lastly the peasants who received protection and entirely gave up their freedom to obtain it.

Amidst the pressing necessities of the age which gave rise to it, the institution undoubtedly had its value, till the nations outgrew it.

The feudal laws were brought to England by the Saxons about A.D. 600, and were made more stringent under the Norman William the Conqueror, in 1068. The system was introduced into Scotland by Malcolm II. in 1008, but it took a long time before it could absorb the tribal organisation then prevalent. Certain burdens on land proper to the old Celtic tenures gradually became assimilated to feudal forms in the eastern districts, whilst in the northern and western the great tribes broke up into clans about the thirteenth century.

The Clan, a Gaelic word meaning children, consisted originally of the children of a common ancestor, bound together by the ties of blood, loyal to the Chief of their race, and sharing his good or bad fortune. Personal attachment united each to the other in this family system, which in different degrees has subsisted in most primitive nations, such as the Israelites, and even in the present day amongst the Arabs. In the Highlands the chiefship was generally hereditary and belonged to the representative of the main stem, but to this there were frequent exceptions. The next cadet often became the captain, and transmitted that honour to his descendants. Occasionally in cases where the actual chief was prevented from taking an active part in warfare, the clan chose a leader on elective principles. The chieftains or heads of the different houses which had branched off from the main stem were also powerful, and exerted great influence over the chiefs; moreover, every clansman had his birthright of kindred blood, which gave him dignity and enthusiasm, so that it is incorrect in any way to liken members of a clan to the serfs of the feudal system. Doubtless there must have been cases of abuse and hardship, and the two systems running parallel, where they did not clash, sometimes overlapped. The feudal superiors, in some circumstances, won the affections of the occupants of their lands, and were accepted in the same position as chiefs of race; but this was the exception.

The struggle between the Gaelic population of the Highlands clinging to the old clan system on the one side, and the feudal overlords, who, having obtained crown charters of the lands, occupied by the native races, sought to dispossess them, was a long source of trouble and dispeace, and the MacGregors, especially, were for centuries irreconcilable to the change.

It may be observed that neither at the period under present consideration, nor for some time later, does the name of MacGregor, so passionately loved and so powerful a talisman in the future, appear to have existed as a surname, although individuals⁷ of the race can be traced. There must early have been numerous descendants of the same ancestor, allied in blood and interests, for by the fifteenth century they had become a very large clan. The custom of distinguishing different families of the same clan by their patronymics—i.e., as the son of so-and-so—also of giving a “byname,” or “to-name,” to individuals, prevailed amongst Highlanders in very early days, and continued long after surnames became general in other places.

The following is taken from a sympathetic article on the Clan Gregor, published by Dr Joseph Anderson in 1890:—

“There are some minor episodes in Scottish history that illustrate with singular force the native intensity of character and fervour of attachment to traditional systems, which so often made the nation’s progress towards the universal reign of law a bloodstained path. The case of the Clan Gregor is perhaps the most typical of these episodes, which marked the transition from the old Celtic system of the military organisation of the clans under the chiefs of their name to the territorial system, by which the men of the tribes became the men of their feudal landlords. But though its tragic and romantic elements have often been dealt with, the true story of the doings and sufferings of the devoted clan has yet to be dug from the dry-as-dust sources of

historic narrative in contemporary records, and the purpose of this paper is merely to show that the records contain material for such a narrative.

“There is no indication of the reason why the numbers of the clan when they first appear in record are found scattered over such a wide area of the Perthshire and Argyleshire Highlands, unless it lie simply that they had spread over the adjacent lands and baronies as best they could, in consequence of their chiefs holding no land of the Crown. We find them located in Glenurchy and Glenlochry, Strathfillan and Glendochart, Breadalbane and Balquidder, Glenlyon and Rannoch. Although by the immemorial custom of the Highlands, to which they most tenaciously clung, they owed military service to the chief of their own name only, he was not at any time within the ken of record in a position either to provide them with homesteads or protect them in their possessions. While the lands on which they had settled remained in the Crown they might be safe from eviction, but when the lands came to be granted out to local barons, the grantees naturally desired to settle their new estates with their own men, on whom they could depend for thankful service and punctual payment of rents. The MacGregors, on the other hand, in all such cases immediately found themselves in the position of occupants of the lands of owners to whom they were unacceptable as tenants, and who desired nothing better than to be rid of them at any price. The inevitable consequences followed—eviction, resistance, and retaliation. The evicted tenants sought shelter among their kinsmen who still possessed lands, as sub-tenants or squatters; or they became “broken men,” and betook themselves to the hills to live on the plunder of the lands from which they had been ejected.”

Referring to the Act passed in 1438

“For the stanching of theft and other enormities in the Highlands,” Dr Anderson adds, “this was the first of a long series of similar enactments by which the MacGregors were placed entirely at the mercy of their natural enemies.”

- 1 ... the late Dr Skene, to whose valuable works frequent reference must at the outset be made, while reducing the race from another source, to be hereafter quoted, remarks that the Clan Gregor, having recognised Gregory “as their eponymous ancestor, their descent from him is now implicitly believed in by all the MacGregors” ...
- 2 Mention is made [in “Celtic Scotland”] also of a “Church in the Meams” with the name of “Eglisgair,” which still observes a memorial of Girig.
- 3 One reason for here reproducing the greater part of the article in Douglas’s “Baronage” is, that as it has served as a basis for small sketches of the Clan history, readers may have an opportunity of comparing it with other studies on the subject, and observe how far its view’s have now to be modified.
- 4 Discovered by Dr Skene among the MSS. in the Collection of the Faculty of Advocates, and considered to have been written by a M^lLachlan, 1450. (See Skene’s “Highlanders,” vol. ii. p. 8.) Reference is made to the MS. having been printed in the “Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis,” edited by the Iona Club, first number. The genealogies from this MS. are also to be found in “Celtic Scotland,” vol. iii., Appendix, p. 487.
- 5 “It is obvious that a number of generations are omitted, not even excepting the ancestor who gave his name to the Clan.”—Note to the Dean of Lismore’s MS., by Mr Gregory.
- 6 ... In the “Highlanders of Scotland,” ... Dr Skene seeks to demonstrate that the Highlanders are the same people with those who inhabited the Highlands of Scotland in the ninth or tenth centuries, the descendants of the great northern division of the Pictish nation, unaffected by the Scottish conquest of the Lowlands in 843.
- 7 In 1260 Gilcolm Makgrigir, probably a churchman, is mentioned in the proceedings of a court held by the Prior of St Andrews at Dull, in Atholl. Quoted from “Transcript, of Chartulary of St Andrews,” Advocates’ Library, by Mr MacGregor Stirling.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Why NHG Fled Washington Co.

As the summer of 1849 came to an end, Nathaniel Hunt Greer stood accused of illegal gang activity. His character had been traduced and he had been driven from his home by an angry mob. His standing in the community had been devastated and his family had been shaken to its core.

The reasons the community had been given to think NHG guilty were these: In local newspapers "confessions" had been published and in two he had been accused of gang involvement. In reaction to the publications and to the events that ensued, NHG chose not to submit to the will of his peers, not to seek justice through the process of law, but instead to flee the county. Could anything have been a clearer indication of guilt than this?

We can readily understand how any observer confronted with these events would doubt NHG's innocence. But we, as citizens now of the 21st century, have seen enough of modern social and political events to appreciate that things frequently are not as first presented. We are sufficiently mature politically to grasp the fact that reports are often based on unfounded rumor, sometimes shaped by biased information, and occasionally just plain wrong.

But if the allegations were untrue, why wouldn't NHG stand his ground, strive to clear his name, and seek redress through the courts? This is a question that looms large before us—it cannot be ignored and must not be slighted. Indeed, its answer will illuminate what was happening in and around Washington County and enhance our understanding of NHG's situation.

To begin to understand the forces at work in 1849 Texas, we should examine an article that appeared in the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* on October 18, 1849. It presented a three-week-old account of recent activities of a group of men who called themselves the "Fayette Association." That article (with original grammatical errors) now follows in its entirety ...

Our Reunion to be in June

As the year 2000 draws to a close, the time has come for us to begin making plans for our next reunion. As readers will recall, the site of the gathering will be Washington County, Texas—scene of the turmoil that surrounded NHG in 1849. This venue gives us an unparalleled opportunity to explore local resources that might shed further light on the events that have recently filled the pages of this newsletter—and will continue to do so for the next few issues.

Now we can also announce that the dates for meeting are set. We will open the reunion on Friday, June 8, 2001. The next day we will have events and our business meeting. On Sunday the 10th we will conclude. In our upcoming issue of March 1, 2001, look for a detailed agenda that will shape our activities throughout the three-day weekend. In the meantime, check out the links on our web site.

So mark your calendars and plan to meet in Texas next June for what promises to be a fun-filled and fact-finding fandango!

Until our next newsletter, may all of NHG's descendants and friends enjoy a safe, joyous and uplifting holiday season.

At an adjourned meeting of the Fayette Association for the suppression of crime, holden at LaGrange, Sept. 29th 1849, the president in the chair.

On motion of I. B. McFarland, Esq., it was resolved, unanimously, that a committee be appointed to draft a preamble and resolutions expressing the feelings and determinations of the association. I. B. McFarland, J. H. Moore, Wm. Sellers, N. Thomas and N. Chapman were appointed said committee.

On motion the President was added to said committee.

Also the following: Whereas, the character of two of our fellow citizens is suffering from having their names published as belonging to the clan, Therefore, be it resolved, that a committee of four be appointed by the President to make a full investigation thereof, and make due report to this meeting.—J. W. McKisick, S. Townsend, Mr. Sellers and Mr. Perry were appointed said committee.

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The Association then adjourned to meet at the expiration of two hours.

2 o'clock P. M. met agreeable to adjournment.—The Committee on preamble and resolutions reported the following which were unanimously adopted, viz:

Whereas, we are satisfied that the organization of rogues and assassins that has heretofore existed in this county though crippled, are not crushed; and whereas, we are now more than ever, convinced that unity of action is necessary among the good citizens of this State to aid the officers of the law in ferreting out and bringing to justice those heartless violators of the law; and whereas, the good citizens in this country has proven the efficacy of the same, in the arrest of one Wm. Sansom, who has been tried by a jury of his countrymen in the District Court of this county, and by it sentenced to three years hard labor in the penitentiary:

Therefore, be it Resolved, 1st. That we deem it neither expedient nor advisable for this Association to dissolve at the present time, but upon the contrary we are determined to continue our association until thoroughly satisfied that not a vestige of the villains remain within our county.

2. That we will continue to use all the exertions in our power to assist the officers of the law in bringing criminals to punishment.

3. That we recommend to the various vigilance committees in this county the utmost energy and untiring efforts to carry out the object of their formation.

4. That our only object being to aid the officers of the law in the discharge of their duties, we will look upon any, and all opposition to us as an effort to create anarchy and confusion in our midst.

5. That we reiterate our hearty approval of all the former acts of this association, because circumstances made them absolutely necessary.

6. That we most cordially approve the high-toned, bold and manly position, assumed by the Texas Ranger, and that we solicit the good citizens of this county to extend to it our patronage.

I. B. McFARLAND, Ch'n.

Reports from the different beats in the county came in, stating that they were organized and ready for any emergency, or, in other words, "ready to be a lesson to evil doers and a praise to those who do well."

The committee on character then reported the following:

That the publication in relation to the two Crownovers had no reference to Arter Crownover, sen'r., nor any of his children, for he is believed to be not only a gentlemen and an honest man, but above suspicion, but we are satisfied that the two Crownovers mentioned are Cheeney Crownover and Arter Crownover, Jr. And having examined the charges against E. Drake, Esq., as far as we have been able to ascertain from the report of his neighbors, he is an honest man.

J. W. McKISICK, Ch'n.

And further, the Association being informed that the sir name only of some of the persons in or near Crockett being in the confession of Thos. Short and others has caused misunderstanding and difficulty. Therefore be it Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to investigate, and if possible, ascertain the Christian name; but should they fail in this, to locate the persons so definitely that the innocent shall not suffer nor the guilty go free, and publish the result of their investigation.

Resolved, That a copy of this day's record be forwarded to the Texas Ranger, and one to the Houston Telegraph for publication.

The Association adjourned to meet at the call of the President.

ISAAC L. HILL, President.

N. Chapman, Sec'y., pro tem.

LaGrange, Sept. 29, 1849.

The foregoing article enlightens us about several aspects of what was occurring along the Brazos during the latter half of 1849. What erupted in response to gang activity and what confronted NHG was an outbreak of another form of lawlessness—vigilantism.

We learn that those illegally engaged in the "suppression of crime" were "now more than ever" convinced that "action is necessary" and that they were "determined to continue our association." The phrase "now more than ever" and "determined to continue" strongly suggest that the vigilantism had been occurring for quite some time before the date of the newspaper article.

The recognition that "various vigilance committees in this county" were in effect informs us of the extent to which unbridled extralegal assaults were afflicting the land. The Association revealed its arrogant and defiant usurpation of power when they wrote that "we will look upon any, and all opposition to us as an effort to create anarchy and confusion."

A chilling air of violence was implied by their "hearty approval of all the former acts of this association, because circumstances made them absolutely necessary" and that they were quite prepared to "be a lesson to evil doers."

It is with great interest that we note that the Association had something called a "committee on character" which decided the innocence of E. Drake and Arter Crownover—despite their being accused in the same "confessions" that had despoiled NHG's reputation. Apparently a finding of guilt or innocence derived from the committee's estimation of one's character—based no doubt on a combination of impression and rumor. One cannot help wondering if a key factor in the determination of a man's innocence was sometimes nothing more than his popularity or perhaps his kinship with those vigilantes who had so blatantly usurped legal authority.

But was the storm of vigilantism actually so widespread and violent that NHG felt compelled to flee? Was it truly that bad? The December 22, 1849, issue of the *Texas State Gazette*, included the following telling article reprinted from the *Bonham Advertiser* ...

Parson Shook.

A gentlemen recently from Cherokee county informs us of a rumor current there, that Parson Nathan Shook had been hanged at Crockett, in Houston county. It will be recollected that Shook was named in the confession of Thomas Short as a party to sundry thefts, counterfeiting of coin, land certificates, &c.—When apprised of these charges he surrendered himself and was committed to the jail in Lamar county. Nothing new appearing against him, the Sheriff was unwilling to detain him, and set him at liberty. According to our informant, Shook then went to Crockett, the very place where some of his alleged crimes were said to have been committed, and placed himself in custody, to await the preferment of charges. A mob soon gathered, took him from the Sheriff, and executed him forthwith.

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We give this account as we received it. We hope it is not true. If it be, the mob who have thus insulted a public officer, and trampled upon the law, should be hunted with blood hounds, if necessary, and brought to justice. Shook may, or may not, have been guilty. That is not the question; he was entitled to the investigation which he sought. If every suspected man is to be thus dealt with; God pity him who may incur the malice of a confessed scoundrel—for the testimony of just such a scoundrel is all that has appeared against Shook. We would be glad to know if this report is erroneous; for we would not that the stigma of such a deed should rest upon any portion of our State.

Two pages later in the same issue another announcement, reprinted from the *Texas Times*, adds that the Lamar county jail was in the town of Paris, and that Shook was released—his accuser “not having appeared with the required proof of his guilt, within the time specified”—but does not mention his lynching which would seem, from these accounts, to have occurred in late November or early December.

Shook, a respectable circuit preacher, moved from Arkansas to Texas in 1837. He joined the Texas Methodist Conference, where he and at least three brothers were ordained to preach. Although direct confirmation of his lynching was not found, in the 1850 census his wife was listed as a widow. Thus, it seems almost certain that the lynching occurred. Shook’s family was so distraught over his shameful demise that they subsequently invented the story that in 1849 he departed Texas for the California gold fields, but was killed by Indians before getting out of the state.

Shook surrendered to the authorities *twice*, the last time riding some 170 miles from Paris to Crockett to do so. Such behavior appears quite uncharacteristic of a guilty man.

A fellow researcher and Shook descendant recently wrote of how tragically ironic it was that, “Nathaniel Hunt Greer and at least two other frontiersmen accused of being gang members by Thomas Short went to the newspapers to proclaim their innocence. Only Nathan placed his faith in the law.”

Vigilantism or Vendetta ?

In addition to its illegality, vigilantism was frequently unreliable and notoriously opportunistic and subjective. J. E. Haley in his book *Rough Times—Tough Fiber*, relates how a vigilance committee known as the “Night Riders” operated some 10 miles north of Belton, TX, where AVG once clerked. “They probably exercised some cathartic effect on local villainy, but as is often the case with extra-legality, victimized others on the basis of personal prejudices ...” They even became irate with a local butcher simply because his slaughterhouse stank! “A meeting of the Riders was called ... to decide where and when to hang [the butcher].” It is interesting in passing to note these Night Riders included some

Haley kin of one of those accused in Tom Short’s confession.

We learned last June from the “confession” of Orland Sap that “Grigg said that there were some dam’d rascals in his settlement that did not like him much ...” The implication from this passage is that Grigg acted, in part, out of revenge. And if he did, perhaps others did as well. Were NHG or his friends or neighbors targets of vengeance?

In exploring the issue of whether or not NHG fell victim to some form of prejudice which acted to censure him unjustly, it is not enough to merely suggest that was such was the case. It behooves us to delve as thoroughly as we can into the matter so that we may ascertain any plausible reasons for such circumstances to have existed.

Among the individuals mentioned in recent issues, further significance will be attributed to Absalom Bostick, James Cox, Dennis Herald, Thomas Irvin, James McLaughlin, William Sansom, Orland Sap, the Short clan, Dr. Adkinson, Mr. Cleveland, Mercer Hill, J. H. Moore, Isaac L. Hill, and N. Townsend. As we investigate the ties among these people and others not yet introduced, we will uncover relationships both fair and foul. We will learn of bad blood and pernicious politics, of deep-rooted crime and diabolic murder. This strife and disorder stretched back before NHG brought his family to Washington County and further back still—long before the Republic of Texas came into being.

In upcoming issues of *The Greer Way West*, all this turmoil will be explored—how NHG and his kin unfortunately entered into the fray and why he was innocent. Stay tuned ...

Who Was Ira Abney?

On a completely different track, many of our readers will recall that the tragic deaths on the Plains crossing of 1855 included many of our ancestors and among those was NHG’s eleventh child Ira Abney who fell victim to Asiatic Cholera just 9 days after his 15th birthday. We know very little about him. Even his name has been in doubt and many a genealogical account has recorded him as Ira Abner.

Fresh research has revealed that his name was certainly Ira Abney. Why? In the November 27, 1839, issue (Volume 1, Number 5) of the *Austin City Gazette*, we read of one the first significant acts that NHG performed as a representative of Washington County to the Texas Congress: The newspaper reported that “In House, Thursday, Nov. 14, 1839 ... Mr. Greer presented the petition of Ira Abney, praying for a divorce, which was referred to the committee on the judiciary.” Although we find no further mention of this matter, some significant relationship—perhaps by blood—must have existed between NHG and Ira Abney because seven months later, to the day, NHG named his new son after Abney.

An Abney researcher has found evidence that the Abneys and the Hunts were perhaps related back in the Carolinas. This connection bodes well for fruitful research, but future pages of *TGWW* will suggest some sinister aspects as well.

Notes to Chapter II of *History of the Clan Gregor*

[Each "—Ed." below refers to Ms. MacGregor.]

1. This name is believed to be that of Gregory's father rather than of his son.
2. MacGregor Stirling derives the family from King Gregory, since no Prince Gregor, brother of Kenneth, can be traced. He disputes the assertion that King Gregory did not marry, as wives of kings were frequently not mentioned, unless for dynastic connections. [As reported in Vol. 2, No. 2, of this newsletter, modern informed opinion tends to agree with Mr. Stirling.—Bill Greer]
3. Professor Gregory writes this "The King's Hostarius" or "Doorward."
4. Mamlorn called (in Gaelic) "The Glen of the Mist," "Corri-cheathich." — Doug. Bar.
5. Sir Colin Campbell of Lochow, "had divers great offices from King Malcolm II, had a daughter wed to McGregor, Laird of Glenurchay; of this marriage was Sir John, a person of very good account in the reign of King Malcolm III." From the Chartulary: — "He (Gregor Garbh) married a daughter of 'Paul na Sporan' or 'Paul of the Purse,' treasurer to King Malcolm II, whose female descendant carried the estate of Lochow, by marriage, to the family of Campbell, now Argyle." — Macgregor Stirling.
6. Dr Skene's investigations alter the date, places, and persons. "Mylne is wrong, both in the date and name of the Founder" ("Celtic Scotland," vol. ii. Page 370). Alexander III created, 1107, two Bishoprics for the remote and Celtic portion of his Kingdom, the first was Moray, to which he appointed a Bishop named Gregorius; and the second was Dunkeld, which he revived in the person of Cormac." Note, "They are first named when they confirm the charter of the erection of Scone, 1115," *ibid*, page 368.
7. The lady's father, as appears, was William, Earl of Murrayse [equivalent to Moray—Bill Greer], son of King Duncan II. Chronicon Cumbrac.—Chartulary.
8. Probably the time when he flourished was 30-40 years later, and possibly the two generations of Duncan a Straileadh, and his son, Duncan Beg, came in between Ian Borb nan Cath and Malcolm of the Castles.—Ed.
9. "The foundation of the Grant story seems merely to be that the earliest Grant known was Gregory le Grant, whose sons Laurence and Robert, called Grant (dicti Grant), witness an agreement between the Bishop of Moray and John Bisset in 1258."—"Celtic Scotland," vol. iii.
10. There is ground to suppose that Gregor's father's name was John, believed to be William's second brother, omitted in "Baronage." (See chapter vii.)—Ed.
11. The writers of the "Chartulary" do not consider that the title "Morer" (equivalent to Lord), by which Sir Malcolm was designated, was hereditary, even if it was ever formally bestowed; but after No. VII, styled Lord of Glenurchy in the "Baronage," the "Chartulary" continues to quote the territorial designation.—Ed.
12. The ruins of this priory can still be traced near Crianlarig.—Ed.
13. In 1374-6 Campbell is mentioned as having received it from the Crown, it is supposed on the forfeiture of Malcolm of Glendochart.

History of Clan Gregor — Chapter II [edited for brevity]

Early Ancestry

EXCERPTS from the “Baronage of Scotland,” by Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, Baronet, Edinburgh, 1798 :—

“I. Gregor (third son of King Alpin) was brother to Kenneth, Donald, and Achaius MacAlpin; the two former of whom reigned successively, *inter annos* 834 *et* 859.

“II. Dongallus or Doun-gheal,¹ so called from his light brown complexion. Martin (who, by mistake, says he was son to Gregory the Great,² though all historians agree that monarch had no issue), relates of Doun-gheal, ‘he behaved most gallantly in the wars which King Gregory had in Ireland.’ ‘He married’ (says the same learned antiquarian) ‘Spontana, sister to Duncan, a king in Ireland, and the posterity got the name MacGregor, and in this kingdom all of this name descend from him.’ He died ca 900, leaving two sons—

1. Constantine.

2. Findanus, from whom the MacKinnons, etc. descend.

“III. Constantine married his cousin Malvina, daughter to King Donald VI.

“IV. ‘Gregor na Bratich’ (Bratach), ‘Gregor of the Standard,’ so called from being standard-bearer to his uncle, King Malcolm I, son of Donald VI. He wed ‘Dorriegeldum’ filiam hostiarum,³ and under King Malcolm fell in battle with the Danes, 961, leaving—

1. Eoin (in Gaelic) or John (in English).

2. Callum nam feidh, or ‘Malcolm of the Deers,’ keeper of the royal forests of Corrygeig.⁴

“V. Joannes, vocatus Eoin Mor MacGregor na Bratich (of the Standard), who wed Alpina, daughter of Angus (Eneas), great-grandson of Achaius, brother of Kenneth the Great. Eoin Mor was ‘a comely man of great stature, and an excellent bowman.’ He fought under King Malcolm II against Grimus (Gruamach) so called from his surly looks, and fell in battle, ca 1004, leaving—

“VI. Gregor Garbh (the Stout) of Glenurchay, a man of martial spirit and great renown in Malcolm’s time. He fought under King Duncan I against Normans and Danes, 1035-1040, and promoted the restoration of his son, Malcolm III. He married a daughter of the ancient house of Lochow,⁵ by whom he had two sons—

1. Sir John.

2. Gregorius, or Gregor, bred to the church, ‘obiit electus episcopus St Andria.’

“VII. Sir John MacGregor, Lord of Glenurchy, a person of very good account in the reign of King Malcolm III, *inter* 1057-1093, and because of his warlike achievements, was called ‘Shir Ian borb an Cath,’ ‘Sir John forward in battle.’ He married an English Lady of great beauty, who came to Scotland in the retinue of Princess, later Queen Margaret. He died *circa* 1113, leaving two sons—

1. Malcolm who succeeded him.

2. Gregor (Gregory), being bred to the Church travelled to foreign parts for improvement, and on his return, he became

Abbot of the Monastery of Dunkeld. Being of great piety and learning, and because of his father and grandfather’s services to King Malcolm, St David the King changed that monastery to a Cathedral Church, *anno* 1127, and promoted Gregory to Bishop of the new see, securing ratification from Pope Alexander III as well as an apostolical protection to himself. He witnessed several Charters in the reign of King David and of Malcolm IV. From him the McNabs (‘Sons of the Abbot’) undoubtedly descend. He lived to be the oldest Bishop of his time, dying *ca* 1160.”

According to Myln, Canon of Dunkeld in the 16th century :—

“Gregory, Prior of the Convent and later Privy Counsellor, was first Bishop [of Dunkeld] ... He sat in this see forty-two years, and died in the year 1169, the third year of the reign of King William.”

From the “Chartulary” :—

“Gregory, Abbot of Glendochart (where early in the 8th century there had been a house of Culdees), next Abbot of Dunkeld, and on erection of Dunkeld into an Episcopal see, the Bishop is said to have been a younger son of Sir John MacGregor of Glenurchay,⁶ [aka] ‘the pale Abbot, MacGregor’s son from Stronuidhme’ (where he lived in Glenfalloch), is still proverbial in the Highlands”

“VIII. Sir Malcolm MacGregor of Glenurchy, eldest son of Sir John, a man of reputation and authority in St David’s time, wed ‘Marjory, youngest daughter of William,’ Chief of the Army and nephew of our Lord the King.”

“Sir Malcolm was called ‘Moref hir Callum nan Caistel,’ ‘Lord of the Castles,’ because he built several castles including Caol-Charn (now Kilchurn), at the north-east end of Lochow, that of Finlarig, and the old Castle of Taymouth”

“Sir Malcolm died, *circa* 1164,⁸ leaving three sons—

1. William, his heir.

2. Gregor, called “Gregor more graund,”—“more” from his large stature, and “graund” from being ill-favoured or ugly. Of him all the Grants are said to be descended.

3. Achaius (Hugh), [mistakenly thought] progenitor of the Clan Achaius—now corruptly called Maccays or Mackays.

With reference to the derivation of the Grants, a family copy of the “Baronage” has a note, apparently in Mr MacGregor Stirling’s handwriting.

“In a history of the Family of Grant, composed before 1719, and denying the traditionary descent of the Grants from a younger son of the Laird of MacGregor—there is the following passage regarding the parents of Patrick Grant of Freuchie and Bellachastell born about 982.—‘Anlaw, or Allan, eldest son and representative of Heming Grandt, a man of desirable accomplishments, is wed to Mora daughter to Neil MacGregor, a man lineally descended of Gregorius Magnus, King of Scotland. This Anlaw (others call him Avelass) got with Mora MacGregorie, in portion, the Barony of Bellachastell and Freuchie in Straspey.’ The grandson of Patrick (son of Mora MacGregor) was ‘Gregory Grant of Freuchie.’” The same passage occurs also in the ‘Chartulary’ with the remark: ‘This account, which differs from the title Grant of Grant, in Douglas’s Baronage—but is obviously preferable, and is confirmed by the other MSS quoted—may account for, and correct the extant tradition of the common origin of the MacGregors and the Grants, whose armorial bearings have a strong affinity.’”

In consequence of this passage (found, however, only in a modern genealogy), the date of A.D. 980 is assigned as the time when Neil MacGregor flourished; and he is conjectured to have been a son of Gregor of the Standard.

“Baronage continued—

“IX. William, Lord Macgregor, who flourished in the reign of William the Lion, and Alexander II. He married filiam domini de Lindsay, dying *ad annum* 1238, leaving two sons and a daughter—

1. Gregor, his heir.

2. Alpin; who, being bred to the Church, was promoted to the Bishoprick of Dunblane; *inter annos* 1232 and 1290.”

The "Chartulary" notices—

"From a collation of circumstances, a strong presumption arises that William's wife was a daughter of Lindsay of Bonhill, or Buchnull as it was anciently called. These Lindsays in the thirteenth century were hereditary Toschsadorachs, and Forresters of the Earls of Lennox." "Baronage" continued—

"X. Gregor,¹⁰ Lord¹¹ of MacGregor (or, according to the 'Chartulary,' Gregor of Glenurquhay) succeeded, and joined King Alexander II. *anno* 1248 with his followers when that Monarch went upon his expedition for recovery of the western Isles from Haco, King of Norway. He also flourished in the reign of Alexander III. (*inter* 1249 *et* 1296). By his Lady Marion, filiam de Gilchrist, he was father of Malcolm XI."

The "Baronage" adds the writer has been unable to discover who the Gilchrist was, but the "Chartulary" has a remark—

"*Circiter* 1286. Died Gregor of Glenurchy, who married a daughter of Gilchrist (4th son as is believed of Aulin, 2nd Earl of Levenax), founding this belief on a Charter by Malduin, 3rd Earl of Lennox, 1238-9, of certain lands which is witnessed, it is to be remarked, by John Glendochir, Amalech my Brother, &c."

In the "Baronage" the successor to Gregor No. 10 is given as—

"XI. Malcolm (styled Dominus de MacGregor), a person of great loyalty, strongly attached to Bruce, whom he is said to have relieved from the chief of Lorn at Dalreogh, and to have been mounted on a milk-white steed. Thereafter the King harboured in a large cave in MacGregor's lands, near Craig-Chrostan, which is to this day called "Uamh an Riogh" (the King's cave), from which he crossed over Loch Lomond, and met the Earl of Lennox.

"Malcolm fought at the battle of Bannockburn, and is said to have been the person who brought the relics of St Fillansarum from the country of that name, then part of his lands, to King Robert's chaplain, who passed it for a miracle, in consequence of which the Bruce founded a priory in Strathfillan¹² (*anno* 1314). This Malcolm is much celebrated by several bards. He fought under Edward Bruce in Ireland, and having received a wound at the battle of Dundalk, of which he was ever afterwards lame, he retired home, and was known by the name of "Morfhear bachdach," or the lame lord.

"He died at an advanced age, *anno* 1374. leaving by his wife Mary, daughter to Malise M^cAlpin of Finnich, two sons—

1. Gregor, his heir.

2. Gilbert of whom it is said the Griersons of Lag descended."

The Griersons of Lag claim this descent, which is quite probable although it may not be susceptible of actual proof.

The existence of this second Malcolm seems well established by tradition and Highland poems. It is said that "Malcolm, chief of the family of MacGregor, led a command at the army of King Robert Bruce at Bannockburn," but the authority for this is not conclusive. There is also mention of a Malcolm of Glendochart doing fealty to Edward of England, 28th August 1396. As Gregor (X) is said to have flourished in the thirteenth century, it seems improbable that his son should have lived till 1374. Possibly one or two generations have been missed before or after Malcolm. The MSS of the Dean of Lismore contains a genealogy by an old Highland seanachie, giving the Glenstray pedigree. It is difficult to identify the list recorded in the "Baronage" with the names found therein, but in a subsequent chapter this genealogy will be transcribed.

From the unquestionable authority of the Obituary, known as the Chronicle of Fortingal, the following entries are here given:—

"1390, April 19. Died John, son of Gregor of Glenurquhay, and was buried in Dysart, north of the High Altar.

Dysart, q. d. Tigh sart—in English, "House of the Highest"—is the old name of the Church of Glenurquhay, which was annexed to Dalmally. John, son of Gregor, was surnamed Cham, or "blind of an eye," as appears from the two entries under 1415.

It is believed that he was the latest MacGregor in recognised possession of Glenurquhay, for his son is styled "in," not "of," that land; but "there does not seem ground to suppose that they ever had what alone, according to Saxon ideas of landed property, could secure continued possession, a charter of confirmation on their resignation into the King's hands. ("Chartulary.")

1415. Died Gregor, son of John Cham, in Glenurquhay, and was buried as first mentioned.

1415. Died John the Black (dhu), son of John Cham, son of Gregor at Stronmelochan, and was buried at Dysart.

Stronmelochan was a fortalice at the north-east extremity of Lochaw, near the entrance of Glenstray.

The above entries, the Bard's genealogy, and others from "The Black Book of Taymouth," enable us to define positively that the house of Glenstray descended in direct line from this John Dhu, and as he had a brother, Gregor, who coincides with Gregor, surnamed Aulin, in the "Baronage," we are led to believe that these two Gregors were identical. From the "Baronage":—

"XII. Gregor, called Aulin (Aluinn)—*i.e.*, "perfectly handsome"—succeeded. He married Iric, daughter of his uncle Malcolm McAlpin, son of the said Malise, and died *circiter annum*, 1413 leaving by his said lady five sons and several daughters—

1. Malcolm, his heir.
2. John, first of Breachd-sliabh, later Laird of MacGregor.
3. Gillespie, or Archibald, who married and had issue.
4. Gregor, of whom the family of Ruath shruth, or Roro.
5. Dugal Ciar."

In the course of this, the fourteenth century, the sovereigns had given many lands to those who supported them, and amongst these were territories occupied by the Clan Gregor as Crown tenants—*i.e.*, settled on the Crown lands by royal favour, either as a reward for military services, or connected with the royal house, which tradition asserts, or the tribe may have enjoyed allodial occupation of these localities from time immemorial.

From the "Chartulary":—

"Before 1340, Alexander Menzies, son and heir of the deceased Alexander Menzies,¹³ gave a grant to 'Avunculo meo,' Yvaro Campbel, of all his lands in the Barony of Glendochart.

"In A.D. 1340, July 30th. Charter by Alexander Menzies, son and heir of Alexander de Menzies, Lord of Glendochart, to Ewar Campbell and his heirs of 20 merks of land in Glendochart, dated at Kilmarnock, 30th July 1340.

"1368-9, 12th March. Charter by King David II at Perth to John of Lorn, of the district of Glenlyon, in Atholl.

"1374, April 20th. Charter by King Robert II to Arthur Campbell, son of Ewar Campbell, of the lands of Strathquhir, resigned by the said Ewar.

"1376, Feb. 9th. Charter by King Robert II, confirming one by his son Robert, Earl of Fife and Menteith, to Arthur Campbell of Strathquhir, of certain lands in the Barony of Glendochart, viz., amongst others, Kyleters, mor, and beg, Innerhardgowrane, with the Lake of Glendochart, and the Island of Garwhelane, and Wester Hardkell (Ardchalzie).

The unedited version of this chapter may be found on our web site at ...

http://members.aol.greerswest/clangregor2.htm

The notes for this chapter are also edited for brevity—and only those which are of interest to us are presented on page four of this issue.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Reunion Plans Set



Birthplace of Texas

*Commander of the Alamo—
Bejar, Feby. 24th, 1836—*

I am besieged ... I have sustained a continual Bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours ... The enemy has demanded a surrender ... otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword ... I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls — I shall never surrender nor retreat ... I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid ... Victory or Death.

William Barret Travis
Lt. Col. Comdt.

Most people *remember the Alamo!* when thinking of how Texans cast off the shackles of Santa Anna's dictatorship, but most of the planning and decision-making stemmed from Washington-on-the-Brazos, site of the next Greer reunion. When Travis' plea arrived, the assembly was moved to action.

Greetings all. Sorry this issue is late, but my work took its toll! Reunion plans for June 8–10 are set and here is our agenda.

On Friday at 6:30 pm, we will have our banquet at:

K & G Steakhouse
2209 South Market
Brenham, TX
ph: 979-836-7950

Here is the Friday night food offering—

- ▶ **Seafood buffet** (\$13.25/person) choices include:
gumbo—fried or boiled shrimp—fried or baked fish
—crab cakes—crab casserole—frog legs—oysters.
- ▶ **Traditional buffet** (\$11.00/person) which includes:
roast beef—fried chicken—fried German potatoes
—glazed carrots—rice pilaf—garden salad—hot rolls

(Please note the above prices do not include tax or tip.)

After the meal, the banquet room will be ours for the rest of the evening. We will socialize a bit, have a brief program and review our plans and options for the next two days.

On Saturday morning we will breakfast on our own, then meet at 10:30 in Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park at Pavilion GPP2. At 11:00 we will view a 20-minute video, "The Republic of Texas," narrated by Bill Moyers. Following the video, we will tour the exhibits of the fabulous Star of Texas Museum.

Note: Some attractions are open only on weekdays, so you're on your own if you wish to tour Independence Hall or the Anson Jones Home—or browse the museum's Library and Archives.

At 1:00 pm, Tex's Bar-B-Que & Catering will cater lunch at our pavilion. We'll feast on beef, chicken, and pork—with plenty of 'fixins' on the side. The cost will be \$5.95/person.

By the way, this caterer comes highly recommended. In fact, this spring, Tex's will be catering an event for ex-President George H. W. Bush at nearby Independence, TX!

After lunch, we will have our business meeting. Following that we have our choice of visiting, catching up on genealogy or touring local attractions on our own.

If arriving early, why not take the children to Pioneer Day Camp held in Washington-on-the-Brazos Park? Kids aged 6–11 explore pioneer lifestyles each Wed–Friday from 9–3:30 through activities like building a log cabin, grinding corn, making candles, weaving, leatherwork, and rope making. For more information, contact the park staff at 936-878-2214.

1849 Events Tied to East Texas Feud

In this issue we publish the confession of William G. Sansom, one of the principals of the outlaw gang which was broken up in 1849. Email from another researcher referred to this article and last fall our vice-president for the GDG line, visited an archive in Austin and transcribed the confession. is also actively helping us prepare for our upcoming reunion. thank you for your kind assistance!

Sansom's confession is noteworthy for several reasons. One thing that commands our attention is that NHG is not mentioned. This makes two of the four "confessions" published to date that have not listed our ancestor among the gang — thus the allegations made against him are considerably weakened.

The article also introduces two key players in the tragedy of 1849: Absalom Bostick and James S. Mayfield. It is probable that without the involvement of these two men—discussed in detail on pages 3 and 4 of this issue—the crime wave would have persisted and the perpetrators avoided exposure for quite some time.

Sansom also spoke of threats against his life should he disclose what he knew. This revelation is particularly significant in two respects: The threat came from East Texas, along the Sabine River, and those responsible were so ruthless as to have even murdered women as circumstances demanded. On the one-sheet insert for this issue, we will learn that these claims were not idle—indeed, Sansom's remarks pale in comparison to history.

From the Texas Ranger.

Confession of William G Sansom Fayette Co. August 18, 1849.

Satisfactory evidence having been received of Sansom's guilt, about the 7th last, he was arrested by the Fayette Co. association¹ as belonging to the clan of thieves, murderers etc. and was placed in the hands of the officers of the law, and accordingly tried before WP Rullal Esq. J. P. who on positive evidence of his guilt, committed him to jail there to wait his trial at the next circuit court. He, Sansom, this morning expressed a wish to make a confession. That information was given to the President of the Fayette association, who then appointed a committee of three to wait on Mr. Sansom and hear what he had to say.

He, Sansom said.—"I do solemnly before God state the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Sometime in the year 1847, as near as I can recollect about July or August, William Short, Griggs and Crook did drive off out of what is known as Murcherson's prairie a drove of cattle numbering about five or six cows and calves and some yearlings and sold them to one Hewit as I afterwards learned from William Short. I was in LaGrange and employed in digging a well for John Carter, and going home I found William Short and Smith at my house whose name I was told afterwards by William Short was Richie, and that he came from Eastern Texas; before Richie started to Eastern Texas he Short told me he was harboring Dr. Adkin's negro man David and a one eyed negro boy name unknown, who I understood belonged to some man in the lower country of Texas and William Short and Richie took them to Eastern Texas [and] sold them; William Short told me that he also took Mr. Derr's mare and filly to go off upon.

The next time I saw Griggs he came to my house and offered to sell me some land certificates. I did not buy but told him John Murcherson wanted to buy, he asked me to go with him to Murcherson's. I did so, he said he would give him a trade if they were good, and he was going to La Grange and he would ask someone that knew. J. S. Mayfield told him they were base counterfeits, Griggs came back to my house and told me these things, I then asked Griggs if he would put them upon me, he said he would put them upon any body.

William Short told me that Thomas J. Williams purchased two negro men from one of the clan and that afterwards one of the same clan stole them again. At another time being in La Grange [unreadable words] my mare and went off and stayed until about an hour in the night; I went to his house and on my arrival there, found J. McLaughlin there. When Short came home he brought horses with him. This was in the spring of

1849.

William Short told me last spring he wanted to raise \$300, and if he could do it, he would make as much as he wanted and I asked him what he wanted it for, he said he wanted it to buy a set of dies from Bostick, that he had two sets, one for gold and one silver, and that he could employ as good a chemist as ever was to help him; he said he had seen the dies, I don't know whether Short got them or not. At another time, Short told me that Bostick was very mad with him; Bostick got drunk and took the dies out of his trunk and hid them and accused Short of stealing them. Bostick afterwards found them and came to Short and told him and made friends. William Short told me that Griggs was one of the clan. Also J. McLaughlin, Thos. Short and William Ragin he said was good friends. Bostick said he was a good hand to [unreadable words] at law. Shook a minister, his business was to sell (?) fraudulent land certificates also, he said Agery was a dealer which signifies (?) one of the clan; Alfred Obar told me he intended to steal Acl's negro girl Louisa. William Short told me if I ever [disclosed the existence] of the clan and they were punished there was men that will come from the Sabine to take my life.

I acknowledge to the killing of two of Thos. J Williams hogs last winter and Wm. and Thos. Short helped me. I think they would weigh 150 or [unreadable] pounds a piece. (Signed) Wm. G Sansom. Witnessed J. B. McFarland, H. G. Wood, Jos. A. Haynie. August 23, 1849

Wm. G Sansom said in the presence of J. H. Moore and J. B. McFarland that Small, the son-in-law of McLaughlin purchased the double barreled shot gun from a Dutchman living near Round Top and paid for it in counterfeit money (paper) and that Bill Short told him, Sansom, that if he ever divulged anything on the clan that death would be his portion that he would not live 24 hours and that even women had been murdered in Eastern Texas for hinting round and making attempts to divulge the secret. He also confessed that he stole two of J Murcherson's [unreadable words] and a mule of Abner Kerkendal last spring.

This article appeared in the Galveston Weekly News issue which was published October 1, 1849. Sansom was convicted of cattle theft and sentenced to 3 years in the brand new Huntsville Penitentiary where he had the dubious honor of becoming its first inmate on the same day that this article was published. Sansom served less than half his sentence before being pardoned by Governor Peter Hansborough Bell on September 14, 1850. This pardon raised some eyebrows and will be discussed in our next issue.

¹ This was the vigilante group discussed in our last issue.

How the Gang Was Disclosed

In early August 1849, the gang of thieves who called themselves the 'Clan' were uncovered in La Grange, Texas, quite unexpectedly as revealed in the following article. It was printed in The Northern Standard issue of September 1, 1849, published in the Red River town of Clarksville, Texas. It also served to introduce, in the same issue, the Short confession which was printed in our Volume 5, Number 1, last year.

The article refers to other confessions to appear in the next issue of the newspaper, but exactly what other confessions were subsequently printed remains a mystery—although we suspect they are the ones familiar to us. Our failure to learn the nature of those is because next issue—the one of September 8, 1849—is not on the microfilm record of The Northern Standard, and apparently has not survived.

In addition to mentioning Bostick and Mayfield, the article informs us that more than one of those who were apprehended immediately fell victim to 'Judge Lynch.' Unfortunately, the identities of those executed are not reported.

Look out for Rascals.

A few weeks since, a desperado named Bostick, was killed in La Grange by General Mayfield in self defence. An examination of his letters and papers disclosed an organized gang of negro thieves, robbers, and murderers extending from Missouri to the Rio Grande. Several of these have been taken, and some summarily executed. Others remain in confinement awaiting trial. Thomas Short, one of the gang, was pursued and arrested at Natchez, Miss., where he had taken a stolen negro to sell. His confession—showing the ramifications of the gang, their objects and the names of the active participants, we republish from the Texas Ranger of the 17th of August, in order to put the people of Northern Texas upon their guard. It seems that a personage who has officiated in this section as a clergyman, is mentioned as an active operator, and a forger of land certificates.¹ Short intimates that he suppresses the names of others holding respectable stations in community, because of their families. It should be brought to light however—not a man should be spared against whom evidence exists to corroborate the statements which this fellow may make. Sanctimonious hypocrisy should be exposed—but expositions of men hitherto supposed respectable should not be made upon such testimony alone.

We will give the other confessions, which are shorter, and in part the same substance as this, in our next issue.

¹ This is a reference to the unfortunate Reverend Nathan Shook whose lynching—some three months after the publication of this article—was discussed in our last issue.

Red River Support for NHG

Soon after news broke about the crime wave of 1849, The Northern Standard of Clarksville, Texas, some 250 miles from Brenham, published the following editorial. Here we find NHG's plea for justice and fair play given a sympathetic ear by the publishers of this town which is just a dozen miles or so from the Red River. It ran in the issue of September 15, 1849, and demonstrates the importance that was attached to these events as they unfolded half way across the new state. The 1849 crimes were apparently as wide-spread as Short depicted.

The article also substantiates how real and imminent was the threat to NHG of lynching. It also reveals how seriously such an event was regarded — and how common was the opinion that lynching was occasionally justified.

The italics in following text were added by Bill Greer to emphasize passages of relevance to NHG's situation.

The Accused.

We find in the Ranger² of the 30th ult.³ a communication from Jas Cox and N. H. Greer, denounced by Short, as belonging to the murderous gang of which he was a member. These persons assert their innocence, and call upon their fellow citizens to exhibit the charges against them, and give them the opportunity for defense. They say they understand that they are under sentence of death, but most solemnly assert their innocence, and only ask a trial confronting them with their accusers. This is but a just request, and they ought certainly be assured of it. *Men whose positions have been heretofore reputable, should not be hastily and lawlessly hung upon irresponsible accusations of villains who acknowledge themselves derelict of all law, both of God and man.* We believe there are cases, in sparsely settled countries, where lynch law is justifiable, but it is only against desperate villains utterly destitute of character, and notoriously abandoned. *Men who have permanent homes, within the observation of whole settlements, and have maintained fair character for years, are certainly in the view of equity, as well as of law, entitled to impartial trial, in the mode pointed out by the laws.*

² This was the *Washington Texas Ranger* — published in Brenham — the main source of news about the gang activities. Because so many issues of this newspaper have not survived, we have had to rely on other periodicals as secondary sources of our information.

³ Few of us today will recognize this abbreviation for *ultimo*, a Latin word used to indicate the month just passed. When reading antiquated text, it is helpful to know this word and its counterparts: *proximo* for next month (abbreviated *prox.*) and *instant*, an obsolete usage of the common English word referring to the current month (abbreviated *inst.*)

Bostick and Mayfield

During the summer of 1849 in La Grange—seat of Fayette County—something triggered a hostile encounter between Absalom Bostick and James S. Mayfield. When it was over, Bostick lay dead and the Clan to which he belonged had begun to come apart. Both men were attorneys in La Grange, so we can assume that they had been acquainted for some time.

One historian has written of Mayfield, “A man of hot temper, in 1849, he killed Absalom Bostic as the result of a political argument.” What precisely caused the shooting is unknown, but we do know the following which sheds some light upon the fate which soon befell NHG. These will receive more attention next issue.

Of Bostick we have little public knowledge, but of his relationships we know more, but they will require more space and we will cover in our next issue. He had been in recent trouble. Early in 1849, he and B. Breeding¹ had been arrested in La Grange on charges of forcible entry and detention. William Sansom² was one of the juror’s that acquitted the pair on March 12.

On the other hand, General James Shannon Mayfield had been a widely known public official for many years. He brought his family to Texas in 1837, settling in Nacogdoches which he represented in the Fifth and Sixth congresses from 1840 through 1842. He introduced the Franco-Texian Bill and in 1841 served as Secretary of State under President Mirabeau B. Lamar.

On September 16, 1842, Mayfield assembled a company of volunteers from La Grange to go to the aid of Capt. Nicholas Dawson as the latter attempted to repel Gen. Adrián Woll’s Mexican army from San Antonio. Mayfield’s group arrived at Salado Creek just as Dawson’s party was being massacred. Mayfield determined that his men were outnumbered and stood off until the next day, when he joined the command of Mathew Caldwell. A few weeks later Mayfield, like Gilbert Greer, was in the Somervell expedition but did not go to Mier. In 1843 he became a candidate for Major General of the Army but withdrew ostensibly because of ill health. But it is likely that accusations of cowardice during the Woll invasion affected his decision. His accusers were Mathew Caldwell and Edward Burleson. Mayfield represented Fayette County at the Statehood Convention of 1845 and that year challenged Burleson to a duel. Cooler thoughts, and maybe an appreciation for Burleson’s ability with a pistol, got the better of him and he did not go through with the engagement. Mayfield outlived Bostick by a little over three years.

Mayfield left Nacogdoches after his second term in Congress possibly, like many others, to get away from the feuding. Senator Potter (see the insert for this issue) didn’t get that chance. As it turns out, only a month before being murdered in 1842, Potter had made out his will in Austin. It left part of his headright, some horses, slaves, and all of his household furnishings and farming stock to his common-law wife, identified in the will as Mrs. Harriet A. Page. Surprisingly, he left his homestead land to Sophia Mayfield, wife of General Mayfield. What the relationship was between Potter and Mrs. Mayfield is unclear, but Potter was a notorious womanizer and perhaps this was part of the picture. Certainly the enmity between Potter and Rose was based in part on Potter’s pursuit of Rose’s daughters. A notorious dispute over the division of Potter’s estate was litigated for 25 years!

¹ This was either Napoleon Bonaparte or, more likely, his brother Benjamin Wilkens. The former was called ‘Pole’ for short and he was very probably the ‘Paul Breeding’ of Thomas Short’s confession. No Paul Breeding has ever been located. Benjamin was highly regarded by John Henry Moore of the Fayette Association, but not Pole—more about this in our next issue.

² This was William G. Sansom who was convicted of thievery and sent to prison in Huntsville in the fall of 1849.

To better understand the forces that affected the criminal events of 1849 and swept NHG into the maelstrom that afflicted the land he adopted—this account is necessarily frank and brutal. This synopsis presents a lot of names, many—those in **bold-face** as they are introduced—are of men who influenced NHG or his relations.

Clear connections can easily be demonstrated for most of these people, but some are speculative from lack of confirmation (that may never be found). The tenuous threads of influence sometime weave through murky history, incidental records, family anecdotes and speculation drawn from circumstantial evidence. The gleanings

of such slim facts has been difficult, and full analysis of available records has not been achieved for a simple reason—it would have required a huge investment of time not available to this researcher. History has missed many men—possibly related to NHG.

Still, a pattern emerges from this tale. One that serves well to explain why things happened to NHG the way they did and why he reacted as he did. The material below does not resolve the issue because the connections to NHG are not discussed now for want of space. Such discussion—and his vindication—will appear in our next issue which should be published before our June reunion.

The Little War That Never Stopped

Nearly all the men engaged in this deadly feud were small farmers, recent emigrants to Texas; most of them had been dragged into this thing by unscrupulous men. A very large majority of them were good men, honest and true, but they had fallen on evil times. — Alexander Horton, witness to the events

As the young United States expanded westward, their sphere of influence rubbed up against that of Spain. After the Louisiana Purchase, the geography west of New Orleans caused the Sabine River to become the natural, though unofficial, border between the two countries. It was known as the Neutral Ground and until 1819 when the border became official, the river valley was outside the law of either government—a haven for criminals and those comfortable with them. The lawlessness persisted for decades.

Americans tough enough to withstand the conditions settled the west side of the Sabine—illegally as early as 1822 when Mexico gained independence—then by 1827 in numbers sufficient to form the Teneha Municipality, 100 miles of fertile clay and woodland administered loosely from Mexico City. In 1838 the new Republic of Texas began granting land to attract settlers, and those who had prospered in stolen slaves and rustled cattle now found a prolific trade in fraudulent land certificates—often worth a dozen drinks each when pawned in grog shops. As the population grew, so did rivalries and these often bred hostilities. The flood of emigrants to the new republic exacerbated the situation and by 1839 a turning point had been reached. That winter a line was crossed.

In early February 1840, an ex-riverboat captain and Louisiana fugitive named Charles W. Jackson formed a vigilante group to deal with local villainy. Jackson and his men apprehended one **Squire Humphreys** who was suspected of stealing horses. Bound and prostrated in the Shelbyville town square, Humphreys was tortured into confessing. After naming (among others) one **Boatwright**, Humphreys was released and ordered to quit the Republic. Jackson's vigilantes continued to 'regulate' local men commonly thought to be no good. Joseph Goodbread, like many Shelby residents, thought Jackson's 'Regulators' excessive. That spring he warned Jackson to leave the county or face death. A few days later in the center of Shelbyville, Jackson walked up to an unarmed Goodbread and shot him point blank with a rifle.

In July 1841, Jackson faced trial for killing Goodbread, and a multitude of armed Regulators filled the courtroom of Judge **John M. Hansford**. Despite the presence of a similar number opposing the Regulators, the judge (a friend of Goodbread) was so shaken that he adjourned court and fled the area that night.

Early next autumn, emboldened by the courthouse farce and other victories, Jackson and some of his men rode north to where Humphreys and Boatwright had found refuge among the Strickland and **McFaddin** clans. They first stopped at the home of 'Tiger'

Jim Strickland. Jim was not there, so they rode on to 'Buffalo' Bill **McFaddin's** place, but neither Bill nor his brother Bailey were at home. Ignoring pleas from the **McFaddin** women, the Regulators—to impart a lesson—burned the house down and rode away, leaving the hysterical **McFaddin** women and children to face a freezing early 'norther' with only the clothes on their backs.

So began the worst feud in Texas history. The aborted murder trial and the outrage visited upon the **McFaddins** prompted an infuriated citizenry to create the 'Moderators' to counter the growing threat from Jackson's band. The feud became a protracted epidemic of violence and retribution that would become known as the "War of the Regulators and the Moderators."

The Moderators, every bit as capable of outright thievery and murder as their nemeses, sought vengeance against the house-burners—especially Jackson and his lieutenant **Watt Moorman**. A party of about 40 surrounded a wedding attended by **Moorman**, but he donned a woman's frock and rode past the avengers undetected. Then the Moderators learned that Jackson and some pals had gone on a business trip to Logansport, Louisiana. Returning through **McFaddin Creek**, the Regulators met a hail of Moderator bullets. Jackson was one of those killed, but **Moorman** was not present and soon took command of the Regulators.

By this time, the feud had become notorious throughout Texas and President Lamar offered \$500 for any Strickland that could be captured or shot. Shelby sheriff Alfred George (who had brought Jackson to prominence) had fled in fear of his life and his job fell to another Regulator named **John W. Middleton** who raised a posse of Regulators including 'Colonel' **Moorman**, as he was now called, to apprehend the **McFaddin Creek** ambushers.

The posse rode west in dogged pursuit of their prey for some 80 miles and then a couple of dozen miles north of **Crockett**—where **Parson Shook** would be lynched 8 years later—**Tiger Jim** barely escaped them with a bullet in his shoulder. Meanwhile, the **McFaddins** were headed for **Fayette County** where cousin **Nathan Arnett McFadden** had settled. The relentless posse turned south, riding another 70 miles or so, and caught up with the **McFaddins** who were lodging in a house near **Montgomery**—not far from where NHG's brother had been killed by Indians a year and a half earlier. **Buffalo Bill** tried to run for it and had almost gotten away when **Watt Moorman**, a crack marksman, caught him in the heel with a long shot. Faced with having the house burned around them, Humphreys and the other **McFaddins** surrendered. The posse headed home triumphantly, but nervously, through **Crockett** where anti-Regulator sentiment had been incited by **Tiger Jim**.

A few days later on October 9, 1841, a 'trial' was held and guilty verdicts returned. One **McFaddin** boy was spared due to his youth, but **Bill** and **Bailey** were strung up alongside **Squire**

Humphreys about a mile east of Shelbyville. The condemned were remorseful for the loss of innocent life, but none regretted killing Jackson. Before dying, Buffalo Bill reportedly screamed, "You have stolen my life and you'll wade through blood for it." His prediction would eventually prove horrifyingly accurate.

Not long after the Shelbyville lynchings, Boatwright was caught in Louisiana. On the way back to Shelbyville he was 'encouraged' to make a break for it—and died when he did. Newspapers in both Texas and Louisiana reported that the posse "cut him in pieces and hung the fragments of his body on the surrounding trees." This news gained notice in the States and condemnation by some of its newspapers. Soon a related incident would capture the attention of the celebrated Charles Dickens who was touring America as the Texas tragedy unfolded.

Robert Potter, founder and first Secretary of Navy for Texas, was a Moderator who had become Senator for the Red River and Fannin District over bitter opposition from his neighbor William Pinckney Rose, leader of the local Regulators. On November 15, 1841, President Lamar put a \$500 price on the head of Rose who had recently been indicted for the murder of the sheriff of Panola County. As soon as Congress let out, Potter hurried home to personally apprehend his hated adversary. On March 1, 1842, Potter and 17 Moderators surrounded the Rose home, but 'Hell-roaring Rose' escaped. Before dawn the very next night, Rose and a party of Regulators stormed the home of Potter who dove into Soda Lake in an effort at escape. As he swam for his life, he was shot in the head by John W. Scott, Rose's son-in-law. Charges were brought against Rose and his cohorts, but dismissed for lack of evidence. Dickens wrote it up in his *American Notes*.

In December 1841, **Sam Houston** replaced Lamar as president of Texas and on January 31, 1842, issued a proclamation exhorting local officials to end the bloodshed—offering the Texas army, if needed. Local officials weren't interested in what Sam had to say.

After recuperating in Louisiana during the winter, Tiger Jim and some cronies ambushed Middleton on March 26, 1842. But Middleton was tough and although he took four slugs, he walked to his house and five days later took up the chase of Strickland and the would-be assassins. Middleton's objective was achieved, and although Jim's exact fate is unknown, the following November a Regulator publicly wrote that Strickland had been shot dead.

The carnage had spread roughly 150 miles from its epicenter, infecting some 8 Texas counties, a couple of Louisiana parishes—and now with the Potter murder—the very heart of the Republic. But amazingly the toll was only beginning. Sam Houston opined, "I think it advisable to declare Shelby Co, Tenaha, and Terrapin Neck free and independent governments, and let them fight it out."

The rest of 1842 was comparatively calm, but in 1843 the battle rejoined in Shelbyville when **Henry Runnels**, a Regulator, openly accused **Samuel N. Hall**, an ex-Regulator turned Moderator, of poaching pigs. Both men went home for their guns, but a boarder in Runnels' home—a man named Stanfield—got to Hall first.

Hall's kin called out the Moderators for revenge and although Stanfield escaped from jail, he was caught and lynched. Bounties were offered for prominent Regulators and in March 1843 Runnels was shot near Keatchie, Louisiana, by two mercenaries who had followed him as he hauled his cotton to market in Shreveport. One of the killers, named **Williams**, was caught and hung—but not until tortured into identifying John M. Bradley as his sponsor.

Bradley, brother-in-law of the governor of Arkansas, made a defensive move by bringing charges against Moorman for the lynching of Williams. Moorman agreed to an arraignment only

because Judge **John Ingram**, a Regulator, heard and promptly threw out the case. Moorman reciprocated with charges against Bradley and Hall, but they arranged to appear before Judge **S. F. Lester**, a Moderator, who quickly dismissed their murder charges.

In the climate of 'payback,' the killing escalated until East Texas could hardly be described as civilized country. In January 1844 Judge Hansford, who had fled his courtroom back in 1841, was shot after returning from church services one Sunday morning. That summer about 50 Moderators reorganized as the 'Reformers,' electing James J. Cravens 'colonel' of their 'regiment.' The next morning they 'captured' Shelbyville. In response, Moorman assembled around 100 Regulators and prepared for battle, but on July 24, some neutrals got a truce signed which lasted four days. On July 28, Moorman gut-shot Bradley in a crowd outside of a Baptist meeting near San Augustine. Moorman was detained by **Anthony Patton**, a J. P., but soon returned to Shelbyville, while Bradley died an agonizing death, begging his kin to avenge him. That night Moorman and 250 Regulators celebrated his deed and drew up a list of Moderators to be banished from the area or else. Two of the blacklisted were **Tom Haley** and **John Anderson**.

The storm broke in August with the 'Battle of the Cowpens,' near Shelbyville. Some 225 Moderators attacked 65 Regulators who were so well 'forted up' that the besiegers withdrew—but not before a feat of fabulous marksmanship in which a treetop sniper was dropped by a Regulator rifle 480 paces distant. About 40 reinforcements were then obtained by Moorman while General Boulware brought in well over 100 Regulators from Harrison Co. The war was rejoined nearby where the Moderators occupied a log meetinghouse. The Regulators launched a surprise attack known as 'Church Hill Battle' to the Regulators and 'Helen's Defeat' to the Moderators—a reference to Moorman's wife whose spying on the enemy camp enabled the attack. One casualty of the two-hour skirmish was Colonel **Davidson** of the Harrison Co. Regulators.

There were few casualties, and the action was indecisive. On August 15, 1844, Houston finally acceded to pleas for help and rode from Washington to San Augustine where he declared martial law, calling out 600 militia. Leaders from both sides were arrested and agreed to disband each group. A treaty was signed by, among others, Regulator **Middleton T. Johnson** and Moderator **John Dial**, Texas Congressman for Shelby Co.

So the Regulator-Moderator War ended — at least officially.

Anyone who knows about feuds knows such a tidy resolution is unrealistic. A few days later a man named **Harris** was astride his horse when he saw a man named **Duncan** raise a shotgun. Just as the shotgun went off, Harris ducked and fired from under the neck of his mount—plugging Harris in true Hollywood fashion. Historians claimed the Mexican War dispelled the feud due to the common foe, but some claim that after the Battle of Buena Vista ex-feuders stopped shooting Mexicans and went after each other. In May 1847 a wedding was held at the home of a Moderator named **Wilkinson**. He laced the wedding cake with arsenic and fed it to 60 guests, men and women alike—a mass murder of 23 known Regulators, probably more. Watt Moorman was not one of them. He had moved north after the militia took over Shelby Co. He escaped retribution longer than most, but was shot in the back by **Dr. Robert Burns** in Logansport, Louisiana, on Valentine's Day 1850. Burns claimed Moorman tried to ambush him and was acquitted—folks knew Moorman was capable of it.

Eventually, the feud ended, but not until it had wounded NHG's life—and full closure was lacking for a generation—long after the Greers had left the blighted area behind them.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



The Texas Reunion

Watch our next issue for our report on the 2001 reunion in Washington County, Texas, including our new list of officers. Preliminary indications are for good weather. Let's hope so!

The Feud Connects to NHG

Last issue we read of the feud that raged for years in East Texas and how Sansom's confession coupled that feud to the events that unfolded around NHG in 1849. In this issue we learn how various feudists were connected to NHG and to the other people who were entwined in his life when the criminal "Clan" was busted. And we will see why NHG was innocent of the allegations made against him.

The original publishing plan was to present in *The Greer Way West* all of the relationships that established pertinent connections between the events of 1849 and those which occurred in East Texas several years earlier. But it became apparent that the web of interconnections was more complex and involved more people than first thought. Thus, what is reported here hopefully reveals the most important ties of kith and kin, but certainly not all of them.

Many relationships bearing upon events in East Texas and in Washington County, can be traced back to pioneering activity which predated the independence of Mexico (1822). Carved out of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the original Missouri Territory gave birth to Arkansas Territory in 1819. In those years the western borders of the United States were nebulous and considerable land south of the Red River was claimed by Arkansas but was officially made part of Texas when the latter joined the union in 1845. Old Miller County, a vast tract of land, was created by the Territorial Legislature of Arkansas on April 1, 1820. It included most of what is now Miller County, Arkansas, and the Texas counties of Bowie, Red River, Lamar, Fannin, Cass, Morris, Titus, Franklin, Hopkins, Delta, and Hunt. As early as 1811, a dozen or more fugitives resided at Pecan Point, situated in what is now northeast Red River County. Within four or five years, they had been supplanted by growing numbers of Anglo settlers. Many of these settlers interest us — including the families of Anderson, Boatwright, Bostick, English, Gates, Gilleland, Humphreys, Ingram, Kuykendall, McFaddin, Pool, Williams, and Wright.

The most significant familial relationship between NHG and the feudists involved the McFaddins who featured prominently in the "War of the Regulators and the Moderators." The two McFaddins who were executed in Shelby County were cousins of Nathan Arnett McFadden who was listed as a Washington County farmer in the census of 1850. It was his shelter and aid that the feuding McFaddins appeared desperately trying to reach

in their doomed flight of 1841. Nathan McFadden, like many Texas immigrants, first pioneered in Illinois. But by the fall of 1832, he had succumbed to the lure of Texas and become a member of Austin's colony. In that year Mexico granted him a league (4428 acres) of land near NHG's future home. He was later awarded additional land by the Republic of Texas for his service during the revolution against Santa Anna.

All of Nathan McFadden's eight children were born in Washington County (or its precursor during the colonial period). Therefore, the McFaddens were neighbors of NHG throughout his residency in the county. At least six McFadden offspring reached maturity and two had marriages which associate NHG with the "Moderators" and their heirs. The eldest son was Joseph Callaway Bartlett McFadden who wed Sarah Burns. Sarah was a daughter of Leander Burns and Sarah Irvin. Sarah Irvin was the eldest daughter of Absolam Irvin and Sarah Hunt Greer. Sarah Hunt Greer was NHG's sister. The youngest child of Absolam and Sarah was Absolam Daniel Irvin who married Nathan McFadden's sixth child, Sarah Hibernia.

Absolam and Sarah had begun their family in Jasper County, Georgia, around 1814. They had moved west with the Greers and immigrated to Texas soon after NHG — taking up residence in Washington County by October, 1839.

The other man executed in 1841 alongside Bill and Bailey McFaddin was Squire Humphreys. Squire (his actual name, not his title) appears to have been related by marriage to his condemned comrades because in 1835 the McFaddins' sister Mary Jane had wed William Pellham Humphries — to whom Squire was likely related.

NHG's life affected that of Shelby County Judge Hansford (assassinated in 1844) in this way: During NHG's term in Congress, he was appointed to the Committee on Privileges and Elections where he voted to disallow *both*, Rev. Daniel Parker — victorious Shelby candidate for the House — *and* his rival John Houston, thus allowing the incumbent Hansford to be appointed to the vacant seat which he had just lost. Since Hansford was a Moderator, his continuation in Congress served to impede any legislative efforts of the Regulator camp.

During the same term of Congress, NHG further distanced himself from the Parker clan for other reasons. That NHG had been instrumental in disqualifying Daniel Parker from Congress probably did not sit well with Daniel's brother Isaac who was currently representing Houston County. NHG was politically aligned with Sam Houston who, between stints as president, was representing San Augustine County — situated immediately south of Shelby County.

In May 1836, the Parkers had lost their father and several other family members to an Indian massacre at Fort Parker. The barbarity of the attack made it a cause célèbre for those who advocated strong action against the Indian menace.

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James W. Parker, brother to Daniel and Isaac, had survived the carnage and led other survivors to safety on a harrowing 150-mile trek by foot. A few weeks later, he met with Sam Houston, seeking help in winning the return of captured family members. Houston suggested a treaty with the Indians and James was dismayed. A month later he again approached Houston, this time begging him to order an expedition against the Comanches. Houston, an avid proponent of peaceful coexistence, still refused. After a year had passed, James wrote Houston for permission to raise a sizable force to combat the Indians. Houston allowed Parker to assemble a much-smaller group, but then disbanded the unit before it could act. A few months later, James's daughter Rachel was recovered, but her condition was so awful that she lived only a year before dying in February 1839. And the fate of his niece, Cynthia Ann Parker, became known nationally. Thus, any friend of Houston was not likely to be a friend of the Parkers.

Nevertheless, the Parkers had connections with the Greers through marriage. Some 20 years earlier, James Schrier had wed Sara Elizabeth Parker, eldest daughter of Jesse Parker. Schrier's land adjoined that of NHG's landlord, Philip H. Coe who himself married Elizabeth Ann Parker, youngest of the Parker daughters. Incidentally, many years later — after the Civil War and the death of his first wife — Isaac Parker remarried to Virginia Hill Sims, believed to have been kin to the Simms family who were Gilbert Greer's in-laws in his first marriage to Susanah Carothers.

The tough Regulator leader John Washington Middleton, critically wounded in March 1842, lived to the ripe old age of 90, dying in the Brazos River town of Granbury (about 30 miles above Kimball) after writing his memoirs about the East Texas feud. In Washington County in December 1847, a John W. Middleton pledged \$2000 bond to free his kinsman Thomas Middleton, charged with horse theft and manslaughter. Many Middletons came to Texas and identification of the John W. of Washington County has not been determined. (And it definitely was a different John Middleton — although maybe a younger generation cousin — who rode with Billy the Kid in the 1870s.)

Squire Humphreys' associate — whose gruesome killing in Louisiana so appalled American newspaper readers — was a man named Boatwright about whom virtually nothing is known. But, the following leads us to infer that this Boatwright possibly had Washington County kin with ties to NHG.

Thomas Boatwright — patriarch of the Texas Boatwrights — was born in Virginia about 1760, moved to Illinois when it opened for settlement, but by 1819 was living in Old Miller County. In the early fall of 1821 he and his family traveled with other Red River families down Trammel's Trace to Nacogdoches. In early December they set out along the La Bahía road for Austin's colony, crossing the Brazos New Year's Eve 1821 to camp beside a flowing stream, now known as New Year Creek, in Washington County. Here settled the families of Thomas Boatwright and Abner Kuykendall, whose grandson — according to the confession of Samson — was a target of the Clan in 1849. In 1834 the Kuykendall and Carothers families joined when Abner's son William wed Eliza Carothers who was almost certainly kin to Susanah Carothers, first wife of NHG's son Gilbert.

In 1824 Boatwright and his son-in-law Daniel Gilleland were granted Brazos land, but neither family ever lived on it. In 1825 they and other Red River immigrants returned to Miller County, Arkansas, to protest (unsuccessfully) the U. S. decision which awarded the Choctaws all of the Red River land settled by the Anglos. Thomas Boatwright died before returning to Austin's colony, but by 1833 his 72-year-old widow Amy and sons, Thomas, Friend, and Richard, were back in Texas applying for more grants. In 1835 she received land in Montgomery (now Madison) County. She died by 1839. We learn from the above that the Boatwrights (and others) travelled La Bahía and Trammel's Trace many times, each time passing through Nacogdoches and the area that in the 1840s would play host to the celebrated feud.

Now let us turn our attention to Boatwright's son Richard. In November 1837 he welched on a bet made on a race which was run at a race track on the same land on which NHG was apparently a tenant — that of Philip Haddox Coe. In September 1837 NHG had sold to Coe a slave named Louisa — and in 1841 NHG bought from Coe the land on which NHG had been living. In March 1838 a jury found against Boatwright in the amount of \$500. The successful plaintiff in the case was Thomas Hughes — who in 1849 would be accused of gang involvement in Orland Sapp's confession (see Vol. 5, # 2).

Among the jurors in 1838 was Josiah Lester — possibly kin to the Moderator S. F. Lester, the Shelby County judge who in 1843 would dismiss the pig-poaching charges against Samuel N. Hall (see "The Little War that Never Stopped," in our last issue). NHG lived directly across Mill Creek from Josiah D. Lester and in 1845 they were co-defendants in a Washington County suit brought by Robert S. Armisted. In the adjoining county of Fayette in the latter 1840s, James Seaton Lester — ex-Congressman and Senator for Fayette, and probably a kinsman of Josiah — was judge of probate for the estate of John Short, father of the youthful Clan confessor Thomas Short. It is remarkable that three different men surnamed Lester in three different counties were involved with the same people and events. And it would be even more remarkable if they were not kin.

Then in late 1847, Josiah Lester's son Milton and Saran A. Parker (nee Eldridge) were indicted for murdering her husband George D. Parker, based in part on the testimony of Dennis Harrell. Although Sarah sought immediate justice, the defense maintained that "the Defendant Lester makes oath that he cannot go safely to trial jointly with the said Sarah and pray a Severance [from Sarah]..." The court agreed and the State continued with two murder cases instead of one. The kin of George D. Parker have yet to be determined, but the above Parkers are plausible.

Lester's witnesses included the Clan members William Hewitt and James McLaughlin. His defense team of five attorneys, which included none other than J. S. Mayfield, successfully argued that a fair trial could not be had in Brenham so it was moved to Austin County. Here was an instance of county justice encumbered by prejudice arising, in part, from the East Texas feud. It was the same predicament which would befall NHG a few years later — *and with the very same accuser: Dennis Harrell !!!*

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Harrell was also on the jury in the Hughes-Boatwright suit — as were Samuel H. Gates, brother-in-law of Abner Kuykendall, and John Hall. In 1840 there were some 11 Hall families in Washington County and that March — as one of his last congressional acts — NHG petitioned the committee on Claims and Accounts on behalf of John Hall. In 1845 W. W. Arrington — probable kin to Joe Arrington, alleged member of the Clan — sued John W. Hall and James W. Smith — possible kin to Byrd Smith, a known member of the Clan. But the most significant of 5 Hall families still in the county in 1850 were those of James and B. A., possibly his son. These two families lived next door to Tom Irvin, James Cox, the Harrells and the Cleavelands — all linked to NHG and the events of 1849. The kinship of these Halls to the slain Regulator Samuel Hall seems likely, but is yet unproven. But what is known for certain is that William Gladden Hall wed Sarah Gilleland in 1837 in Washington County and she was the niece of Richard Boatwright.

Although the Boatwright family continued to be NHG neighbors for many years, no further record has been found of Richard and it is conjectured that he was the Boatwright who was killed by vigilantes in Louisiana in 1841. Nor was that man the only Boatwright who was the object of vigilante action. During the summer of 1860, the Vigilance Committee of Port Sullivan lynched two Boatwrights — an uncle and nephew — both suspected of being abolitionists.

The probability that the latter Boatwrights were abolitionists is itself significant. A Texas A&M professor has recently advanced the theory that some members of the Clan were involved in stealing slaves for the ultimate purpose of setting them at liberty after first reselling and then re-stealing them to finance an underground railroad. And other illegal activities of the gang may have been orchestrated, in part, to financially injure those who were strongly pro-slavery.

There is little doubt that Sansom was an abolitionist. During the Civil War his son John, "from a staunch Unionist family," assumed a responsible position in the Union Loyal League, which formed to thwart Indian raids rather than uphold Confederate military actions. In late 1862 the league was driven underground. Sansom and many of like mind went to New Orleans which had fallen to Union forces. He joined the First Texas Cavalry, U.S.A., which battled the Confederates in the Rio Grande campaign.

Buttressing this theory is the fact that both convicted Clansmen — Thomas Short and William Sansom — were pardoned halfway through their prison terms by Governor Peter Hansborough Bell. The reason for this may never be known, but he may have harbored some sympathy for those who opposed slavery. This possibility is made stronger by the fact that at the start of the Civil War, Jefferson Davis offered him a commission of colonel in the Confederate forces, but Bell refused to serve and sat out the conflict though in good health and not an old man.

Could the issue of slavery have been at the core of the political animosity that allegedly existed between James S. Mayfield and Absalom Bostick — whose death precipitated the Clan's undoing? As a member of the Clan, Bostick would presumably have been anti-slavery — although there were very probably Clansmen of both persuasions. On the other hand, Mayfield was adamantly outspoken in his advocacy of slavery and at the Constitutional Convention of 1845 proclaimed it necessary for "the true policy and prosperity" of Texas.

Twice NHG voted against measures that would allow free blacks to remain in the Republic. But though he clearly supported slavery in 1840, as the years passed his views may have mellowed. When the Mormon Greers left Texas, they sold not only their land but many of their slaves. A few faithful blacks accompanied the family to Utah *and even came back with the Greers to the slave state of Texas* — strongly suggesting they had been well-treated in their bondage.

More evidence that the Greers' opinions on slavery eased — and maybe even accommodated abolitionism — was this: At the outbreak of the Civil War, family members were divided on the issue — some Greers fought for the Confederacy, but some did not. During Reconstruction, large numbers of Texas jurists were not allowed to sit on the Bench — because they were Confederate veterans or they refused to take the oath of loyalty to the United States. Thomas Lacy Greer was appointed Judge for Bosque County and possibly suffered community backlash as a result — which may have "encouraged" his move to Arizona.

But another factor — and perhaps the most important — suggesting that NHG's views on slavery moderated, was his friendship with Sam Houston with whom he served in the 4th Congress of the Republic. As U.S. Senator, Houston's positions on the Missouri Compromise, Oregon Bill, and Compromise of 1850 clearly placed him in the anti-slavery camp. At one point, he even presented the U.S. Congress a petition by 10,000 clerics to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia and all U.S. ports and arsenals. Houston's career dived in 1855, when the Texas legislature condemned his vote on the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Unproven but likely, is the kinship of the murdered feudist Henry Runnels to Hardin Richard Runnels. The latter lived along the Brazos in 1842 before moving to the Red River. He staunchly opposed Sam Houston and became the only man to ever defeat Houston in an election when winning the governorship in 1856.

It is possible that Williams — hung for killing Runnels — had ties to NHG. The Thomas Williams family was in the vanguard of pioneers who frequented Nacogdoches while traveling between the Red River and Austin's colony. Thus, an East Texas member of this family *could* have been the man in question. Thomas' son Thomas Johnson Williams was possibly the "Rocky" Williams who was victimized by the Clan. For sure, the elder Thomas' stepdaughter Sarah Gilleland wed Robert Kuykendall, becoming a sister-in-law of Eliza Carothers, thus tied to Gilbert Greer.

The family of Regulator Judge John Ingram has not been identified, but we note the following with great interest: A youngster named John Ingram accompanied the Williams and Gilleland families from the Red River to Austin's Colony in 1821. In 1830 he was involved in smuggling tobacco to the Rio Grande. In the fall of 1835, he enlisted under the command of John Henry Moore who in 1849 would be co-chair of the Fayette Association of vigilantes. In the spring of 1836, he enlisted in the company led by Philip Haddox Coe who was the future landlord of NHG. In Fayette County in 1838, he married Elizabeth Price who was presumably related to the Williamson Price who would later become James McLaughlin's jailer in 1848!

And, as an aside, curiously there was the marriage of Thomas R. Ingram (son of another John Ingram) to Cynthia A. Bostick — although no relationship has been found to link either of them to those on whom we focus our attention.

It is probable that Anthony B. Patton, the Shelby County J. P., was kin to Absalom Bostick. Bostick married Mary G. Patton — probably Bostick's cousin because her mother was Bethenia Bostick. John W. Sansom (the aforementioned abolitionist) wed Helen Victoria Patton. William H. Patton commanded Absalom's cousin Sion Record Bostick who was one of the men who had captured Santa Anna after the battle of San Jacinto. And Samuel B. Patton served with NHG in the 4th Congress of the Republic.

On October 28, 1841 James S. Mayfield moved his family from Nacogdoches to La Grange in Fayette County — probably to get them away from the growing feud. Less than three months later on January 4, 1842, Representative Mayfield addressed the 6th Congress in Austin on a bill and included some harsh criticism of his fellow congressman David Spangler Kaufman who — like Mayfield — was representing Nacogdoches. After adjournment, Kaufman engaged Mayfield in a heated argument punctuated by an exchange of shots. Kaufman suffered a stomach wound that never healed properly and eventually caused his death in 1851. No charges were filed against either man in what seems to have been part of the East Texas feud that played out in Austin.

Beverly Benjamin Pool, who in 1849 along with NHG proclaimed his innocence in the pages of the *Texas Ranger*, was among those who left the Red River for Austin's Colony in 1821. In 1835 he obtained a Mexican grant for land located in present Cherokee County. That land was acquired by the congressman John Dial who signed the treaty which nominally ended the War of the Regulators and the Moderators. Incidentally, it was Pool's nephew John C. Pool who established a prosperous ranch near the future site of Port Sullivan. In 1848, John C. Pool hired a 13-year-old youth named Charles Goodnight whom we mentioned in Vol. 4, No. 3, as an inspiration for Woodrow T. Call in the novel *Lonesome Dove*.

The mass murderer Wilkinson possibly had two kin who married women tied to the events of 1849, although the kinship of each groom has not been determined. In February 1847 — three months before the mass murder of Regulators — Hardin G. Wilkinson married Joane B. Irvin, daughter of Absalom Irvin and Sarah Hunt Greer. And years later, Robert D. Wilkinson married Sophia Fanny Mayfield, second daughter of James S. Mayfield.

It is currently unknown, but suspected, that the aforementioned Wilkinsons were kin to the land owners J. Wilkinson and L. Wilkinson whose land adjoined that granted to Elliot Allcorn by the government of Mexico in 1831. The Allcorn grant was subsequently subdivided and acquired by W. W. Buster who sold the lower 271 acres (on the waters of Mills Creek) to NHG on December 3, 1844. This property became NHG's homesite for the remainder of his residency in Washington County. And so it was that the latter two Wilkinson families were NHG neighbors.

John Wilson McKissick is a man with surprising connections — both by blood and by marriage — to the events of 1849, to those in East Texas and to the Greers. We know that he was a co-chairman of the Fayette Association, but consider the following:

McKissick served as Washington County deputy sheriff some ten years before the events of 1849. In that capacity in 1839, he served papers on Elliot Allcorn who was being sued by the estate of Young Caruthers in the person of Allen Caruthers, his surviving brother and administrator. Their brother Ewing was among the murdered heroes of Goliad. The ancestry of these Caruthers is uncertain, but probably ties to Allen Caruthers, born to John Caruthers and Frances Murphy in Huntsville in 1837.

In 1869, the latter Allen Caruthers wed Sara Frances Ogden, daughter of William Riley Ogden and Mary Eliza Dickson who was the daughter of Ezekiel Dickson and Mary McKisick who was an aunt of John Wilson McKissick.

McKissick also had three uncles of great interest to us: James G. McKisick who married Mary Vance Greer, Joseph McKisick who married Jane Greer, and Wilson Harmon McKisick who wed Theodosia Greer. The area of the weddings was Bedford County, Tennessee — where Gilbert Greer, NHG's eldest son, was born (or, he might have been born in Bedford County, Virginia). Thus, John Wilson McKissick was very likely a cousin of NHG!

McKissick married three times. His first wife, Sarah Early, died young in Washington County in the fall of 1838. His second wife, Sarah McGary, was the widow of a man named Wright — possibly kin to the Wright clan of Pecan Point on the Red River, maybe the widow Claiborne Wright, who fell at the Alamo.

Before joining the Fayette Association, McKissick was active in Waco where in about 1846 he built the first hotel (he was a carpenter by trade). In 1847 he traded his hotel for a tract of land between Steele and Cedron Creeks, roughly the site of the future Bosque County village of Steiner. He built a cabin, but occupied it only briefly before withdrawing because of the Indian threat.

Meanwhile, his relationship with his Fayette "Associates" had begun to sour and by the fall of 1850 he had relocated to Milam County. Soon his erstwhile friends charged him with embezzling Fayette County funds and a warrant for his arrest was issued to Waco where he had become resident. This warrant went unserved for years, if ever. It is unclear if the matter was ever resolved.

By 1854, when Bosque County came into being, McKissick had moved his family onto his tract and there he lived out his life. He was supposedly buried across the Brazos at Fort Graham, but his grave is unmarked. Sarah predeceased him and he took a third wife, M. L. Walker whose kinship is unknown.

McKissick's eldest daughter Sarah Anne wed Christopher Richard Claybrook who had recently lost his first wife, Margaret Ann Lane, sister of the three Lane girls who married Greer men!

Interestingly, McKissick's mother was Rebecca Bonham, whose brother James Bonham was the father of Milledge Luke Bonham, Governor of South Carolina, and reportedly also father of James Butler Bonham, one of the prominent Alamo heroes.

In his role as deputy sheriff back in 1840, McKissick had also served divorced papers on Elizabeth Abney at the request of Ira Abney. In November 1839, NHG had asked Congress to grant a divorce to Ira, but was unsuccessful. It was a classic petition: he claimed alienation, she claimed cruelty. In October 1841, Ira was worn-out and dropped his suit — by next spring he was dead.

Elizabeth was a daughter of James Walker and Catherine Miller. Elizabeth's siblings included Thomas, who wed Amanda Middleton; and Saunders, who wed Lucinda Lucretia Middleton. Both of these wives were possibly related to John W. Middleton, the Regulator leader discussed above. Ira's attorney was W. Y. McFarland, whose kinsman J. B. McFarland in 1841 was granted land in San Augustine County — in the thick of the East Texas feud which *must* have influenced him when he, like McKissick, became co-chair of the Fayette Association in 1849.

A year after Ira's death, Elizabeth Abney married William H. Miller, possibly kin to the James and Samuel Miller who would later be named in Thomas Short's "confession."

NHG Exonerated

The extensive material presented in this and the last issue provides substantial evidence that the events of 1849 in and around Washington County were connected to the East Texas feud known as the "War of the Regulators and Moderators." Some of the evidence is tentative and circumstantial, but the majority of it is strong and persuasive.

It has been clearly established that a number of those implicated in gang activity were completely innocent. This was even admitted by the vigilante group that called themselves the Fayette Association. But it has been up to us to demonstrate that the allegations against NHG were unfounded and were the product of a pernicious and continuing prejudice that had its origins along the Sabine River in the early 1840s.

There is little doubt that some of the crimes were acts of spite or vindictiveness rather than personal gain. Sapp's "confession" implied such when he quoted Grigg as saying, "there were some dam'd rascals in his settlement that did not like him much..." For example, James Holt had a sow killed — not stolen, just killed. The same lot befell two hogs owned by Thomas J. Williams.

Some of the hard feelings that motivated the unpleasant activities was of different origin, often political. NHG had probably made enemies. His investigation of Alabama land fraud back in 1835 would have displeased unscrupulous land dealers there and worried others later in East Texas. When the Texas House debated a motion to move the capital from Austin to the Falls of the Brazos, NHG rankled some when he rose and spoke in support of Sam Houston. Houston had "strenuously advocated the bill, arguing against the City of Austin as a location. Later Cornelius Van Ness ... delivered an able and sarcastic speech, a portion of which was directed against General Houston." The motion "brought on a most animated and interesting debate," but it lost, of course.

NHG also voted against the establishment of Rutgersville College, a Methodist facility espoused by most residents of Fayette County. The school would be situated between Round Top to the northwest and La Grange to the southwest. Both communities and their residents stood to gain. John Henry Moore, on whose property La Grange came into being, was a prominent future member of the Fayette Association. Another likely supporter was future vigilante president Isaac Lafayette Hill, resident of Round Top. Interestingly, Hill had been born in Hillsboro, Georgia, quite near the Greers — and his family followed the Greers to Troup County around 1832.

The drama of 1849 involved a large number of people. We have little or no explicit information about the activities of the large majority of them. Therefore, we cannot assess with certainty the character or complicity of any but a very few. Where known, we can observe the prior and subsequent behavior of a given person and thus derive a fair indication of the likelihood that he did or did not engage in improper acts.

Very few men named in the "confessions" were charged with crimes. A year after publishing their responses, Beverly Pool had moved to Milam County and James Cox was still living in Washington County. After fleeing, NHG returned to Washington County, but left once more upon being accused of murder by Dennis Harrell. What about this man Harrell?

NHG, in his 1851 petition for change of venue, claimed Harrell was "known to be a lunatic." Doubting NHG would invent this defensive ploy, I began searching for information on Harrell (aka Herald or Herrald). After reading much old microfilm, I found it. In October 1839, Nancy Harrell sought protection for herself and her six children when she filed for divorce from Dennis Harrell. Her petition solemnly swore he

is now and for some months past has been entirely insane that he is often furiously and in the paroxysms of his fury attempts to take the life of and commit great bodily injury on all persons round him that he exhibits the evidence of the entire loss of reason & has more than once in & under rage attacked Your petitioner with clubs & the dangerous weapons ...

And the witness James Haggard acknowledged that

so great is the fury of the said Dennis Harrell that your deponent has been obliged to arm himself with his gun when he visits the said Harrell in his place of confinement

Having thus confirmed NHG's veracity and accuracy, and learned of Harrell's mental condition and his recorded affiliation with known gang members, we seriously doubt his credibility and suspect his accusations were heavily tainted with the poison of vindictive elements in the community. But there is more.

NHG's nephew Thomas G. Irvin, also maligned by Short's allegations, *had wed Dennis Harrell's sister Caroline*. We have here the makings of bitter family turmoil, perhaps a full rift.

There are other reasons to believe NHG innocent. A year after his indictment, charges were "Continued & pluries capias ordered to Milam County" because it had become known that NHG had moved his family to Port Sullivan. *For two and one half years*, the warrant went unserved until an exasperated judge issued a "fine of \$50 against Sheriff of Milam Co, for failure to return the capias." Did the Milam sheriff not serve the warrant because he, like others, believed the indictment to be baseless? But there is more.

In April 1854, NHG received *in Brenham* "a Judgement and Decree against James H Brantley..." Accordingly, Brantley's land was seized for debt. In August 1854, the *Washington* sheriff John Day, on court order, put the land up for auction in Brenham and

Nathaniel H. Greer whereupon offered the Sum of 765.00 Dollars for Said property which being more than was offered by any one else the Said property was sold to him the said Nathaniel H Greer

How is it that NHG was not arrested in Brenham? Did the Washington sheriff and the others in attendance (perhaps including public officers) also realize that the three-year old indictment for murder was specious? The facts cry out that NHG was a victim of persecution and that many people knew it and would not act on it.

But perhaps the strongest defense of NHG's innocence was his sterling public career, his outstanding character, and the fact that friends and family — highly-principled Mormons among them — continued to love and admire this family patriarch.

Constraints of time and space prevent the publication of more material — both illuminating and fascinating — on these matters (I'll try to post them online as conditions permit). Time has come to return to other subjects in upcoming issues — now that the allegations against NHG have been shown to be at least exaggerated, if not wholly without merit.

Thanks for Newsletter

all responsible for our *The Greer Way West*.

You guys are doing a swell job with our paper. I look forward to getting it. I have a good idea of all the work and time involved in it. All of the articles and stories are fantastic. Keep up the good work and tell everyone involved how much I appreciate it.

I wanted very much to go to the reunion this year, but the Greenwood reunion this year is and was set up last June for the 9th day of June and I can't be at both. I started the Greenwood reunion 4 years ago so I am obligated to be there.

Thanks.

Dear Greer Way West Staff

Enclosed is a donation check ... that we would like to contribute towards your mailing, research & other expenses. We want this contribution to be under the name of my mother: _____, whose husband (deceased) is the grandson of A. V. Greer. Can you apply the required amount of this towards a year of *The Greer Way West* newsletter.

We enjoy the newsletter so very much!

Our Best Wishes,

Announcements

We regret to announce the passing of Ellen Mae Bailey on January 30, 2001, in Paris, TX. Ellen was born July 18, 1916, the daughter of Henry Holmes and Esther Mignon Greer, daughter of Matthew Simeon Greer. Ellen taught elementary school in various Texas communities from the Rio Grande to the Red River, helping to shape the lives of countless pupils. She was preceded in death by her husband Morris Bailey whom she had wed on August 9, 1945.

Corrections

Last issue had two mistakes involving descendants of John McFadin of County Tyrone in Ulster. The nickname of William McFaddin was not "Buffalo Bill" — his true epithet was "Buckskin Bill." Bill's cousin Nathan A. McFadden did not settle in Fayette Co. — he was actually was a Washington Co. neighbor of NHG.

The Fate of Ira Abney

The fate of Ira is a sad one. At the end of 1841 he left Washington County, probably due to his unhappy marriage, and embarked on an journey whose aim remains an enigma to us. What happened to him was a mystery until a few weeks ago when, **completely by accident**, as I was skimming through death notices published in the *Houston Morning Star*, on June 21, 1842, I happened upon:

Drowned— Dr. Ira Abney, late of Washington Co, TX, was drowned in the Arkansas River near Lewisburg, on the 19th ult. by the upsetting of a canoe.

Our readers will probably realize *why* Abney's fate had escaped my previous searches. I had not anticipated the misspelling of his name as it appeared in the newspaper! And what was he doing so far from Washington County? The Arkansas River was a major artery for pioneering efforts. Perhaps he was striking out in new directions in an effort to start his life anew.

Another revelation in the announcement is the reference to Ira Abney as a doctor. This suggests that maybe, *just maybe*, he delivered Nancy and NHG's son Ira Abney — who was then given the name in honor of the doctor.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Rain — Rain — Rain

The 2001 reunion in Washington County, Texas, was held 60 miles west of Houston — and we all know what happened in Houston! Although it rained buckets Friday night, our gathering was fortunately indoors. And as the time of our outdoor meeting approached on Saturday, the weather miraculously cleared for five hours or so and we had a delightful get-together!

We enjoyed the meals and the museum, but most of all we enjoyed each other's company and genealogical anecdotes. On Saturday many of us also drove just west of Brenham to view the approximate homesite of NHG when his last child, Matthew Simeon "Babe" Greer (MSG), was born.

Affordable DNA Research

For several years I have been waiting for the cost of DNA analysis to come down to affordable levels. I had realized that through genetic analysis, we could determine with statistical certainty which of various prospective ancestors are truly ours.

For example, the following much-debated questions would become capable of solution: Do we descend from the Ulster immigrant of 1653, Henry Greer — alleged son of James Grierson of Capenoch? Or do we descend from another son, James Jr, who emigrated to Baltimore in the fall of 1675? Were Henry and James actually sons of the elder James? For that matter, do we truly descend from the Griersons of Lag?

Most of you will recall the sensational DNA research which proved (statistically) that Thomas Jefferson fathered children by his slave Sally Hemings. Well, the time has come for a similar genetic study of our Greer ancestry. Please read the following highly-condensed (and in some places re-worded) version of a recent Reuters news story:

Just take a swab from your cheek and you can determine your early ancestors. This opinion was related in an interview with Professor Bryan Sykes, a top geneticist who has spent years of DNA research in mapping out our genetic origins.

The Oxford University professor began studying DNA from archaeological bones, then in 1994 was asked to examine the 5,000-year-old remains of a man trapped in a glacier in the southern Alps. This spawned his research into how genes pass undiluted from generation to generation through the maternal line — and so help to determine our genetic ancestry.

Why the maternal line? In an interview with Reuters, Sykes stated that DNA is inherited only from our mothers — it is found in eggs, not sperm. After examining thousands of DNA samples, the "clan mothers of Europe" (as Sykes refers to them) were reduced to The Seven Daughters of Eve, the title of his recent book which chronicles his DNA detective work.

[See page 2 about genetic tracing via the male line. — WNG]

He said, "There are roughly 33 equivalent clusters if you take the whole world. Eventually it all comes down to Mitochondrial Eve in Africa 200,000 years ago ... Thousands of people have asked to have a DNA test to find out who they are descended from."

Therefore, he established a web site with the address www.oxfordancestors.com to meet the demand. By sending in \$220, you will receive a swab kit used to sample the DNA in your mouth. Then you return the sample for an analysis that will reveal your genetic ancestry.

Sykes concluded, "Your genes are a very, very precious gift and you should be proud of them."

[Read more about genetic research on page two.]

Tracking the Y-Chromosome

Paternal lines (using Y-chromosomes) can be used to trace back to a small group of men, in the same way that mitochondrial DNA was used to identify the Seven Daughters of Eve.

The Y-chromosome contains the gene that causes a human embryo to become male. Men produce both Y-chromosomes and X-chromosomes, but women produce only X-chromosomes. Embryos with two X-chromosomes become girls, and those with one X and one Y and become boys. Thus, Y-chromosomes can theoretically be used to identify a small number of common male ancestors, but scientists have not yet agreed on the exact manner in which this is done. However, useful results are possible.

The people at Oxford Ancestors Ltd offer a service which they call the *Y-Line™ Test*. Although it cannot prove paternity, it will show if two males are paternally *unrelated*. Consequently, if two brothers have different Y-Line test results, they cannot have the same father. Here is what Oxford Ancestors claims:

Y-Line is our new DNA-based service designed to help you research your genealogy or family history. Set to revolutionise the art of genealogy, Y-Line works by producing a genetic signature of your Y-chromosome. This is the chromosome that is passed from father to son.

Although Y-chromosome signatures do change very slowly over time, the pattern is stable over hundreds of years. This means that male relatives who have an uninterrupted male-male link between them will share the same, or very similar, Y-chromosome signatures. Y-Line is particularly useful when a connection between different branches of a family, perhaps with the same surname, is suspected but cannot be proven from written records. Y-Line, by comparing the Y-chromosome signatures, provides the answer.

Y-Line analyses ten different genetic sites to construct a Y-chromosome signature. You will receive your own Y-Line certificate, suitable for framing, as well as full guidance notes on how to compare your Y-chromosome signature with others. In addition you will receive a complete description of the steps we have used to produce your result.

To obtain this service, the first step is to request a free DNA sampling kit from Oxford Ancestors Ltd. This kit (which comes with full instructions) contains a small brush used to collect cells simply and painlessly from the mouth. Step two is to return the sampling brush with \$220 (USD) — which is not processed until the results have been posted in the mail. It typically takes about a month to get results after the firm receives the sample.

Oxford Ancestors Ltd advises customers of the following:

- Multiple requests in the same order are welcome (and qualify for a discount), but individual test results can only be returned directly to the individuals from which the samples originated.
- Tests are available only to individuals aged 18 or older.
- The Y-Line test is only for males.
- Y-Line is not designed for use in cases of disputed paternity.

Our Male Greer Ancestry

What does Y-chromosome analysis hold for Greer genealogy and what might be a suitable strategy for applying it?

To begin with, some Greer men would need to have a sample made of their chromosomes. Such tests would, of themselves, be of no use. The results would need to be *compared* with results of *other* men in order to learn something useful. And if more than one of us were tested, we'd reduce the chance of a testing mistake.

If different male descendants of NHG were tested, not much would be learned — we already know *that much* of our ancestry with virtual certainty. The testing would need to include *men* who descend from a male NHG ancestor, not from NHG himself. In fact, we have great confidence that NHG's father John D. Greer is positively known — so we need to seek even earlier in our tree.

We believe we know the identity of NHG's grandfather Thomas Greer, but we lack firm proof. Therefore, it would be desirable to locate a *documented* descendant from the Thomas Greer whom we believe is our ancestor, but *not* one descending through NHG's father, John D. Greer.

It is this need to compare the genetic signatures of the male descendants of Thomas Greer through his son John with the descendants through other sons that is probably the greatest challenge to overcome. To find such a *confirmed* descendant who is also *willing* to participate in the study, persistent research must be done — and a little luck would be helpful. Considering this task, the actual cost of the tests is a relatively minor issue.

Furthermore, the accuracy of the process would be improved if the test were applied to the *oldest* of those now living. For example, subjecting myself to a test would be good, but having my father tested would be even better. When I put this question to Oxford Ancestors, they replied as follows:

You are quite correct in assuming that it is better to use genetic samples from as early a generation as possible when trying to decide if a paternal relationship is true. This is because most researchers use an average rate of change for each of the ten DNA markers used in the analysis of 0.2% per generation. So, combining the ten markers, this gives a 2% chance that between one generation and the next a father and son will have a Y-Line code differing at one of the ten markers.

In other words, the more generations which separate the current men from their paternal ancestors, the greater are the cumulative effects of the random gene mutation that inevitably arise in the statistical comparison of the selected genetic markers.

If we undertook this project without delay and if we located a willing male descendant not through John, we could possibly have definitive proof of our ancestry within a few months!

And beyond that? It would be a huge help to our European research to prove our descent from the Griersons of Lag and to narrow our search for our immigrant ancestor (today we only have *theories* of which Greer brought our family to the new world)!

If you have an opinion on this subject, or if you have some helpful suggestions regarding its realization, please contact your editor or our president.

The Preservation Waltz: Kimball Bend Park

This Fort Worth Star Telegram story (edited for length) by Jessie Milligan was published May 1, 2000, and contributed by Bernay Martin, a great-grandson of Gilbert Dunlap Greer, NHG's firstborn. It describes the ghost town where many Greers lived and some of us toured at the 1997 reunion. Thanks Bernay!

It's a spring morning near Lake Whitney, and it's ever so peaceful under the pecan trees in the grassy meadow of Kimball Bend Park. As yet, no one has arrived but the sand bass fishermen, and they don't make much noise.

The water-skiers are weeks from showing. So is the road-paving crew that will be laying asphalt for a new access road right over one of the few places in Texas where the exact route of the old Chisholm Trail is indisputable.

Within the confines of Kimball Bend Park lies the ghost town of Kimball, a village that flourished during the 1867-1884 Chisholm Trail days as longhorns trod down its main street on their way to the main crossing of the Brazos River in Central Texas.

Kimball Bend Park is one of the few places in Texas where visitors can see vestiges of what life was like on the trail.

The Chisholm Trail drew 10 million longhorns before it died out in 1884 as the open range became fenced with the barbed wire that symbolizes private ownership.

With the cattle trail empty, the railroad nowhere near, Kimball was nearly deserted by the early 1900s; by 1940, everyone was gone.

Texas left Kimball to wear away. Its buildings fell. Grass grew over its streets.

"I wish we could go back in time so we could preserve it all," says a spokesman of the Army Corps of Engineers which oversees the park. "We ought to take better care of our history in Texas. It's the frontier mentality: Resources seem endless. There's this idea that we are Texas, we are still creating history."

Kimball wasn't entirely ignored.

In 1963, a Boy Scout troop from Fort Worth placed a pink granite marker in the center of the park to note Kimball's significance in the history of the Chisholm Trail.

Now, all that remains in Kimball Bend Park from the trail days are skeletons of three limestone buildings, plus part of a bridge over Hopewell Creek, as well as barely visible roadways and foundations.

A 600-grave cemetery was moved in the 1940s when the corps took over the property.

Preservation of historic sites is a tricky waltz between attracting visitors and keeping them from spoiling the sites.

The corps plans many improvements: interpretive signs explaining history; stabilizing the crumbling ruins; public restrooms in the architectural style of old Kimball; hiking trails back in the oak groves; a fence around the park with gate and keeper to take money for camp sites; and keeping out the off-road vehicles that have scarred the earth around the walls of the old Kimball School.

A safer park entrance road is being added off Highway 174. Its path follows the exact route of the old Chisholm Trail — down Kimball's Lubbock Street that shows up in surveys from the 1800s, but has for decades been covered with grass.

Attracting visitors presents the potential of damaging the park, but if the site exists and no one visits it, what good is it?

Road paving was to begin in the fall of 2000 with fencing to follow. Environmental review was done as part of a master plan.

In the center of the park stand the rock walls of the Kimball dance academy. Millions of longhorns hoofed it past the dance academy and saloons and Masonic Lodge, past the homes of tenant farmers and past a small village struggling to revive itself after the Civil War. Music must have swirled like floodwater out of the dance academy door and over the cattle trail, mixing waltzes and cowboy calls alongside the Brazos.

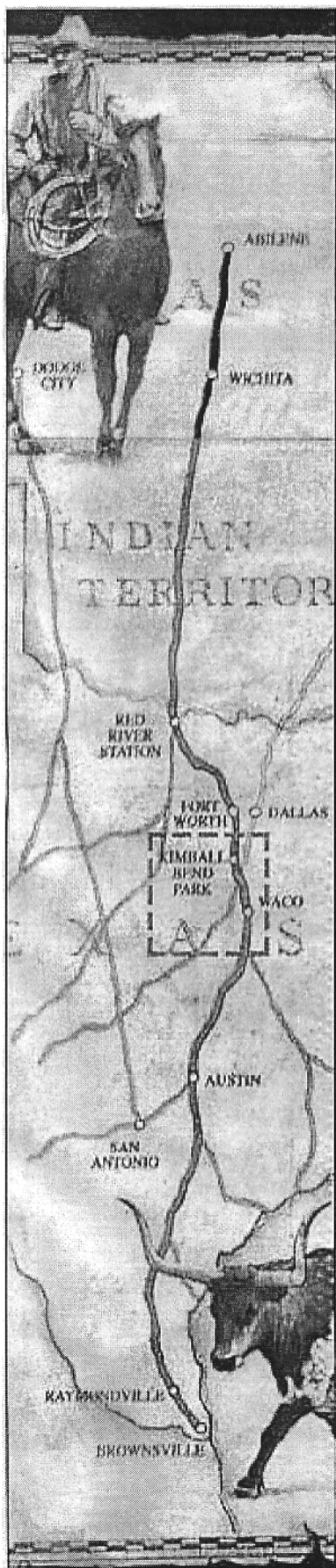
A waltz continues at Kimball Bend, a place challenged by the pressure to draw more visitors while still preserving what's left of its historical significance.

The corps plans to add 80 campsites with electric hookups alongside the ghost town that once offered hotel rooms for cowboys on the trail. Travel trailers will be able to park near the crumbling limestone walls, skeletons of Kimball's remaining buildings.

But for now, the park is quiet. On a spring morning, you can stand in the park's center and hear the call of a great homed owl. A red-tailed hawk sounds its alert.

Kimball in 1870: Some 40 buildings on 100 lots platted in 1853 by a natural Brazos crossing — the brainchild of Wall Street lawyer, Richard Kimball, and a former Jamaican newspaperman, Jacob De Cordova.

[continued with photos on page four]



Correction

Many thanks to _____ for pointing out an error in our last issue. Leander Burns wed **Nancy** Irvin, not Sarah. Nancy had a daughter Sarah — and of course, Nancy's mother was Sarah. These Sarahs contributed to my mistake!

Kimball Bend Park

[continued from page three]

Hopes and dreams are high. A school is built with towering windows. Three saloons quench the cowboys' thirst. A hotel is built. A Masonic Lodge. A graveyard is started for the generations of families the town's founders believe will call Kimball home. Most improbable and hopeful of all is the dance academy built to teach people how to waltz along the Chisholm Trail.

As many as 1,500 people live here, having come from New York and England and parts unknown. Many are renters who grow cotton and vegetables. The new households include poodles, employed to scare rabbits from gardens.

Poodles and longhorns. Who knew?

One of the town's 20 roads is named Lubbock Street, and it is there that millions of longhorns — a fortune on the hoof — are herded to railheads in Kansas.

The cost of the work is expected to fall between \$1 and \$1.5 million.

So Kimball quietly awaits more changes.

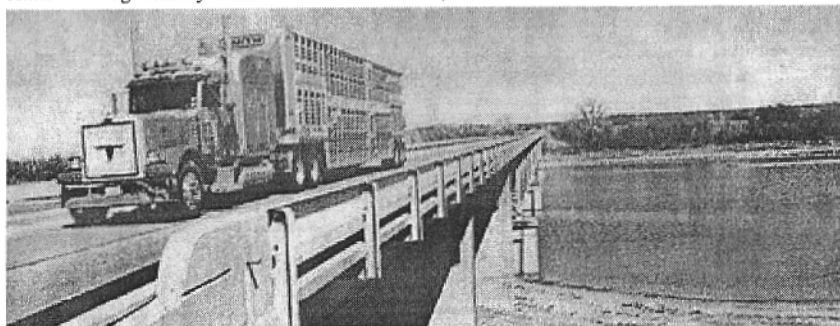
To the careful eye, the magic of the ghost town will remain. There are the limestone buildings, of course. And in the oak grove off the park, in the places untouched still by water-skiers and sand bass fishermen, iris and crape myrtle bloom, nonnative plants brought by homesteaders of long ago.

Photography by Rodger Mallison for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram:

These walls are all that remain of the Kimball school that sat just yards off the Chisholm Trail.



Kimball Bridge exactly follows the Chisholm Trail, but the cattle in this truck don't have to swim!



When the Kimball Bridge opened in April 1950, Rev. William N. Greer (MSG's son) was asked to speak. He recalled how as a boy he would sit on the roof of his father's store at Kimball and watch the herds cross the river on their way to market, and spoke of the ferry that began operation at the same point in 1873.

History of Clan Gregor — Chapter IV [edited for length]

Sketch of the Reign of King James I

KING JAMES I., born in 1390, was captured by the English on his way to be educated in France, shortly before his father, King Robert III.'s death, which took place 4th April 1406. The first part of his reign the sovereign power was exercised by the King's uncle, the Duke of Albany, who was succeeded as Regent by his son Murdoch. King James I. returned from his captivity in England in 1424. He was an energetic ruler who sought to curb the power of his nobles, and also to crush the Highlands by severe measures. Tytler in his "History of Scotland," regarding this reign, gives the following description of the country at that time :—

"Besides such Scoto-Norman barons, however, there were to be found in the Highlands and Isles, those fierce aboriginal chiefs who hated the Saxon and the Norman race, and offered a mortal opposition to the settlement of all intruders within a country which they considered their own. They exercised the same authority over the various clans and septs, of which they were the heads or leaders, which the baron possessed over his vassals and their military followers; and the dreadful disputes and collisions which perpetually occurred between these distinct ranks of potentates, were accompanied by spoliations, ravages, imprisonments and murders which at length became so frequent and so far extended that the whole country beyond the Grampian range was likely to be cut off, by these abuses, from all regular communication with the mere pacific parts of the kingdom."

Amongst sundry enactments in the Parliament held in March 1424, regarding Article 46, Mr Tytler had this comment:—

"It was declared to be the intention of the sovereign to grant a remission or pardon of any injury committed upon person or property in the lowland districts of his dominions, where the defaulter made reparation, or, according to the Scottish phrase, 'assythement,' to the injured party, and where the extent of the loss had been previously ascertained by a jury of honest and faithful men; but from this rule the Highlands were excepted, where on account of the practice of indiscriminate robbery and murder which had prevailed, previous to the return of the King, it was impossible to ascertain correctly the extent of the depredation, or the amount of the assythement. The condition of his northern dominions, and the character and manners of his Highland subjects, whose allegiance was of so peculiar and capricious a nature, had given birth to many anxious thoughts in the King, and led not long after this to a personal visit to these remote regions, which formed an interesting episode in his reign."

The murder of King James I. by the traitor Graham, in February 1436, again plunged Scotland into the troubles of a long minority amidst rival factions seeking their own interests.

The following entries relating to the fifteenth century are taken from the "Chartulary":—

"1436-7, Feb. 18. King James I. murdered at Perth. Henry MacGregor appears to have been an actor in the murder, and to have suffered death for his share in that barbarous

deed. The proof of this is contained in a charter of King James III. in favour of Robert de Ros, dated 14th August 1479. 'James (III.) by the Grace of God, &c.: Whereas it hath lately come to our knowledge that the late Henry M^cGregour, father of the late Murdac Henrisoun, was present at the traitorous and most cruel death of our late most serene grandfather, the most illustrious James I., King of Scots, and for this was executed, and the said Murdac, son of this traitor, had one tenement with pertinents lying in our Burgh of Perth, acquired by the said Murdac, &c.' The name Murdac affords a slight presumption that Henry M^cGregour had been a partisan of the late unfortunate Regent Murdac, part of whose offences is understood to have been the alienation (in imitation of his father, the previous Regent) of the Crown lands.

"1440-1, 21st June. Charter by King James II. to John Menzies, son and heir of David Menzies Kt: and monk of the Monastery of Melrose and to his heirs, of the barony of Rawir, Lands of Weyme, Aberfallibeg, of Cumrey, and the lands of the Thanage of Crennich &c.

"1440-1, Jan. 8. Charter by John Lockart of Bar to his son Robert of the lands of Bar in Ayrshire witnessed among others by 'Gilb: Greresoun' Register of Great Seal, 111-148.

"1463, July 5th. Malcolme Johnsoun of Auchrevach disposed his lands of Auchinrevach, lying in the barony of Glendochir and shire of Perth, to Colin Campbell of Glenurchay Kt by charter. The charter by Johnsoun is signed at Perth, and one of the witnesses to it is 'Murdacus Henrisoun.'

"King James II., who had succeeded his father at the age of six, in 1436 was killed by a splinter from the explosion of a gun at the siege of Roxburgh, 3d August 1460, having shown himself a sovereign of vigour and capacity.

"1483, Feb. 19th. Donald Balloch MacGregor with several others ordered by the Lords Auditors 'to content and pay to the Prior and Convent of the vale of Virtue beside Perth the soume of fourty pund, aucht be him for the mailles of their landis in Athol.'

"1484, Oct. 21st. In the action and cause pursued by Schir Duncan M^cGregore, Vicar of Drumman, against James Arthursoun, for the wrongous occupation and detention of the mansion of Drumman, and taking up the fermeze and profits of the said mansion, and for the withholding of 'ane vmast cloth' pertaining to the said Vicar by the decease of Jonet Badly and for the withholding of 10s of borrowed silver. The Schir Duncan being present, and the said James being lawfully called and not compeired, the Lords decree and deliver the said James does wrong in the occupation of the said mansion.

[continued on the other side]

1484, Oct. 11. In an action by Margaret Lady Torre against Lioune of Logyalmond and others for wrongful occupation of the Manys of Logy, &^a occur the names of **Alane Grigsoune and John Gregorsoune.**"

King James III. was killed at the battle of Sauchie Burn, 18th June, 1438. The notices of the Clan during the previous stormy period are meagre. The Obituary has the following entries:—

"1440, April 20th. Death of Malcolm, son of John dhu MacGregor, at Glenurquhay, on the 20th of April; he was buried in the manner formerly mentioned.

"1461. Death of Patrick MacGregor, Laird of Glenstray, at Stronemelochane; he was buried in Dysart, in the way before mentioned.

"1477, February 17th. Death of Duncan Beg MacGregor, at Roro."

In the first Parliament after the accession of James IV., held in Edinburgh, 17th October 1488,

"A determined effort was made for the putting down of theft, robbery, and murder—crimes which were at this moment grievously prevalent—by dividing the kingdom into certain districts, over which were placed various Earls and Barons, to whom full authority was entrusted, and who promised on oath that they would, to their uttermost power, exert themselves in the detection and punishment of all offenders."

"On this occasion, the districts of 'Renfrew, with Dumbarton, the Lennox, Cote and Arran,' were entrusted to the Earl of Lennox, Lord Lisle, and Matthew Stewart; Stirlingshire to the Sheriff of Stirlingshire and James Shaw of Sauchie; Menteith and Strathgartney to Archibald Edmonston; Glenurquhart, Glenlyon, and Glenfalloch to Neill Stewart, with Duncan and Ewin Campbell; Athole, Strathern, and Dunblane to the Earl of Athole, Lord Drummond, and Robertson of Strowan."

The following is the text of part of the enactment:—

"Item anent the stanching of Theft, Reft, and other enormities through all the realm; the Lords underwritten have made faith and given their bodily oaths to our Sovereign Lord in this his parliament, that they, and each of them, shall diligently with all care and besinace, search and seek where any such trespassers are found or known within their bounds, and to take them and justify them, or make them to be sent to our Sovereign Lord to be justified. And they shall have power of our Sovereign Lord, under his white wax, to take and punish the said trespassers without favour according to Justice. And also to give them power to cause others, small Lairds within their bounds, to mak faith likewise; And to rise and assist them in the taking of the said trespassers; and this Act to endure to our Sovereign Lord's age of xxi years, &^a."

"Among these Lords we find Duncan Campbell, Neille Stewart, and Ewyne Campbell for Discher, Toyer, Glenurquhar, Rannoch, Apnadule, Glenlioun, Glenfalloch." ("Parliamentary Record," first Parliament of King James VI.)

"In 1491, Duncan Campbell of Glenurchy had a Charter of the Port and Isle of Loch Tay, and certain of the King's lands adjacent to Loch Tay. In 1498 he had the 'Balliary' of all the King's lands of Discher, Toyer, Glenlyon, and the Barony of Glen Dochart."—(Dr Joseph Anderson.)

"1499-1500. Precept of Remissioun to Patrick M^cGregor, Remittand to him the slauchter of umquhill Gillaspay M^cNeluss, &^a" (all after crime).

Continuation of the notices in the public Records, after the Act of James IV.'s first Parliament, as taken from the "Chartulary":—

"1499-1500. Decree at the instance of Alexander, Earle of Menteith, against his tenants of certain lands, Ledard, Franach, Dowlochcon, &^c, and amongst those tenants are Malcolm MakGregour and John Dow Malcolmson, whose names immediately follow that of the others. Acta Dominorum Concilis and Secessions.

"1499-1500, February 20th. A precept of Remissioun for Patrick M^cGregor Remittand him the slaughter of vmquhile Gillaspay M^cNeluss, and for all crime that may be imputed to him zairfoir alanerlie, &^c the usual exceptions for capital crimes, treason, &^c, following de data xx Februarij anno Regis xij. Registrum Secreti II. 4.

[Here we skip to the end of the chapter ...]

In the reign of James IV. great progress was made towards the general pacification of the country.

"The policy which he adopted was, to separate and weaken the clans by arraying them in opposition to each other, to attach to his service by rewards and preferment some of their ablest leaders, to maintain a correspondence with the remotest districts, and gradually to accustom their fiercest inhabitants to habits of pacific industry, and a respect for the restraints of the laws." For the purpose of quieting the lowland districts the king adopted a system of engaging the most powerful of the resident nobles and gentry in a covenant or band which under severe penalties obliged them to maintain order throughout the country." Proud of the success attending his efforts James IV. set out "on horseback unaccompanied even by a groom, with nothing but his riding cloak cast about him, his hunting knife at his belt, and six and twenty pounds for his travelling expenses in his purse. He rode, in a single day, from Stirling to Perth across the Mounth, and through Aberdeen to Elgin."

But in the disastrous year 1513 King James IV. and the "flower of his nobility" unfortunately fell at Flodden, while his only son was still an infant.

The minority of James V. was a time of great trouble to the nation, and little heed was taken of the Highlands. In 1528 many contentions occurred in the Isles, and the King showed much skill in conciliating the island chiefs. But other troubles occupied the King's short life, and wearied and worn he expired in the thirty-first year of his age, on the 13th December 1542.

The above abbreviation of Chapter IV was truncated at the end of the 15th century because the MacGregor lines deviated ever further from those of Grierson. The balance of the History of Clan Gregor holds little to interest our Greer concerns. But some material, scattered across a couple of chapters, is worthy of our attention and will be published in our next newsletter.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



President's Message

Dear Cousins,

Greetings from Paradise, and the birthplace of many of our ancestors. For those of you that wonder where I am coming from, the answer is Central Georgia. We live in Greene County which is North of Jasper County, west of Hancock County and east of Troupe County. Our ancestors lived in this area in the late seventeen hundreds and up to the middle eighteen hundreds. Many of our cousins still live in this area. In fact, cousin Margaret Greer Sammons celebrated her 103rd birthday on October 15, 2001.

The long relationship of the Foreman, Greer and Johnson families is most interesting. It seems that they traveled together, and settled many areas of our then young country together. When one looks at their travels, all by horseback, walking, or in wagons, it makes some of today's jet setters look like pikers.

It is amazing how many relatives we have from so few ancestors. Many, many thousands. Our research and genealogy continues to uncover even more of our cousins. At the same time it takes careful review to ensure that all of the information is accurate and factual.

My wife and I send our best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving, and Holiday Season.

Regards, Wallace L. Taylor

Clan Gregor History Concludes

In this issue we conclude our much-abbreviated presentation of Miss MacGregor's *History of Clan Gregor* with selected excerpts from chapters 5, 6, 7 and 11. These passages were all that seemed to be relevant to the Grierson family itself or to that portion of the Clan Gregor ancestry from which the Griersons claimed descent. The balance of the huge work deals with that portion of the Clan Gregor history which occurred after the Griersons diverged from the clan late in the 14th century.

Was John D. Greer Illiterate?

Like many of the pioneers who settled Jasper County, NHG's father John D. Greer, though rich in friends and family, was cash poor. His situation required repeated indebtedness over a period of several years by means of promissory notes—some of which he found difficult to repay. Displayed below are xerographic copies of two early examples of such instruments.

The Greers had apparently moved from Hancock County to Randolph County before NHG was 8 for on August 22, 1810, John Greer appeared in the Randolph seat of Monticello as security on an unpaid note by his son-in-law Thomas Mangham. The county clerk recorded the action (lower left illustration) and had it signed by John Greer. However, John Greer's name appears to have something resembling an 'x' interposed between the given and family names—which was apparently in the clerk's handwriting. This signature is very unusual because most instances of illiterate 'signatures' are clearly identified by the scribe having created a wide space between the first and last names for the traditional 'x' while appending the words 'his' above and 'mark' below. But not so in this case. If John could not write his name, it would seem that between the time of this note and that of the second, he learned to sign his name—because the second note seems clearly signed by him.

We see that this second note (lower right illustration) was also done in Monticello, in what was at that time still called Randolph—because the county was not renamed Jasper until December 10, 1812. The note was executed by John Greer just 18 days before his 52nd birthday. It went unpaid—for unknown reasons—and on January 6, 1815, the Jasper Superior Court judge issued a summons for John Greer to appear in court to answer a suit brought by Anthony Dyer and his son Otis, late merchants in the area. On April 24 John Greer was ordered to pay the note plus \$11.50 for the cost of the suit.

A close examination of the note reveals that John Greer did not write it because the handwriting, but for the signature, is not his. In comparing John's penmanship to that on most of the paper, it seems his writing is tentative and unpracticed. Could this be another indication that he was only marginally literate? Was John's ability to write limited to just the ability to produce his signature—and that ability only learned late in life?

*In this case the defendant
coming forward and pays
at one third of the principle
I intend and last and give
John Greer for security
August 22 1810 John & Greer*

*\$107 31/4 Dols Monticello 1st January 1812
I promise to pay Anthony Dyer & son one
day after date one hundred and seven dollars
thirty one & quarter Cents for value received
this day & date as above John Greer*

Where Our Royal Ancestors Tread

During the last half of the fifth century, Pictish power in northern Britain was challenged when a fleet of some 150 men arrived on the coasts of Argyll and established the kingdom of the Dalriadic Scots. Tradition states that the invasion or colonization (which is not clear) came to Argyll from the kingdom of Dalriada in what we now call county Antrim. The enterprising band was led by three descendants of the Irish high-king Conaire the Great: Loarn, Angus and their brother Fergus who would become the 36th great-grandfather of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. (See Vol. 3, No. 3.)



The brothers divided the kingdom. Loarn and his family held power in northern Argyll from a fortress established at Dunolly Castle, Oban. The region still bears his name, though spelled 'Lorne.' Angus's family were centered in Islay. The mid-Argyll portion belonging to Fergus was divided between his grandsons Comgall and Gabran. Comgall held the area east of Loch Fyne—it still bears his name, though now spelled 'Cowall'—and Gabran held power in the areas now called Kintyre and Knapdale.

Long a Pictish fortress, the rock of Dunadd (meaning 'fort of the River Add') became the chief seat of the descendants of Gabran from whom we descend through his son Aedan the Great, thought by some to have been synonymous with Uther—father to Arthur of Camelot—as related in Vol. 2, No. 4. The most famous of the Dalriadic kings, Aedan befriended St. Columba and so devastated the Picts (by conquering Fortrenn) that his son and successor Eochaid Buide (Hugh the Fair) was listed in Irish Annals as 'king of the Picts'.

Dunadd viewed across the River Add from the southwest.



The fortress of Dunadd was constructed over several periods of indefinite sequence and duration. It had 5 plateaus, each defended by stone walls of which some remnants still exist today, and a few well preserved. The summit, with a stunning panoramic view, bore the ultimate defensive structure with access via hewn steps from the northeast where a rectangular stonework—thought to be a buttress—still exists. The fort was approached via a natural fissure on the southeast side of the great rock—culminating at an entrance some 10 feet wide, 7 feet high and likely framed many centuries ago by a stout timber gateway.

Archaeological excavation has shown that Dunadd was a rich production center for jewelry and precious metalwork. Patterns for the designs were drawn on pieces of slate. Elaborate and high quality Anglo-Saxon artifacts have been found there. And much iron was worked into weapons, knives, and other tools. The Dalriadic trade even included ware imported from the Continent.

The ruling descendants of Fergus, and likely himself as well, are thought to have perpetuated a Pictish tradition of symbolically assuming the mantle of leadership by placing foot into the carved footprint atop the granite massif of Dunadd.

The Royal Footprint atop Dunadd. Others in Britain date from the Iron Age.



NHG Witnesses "The End of the World"

"When I opened the door, I was startled by streaks of fire flying in every direction ... like millions of stars were shooting down to the ground. Several yards from ... the house, we had a hog pen, and it seemed like most of the stars were falling right in on top of our hogs."

"I screamed to father. The whole family came rushing out. For a moment, father gazed at the scene of falling fire. I could see his face as the flashes lit up everything and it had a look I shall never forget [He said that the] 'world is coming to an end. We had better have a little prayer meeting.' Together we knelt and father asked the Lord to help us."

When the Greers went to bed the night of November 12, 1833, Nathaniel—then 31 years old—had been serving as Chambers County sheriff for just over nine months. He was the first sheriff of the burgeoning community—and little did he know that before the next sunrise many of his family and neighbors would think he would also be their last.

The pioneer family fell asleep in familiar security that night. Nancy was carrying her 8th child, due next spring. The eldest child Gilbert had turned 11 a month earlier. Thomas was 7, Bill 5 and Cate 3. Twins Christopher and Americus, aged 18 months, were too young to know what the next few hours would bring. Willmirth's 9th birthday was less than a week away. She was old enough to be the source of the above quote, but instead it was told by a teenaged girl who witnessed the awesome pre-dawn event as she emerged from her homestead in East Texas to fetch water.

The viewing conditions were ideal; the waxing moon set early, and clear weather prevailed over eastern America. Some folk noticed an unusual number of shooting stars as they retired for the night, but it was nothing compared to the heavenly fountain that poured down on Earth between 2 a.m. and dawn.

On pictorial calendars, the Kiowas referred to the season as the "winter the stars fell." In 1898 an ethnologist deciphered Kiowa pictographs and related their account of that night:

The whole camp [was] wakened by a sudden light; running out from the tipis, they found the night as bright as day, with myriads of meteors darting about in the sky. The parents aroused the children, saying, "Get up, get up, there is something awful going on!" They had never ... known such an occurrence, and regarded it as something ominous or dangerous, and ... with dread and apprehension until daylight.

Dumb-struck settlers saw an awesome and unprecedented display of *tens of thousands* of meteors—most were faint, fast-moving points of light that came in waves too numerous to count. Some folk, like the East Texas girl, thought the meteors covered the earth—descending all the way to the ground.

People were terrified by a succession of fireballs, some so brilliant as to rival the full Moon. The most dazzling were bright enough to cast shadows and made noises like musket and cannon fire or of crackling, snapping, and hissing. The largest left smoke trails that lingered for up to 20 minutes and were slowly distorted by the wind into eerie and portentous shapes. One magnificent fireball left a trail dubbed "the serpent." Often a dozen or more smoky patterns were visible at once.

A plantation worker recounted:

"I was suddenly awakened by the most distressing cries that ever fell on my ears. Shrieks of horror and cries of mercy, could be heard from most of the negroes of three plantations, amounting in all to some six or eight hundred. ... I heard a faint voice near the door calling my name. I arose and, taking my sword, stood at the door. At this moment I heard the same voice still beseeching me to rise, and saying, 'O, my God, the world is on fire!' I then opened the door, and it is difficult to say which excited me most—the awfulness of the scene, or the distressed cries of the negroes. Upwards of one hundred lay prostrate on the ground, some speechless, and others uttering the bitterest moans, but with their hands raised, imploring God to save the world and them. The scene was truly awful, for never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell toward the earth; east, west, north, and south, it was the same."



Etching from *The Aerial World*, pub. 1875.

Some were literally scared to death. One young woman

"... swooned, and was carried to her chamber. She soon recovered ... but appeared very much dejected. ... impressed with the belief that the phenomenon was prognosticative of the dissolution of all things, which so preyed on her mind as to cause her death."

The world did not end in 1833 as many expected, but the marvel was discussed long afterward. For years, even decades, many believed the Day of Judgment was at hand. The experience contributed to great religious revivals that swept America in the 1830s, yielding new sects and denominations and giving impulse to the new Mormon religion. The Greers were likely affected, and the incident possibly contributed to their conversion to Mormonism several years later.

1828 — Year of Financial Crisis

In 1823 or 1824, Nathaniel and Nancy (and their first-born Gilbert) moved to DeKalb County, Georgia. There they probably lived with, NHG's brother Gilbert on the lot he had just won in the 1821 Land Lottery. It was somewhere near the border of the modern counties of Henry and Rockdale.

As 1828 rolled around, Nathaniel's family had grown to five and although everyone was healthy, their prosperity was ebbing. Financial and legal problems had beset the young family. This was revealed by a notice which appeared in the "Georgia Journal" printed in Milledgeville—then the state capital—on March 3. In that issue, Sheriff John Brown publicized a sale which was to occur the first Tuesday in April of two slaves "levied on as the property of Nathaniel H. Greer to satisfy a fi fa in favor of William Connor for use of Meredith Corlee." (These were perhaps all the slaves NHG had.)

The legal device employed against NHG was a judicial writ signifying that William Connor had recovered damages in court. It was a command to the sheriff to see that the judgment of the court was duly carried out. The term 'fi. fa.' is a contraction of two Latin words, *fi'eri facias* (cause it to be done). It authorized the issuance of a state tax execution against NHG, having the same force and effect as an order issued by the Superior Court, and it constituted a lien upon the title of any real and personal property that NHG owned—in this particular case, his slaves.

A Few More Items from the History of Clan Gregor

[These excerpts are edited for content and brevity.]

Chapter V excerpt—

In the Dean of Lismore's Book,¹ the genealogy of this John dhu M^cGregor of Glenstray is given in old Gaelic,² with the following translation:—

"John, son of Patrick, son of Malcom, son of John, the black son of John, son of Gregor, son of John, son of Malcom, son of Duncan the little, son of Duncan from Srulee, son of Gilelan,³ son of Hugh of Urchy, son of Kenneth, son of Alpin, and this Kenneth was head King of Scotland, in truth, at that time; and this John is the eleventh man from Kenneth, of whom I spoke. And Duncan the servitor, son of Dougal, son of John the grizzled, wrote this from the books of the genealogists of the kings, and it was done in the year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and twelve."

The genealogy is here reversed for greater distinctness:—

Alpin.
Kenneth.
Hugh of Urchy.
William, or Gillefealan.
Duncan a Strwiee, he was probably the second son.
Duncan beg.
Malcolm (or, more probably, Malcolm VIII.).
John (not mentioned in "Baronage").
Gregor do. do.
John (Cham). (Died 1390.)
John Doef (or dhu). (He and his brother Gregor died in 1415.)
Malcolm. (Died in 1440. Had a brother Allaster.)
Patrick. (Died May 1440.)
John (dhu). (Died in 1519.)

The Bard may be assumed to have had accurate information about the late generations, although he skipped over several ancestors prior to Hugh of Urchy. The Latin MS. followed in the "Baronage," was probably the labour of a monk or ecclesiastic of the name of MacGregor. It has been found, by the scrutiny of sundry ancient chronicles, that the monks sometimes drew on their fertile imaginations; but, although some generations may have been omitted by them also, and the names mixed up, the accounts of the various Chiefs, as related in this MS., were probably founded on old traditions; and thus the two pedigrees embody all that can now be known about the early days of the Clan's heroes. We reach solid and perfectly reliable ground in the Obituary of the Chronicle of Forthingall.

As remarked by Mr Skene in a note to the genealogy—

"It is obvious that a number of generations are omitted, not even excepting the ancestor who gave his name to the clan. The omission of generations is by no means an uncommon feature in traditional genealogies."

¹ From the MS. collection made by Sir James MacGregor, Dean of Lismore, in the beginning of the sixteenth century; edited with translation by Revd. Thomas McLauchlan, 1862. The Obituary had been previously printed in the "Archeologia Scotica." vol. iii.

² "Eone Macphadrick vec Voylchallum vec Eonedoef vec Gregor vec Eone vec Woilchallum vec Conquhy veg vec Conquhy a Strwiee vec Illethane' vec Ey Urquhaych vec Kennane vec Alpin."

³ Mr Skene reads this name as Gillefealan (it seems probable): William in modern Gaelic is Uilleam.

Chapter VI excerpt—

The so-called Chronicle of Forthingall, compiled by James MacGregor, Vicar of Forthingall and Dean of Lismore, contains a most valuable abstract of the contemporaneous history of the Clan Gregor, and therefore it is here given, omitting many entries not connected with the Clan. Translation of Dean MacGregor's Chronicle,¹ by Donald Gregory, Esq.:—

- "1092. Death of Malcolm Kenmoir, the elder² King of Scotland, at Alnwick. And Qwiene Margret heir and the deid of hir husband died within thre dais thairefter in the said year.
- "1107. Death of Edgar, King of Scotland, at Dundee. He reigned nine years and three months.
- "1124. Death of Alexander I., King of Scotland, in Striweleich. He reigned eighteen years and three months.
- "1153. Death of David I., King of Scotland, at Carlisle. He reigned twenty-nine years and twenty days. Died the 9th. of the Kalends of June, and was buried at Dunfermyne before the great altar.
- "1165. Death of Malcolm the younger (IV.), King of Scotland, in Gedwart.³ He reigned twelve years six months and twenty days.
- "1213. William, King of Scotland, died at Streulyne. Reigned 51 years.
- "1247. Alexander II King of Scotland died at Kerueroy,⁴ reigned 35 years.
- "1233. Alexander III died at Kyngorne; reigned 36 years, 8 months.
- "1314. Battle of Bannochburn.
- "1328.⁵ Robert I King of Scotland died at Cardross. Reigned 23 years.
- "1333. Battle of Hallidonhill.
- "1345. Battle of Durayme.
- "1370. Death of David King of Scotland at Edinburgh, he reigned forty-three years.
- "1388. Battle of Ottyrburn.
- "1390. April 19. Death of John MacGregor of Glenurquhay. He was buried at Dysart on the north side of the High Altar.⁶
- "1390. Death of Robert II King of Scotland at Dundonald; he reigned nineteen years and two months.
- "1396. Combat of the sixty men at Perth.
- "1402. Battle of Homilton.
- "1405. Death of Robert III King of Scotland, he reigned thirtyone years.⁷
- "1411. Battle of Hayrlaw.
- "1415. Death of Gregor M^cAnecham in Glenurquhay, he was buried as above noted in Dysart.
- "1415. Death of John dhu M^cAnecham V^cGregor at Stronmelochane, he was buried in Dysart.
- "1424. Death of Darwayll daughter of Ewyn V. Lachlan—John dhu M^cGregor (his wife?).
- "1425. May 27. Death of Lord Murdac Duke of Scotland and his sons Walter and Alexander.
- "1431. Battle of Inverlocha.
- "1440. April 20. Death of Malcolm son of John dhu MacGregor, at Glenurquhay; he was buried in the manner formerly mentioned.

¹ From a document in the Archives of the Highland Society. A duplicate (of the Gaelic and Scotch part) is to be found in the Black Book of Taymouth, and it is known as the Chronicle (or Obituary) of Forthingall.

² In contradistinction to Malcolm IV.

³ Jedburgh.

⁴ Kerrera, off Oban.

⁵ True date said to have been 7th June 1329.

⁶ Clachan Dysart—now the Church of Glenurquhay, close to Dalmally.

⁷ True date 1406.

Chapter VII excerpt—

In connection with the preceding Obituary, a poem from the Collection known as the Dean of Lismore's Book¹ now follows. It is written in praise of some of the MacGregors, whose deaths are recorded in the Obituary, and shows a traditional Genealogy current in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This Genealogy written by Duncan MacDugal Moill in the lifetime of John Dhu Macpatrick, Grandson of the Malcom who died in 1519, carries the Genealogy up to Kenneth M^cAlpin.

THE AUTHOR OF THIS IS DUNCAN MAC DOUGALL MAOIL.

The history of the secret origin of John Mac Patrick
Why should I conceal it?
What belongs to his race is not feeble,
The bearing of that race we love,
Seldom of a feeble race it is,
Among the Gael of purest fame,
That inquiry of their origin is made,
By the men who read in books
Firm the belief to them and me,
During the evening time so dark
That in the blood of noble kings
Were the rights of true Clan Gregor
Now that I'm by thy green dwelling,
Listen John to thy family story.
A root of the very root are we
Of famous kings of noble story.
Know that Patrick was thy Father,
Malcolm father was to Patrick.
Son of Black John, not black his breast,
Him who feasts and chariots owned.
Another John was Black John's father,
Son of Gregor, son of John the lucky.
Three they were of liberal heart,
Three beneficent to the Church.
The father to that learned John,
Was Malcom who his wealth ne'er hid,
Son of Duncan surly and small,
Whose standard never took reproach.
His father was another Duncan,
Son of Gillelan of the ambush,
Noble he was, giving to friends,
Son of the famous Hugh from Urquhay.
Kennan of the pointed spear,
Of Hugh from Urquhay was the father.
From Alpin of stately mien and fierce,
Mighty king of weighty blows.
This is the fourth account that's given
Of thee who art the heir of Patrick.
Remember well thy backbone line,
Down from Alpin, heir of Dougal
Twenty and one besides thyself,
John the black not black in heart.
Thy genealogy leads us truly
To the prosperous Fergus M^cErc.

Of thy race which wastes not like froth,
Six generations wore the crown.
Forty Kings there were and three,
Their blood and origin are known.
Three there were north and three to the south,
After the time of Malcom Kenmore.
Ten of the race did wear the crown,
From the time of Malcom up to Alpin.
From Alpin upwards we do find
Fourteen kings till we reach Fergus.
Such is thy genealogy
To Fergus, son of Erc the prosperous.
How many are there of thy race
Must there have been from thee to Fergus.
Noble the races mix with thy blood,
Such as we now we cannot number.
The Schools would weary with our tale
Numbering the kings from whom thou'rt sprung.
The blood of Arthur is in thy bosom
Precious is that which fills thy veins;
The blood of Cuan, the blood of Conn,
Two wise men, glory of the race.
The blood of Grant in thy apple-red cheek,
The blood of Neil the fierce and mighty.
Fierce and gentle, at all times,
Is the story of the royal race.

Chapter XI excerpt—

NOTICES of some of the other branches of the Clan have now to be given, as they henceforward become more prominent in the general history.

The family of Grierson of Lag, following the account given in the "Baronage," trace their descent from Malcolm (XI.) the Lame Lord (see page 20). It is supposed that they branched off the end of the 14th century, and probably before the death of Ian Cam, who died in 1390. Their immediate ancestor Gilbert, Laird of Ard and Lag, took the name of Grierson in accordance with charters from George Dunbar, Earl of March, of the Netherholme of Dalgarnoch, to him and his heirs male, to be called by the surname of Grierson, before 1400; and another charter, dated at Dunbar 1400, of the lands of Airdes & a lying in the barony of Tyberis and shire of Dumfries, to the said Gilbert for his many good deeds done to the said Earl. The lands of Lag were conveyed by his cousin Henry Sinclair, 2nd Earl of Orkney, by charter dated 6th December 1408. Confirmation of lands of Garryhorn and Sandokhill dated 17th May 1410. Charter from Archibald Earl of Douglas to Gilbert Grierson his armour-bearer of the lands of Drumjoan, confirmed by his Relict the Princess Margaret, Duchess of Touraine, dated 9th April 1425. Lag Castle was built circa 1460.¹ It is averred that there is no legal proof connecting the Gilbert Grierson of the Charters with MacGregor ancestry.² Granting that the required link is missing, yet most Highlanders will accept the tradition.

¹ Genealogical Table of Grierson of Lag—printed for private circulation.

² On this ground the Griersons are admitted as Members of the Clan Gregor Society.

¹ "A Selection of Ancient Gaelic Poetry from a MS. Collection." Edited, with a Translation and Notes, by the Rev. Thomas McLauchlan, and an Introduction and additional Notes by William F. Skene, Esq., 1862.



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Making Plans for Reunion 2003

The next reunion of the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization will be in 2003. But when exactly and where? Planning should begin soon and there are many concerns.

It is desirable to rotate the site of the reunion so as to involve as many members as possible. Most of our members live in the west, so it seems natural to give preference to that region. But there are other issues such as sites with special significance in the history of our family. Here are some options:

Northeast KS. This is where the Mormon trail began and where NHG and so many of our family perished. But should we meet here later—while establishing a memorial?

Chattahoochee River—AL/GA border. Five of NHG's children were born on either side of the river. There is much Greer history here just waiting for us. See map below.

Jasper County area, GA. Just an hour's drive southeast of Atlanta, NHG's parents pioneered this area at the end of the American Revolution and for 40 years afterwards. Georgia's historic first capital of Milledgeville is nearby. See map below.

The above two venues could be combined into one. Also, it is highly probable that a reunion in this region could be enlarged by inviting descendants of NHG's siblings to join us. To help our western members gain better appreciation of this area, a regional map with NHG notes has been reproduced below.

Bear River area in UT and WY. NHG's daughter, Sarah Hunt, lived here almost her entire adult life and NHG's sister, Nancy Reddick, spent her last years here.

Graham County, AZ. Willmirth Margaret spent the last 20 years of her life in Pima. But do any NHG descendants live in this area? What is the extent of its facilities and cultural appeal?

Apache County, AZ. St. Johns is where our organization began and is associated with NHG's son, Thomas Lacy. And the nearby town of Greer is named for Uncle H. However, we may wish to visit other sites before returning to Apache County.

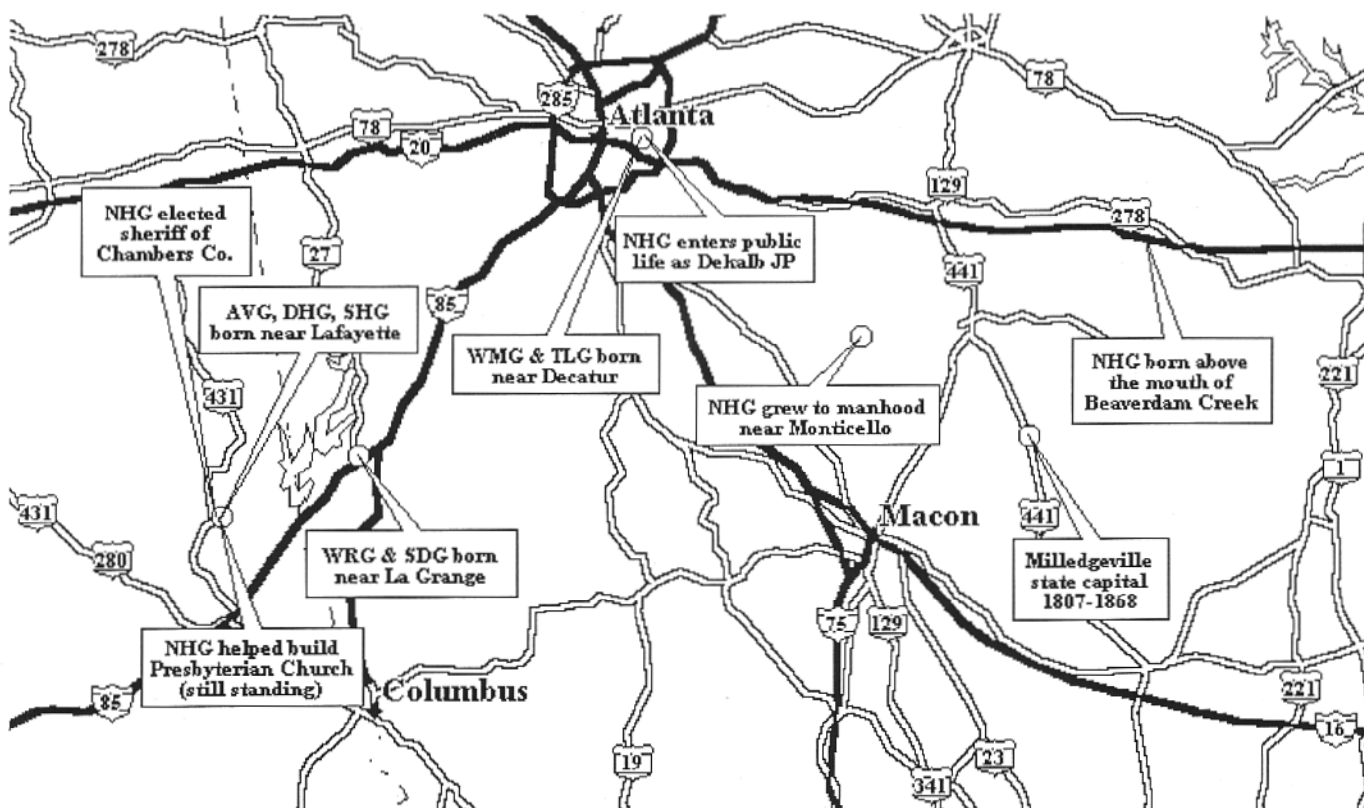
Bosque County, TX. This is where Nancy and her sons GDG, WRG, SDG and MSG lived out their lives. We met there in 1997 so it's much too soon to return.

Salt Lake City. All of NHG's surviving children were here for varying amounts of time. The LDS facilities have much appeal to many of our members, but we were in SLC in 1999.

Washington County, TX. Much Greer history in this area, but our 2001 reunion was in Brenham, so let's look elsewhere.

In following issues, we will print other maps to help us decide when and where to meet in 2003, but start thinking *now* about your favorite site.

Other ideas? Please let me hear what you think!



New Findings Concerning the Trimmier Murder

In our issue of September, 1999, I began to write about the unfortunate events which beleaguered NHG and his kin during the last years of his life. The first item that attracted my attention was the murder charge brought against James Clark and Riley A. Irvin—TLG's beloved cousin—in the death of Thomas Trimmier on July 4, 1854. The Bell County, Texas, hearing occurred on June 27, 1855. The defendants were refused bail and that night they escaped from the Belton jail. Since 1999, much is still unknown about the Trimmier shooting and what transpired before and after it—but some of what has been learned is remarkable.

To begin with, the identity of the victim is in doubt. The author of *The Land of Beginning Again*—a Brazos Valley history—wrote:

Then, there was a herd that T. J. Trimmier drove in 1848 from the Brazos to the gold-fields of California, with their wide horns weaving, and the drivers brought back plenty of gold with them.

The man referenced above, Thomas Jefferson Trimmier, was born in Pickens County, Alabama, late in 1836 and so would have been 11 years old in 1848. Obviously, the above excerpt is wrong. The Bell County record names the victim as Thomas Trimmier, but the Thomas *Stribling* Trimmier and his son (the aforementioned Thomas *Jefferson* Trimmier) both survived long after the year of the killing. In a Trimmier family history, it is claimed:

John Trimmier in 1854, just returning from the California gold fields, was shot from ambush and killed by his brother-in-law Clark, one mile north of Belton while his horse was drinking water from the river.

Some Trimmier descendants claim that the victim was John E. Trimmier, and older brother of Thomas Jefferson Trimmier, that a herd was taken to California but the Trimmier in charge remains in question. Also, it is well-known that NHG's son William Reddick Greer prospected for gold. Could it have been that he was among those who drove the Trimmier herd west (when about 25 years old) then returned after enjoying some success in the quest for gold? John Trimmier enlisted with Riley Irvin, TLG and others from Brenham in June of 1846 to fight the war in Mexico, so he was easily old enough to take charge of a herd some 7 years later.

Readers are reminded that another man accused of misconduct along with NHG was Beverly Pool. We mention this because Pool's wife was Sarah Greenwood and the wife of Thomas S. Trimmier was Martha Greenwood—possibly sisters.

Two more noteworthy facts emerge about Thomas Trimmier. In 1841 he was on record in the newspaper "The Telegraph and Texas Register" along with Arnett McFadden (of the feuding McFaddens) in support of Sam Houston. It was just a year before that NHG had stood with Sam Houston in the effort to relocate the Texas capital. And in then 1842, both Trimmier and TLG were among the Washington County contingent in the ill-fated Somervell Expedition.

But who was the accused murderer James Clark? At the very least, he was the husband of Mariah Trimmier, a sister of the murder victim. However, he seems also to have been a brother-in-law of Riley Irvin whose wife was one Lavina Clark. In the 1850 census of Washington County, Texas, James Clark, Jr.—aged 22—appears with his wife Maria and 1-year-old John as *next door neighbors* to the Irvin family of Louisa, Martha and Cecin. And although the

relationship of these Irvins to Riley is undetermined, it appears highly likely that the Irvins and the Clarks were related by marriage.

After escaping from the Belton jail in 1855, Riley Irvin and James Clark eluded capture. Subsequently a warrant was issued for their arrest was "ordered to any county where [they] may be found." This warrant was renewed every term of the Bell County Court (spring and fall) for no less than 13 years. Then, in the March Term of 1869, the case was moved to Hill County—Riley's whereabouts had been discovered. But apparently Riley was never apprehended. What exactly transpired in this matter during the final years of his life is unknown because the Hill County courthouse burned in the late 1870s and all the records were lost. No record has been found of any pursuit of the matter in Bosque County, but we do know that Riley lived in Bosque until his death in 1874.

The fate of James Clark is more mysterious. Try as one may, no evidence is found of his fate in any conventional record source. However, a very interesting account was related as follows:

Late in October of 1898, in Allen Parish, Louisiana, some 40 miles east of the Sabine, a Louisiana family gathered around their dying father. Franklin Johnson knew that his death was near and he wished to make a final confession to them.

Frank informed his loved ones that they were his second family; he had had a previous wife and children. He further said that he had not been born with the surname of Johnson, but was really named Clark. He asserted he had changed his identity while still a young man. The reason that he gave for having done this was that he had accidentally killed a man. He added that he was from Bell County, Texas. None of his family—then or since—has ever found much information to expand upon these meager facts.

One of Frank (Clark) Johnson's relatives seemed to know a little of what had happened. It seemed, according to the kinsman, that Frank had escaped from the second floor of an adobe jail, breaking his ankle in the effort. That relative added that Frank was a young man when it happened—in his early twenties.

Well! The foregoing account certainly is fascinating, but was Frank Johnson the same man as James Clark? It can hardly be doubted that Frank Johnson told the truth on his deathbed. Why would anyone concoct such a tale which would surely upset the surviving family members? We may also ask what are the odds that two different men by the name of Clark were arrested for murder in Bell County, Texas, during the same period of history, who both escaped from jail and who both vanished from public record?

Frank's tombstone dates are: 11 Nov 1825—28 Oct 1898.

Let us suppose the two were one and the same. Could the Johnson alias possibly have arisen out of some respect held by the fugitive for the family of Willis Johnson? And what kind of relationship might the Clark's have had to our Greer ancestors? And is there more Trimmier facts of interest to our history?

Before we leave this matter, let me add one other fact that might prove of interest in our speculation: In 1867, Frank Johnson's second wife (Stetira Gilchrist) gave birth to a son. When it came to naming the boy, they picked the name "Riley."

Almost all of the information presented above was sent to me in email messages by a few descendants of both the Johnson and Trimmier families, and I thank them for their kind assistance in my research—ed.

European Roots — Our Grierson Ancestry

In Volume 1, Number 4 (March 97), we featured the estate of our presumed ancestor, James Grierson of Capenoch, and we noted that our descent was unproven. Proof yet eludes us and probably always will—unless conclusive genetic evidence is found. But if said descent is true, what of our Grierson ancestry? The following Grierson history is from the first 3 pages of The Lag Charters, published in 1958 by the Scottish Record Society. It is only slightly edited for brevity. I have inserted bold face type to indicate our direct ancestors and omitted all but two footnotes which hold relevance and interest for us. The Grierson history begins thus :

THE documents in the Charter Chest of the Griersons of Lag were arranged and abstracts made of them about 1913 by Sir Philip James Hamilton-Grierson of the Dalgonar branch of the Griersons. Since this was done the documents have vanished and members of the family are unable to throw any light on their whereabouts. The head of the family, Sir Robert G. W. Grierson, 10th Baronet, kindly gave his permission for these abstracts to be published, now done from a copy given by Hamilton-Grierson.

The Grierson family seems to have sprung suddenly into importance at the beginning of the XVth century. The name does not appear before about 1400, but within a few decades Dumfries and Galloway are full of it. The first member of the family of Lag appears to have been **Gilbert Grersoun**, described on his seal appended to an instrument dated 8th Jan. 1418-19 as "son of **Duncan**."¹ By several charters, the earliest dated probably soon after 1400,² and the latest somewhere about 1418, Gilbert became possessed of large tracts of land in Dumfries and Kirkcudbright, including the baronies of Arde and Lag. Both John MacRath of Lacht in the first charter and Henry, Earl of Orkney, in the second call Gilbert *dilectus consanguineus*, which, taken with the fact of his being esquire to Archibald, 4th Earl of Douglas, suggests that he was of good standing. As his seal mentioned above bears the Arms "a lion rampant guardant crowned", it may be that he was a cadet of the Galloway family. He married a **sister of John Durand**, lord of "Betwixt the Waters," and had two sons: Gilbert, who followed him in Arde and Lag, and William, who succeeded to the lands of Dormont and Meikle Dalton and was ancestor of the Griersons of Dalton and Castlemaddy. It is probable that Walter Greysone of Dalmaurane was another son, as Walter was an accustomed name in the Durand family.

Gilbert the younger of Arde and Lag wed [see Vol. 4, No. 3] at Dunscore Church, on 14th Nov. 1412, **Isabel**, daughter and one of three co-heiresses of **Sir Duncan Kirkpatrick** of Torthorwald, who brought with her the lands of Rocail (now Rockhall) and Collin. They had three sons: **Vedast**, Gilbert of Kirkbride and John. Vedast succeeded his father about 1444 and appears to have been twice married: first to Jonet and afterwards to Margaret Glendonwyn, perhaps of the Parton family, who was his widow in 1488. His eldest son Gilbert predeceased him before 1473, leaving

a daughter Annabella, who married George Muirheid, and his second son, **Roger**, succeeded. He was wounded at Sauchieburn fighting for James III against the future James IV on 11th June 1488 and died soon after, leaving by his wife **Isabel Gordon** three sons: Cuthbert, **Roger** and Robert. Cuthbert died, apparently unmarried, about the beginning of 1513 and Roger was killed at Flodden. He wed **Agnes**, daughter of **James Douglas**, 5th Baron of Drumlanrig, by **Janet**, daughter of **Sir David Scott** of Branxholm, and left three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, John, married firstly Nicolas Herys and secondly **Gelis (Egidia)**, daughter of **Sir John Kennedy** of Culzean by **Janet Stewart**. She brought the lands of Bargatton into the family and gifted them to her second son John, from whom descended William Grierson of Bargatton, Commissioner to Parliament for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright 1644 to 1649.

John Grierson seems to have rebuilt or repaired the tower of Lag; a stone with his initials I G and the arms "a mullet between three quadrangular locks (or cushions)" which was over the entrance was removed to Friars Carse and later was built into a memorial to "Auld Lag" in Old Dunscore Churchyard. He died about 1559 and was succeeded by his eldest son William (by Nicolas Herys) who married Elizabeth, daughter of James Gordon of Lochinvar by Margaret Creighton. After William's death, about the end of 1562, she married Ninian Adair of Kinhilt. William was followed by his half-brother **Roger**, who was twice married; firstly in 1566 to **Helen**, daughter of **James Douglas**, 7th Baron of Drumlanrig by his second wife **Christian Montgomerie**, who died in July 1592, and secondly to Margaret Chalmers, who survived him. He died in Aug. 1593 and was succeeded by his only son **Sir William**, who was Commissioner to Parliament for Dumfriesshire 1617, 1621 and 1623, Sheriff of Dumfries 1615, 1617 and 1621 and one of the Commissioners for the Borders in 1623. He built or rebuilt the house of Rockhall, giving it in liferent to his wife **Nicolas**, daughter of **John Maxwell** by his wife **Agnes**, Lady Herries, whom he married in 1593. In 1614 he received the lands of Capenoch, forfeited by the attainder of John, Lord Maxwell, and these lands he granted to his second son John, at whose death they passed to the latter's brother **James**, and then to James's great-granddaughter Susanna, who wed Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick, Baronet, of Closeburn, and thus took the lands to the Kirkpatrick family.

Sir William died in January 1620, leaving six sons and four daughters, and was succeeded by his eldest son Sir Robert, Commissioner for Dumfriesshire in various Parliaments from 1628 to 1648, who married in 1622 Margaret, eldest daughter of Sir James Murray of Cockpuill. They had six sons and four daughters, of whom the second son, William, of Barquhar, married Margaret, eldest daughter of James Douglas of Mouswald, and was father of Sir Robert Grierson, known as "Auld Lag." "The Persecutor," created a baronet 28th March 1685. His direct descendant is Sir Richard Douglas Grierson, 11th Baronet.

James Grierson of Larglangley, Sir Robert's third son, married Margaret, daughter of John Corsane of Meikleknock. He was ancestor of the Griersons of Larbreck and of those of Dalgonar and Baldonnell, Co. Dublin. The present [1958] representative is Philip Grierson, M. A., of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.

¹ "Duncan son of Gilbert" witnessed a charter of confirmation granted by David II to the burgh of Ayr, date at Edinburgh. 10 May 1367.

² Patrick Grersoun and son Cuthbert witnessed one charter. Patrick was likely Gilbert's brother or near kin, as Gilbert became a common name in the family.

Announcements

We note with joy that **Pauline Greer McCleve**—whom we profiled in our issue of September, 1999—celebrated her 107th birthday on January 11, 2002. A recent *Church News* article numbered her many descendants to include 5 children, 24 grandchildren, 116 great-grandchildren and 15 great-great-grandchildren! Pauline, happy birthday. We love you!

NHG Bicentennial

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of NHG. This October 26 will be the special day. Are any of our family planning anything in celebration? Please let us know if you are!



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Siting Our Next Reunion

Last issue we noted locations where NHG had his beginnings in Georgia and Alabama as reasons for holding our next reunion in that area. Now we look at Kansas where NHG's life came to an early end along the eastern shore of the South Fork of the Nemaha River. The exact location is unknown, but must have been near the site of Richmond which became a ghost town. (Nemaha Co. has a dozen ghost towns—some with old buildings, but most having only abandoned cemeteries, root cellars and wells.)

The ill-fated wagon train left Mormon Grove for Utah, following the Ft. Leavenworth – Ft. Laramie Military Road, but got only 15 miles before cholera broke out a week before NHG died.

Further west Frank Marshall had founded Marysville (named after his wife) where he set up a trading post and operated a ferry across the Big Blue River. The Greers crossed here three days after NHG's death. Marshall charged up to \$5.00 per wagon and 25 cents per head of livestock to use his rope powered ferry. An old Pony Express Station still stands in downtown Marysville.

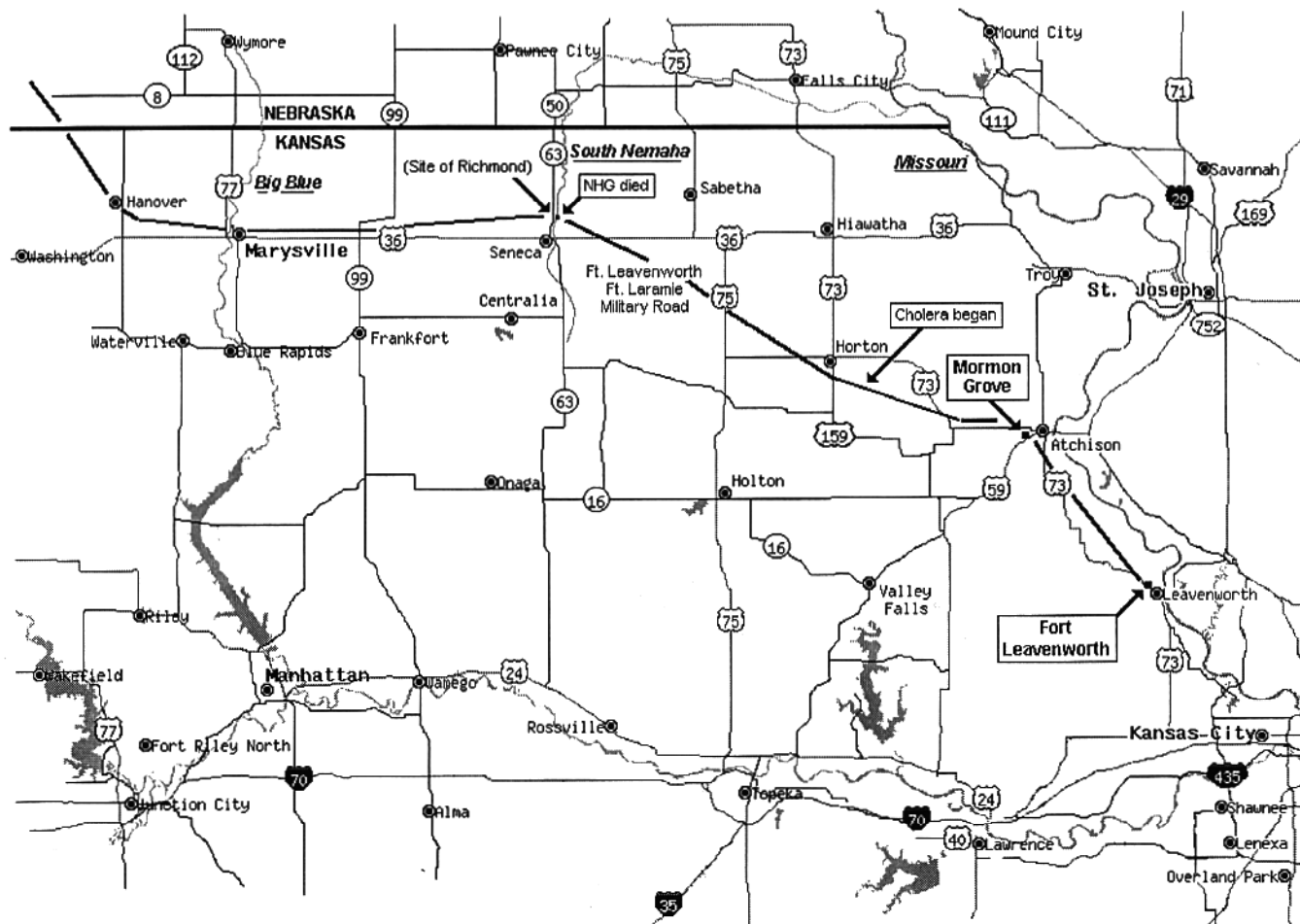
Aside from our personal Greer history, the following events and attractions are of added interest:

In 1804, Lewis and Clark celebrated the first Independence Day in the West where Atchison would later be settled in 1854. The town became an important "jumping off" point for people arriving by steamboat to join the wagon trains heading toward the Rockies. A monument on US 73 just west of Atchison marks where many Mormons camped during their westward migration. (Its inscription is reproduced on the last page of this issue.) The Pony Express chose Atchison as headquarters as did the Overland Stage & Mail Company. Around the turn of the 20th century, Amelia Earhart was born here. Five museums highlight Amelia Earhart, railroading (especially the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway), and the history of Atchison.

Upriver in St. Joseph, we find the Pony Express Memorial, the Jesse James Home Museum.

At our 1997 reunion in Texas, nearly \$400 was raised to erect a memorial to honor the victims of the cholera outbreak that claimed NHG and many other Greers. Not much has been done toward realizing that goal. A reunion in northeast Kansas could help us determine how best to proceed in this effort.

Should our next reunion be here? One drawback is the lack of any local Greers to help us out. Let us hear your opinions.



Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson

NHG was almost the last child. He had one younger sister, Nancy Reddick. Her life would be far more similar to NHG's than any of their siblings and her life was of importance to his descendants as well as her own. In this issue we reproduce her biography as written in 1959 by her great-granddaughter Alley Vernon Johnson Taylor. So read and note well her extraordinary life and lasting influence ...

Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson, the eleventh child of John D. and Sarah Hunt Greer was born the 9th of August 1805 in Jasper County¹, Georgia. She was a pretty, lovable child with a brilliant mind, and grew up to be a beautiful woman with a dynamic character full of leadership and spirit.

The personal history of Nancy is not so well known, but how can anyone give a more authentic history of a mother than is found in the lives and accomplishments of the children of this good woman.

Nancy was born in Hillsboro, Georgia, in Jasper County. The same town as her husband, Willis Johnson, was born. Her parents were born², grew up and were married in Edgefield District, South Carolina. Later they moved into Georgia, on to Alabama and westward ho on to Texas.

Of Nancy's first daughter, Sarah, we know very little. She was born about 1826 in Hillsboro, the birthplace of her parents. Her nickname was "Puss". She grew up and married a Dr. Durham and after his death she married Dr. Alday. Both were fine, intelligent gentlemen.

The second child was Snellen Marion, nicknamed "Cub" by his mother. He was so cute as a baby, with a head of heavy black hair. Nancy called him her little cub bear. And "Cub" he was through out life by his family and friends. Cub married Sarah Hunt Greer, lovingly called Sallie. He was my grandfather and she was my grandmother. Cub was ten years older than Sallie. He was born 27 October 1827. She was a sweet young girl of 15 years. Her birthday was 26 February 1836. These two were cousins, Nancy Reddick Greer, Snellen's mother and Nathaniel Hunt Greer, Sallie's father were brother and sister. Their lives now became entwined, the Johnson's and Greer's in their future journeys, migrations, pioneering and colonizing of the Great West. Nancy had ten children between the years of 1826 and 1846, four girls and six boys. These people were pioneers and frontiersman. We can trace their moves and wanderings from the birthplaces and dates of their children.

I should know more about my grandfather, Snellen Marion, or Cub than I do but he died before I was old enough to remember him very well. I do remember that he was straight and tall and he so loved music and his violin. I have a faint recollection of going to his funeral at Robertson, Wyoming. It was 10 June 1900. He was buried there. I went back over that same road 25 years later when my grandmother, Sallie, died at Lonetree 31 July 1925 and she was buried at Robertson, Wyoming. It wasn't in a white topped buggy as the first time but in a Buick car owned by my dear father Willis Johnson who had died three years before. Cub and Sallie had 11 children.

Two died in infancy, one was drowned in an old well at Medicine Bow when but two years old. Seven grew up to man and womanhood and had big families of their own.

My father, Willis, was the oldest of these. My father and mother were very close to my grandparents, in fact my mother died in 1911 and until grandmother Sallie died, in 1925 she spent much of her time with us in our home and taught us many things. How I wish I had taken time to write down the things she told me. I could then write a more interesting and accurate history.

Cub loved friends and people. He was very generous and hospitable as was his wife Sallie. His mother Nancy lived near or with him for a number of years. Many a poor immigrant or weary traveler ate at his table and shared his beef and flour. He was always willing to entertain with his music. He with his sons Joe and Newton and other relatives played for dances and socials up and down the Bear Lake Valley and later in Lonetree and Burnt Fork, Wyoming.

Cub, as did many members of the Church took the second wife. In July of 1862, he married Rebecca Baker, a very fine intelligent woman. This union brought nine children into the family. The wives were kind and congenial with each other and the children grew up together with love and respect for each other. Nancy and Willis next child, Nathaniel was born when she was back at Hillsboro, Georgia.

He died when very young. Now we trace their migration westward and in 1833, when the Johnson's were settled in Quero³, DeWitt County, Texas, near to the Greer's. Nancy gave birth to a lovely daughter, Mary Willmirth. Mary's life was full of excitement and interest as all young girls lives were in those days of colonization. She fell in love and married James Allison York, son of John York⁴ of Quero, Texas. John York was a rich horseman and landowner. He was a kind friend of Willis and Nancy and Nancy's brother Nathaniel Hunt Greer. These Greer's and Johnson's bought land from John York near Yorktown, on the Corpus Christi and San Antonio Road.

Mary with her dashing young husband and her beautiful baby daughter Adeline, born 20 January 1854, started west with the Johnson's and Greer's. The spring of 1855 found these immigrants fitted out in wagons and leaving the Missouri River for their long trek across the plains. They were with the Seth M. Blair Company. Nancy's brother, Nathaniel Hunt Greer, known as Capt. N. H. Greer⁵ was a very prominent man in this company. While crossing the plains of Kansas, the dread disease Cholera, struck our kinfolk with a vengeance. Here Nancy Reddick Greer saw her dear husband, Willis writhe in agony and die. She saw her lovely daughter Mary, cling to her baby begging to live, but death came to Mary, too. Just a few hours later, her dear kind brother Nathaniel (Capt.) valiantly fighting to live, closed his eyes forever. Was not this enough for her and her kin to bear. It must not have been for Nancy's niece Willmirth Greer East, lost six of her precious children during those never forgotten hours. Nancy could not give up, she must do more now than ever before. Now she must be father as well as mother to her saddened brood. The hastily made graves had to be left behind.

The Wagon train must go on. With heavy hearts and tear dimmed eyes the company moved on.

(to be continued in our next issue)

¹ Subsequent research suggests the site was actually Hancock Co.— See Vol. 3, No. 3.

² He appears to have been born in Pennsylvania.— See Vol. 3, No. 3.

³ The accepted spelling is Cuero.

⁴ John York was prominent in Texas history. — See *Handbook of Texas*.

⁵ He was also known as Colonel Greer, both titles were honorifics.

SKYJACKED !

The horrific events of September 11 shook us to the core. The fiendish barbarity ranks high in the annals of pure evil. Such inhuman slaughter of innocents defies our comprehension.

Now, with the passage of several months, it is perhaps an appropriate time to relate how—over 40 years ago in the skies over the Gulf of Mexico—a milder form of terrorism was inflicted upon William Burnett Carpenter, a 20-year veteran Flight Engineer with Pan American World Airways and a great-grandson of NHG.

At 12:37 p.m. on August 9, 1961, Pan American flight 501 left Mexico City bound for Guatemala City with Bill Carpenter in the cockpit. The DC-8, largest jetliner of its day, would soon become the fourth hijacked plane in three months and the largest up to that time. Many years later Bill recalled:

The landing gear had barely been retracted when I heard a commotion in the cabin. I looked aft and saw the purser bent backwards over the arm rest of one of the first class seats—with a gun in his chest, held by 'our new captain.' I immediately told the rest of the crew that we had a problem in the cabin. Before I could explain the 'problem,' it was in the cockpit telling us, "Take me to Havana or I will kill every one of you!"

Captain Carl Ballard stated there was not enough fuel to reach Havana, but the hijacker knew better—even adding, "If we run out fuel just put it down in the water." Accepting the situation, Ballard radioed that they were being hijacked to Havana—ETA of 3:40 p.m. Then he flew to a higher altitude for better fuel economy.

It soon became known that among the passengers was Julio Cesar Turbay, Columbian Foreign Minister, along with his wife and some aides. Turbay had spoken against the spread of Communism in the Western Hemisphere and was one of Castro's harshest of South American critics. The dictator was still holding an Eastern Airlines aircraft diverted to Havana over two weeks earlier. Even as Flight 501 was being commandeered, the U.S. House Subcommittee on Aviation was in closed session to consider new proposals for countering air piracy and stiff penalties for the perpetrators. Among the measures under consideration were plans for airline pilots to carry guns and for crew compartments to be locked.

Politically the situation was becoming 'red hot.' While the skyjacking was in progress, President Kennedy was briefed and told a lone gunman appeared responsible. The president dispatched interceptors to keep the airliner from landing in Cuba.

On the pirated plane, the flight crew suffered the added worry of landing where no jet had ever landed—indeed, Havana airport had no runway yet rated for a plane the size of a DC-8. To make matters worse, the hijacker was highly agitated.

He was shaking like a leaf and I was afraid he would shoot us accidentally, if not intentionally. Throughout the entire flight he kept the gun pointed at one of the crew. ... We were frequently reminded that if we tried to trick him, and land at an airport other than Havana, he would kill us all.

Without alerting the hijacker, Bill suggested the crew go on oxygen then depressurize the aircraft until their captor passed out. But Ballard doubted the plan would work; the hijacking continued.

After some reflection, Kennedy decided a landing in Cuba was the safer choice—so the Air Force jets returned to base. Despite the tension on board and an unproven runway, Flight 501 put down safely.

Bill recounts how, after the plane was at the terminal,

As the skyjacker began unloading his pistol, one of the bullets dropped on the cockpit floor. The co-pilot asked if he could have it as a souvenir. The gunman agreed, adding, "I'll give each of you one—you were going to get them one way or the other."

[Bill made a tie clasp from one, but it was later lost in a burglary.]

When the fate of Flight 501 became known, U.S. legislators began venting their outrage and clamoring for action. In the Senate, the author of a bill to make 'piracy in the air' a federal crime punishable by life imprisonment said if the Castro government was involved, "it must be taken as an act of aggression against the United

States." Another senator demanded 'immediate military action' if it was found that Cuban agents were involved. Ralph Yarborough opined, "I think we should give the Cubans 24 hours to return the plane. If they don't, we should embargo and blockade Cuba and enforce with warplanes and ships." Hubert Humphrey stated we should give Castro '24 hours to restore the plane' or else 'go get it.' John Tower agreed—adding, "As long as these two aircraft sit on the ramps in Havana Airport they symbolize American weakness in the face of the Communist threat."

In the House, a frustrated member exclaimed, "Maybe they will take some action after the Cubans steal one of the helicopters off the White House

Lawn." Another added, "We ought to send a note to Cuba demanding ... they return our planes in 24 hours [otherwise] we will come and pick them up with an airborne division." Yet another said we should 'send in the Marines, the Air Force and the Army.'

Our State Department arranged for the Swiss Charge D'Affaires to relay a message via the Swiss Embassy in Havana requesting the passenger safety be guaranteed and the plane returned. While diplomatic efforts were underway, Pan Am received word from Havana that there 'would be a delay.'

Years later, Bill explained the nature of the 'delay.' Turbay was irate at being detained and Castro, eager to soothe relations with the Columbian government, took Turbay from the airport and treated him to a tour of Havana and a fine dinner. After some 6 hours, they returned to the airport Castro made a speech apologizing for the events. Then he gave a bottle of rum to each member of the crew!

Bill reinstalled the fuses he had secretly removed (disabling the engines) and Flight 501 flew to Miami where the crew unwound.

It had been a long and memorable day—so we held a crew party where the day's events were re-hashed. I believe some of Castro's rum was sampled before the evening was over.

After months in jail, the hijacker was extradited to Mexico for trial. He was Charles Albert Cadon, an Algerian angry at America's lack of attention to his country's quest for independence from France—a goal realized not long thereafter.

And so an NHG descendant was victimized in one of the first incidents of air piracy—an ugly criminal habit that evolved into the horror we've seen at work. **May God bless our recent victims.**



William Burnett Carpenter

A Sad Passing

We are saddened to learn of the death of Warren Maynard Greer in April, 2002, in Tucson, AZ. Warren was born on January 20, 1923, in St Johns, AZ. He was the third child of Sarah Caroline Jones and Lacy Arza Greer, son of Julia Asenath Nicoll and Gilbert Dunlap Greer, son of Catherine Ellen Camp and Thomas Lacy Greer. We have not learned of the details of his passing—including exact date of his death. Nor do we know the identities of his survivors.

The Mormon Grove Monument

"Near here, located in a grove of young hickory trees, was an important rallying point in 1855 and 1856 for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), then emigrating to the Rocky Mountains. The campground, really a temporary village covering about 150 acres, consisted of a grove, a large pasture fenced by native sod and a ditch, and a burial ground located on the elevated ridge between the grove and the farm. Though one or two permanent structures were erected, most residents lived in tents, wagon boxes or makeshift dwellings. During the peak year of emigration at Mormon Grove in 1855, nearly 2,000 Latter-Day Saints with 337 wagons left here for the Salt Lake Valley. It was also a tragic year for the U.S., British and European Mormons at the little way station, many dying in a cholera epidemic. In 1856, Iowa City, Iowa, became the major jumping-off point for Latter-Day Saints westward travel, and Mormon Grove became a forgotten gathering place."





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



NHG Birth Bicentennial

This October 26th will mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Nathaniel Hunt Greer. Two hundred years! So much has happened in that time. How greatly has the world changed in the intervening years. And how plentiful is the fruit of his line. His progeny now numbers well over 3000.

Among these have been daring pioneers whose persistent efforts turned piedmont and prairie from wilderness into garden, coaxing from the land a bountiful harvest.

His offspring pushed further and further west, carving out a new life, extending the reach of civilization, taming the raw unbridled country. At times combating the threat of savage heathens, but more often partnering with indigenous people and kindred immigrants to fashion a new country for all.

The valleys and mountains echoed the anxious cry of newborn life and the mournful sighs as good lives passed over into eternity. And in between these two bookends of mortality, the descendants lived out their days as moral anchors—bulwarks of character and inner strength—not free from blemish (as human as any)—yet shining examples to follow.

They established religious society, adding culture and law and music and service, in prose and poetry — bestowing upon their children and neighbors the blessings of community and liberty and a keen appreciation of divine providence.

The preservation of liberty is a never-ending struggle and this great family gave amply of its blood — recurring sacrifices at the altar of freedom. May we never forget them.

The family discarded the tradition of slavery and took up the yoke and plow, willingly applying their hands to the cultivation of a new land and a new way of life. And they did this not overly mindful of the agonies endured (and there were many!), but more typically in song and celebration.

They crafted farmland and ranchland, sprinkled here and there with settlements—decent communities which fostered the novelties of urban commerce and ingenious invention.

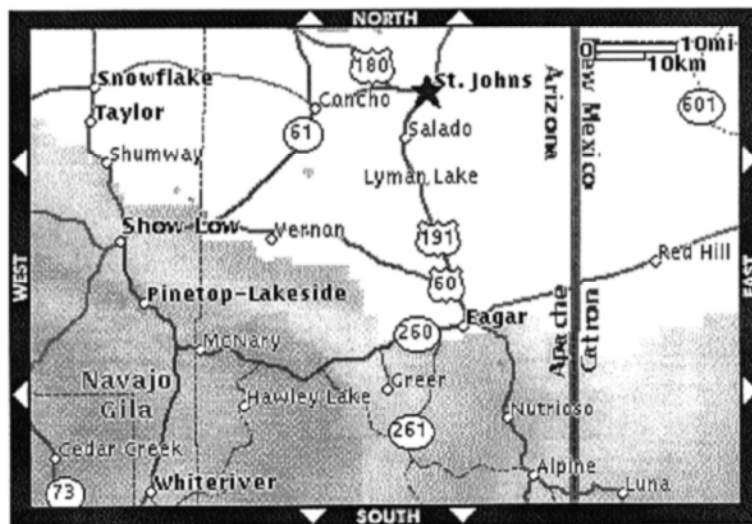
Yes, they were the builders of America, these sons and daughters of Nathaniel Hunt Greer whose humble origins in a rough cabin perched on the border between the old world and the new—at the leading edge of bold enterprise—gave rise through so much effort to so much richness.

This October let us remember all that the past two hundred years has meant to us and pause, on the 26th of the month, to honor the birthday of Nathaniel—who made it all the better!

Our Next Reunion

In our previous two issues, we have illustrated possible reunion sites that were especially significant in the life and death of NHG: Georgia and Kansas. The other sites for us to consider are locations which NHG never lived to see: Utah and Arizona. We met in the Salt Lake City area in 1999 and in the St. Johns area in 1995. These places became homes to some of NHG's offspring — and so have special interest for us.

The map below shows the general area where we met when our organization was founded at the reunion of 1995. Then we met at a park in St. Johns. If we select this area for our 2003 reunion, we could consider an alternative location. The one which seems especially significant is the town of Greer. Named in honor of Americus Vespucius (Uncle H) Greer, it is situated in the beautiful White Mountains. It enjoys the highest elevation of any incorporated city in the state.



Shall we meet again in Arizona? Please make your preference known in the next few weeks so that a consensus can be announced in our next issue.

In this issue we present our descent from the foundations of Russian royalty—with our ancestry evolving along with the state from barbarism to civilization, from paganism to Christianity.

Not surprisingly, the tree is constructed from the major known facts surrounding the men who dominated the historical events. However, we sometimes know a good deal about the lives of the royal women who were also our ancestors. Although no space exists for relating this information in this issue, I hope to do so in our next issue.

Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson

Nancy Reddick Greer's biography—by her great-granddaughter Alley Vernon Johnson Taylor—continues in this issue ...

Nancy had [daughter] Mary's baby girl to mother, but her love and determination took this task with faith and renewed strength. With the aid of my grandmother, Sallie, and my grandfather, Cub, this baby Adeline grew up along with the other Johnson children. In fact my father Willis Johnson knew Adeline as a sister. They grew up together. In later years they were close friends and neighbors. Adeline's boys often made our home their home. Adeline married a very quiet man, Charles Henry Alley. They had a lovely home on the shore of beautiful Bear Lake, known as South Eden. They were among the early settlers of the Bear Lake Valley.

When Alfred Sumners Johnson was born 14th of September 1835, history shows that Nancy and Willis were back in Chambers County, Alabama.¹ This was where her brother Nathaniel Hunt Greer was living also. Here the family remained until after the birth of her next son, James. The records show that Nancy had gone over to Hillsboro, Georgia, her old home, when baby James was born. Alfred was scarcely more than two years old when his folks were again on the move to Texas. Alfred's youth was spent in Texas, growing up with a big family of brothers and sisters, some older, some younger, as a new baby was born every two years until the tenth child was born, about 1846. These youthful days were interesting, filled with travels, hardships, happiness—experiences a boy enjoys. In 1852, Mormon Elders found their way into Milam County, Texas, and into the hearts and homes of the Johnson's and Greer's. So by 1855 emigrant trains were on their way across Kansas. The plains of Kansas were never forgotten by Alfred. Here when the Cholera struck, he saw his father, Willis Johnson, his sister Mary, his Uncle Nathaniel, his six cousins, Aunt Willmirth's children, buried in shallow graves, drenched with tears and left by the roadside. The emigrant train must move on, on to Utah and the valley in the mountains.

In Utah, Alfred met, loved and married a sweet young girl in her early teens, Deborah Elizabeth Hardy. They were married May 1856 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Alfred and Deb with his brother in law, Bayles Sprouse and wife, Nancy Willmirth, were called by President Brigham Young to help settle Fillmore, Millard County, in southwestern Utah. Alfred's first little daughter was born in Fillmore, 25 Oct 1857, but died a month later. The lack of medical care and the hardships of pioneering contributed to the death of these children and their brave pioneer mothers. In 1859, when the second child Alfred Sumners Jr. was born, the family was back from Southern Utah and living in Salt Lake City. The fourth child was born in Laketown, Rich County, Utah. A small town at the southern end of Bear Lake Valley, where Alfred had come with the Johnson families and other pioneers under the leadership of Apostle Charles C. Rich.

Grandfather Cub and grandmother Sallie spent their first winter on Swan Creek, a little stream that flows into Bear Lake from the west hills. Alfred and the other sons and daughters with their mother Nancy Reddick, spent the winter in St. Charles and Paris, Idaho; two other little pioneer settlements on the north and west of the shores of Bear Lake. These towns in their histories record Johnson births, deaths, marriages, jealousies, strengths and weaknesses. Life is filled with sunshine and shadows, and Nancy's Clan really experienced both.

For about 14 years, Alfred and Deb lived in the Bear Lake country. Later they moved into Wyoming and the Vernal, Utah, country. Here Alfred, with his large industrious family aided greatly in the development of the Ashley Valley. Alfred died 23 August 1891 and was buried in Vernal, Utah. His good wife, Aunt Deb as she was lovingly called stood faithfully by his side. She lived on to a ripe old age.² They were parents of 12 children. The growth and development of the Ashley Valley, testifies to the strength and character of these fine men and women and their mother, Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson.

James Johnson, better known as Uncle Jim, was Nancy's sixth child. He was born 13 Oct 1837 in Hillsboro, Jasper County, Georgia. His life really began on a river boat and a prairie schooner, as they came on from Alabama to Texas and on to Utah. His life was that of a pioneer boy, traveling about, spending many nights on the trail and days behind a herd of horses and cattle. Of his private life our knowledge is scanty. He was a good man, quiet and kind. He was married twice, to Martha Blackburn and to Annie Biers. He owned land and lived on Sage Creek in Rich County. He died in Laketown, Utah on the shores of Bear Lake in 1874, four years before his mother met her death. He was buried in the Laketown Cemetery and his mother's grave is beside his.

Hannah Victoria, Aunt Vic as she was called, the child just younger than James, was born 13 Oct 1839 in Autogo, Georgia.³ Her girlhood was filled with experiences of rolling wagons, campfires, nights of sleeping out under the stars. She like her other brothers and sisters could remember all those deaths and graves on the plains of Kansas. She was a beautiful girl of 16 and her impression of the sadness, the falling tears the newly mounded graves which were left behind, and the oxen and horses with the creaking wagons again pointed westward, remained with her through her life. These were the days when Nancy Reddick asked the Lord to give her courage and strength to Push On. Hannah Victoria married Alonzo Blair, son of James Blair.⁴ They made their home in Salt Lake City and here four children were born. Then with the other Johnson families, left to settle Bear Lake Valley in 1864 under the leadership of Apostle Charles C. Rich. This took courage, faith and devotion to the Church and its leaders.

[continued in our next issue]

¹ Willis took his family to safety away from Texas, then returned to help fight Santa Anna. After Texas independence was won, he rejoined his family in Alabama at or just before the start of 1837.

² Deb died February 20, 1936.

³ This place has not been identified. Did she mean Autauga Co, AL?

⁴ The ceremony was October 22, 1856, in Salt Lake City.

Our European Roots

Our Descent from Prince Rurik

As early as the 7th century, some Swedes crossed the Baltic to trap for furs and establish trading posts near Lake Ladoga in the vicinity of what would one day become St Petersburg. The Finns called these Swedes *Rus* and their country *Rossiya* — and thus the origin of the word *Russian*. By 830 these Rus had explored the mighty rivers that, rising nearby, eventually flowed to the Black and Caspian Seas. Around 855 a Russian prince by the name of Rurik (Ryurik) came from the area of Jutland to establish a Viking stronghold at Ladoga. According to legend, in about 862 the natives of Novgorod, weary of chronic internecine fighting, invited Rurik to rule over them and establish order.

After Rurik's death, a kinsman named Oleg continued the clan's power, founding the principality of Kiev and extending Russian authority to the Black Sea. When Oleg died in 912, Rurik's son Igor took control, founding the Rurikid dynasty. His rule was only partially successful and he was murdered while trying to exact more than the traditional tribute.

Igor's widow Olga was regent during the minority of their son Svyatoslav. On reaching manhood, he solidified the security of the Kiev state—defeating various rivals until, in the spring of 972, he was killed when his retinue was ambushed near the cataracts of the Dnieper. Dynastic conflict among his three sons ended in 980, when Vladimir—Svyatoslav's son by his mistress Malusha—became sole ruler.

Vladimir's reign was highlighted by his conversion to Byzantine (Orthodox) Christianity in 988—making it the state religion and him Saint Vladimir the Great. After his death, his eldest son by his widow Anna (sister of the Byzantine emperor Basil II) slew their other sons then was deposed by his half-brother Yaroslav, Vladimir's son by a prior wife Rogneda. In 1036 he became ruler of all Russia. He made Kiev an imperial capital with magnificent buildings, crafted the first Russian code of law, and devised a political system whereby, as a grand duke of Kiev died, each vassal below him was moved to a higher principality.

Yaroslav married Ingegarde of Sweden and they had many children that married into various royal houses. Around 948, a French delegation presented the proposal of their king Henry for the hand of Anne of Kiev. The widowed and childless monarch sought to ally his country with the growing power of Russia. Henry began public life as a child Duke of Burgundy and had shared the French crown with Robert the Pious, his father, for 5 years before becoming sole monarch in 1031. He had to suppress rebellions—some by members of his own family. For a dozen years he helped his nephew William, duke of Normandy (later William the Conqueror) check insurrection in Normandy. When William's power grew too great, Henry waged a fruitless war against him.

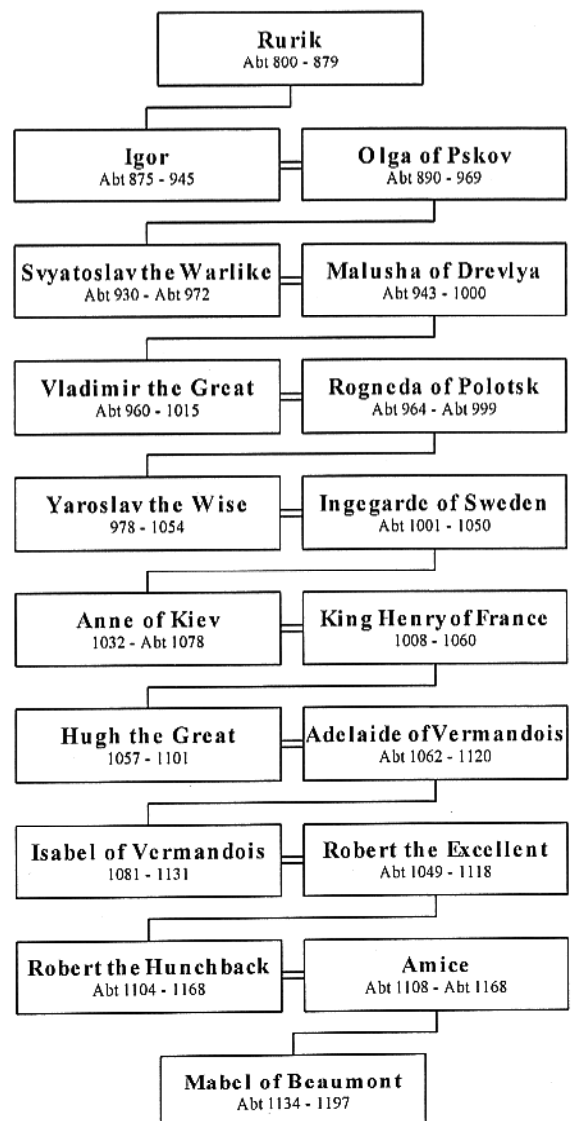
Henry and Anne's second son was Hugh Magnus, Duke of Burgundy. He was among the foremost leaders of the first Crusade and the first to take a contingent to Constantinople. On the way he was shipwrecked between Bari and Durazzo and then detained by Emperor Alexis who demanded allegiance from all crusaders. By early 1097, Hugh and most others agreed and the military campaign proceeded with notable success. In 1101 a call for reinforcements brought Hugh again to the Holy Land, but after late-summer landing in Cilicia his forces were among those slaughtered by the Muslims at the Battle at Heraclea. Badly hurt, he escaped on horseback to Tarsus on the Mediterranean coast where he died of his wounds.

Hugh and Adelaide of Vermandois had many children. The last was Isabel who in 1096 wed the childless, divorced and much older Robert

of Beaumont on the eve of his departure on crusade. So great had been his valor at the Battle of Hastings 30 years earlier that he had been rewarded with 90 English manors. He returned from the Holy Land and became 1st Earl of Leicester. But as Robert grew older, Isabel became unfaithful and eventually he died of grief over her desertion of him. Their several children included twin sons Waleran and Robert who were raised by King Henry I of England because he so esteemed their father.

Robert inherited his father's English lands and became 2nd Earl of Leicester. He wed a woman named Amice/Amicia whose has been variously identified with the houses of Bigod, Gael, Montfort and Waer.

Robert and Amice begat Robert, the 3rd Earl of Leicester, and Mabel of Beaumont whose ancestry of the Bruce was traced in Volume 3, Number 1.



Origin of the MacGregor Arms

In Volume 5, Number 3, we provided the installment of *History of Clan Gregor — Chapter II: Early Ancestry*. At that time, for the sake of brevity, we omitted from that insert the traditional account of the origin of the MacGregor arms. Pages 15 and 16 of Amelia MacGregor's book relate the following:

"VIII. Sir Malcolm MacGregor of Glenurchy, eldest son of Sir John, was a man of reputation and authority in St David's time. He married Marijoriam, *junioriem filiam Willielmi hostarii, domini rigis nepotis*. 'Marjory, youngest daughter of William, Chief of the Army and nephew of our Lord the King.'

"Sir Malcolm was a man of incredible strength of body. Being of the King's retinue at a certain hunting party, in a forest, his Majesty having attacked a wild boar, or some other animal of prey, was like to be worsted, and in great danger of his life, when Sir Malcolm coming up, demanded his Majesty's permission to encounter it, the King having hastily answered, 'In,' or 'e'en do, bait spair nocht' [go on and do it, man!], Sir Malcolm is said to have torn up a young oak by the root, and throwing himself between his Majesty and the fierce assailant, with the oak in one hand, kept the animal at bay till with the other he got an opportunity of running it through the heart. In honour whereof his Majesty was pleased to raise him to the peerage by the title of Lord MacGregor, to him '*et heredibus masculis*'; and in order to perpetuate the remembrance of the brave action, gave him an oak tree eradicate, in place of the fir-tree which the family had formerly carried. We have his arms blazoned by an ancient herald in these words: 'Lord MacGregor of old. *Argent*, a sword in bend *azure* and an oak tree eradicate, in bend sinister proper, in chief a crown *gules*. *Crest*, a lion's head crowned with an antique crown, with points.—Motto: In do, bait spair nocht. Supporters, on the dexter an unicorn *argent* crowned, horned *or*, and on the sinister a deer proper tyn'd *azure*."

Ed.— The motto means "My People are Royal". 'S' is a Gaelic abbreviation of IS [it is]. **RIOGHAL** (pronounced much like what it means: 'regal'. **MO** is "my". **DHREAM** sounds a bit like 'hrem' and means "a race" or "a tribe". **ARD CHOILLE** was a clan rallying or battle cry (analogous to 'Remember the Alamo') meaning to "the high wood".

MACGREGOR OF MACGREGOR





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Our Next Reunion in Arizona

It has been decided to meet next year in Arizona—although it is not yet clear whether the exact location will be in St. Johns or in Greer. (We first met in St. Johns in 1995, so my personal preference is for the city which bears the name of our noble ancestor, Americus Vespucius Greer.)

Nor have reunion dates been suggested, much less chosen. These should be announced in our next issue — but since June is the traditional month of our reunion, it seems likely that we will meet during that month.

Our next reunion will present us with the unhappy—but unavoidable—tasks of filling the office vacancies that have arisen. Between now and then, our members who are AVG descendants should consult on Nello's replacement. And let us all give some thought about whom should be our next president.

It is not clear that it is necessary for us to select a president pro-tem to fill in for Wally during the next several months, and our organizational constitution does not speak to this matter. But there is no doubt that we will need someone in the Northeast Arizona area to coordinate or otherwise facilitate our meeting. If anyone in that corner of Arizona wishes to volunteer to assist in these efforts, please contact me as soon as you can. In the meantime, reunion plans will progress to the greatest degree possible under the circumstances.

This Issue Was Late

Several factors combined to make this issue come out late. Mostly this was due to my personal schedule. I apologize to our readers for this lateness, but hope (and expect) that all of you will still receive this issue before Christmas. Assuming this to be the case, I wish all of our readers the very merriest of holidays during this special time of year ! — Bill Greer

Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson

*Nancy Reddick Greer's biography—by her great-granddaughter
Alley Vernon Johnson Taylor—concludes in this issue ...*

Two years following their coming into the Bear Lake Valley, Hannah Victoria and Alonzo were making their home in St. Charles, ID. In 1866 their baby Nancy, named for her grandmother Nancy Reddick was born. Three other girls, Ellen, Martha and Maud were born in St. Charles. Next our record shows them living in Castle, NM, where Charles was born 12 Feb 1875. Their 10th child, Nettie was born 2 Jul 1882 in Manassa, Conejos Co, CO. For many years the Blair's with other Johnson relatives spent many of the productive years of their lives settling and developing this part of Colorado. Their descendants are still living there and carrying on the fine work.

Nancy Willmirth Johnson, the 8th child of Nancy Reddick and Willis Johnson was born 22 Nov 1841 in St. Augustine, TX. Nancy was a pioneer girl with the others. She enjoyed the home life of a big family. She loved music, dancing, out of doors life. She grew up mainly on the trails. Mormonism came to Nancy Willmirth with the other of her kinfolk in 1852 when she was but 11 years old. Three years later she was with the others on that never forgotten trek hundreds of miles long from Texas to the Missouri, on, on, day after day until the scenes of death and suffering that I have told in their experiences. She bravely held the hand of her sorrowing mother and pressed it tenderly to pledge her support in trying to press on to their goal, the valleys of the mountains. Nancy Willmirth was 14 years old when they arrived in Salt Lake City, UT. When she was 16 years old she married Bayles Earl Sprouse 7 Feb 1857. This happy union brought forth 11 children. As we note the record of their births, deaths and marriages, we find the oldest boy, John Willis was born in Salt Lake City 9 Oct 1858 and was accidentally burned to death 14 Mar 1861. Bayles, known as Jake, was born in Salt Lake City 16 Dec 1861 (Jake Sprouse, my father Willis Johnson, and Adeline York, grew up in Bear Lake as youngsters and were dear friends for many years.). The third child was born in Spanish Fork, UT, in 1863, not long before the migration to the Bear Lake Valley. One of the greatest testimonies of love and family devotion is exemplified in these migrations, as we find the mother, the brothers and sisters banding together. Together they share happiness, sorrow, poverty and prosperity, always a friend in need and a friend in deed. From 1866 to 1876 they were in the Bear Lake country. Four of their 11 children were born there. Then answering the call of Brigham Young, she and Bayles went with her brother Alfred and family to Manassa, CO, as mentioned before. After a short stay in Colorado the lure of the Ashley Valley led them there. This Vernal country became Nancy Willmirth's home and life until her death 13 Mar 1902. Her loving husband lived on without her until 1915 when he passed away.

John Lycurgus, the next of Nancy's and Willis's family was with his people in these migrations and settlements. John Lycurgus, "Cur" as he was known to those who loved him most. He too was born in Brenham, Washington Co, TX. He at 12 years old had been with Nancy, his beloved mother and the others on the Mormon Pioneer Trail. Their lives were woven together as threads in a beautiful piece of linen. Lycurgus went to

Bear Lake Valley a single young man, but here he met and wooed the charming Cora Isabella Davis and on 1 Mar 1867 they were married in St. Charles. Their first child, Willis Lycurgus was born there. He died 14 Sep 1870 and was buried in the Laketown Cemetery, a little settlement at the south end of Bear Lake. Their next 6 babies were born in Laketown. Allen E. and Nathan L died as babies and were buried beside their older brother Willis L. These 3 little graves lie side by side next to their Uncle James Johnson and their grandmother Nancy Reddick.

In the fall of 1878, grandmother Nancy Reddick with her sons, Lycurgus and his family; Cub, and his wives, Sallie and Beckey, and their small children were on the move again out into Wyoming. My father, Willis stayed behind in Laketown as he and mother were married and making their home there. It was the first week in October, a fall storm came on soon after they left the Bear Lake Valley and were near the Wyoming border. The weather turned cold, it began to snow. The poor wagon roads became slippery and traveling was hard. But they must keep going as winter could set in before they could reach Medicine Bow, WY, where they planned to spend the winter. Grandmother Nancy Reddick was driving her own team. One of the horses had a sore mouth and was hard to control. One of the boys offered to drive the team along the narrow dugway but she refused to let him. The horse ran off the slippery road tipping the wagon over. Grandmother Nancy Reddick was pinned under its weight which crushed the life from her body.

What sadness, what a loss in these people, sons, daughters, grandchildren. All had loved her so. They had followed her wise and endearing counsel. What was best to do? Winter was coming and roads were bad. Traveling was slow. After talking and counseling together they decided it best to dig a grave at the point of the mountain, close to the roadside, and there bury their beloved mother. Her body was sorrowfully laid to rest and on they went into Green River and later into the Vernal country. This place of burial was near to the highway between Sage and Nugget, WY, and it became known as Johnson's Point, and is so called to this day. Her body was later removed to the Laketown Cemetery by her grandson, Willis Johnson, and other of her kinfolk.

Lycurgus and Cora were the parents of 11 sons and daughters. Four died in infancy, but 7 grew up to become useful, prominent citizens, active in civil and religious affairs. They, with their children and grandchildren helped to make the Ashley Valley the center of farming and industry as it is today. Lycurgus died in Vernal, UT, in 1908 and his good wife Cora died in 1926. Their lives were so closely woven with the other brothers and sisters that we need not repeat it.

The youngest child of Nancy and Willis' large family was Leonian. He was born in St Augustine, TX, in 1846. He grew up in a home filled with excitement and hardships. Although he was but a little fellow he realized the sufferings and sorrow his mother went through. Many times he lay on the ground under a blanket watching the stars and clinging to his fathers hand and later his widowed mothers. One year after they reached Salt Lake City, Leonian died and once more Nancy Reddick had to lay one of her loved ones away. [concludes on page 4]

Our Female Ancestors: Three Remarkable Russians

Saint Olga of Pskov

Various chroniclers of Russia have claimed that Olga was wisest of all rulers of Kiev Rus and the Orthodox Church so esteemed her conversion and devotion to Christianity—30 years before it became the state religion—that she was sainted.

Olga was born about 890, but whether a Scandinavian or Slav is disputed. In 903 she wed Igor, Grand Prince of Kiev. In 945 he was horribly murdered near the Derevlian town of Iskorosten (some say Malin). To avenge his murder and mutilation she led a campaign—for political control and family reasons—in which Iskorosten and other Derevlian towns were destroyed and the inhabitants either killed or enslaved—but she spared Malusha and Dobrynya, orphans of Igor's murderer.

Olga seized whole regions and villages for herself, founding vast royal estates. She organized a more systematic collection of tribute, expanding fiscal and judicial control via her court officials. The next year she built forts and trading posts along various of her trade routes.

In 957—forsaking warfare in an age drenched in it—Olga made a perilous journey to Constantinople to pursue religion, trade and peace. The embassy she led consisted of nearly 200 nobles, officials, and others (over 100 were merchants)—not counting her military escort. She was dignified and adroit in dealings with the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII—demonstrating good rulership, trading skills and administration. At the Byzantine court she appeared with a retinue of women at the fore—her male contingent marched in the rear! Constantine was favorably impressed and even sought a political alliance by marrying her. Although she was not mutually agreeable, she tactfully avoided the marriage by insisting he first serve as godfather at her Christening; she also had baptism (or re-baptism by some accounts) as a personal objective. Afterward Olga, now christened Elena, reminded him that according to Christian teaching, a godfather cannot marry a godchild. The Emperor was thus forced to withdraw his proposal—apparently not offended by her subtle manipulation and artful intrigue.

Upon returning home, Olga did not impose her Christianity on her subjects. In 959 she did solicit King Otto I of Germany for a bishop and aides to establish a Christian mission in her realm, but she rejected the party that was sent as unworthy.

In 960 her forces aided Constantinople in liberating Cyprus from Islam (the religion of peace) which had been attempting violent conquest for over 300 years. In 968 she successfully defended Kiev against a Pecheneg siege, but the strenuous effort hastened her demise the next year.

Rogneda of Polotsk

Saint Vladimir the Great was an illegitimate son of Prince Svyatoslav and Malusha—who had become Olga's housekeeper.

Vladimir sought the hand of Rogneda—who had been born to Prince Rognvald of Polotsk about the year 964—but she refused to wed the son of a slave (Malusha). Instead, she fancied Vladimir's brother Yaropolk.

Enraged at Rogneda's insult, Vladimir slew her father and brothers then took wed by force. She bore Vladimir children,

but she never forgave him for killing her family. Her enmity grew and she began to betray Vladimir—who banished her and their son Izyaslav to one of his estates near Kiev along the Lybed river. This manor was later known as Predslavino after their daughter Predslava.

Rogneda planned revenge. Once Vladimir visited her and after he fell asleep that night, she stabbed him but he awoke in time to escape death with only a wound. Before attending his wound, he ordered Rogneda to don her bridal clothes because when he returned, she would die. She obeyed but told their son Izyaslav to brandish a sword as soon as his father returned and say he would witness the murder. Vladimir was so impressed by such words from so small a boy that he spared his wife and son.

Despite her actions, Vladimir granted Rogneda control of a town which was named Izyaslavl after their son. Malusha's brother Dobrynya led a priest and small retinue to Izyaslavl where Rogneda was christened "Anastasia" and compelled to become a nun. Then Izyaslav was taken from her.

Rogneda gave birth to sons Mstislav, Vsevolod and our ancestor Yaroslav and daughters Predslava and Maria. About 989 she founded a monastery before dying in her cell around the year 999, the first woman in Eastern Europe to become a monk.

Anne of Kiev

Anne was one of four daughters born to Yaroslav and Ingegarde. The birth year is debated. Historical sources point to 1024 or 1025, but recent scholarship usually favors 1032.

Medieval chronicles assert that King Henry of France heard rumors of Anne's exceptional beauty and wanted to marry her. But it is more likely his political situation forced him to seek influential allies—and Kiev Rus was very influential in that era.

A year or two after Anne's betrothal to Henry, her retinue arrived in Paris. She brought with her the "Evangelisterium," her prized Rus Gospel, which was later given to the Cathedral of Rheims where it became known as the Gospel of Rheims. French kings swore allegiance on it during their coronation ceremony. The book now rests in the National Library of Paris.

The wedding date of Anne to Henry is disputed. Some claim 1044, but modern research suggests a later date. January 29, 1051, seems preferred. It is also unknown if she adopted Catholicism or remained Orthodox. They wed partially to avoid royal consanguinity but mostly to forge an alliance between the Kiev Rus and the Franks. Their marriage certificate reveals that Anne (known in France as Agnesa) signed her name in her own hand, while Henry could only mark an "X."

Their eldest son became Philip I "the fair," King of France, and the second son, Hugh, was our ancestor. After Henry's death, Raoul II de Crépi fell in love with Anne and by 1061 abducted her (perhaps voluntarily). Their ensuing marriage was not recognized by the Pope—Raoul was excommunicated and the marriage dissolved in 1067. They lived in one of his castles until he died in the early 1070s. She died a few years later.

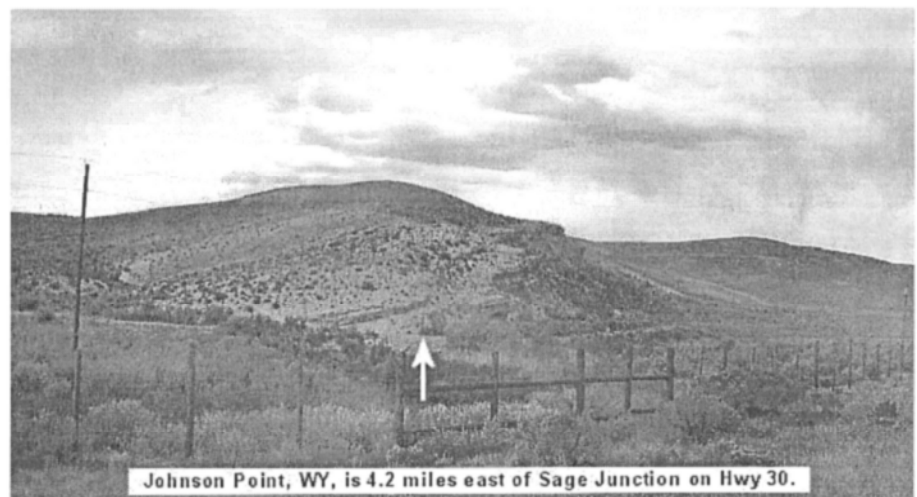
See our last issue to situate these three remarkable women in our family tree.

NRG's Biography Concludes

Into Nancy's life many clouds came, and much rain did fall, but a little sunshine came when in 1857 Nancy decided to marry a kind friendly man, John Sprouse. His lovable wife Catherine Ann Hundley had previously died in Montgomery Co, TX. John was lonely, Nancy was lonely too and John's son Bayles Earl and her daughter Nancy Willmirth had been married just the month before. Their marriage was short as John died the 27 Oct 1857. He was a prosperous landowner and farmer in Grantsville, Tooele Co, UT. He was buried in the Salt Lake City Cemetery.

After John's death, Nancy Reddick was back with her clan ready to strike the trail when the call came from President Brigham Young to go to southern Idaho and northern Utah. She was their leader, she inspired them to settle the land, build homes, bridges, irrigation ditches, schools, churches, to plow the fields clearing the rocks and sagebrush as they went. We find in other family histories, of people who proudly say they crossed the plains in the same company as Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson did. One is Elizabeth Roberts, a young girl who knew and loved Nancy. Nancy's life touched many. She was the first school teacher in Laketown, the little town where I was born. Today, not a block away from where she taught school in a little dirt roofed cabin, now stands a modern High School. And less than a mile away from where she made her home with Cub and Sallie, she is buried. Her grave is marked with a white marble stone, now mellowed with years and worn with the rain, wind, and sun and winters snow. Each year as we place flowers on her grave, I glory in the indomitable and courageous spirit she possessed, and I wonder where is grandfather's grave. Does a wild flower grow on the spot or does a highway or railway, or even an airfield cover the spot where Willis Johnson and so many of our kinfolk were buried and left by the old Pioneer Wagon Trail in the state of Kansas?

This concludes Alley Vernon Johnson Taylor's biography of Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson. A photograph of the place of Nancy's tragic death was kindly provided by one of her descendants and is reproduced below.





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Reunion Postponed

We regret to announce that our family reunion intended for this summer will not occur as originally planned. It appears that the sluggish economy and our unsettled state of affairs during the recent military action in Iraq have combined to discourage or otherwise deter many of our members from attending. Although a gathering could still have been held, it was deemed better to postpone the reunion until more people could attend — probably in the year 2004.

Newsletter Issue Skipped

Because of our protracted efforts to come to a decision about holding the reunion — and the need to announce the date and place of the event in the newsletter — the scheduled date for publication of our issue of March 1, 2003, came and went with no issue being produced. Thus, Volume 7, Number 4, of *The Greer Way West* never happened. As a consequence, the issue now in your hands has been expanded to include more material than normal. We apologize for this aberration in our publication schedule, but trust you will understand.

A Sinclair in the Family?

On page three we run an article about an ancestor of ours — “Prince” Henry Sinclair, a man of much note in the 14th century.

Prince Henry’s son Henry, referred to Gilbert Grierson as “kinsman” (*dilectus consanguineus*), so they likely had a common ancestor only a very few generations back. Assuming Gilbert was somehow kin to the Douglasses of Nithsdale, some have suggested that Gilbert and Henry the younger were related via Henry’s wife Egidia Douglas (through whom Henry acquired Nithsdale) — but no such relationship has been found. (For more on the Douglas–Grierson relationship see the insert in this issue on the Douglas stronghold of Castle Threave).

Grierson tradition claims that a son of Malcolm “The Lame Lord” MacGregor led his family to Nithsdale from the general vicinity of western Stratherne. Exactly where the 14th century migration originated is unknown, but custom has the Lame Lord wedded to the daughter of Malise MacAlpin of Finnich. Finnich Glen is close to the village of Drymen, near the southeast corner of Loch Lomond. Also, it is perhaps significant that the grandfather of Prince Henry was **Malise of Stratherne**.

It is curious that Prince Henry’s cousin who preceded him as Governor of Orkney was named Alexander *de la Ard* whereas our ancestor was Gilbert *Gresoun de le Ard[is]*. What’s more, Finnich Glen was just a few miles south of *Loch Ard*. Could these *Ard* associations be more than just coincidence? Maybe, but Gilbert is known to have been tied to the lands of *le Ard* and *Tynnroun* — most definitely in northern Nithsdale — and there are many Scottish places designated of *le Ard* (the high place).

Where does all this leave us? Still searching, that’s where!

Are You Certain of that Date?

One the main problems of chronology (and thus genealogy) is found in the effort to reconcile dates between the Julian and Gregorian calendars. Take this example:

An article in the *Edinburgh Courant* of February 19, 1706, was an abridgment of another article seemingly published a year earlier in the *London Gazette* of February 13, 1705. But the latter was itself a translation from the *Amsterdam Gazette* dated February 22, 1706. The source article in Dutch was apparently dated a year after the article that derived from it! Yet all three articles were published *in the same week!!!* The discrepancy in the year arose because Scotland and the Low Countries began their year on January 1, while England was still beginning its year on March 25 as late as 1751. The error in days came from the use of the Gregorian calendar in the Low Countries, while England and Scotland were still on the Julian!

The lesson of this example is simple: Be very careful of dates before the modern era of synchronous common dating!

Our Own Movie Star

Laraine Johnson was born in Roosevelt, Utah, on October 13, 1917 — the seventh child of Ada May Rich and Clarence Irwin Johnson, son of Cora Isabelle Davis and John Lycurgus Johnson, son of Willis Johnson and Nancy Reddick Greer, NHG's sister. Within a few years Clarence Johnson moved the family to Long Beach, California, where Laraine began acting with a local amateur group, the Long Beach Players.

Before long she broke into Hollywood. In 1937 she made her feature debut — a bit part in King Vidor's highly acclaimed classic melodrama, "Stella Dallas". Eventually she evolved into a pretty lead of the 1940s and 1950s, but more demure and less vivacious than most stars of the era. She generally portrayed sweet personable characters.

In the first few years of her career, she had leading roles in several "B" westerns and action films at RKO — sometimes under the name "Laraine Hays". She garnered studio attention and in 1939 signed with MGM. It was at this time that she adopted her permanent screen name by which the world and many of us came to know her — Laraine Day. She soon became well-known in a series of seven popular "Dr. Kildare" films playing Lew Ayres' fiancée, nurse Mary Lamont.

In 1940 she won the female lead in Hitchcock's "Foreign Correspondent" — one of her few really important film credits. Due, in part, to being stereotyped as "ordinary", she seldom worked with big directors. But despite being mostly in formula films, she became one of Hollywood's female leads, playing opposite many of Hollywood's male stars, including Lionel Barrymore, Ronald Reagan, Robert Young and Kirk Douglas.

She scored some big hits in the 1940s. In 1943 she played opposite Cary Grant in "Mr. Lucky", in 1945 she and Lana Turner played WACs in "Keep Your Powder Dry" and in 1947 John Wayne was her partner in the big-budget "Tycoon".

With Gary Cooper in
"The Story of Dr. Wassell" — 1944.



Laraine was memorable in a 1946 offbeat noir role in which her usual stable and serene qualities were in marked contrast to those of her character, a mentally unbalanced heroine in "The Locket". And as McCarthyism gained momentum, she found another plum role in the 1949 film, "I Married a Communist".



As television gained wide acceptance in 1951, she appeared in a series of 15-minute segments called "Daydreaming with Laraine". That same year she interviewed celebrities, introduced songs and passed on celebrity gossip via a half-hour format in the "The Laraine Day Show". In 1952 was a panelist on "I've Got a Secret".

Her last big silver screen success was in the 1954 airplane disaster movie, "The High and the Mighty". During the next three decades, she did more TV movies such as "Murder on Flight 502" (1975) and TV series including "Hotel" and "Murder, She Wrote".

Laraine had many interests outside acting. She was active in the Mormon church, directed an LDS theater and became known as the 'First Lady of Baseball' after marrying her second husband, manager Leo Durocher — and with him co-hosting the 1953 TV sports show "Double Play". Her memoir *Day with the Giants* recalls these times. Her first marriage (1942-1947) was to James Ray Hendricks, a popular vocal soloist who sang with Benny Goodman's band.

In 1960 Laraine married for a final time to screenwriter and TV producer Michel Grilikhes. He produced and co-wrote the 1961 Peabody Award-winning "Let Freedom Ring", an inspirational TV special recounting the moral heritage that made America great. It featured the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and starred Laraine Day.

She went on to write an inspirational book *The America We Love* and in the 1970s traveled the country speaking on environmental issues as the official spokeswoman for the "Make America Better" program of the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

Nominated for the American Film Institute's "100 Years ... 100 Stars" list, Laraine Day is a tremendous credit to our NHG family and a national asset — someone we truly need during these perilous times. Laraine, thank you for all you've done for us and America!

Prince Henry Sinclair

In Vol. 4, No. 1 (JUN 1999), we noted that on Dec 6, 1408, our ancestor Gilbert Grierson was granted possession of the lands of Lag from the Earl of Orkney who resigned the property

“to his kinsman, Gilbert Geresoun of Ardis, ...”

The benefactor was Henry Sinclair, 2nd Sinclair Earl of Orkney (there were many Viking jarls before the Sinclairs acceded). He inherited the earldom from his father, dubbed “Prince Henry” from having so much power as to be virtually a sovereign. The Sinclairs held lands beyond the Orkney Islands, including land in Nithsdale and the Midlothian barony of Roslin, their family seat.

Because the nature of the “kinship” between Henry Sinclair and Gilbert Grierson is unknown, we do not know where the earl fits in our family tree. But evidently he and other famous Sinclairs are to be included among our august ancestry. And so it is that we now examine the particulars of Prince Henry Sinclair.

The St Clairs (later Sinclair) came from the same Viking family as did William the Conqueror — but took their name from the Norman town Saint-Clair-sur-Epte where they resided in the 10th century. Father Richard Hay, 17th-century biographer of the Rosslyn (Roslin) St Clairs, wrote that Earl Henry “was more honoured than any of his ancestors, for he had the power to stamp coin within his dominions, to make laws, to remit crimes ... he had a crown in his arms, bore a crown on his head when he constituted laws, and, in a word, subject to none, save only he held his lands of the King of Denmark, Sweden and Norway ... In all those parts he was esteemed as a second person next to the King.”

“Prince” Henry was born in Roslin Castle in 1345 to William, 3rd Lord of Roslin, and Isabel of Stratherne, Heiress of Orkney. Thus, the earldom came to the Sinclairs through Henry’s mother, a daughter of Marjory of Ross and Malise, the 40th Jarl of Orkney, son of Malise, the 39th Jarl. How these earls of Stratherne became jarls of Orkney has been obscured by the passage of time.

Henry’s father died in East Prussia (possibly slain by pagan Lithuanians) after joining in May 1358 with other knights as mercenaries in one of some 80 crusades led by Teutonic Knights against Baltic infidels during the latter half of the 14th century. That same year, Henry inherited the barony of Roslin, but (largely due to being only 13) the Caithness and Orkney titles were split between cousin Alexander de la Ard and uncle Eringisle Sunesson.

In 1362 Henry sailed to Copenhagen and the court of Haakon VI, King of Norway and Sweden. Here he pressed his claim to Orkney, but Haakon appointed a governor to administer Orkney. Although Henry’s claim was denied (due to his youth), he was betrothed to Danish Princess, Florentina, Haakon’s sister or niece. However, Florentina died before the two could wed.

Henry had a special relationship with Queen Margrette. When Haakon died in 1380, Henry became Margrette’s premier jarl by virtue of his descent from the Viking House of More.

In 1365 Henry was knighted before joining the Crusade of King Peter I of Cyprus, which assembled at Venice. Henry fought in Egypt then did pilgrimage to Jerusalem — earning him the sobriquet of ‘Henry the Holy’ on his return to Scotland.

Around 1375, Henry wed Janet Halyburton, daughter of Walter, Lord of Dirleton. They had Henry (who would one day transfer the lands of Lag to Gilbert Grierson) as the first of many children.

By 1379 Orkney had become unruly from bad government and Henry persuaded King Haakon IV (aka Hako) to recognize him as the 1st Sinclair Earl of Orkney — having promised to restore order and the King’s authority. A month after investiture as earl, Henry persuaded Robert II of Scotland to formally renounce any claim to Orkney and acknowledge it a Norwegian possession.

Henry fortified his Scottish possessions and fortress Kirkwall in Orkney. During the 1380s he built up a powerful fleet of ships (larger than the Norwegian navy) with which he later subdued the Shetlands and the Faroes. Records show he attended the Scottish Parliament in 1392, 1393 and 1394. As his strength grew, so did his influence. Among his other remarkable achievements were his designation as the Admiral of Scotland, Chief Justice of Scotland and the medieval equivalent of what would later be termed “Grand Master of Scottish Masons”.

Prince Henry appears to have been slain in August 1400 when enemies made a surprise attack on Kirkwall. Vague records fail to conclusively identify the attackers who could have been either English raiders or assassins sent by the Hanseatic League.

But during the last years of his life, Henry topped all his other achievements by allegedly conducting an amazing and quite controversial feat of trans-Atlantic exploration. Beyond the well-known Viking voyages to Greenland, it is claimed that he led an expedition which made landfall in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia nearly 100 years before Columbus sailed to the New World!

In May of 1398, Henry’s fleet made landfall in Newfoundland but the landing party was repelled with loss of life by forces of the local Native American population. On June 2, 1398, the expedition arrived at what they dubbed “Trin” harbor — in honor of their arrival on the day of the Trinity. The modern site has been tentatively identified as Chadebucto Bay in Nova Scotia. Some have suggested the explorations ventured south as far as Maine and Rhode Island. There are even hints that he had with him a group of the Knights Templar that had secured refuge in Scotland after their Continental demise — a plausible detail given Henry’s preeminent position in the pre-Masonic affairs in that era.

Did Henry really discover North America a century before Columbus? The principle evidence hinges on his purported association with the mysterious Italian brothers Zeno who claimed to have crossed the North Atlantic and to have assisted a northern admiral in doing the same. The Zenos are said to have created a map to show Henry the way to the Canadian seaboard.

Well, Henry *did* visit Venice during his 1365 crusade — and a biographer of the eldest brother records a meeting between Carlo and an unnamed noble Scottish Crusader about this time. Other facts can be construed both pro and con, but one ‘coincidence’ stands out as remarkable:

[Continued in “The Madeira Connection” on page 4]

The Madeira Connection

The uninhabited Madeira Islands (about 700 miles southwest of Portugal) were discovered in 1418 by John Concalves Zarco, Bartholomew Perestrello and Tristan Vaz Teixeira. These men settled in Madeira where their families formed a close-knit community amid the sugar plantations established by Portugal. Among the adventurers lured to Madeira was John Drummond, grandson of Prince Henry Sinclair.

John married into this small community of explorers and thus became related by marriage to the Perestrello family. This family employed a young Genoese mariner named Christoforo Colombo—Christopher Columbus—who later wed Felipa Perestrello. Columbus would almost certainly have been acquainted with John Affonso Escorcio ("The Scot") Drummond. Would Henry's expedition to America have been discussed in this family of explorers? Could the tale have influenced the voyage of Columbus? To learn more about Prince Henry Sinclair, consider these sources:

The prime source is Frederick J. Pohl's landmark book written some 40 years ago: *Prince Henry Sinclair — His Expedition to the New World in 1398*.

On the web, try one of these (although there are many other web sites) ...

http://www.clansinclairusa.org/clansinclairold/Per_pr_did_columbus.htm

<http://sinclair2.quarterman.org/sinclair/600/971203.html>

http://www.pharo.com/wild_talents/henry_st_clair/articles/wtph_00_contents.asp

(The last site mentioned above is bizarre, but has some interesting information.)



The Greer Way West

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Reunion in 2004?

When our postponed reunion was last discussed in this newsletter, the prevailing sentiment seemed to be for holding it in 2004 — probably in St Johns, AZ. Planning for this gathering should begin now so that a firm site and date can be chosen before the end of this year.

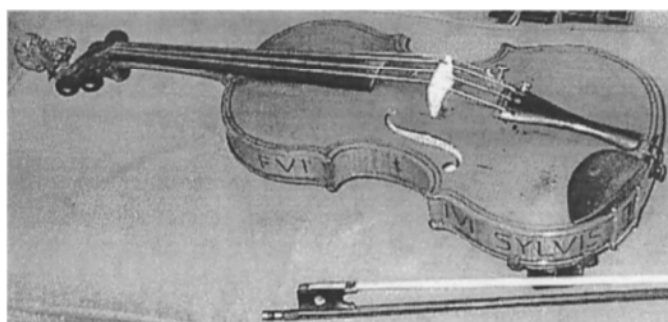
To this purpose, those of our members who live in or in the vicinity of St Johns should contact each other and formulate a plan for arranging the reunion. Then this plan should be communicated to Bill Greer for announcement in subsequent pages of *The Greer Way West*.

So you see, finding documentary evidence to confirm or refute the claim that the paternal grandfather of NHG came from Ulster is nearly hopeless. We must try another strategy. One such effort — DNA research — has begun. But is a long and involved process. See page three for details.

NHG's Violin

The photos below are of NHG's celebrated violin

Read all about it on page 2.



The Problem with Irish Records

Many Greers came to America from Ireland, primarily from Ulster. One of our family traditions claims that NHG's paternal grandfather was among them. This claim has been disputed and supporting evidence has not been obtained.

Lots of records have been kept in Ireland for many centuries. Unfortunately, the history of this material bodes ill for finding information about Irish Greers.

Even before the 14th century, Court of Chancery records were kept, but in 1304 many of these records were lost to fire. Subsequently, surviving and additional records were maintained in Dublin Castle. However, these events had no bearing on most Irish Greers who migrated from Scotland to Ireland primarily in the 1600s. But then in 1711, the Dublin Customs House burned — destroying virtually all the books of the Surveyor General.

Early in the 16th century, pilfering at Dublin had become such a problem that records were moved to Bermingham Tower which then became the principal repository of state records. In 1758 it also burned and with it many precious documents.

In 1810 the Commission of Public Records was created to provide for systematic sorting and archiving of records. The Public Record Office was launched in 1867 and it soon became the center for collecting and cataloging records. Then during the Civil War of 1922, the PRO suffered immense damage and many records were lost. The losses included Church of Ireland parish records and a vast collection of original wills. Following this disaster, substitute sources of records were sought and much record reconstruction done via secondary material. In 1988, the Public Record Office joined with the State Paper Office to become the National Archives of Ireland.

NHG's Violin

Much of what follows is adapted from "THE OLD VIOLIN" written in March, 1997 and provided to us earlier this year. The violin photographs were also shot by to whom we are much indebted.

In her biography of Sarah Hunt Greer, Alley Vernon Johnson Taylor wrote about the trek to Utah and observed the following:

By April they were at St. Louis ... ready to outfit and begin the journey. Here Sallies' parents paid 99 head of cattle as tithing. At this outfitting post, Sallies' father purchased an old violin from William Pratt, for \$500.00. Nathaniel said, "The first one of my sons or son-in-laws who will learn to play Mormon Hymns, especially "Come, Come Ye Saints", I will give him this violin" Cub, much to Sallies' pride won the violin. So he and others played that violin each evening to dance by its music, to sing with its melody and to shed tears when it cried out the sorrows of those burying their loved ones. This violin crossed the plains again when Cub returned to Texas and came back to Utah. As Cub's sons grew up, several learned to play but Newton inherited it and played it for over 60 years. Newton's daughter Sallie E. Richins of Declo, Idaho has it now [1959]. It is a rare old Fiddle made in 1581 by Magamami.

Cub had two sons who took an interest in playing — Newton DeWitt (son of Sarah Hunt Greer) and Joseph Amenzo (son of the second wife, Lydia Rebecca Baker). Because both played so well, their father bought another violin and gave it to Joe.

Newton DeWitt now owned the old violin and played it for 64 years for dances, family gatherings and for his own enjoyment. The instrument was left to his youngest child, Sallie Elisabeth Johnson Richins.

There have been many things said and written about the violin. According to an account by Newton DeWitt Johnson, the violin was described as follows:

The inscription on the sides contain the words

VIVA FVI + IVI SYLVIS DEO VI MORT VA + DVL CE +

It has a man's head carved on it that is bald on the top with long hair on the sides and back of the head, and a long full beard and a collar like is seen in pictures of the 16th century. There are 365 pieces of wood to represent each day of the year. On the back of the violin is an ancient inlaid city made of different kinds of wood. It was said to have been made by Magenni. A label inside reads AD 1581.

By 1974 it had been carried around and played so much that it had become cracked and in need of repair. Thus, Sallie took it to Carl E. Farley of Albion, ID. Mr. Farley did his best to restore it — re-gluing broken pieces of wood, installing a new bridge and strings, and adding a new coat of varnish.

When Sallie died in 1977, Newton's sole surviving child, Willis Snellen Johnson, claimed the violin and soon gave it to his son In 1989, sold the old violin to Sallie's daughter,

Through the years, various people have attempted to prove the authenticity and the value of violin. Sallie took it to San Francisco, but received little satisfaction. While Raymond had it, the violin was taken several places and shown to a number of experts to determine its worth.

On March 8, 1997, took the violin to Salt Lake City, to Peter Paul Prier, a renowned violin maker who had studied the history of violin craftsmen and made violins for over 40 years.

presented him the violin and began to tell him its history, but he interrupted and said, "No, I'll tell you about it."

According to Prier the violin was made in Mirecourt, France, between 1850 and 1860 by H. Derazey — in the style of the Italian master Gasparo Bertolotti de Salo. It was not made by Magenni (usually spelled **Maggini**) and lacked the typical chrome stripes. Giovanni Paolo Maggini was born in 1581 (the date inside the violin) and apprenticed under Gasparo.

It was common to inlay a scene of some sort on the back of the instrument. Derazey had inscribed the back with the scene of a city. Mr. Prier recognized the style of buildings as that of a city in France. He stated that the idea of there being 365 pieces of wood is all stories. The head carving was common. Prier said it no doubt was a likeness of Antonio Stradivari, then produced a painting of the master to show the resemblance. The edge inscriptions are in Latin, but he was uncertain as to their interpretation. Gasparo never inscribed his violins.



It pained Prier to see that the violin had been subjected to poor repair. It was not the original color and was poorly refinished. The bridge of a violin should never be glued down. The strings were too wide apart and the tuner on the E string belonged to a viola — not a violin. The border inlay was not redone well at all. There were slight gaps in the regluing.

The professor claimed if the violin were in its original form it would be worth about \$12,000. But as it is, its worth is as an heirloom — something to hang onto, to cherish. After playing it he stated "Nice sound — is good." It hurts him that someone tampered with it. Asked if he would be willing to do some work on it, Prier remarked, "I would not dare touch it. I would not jeopardize my reputation."

It is a great instrument and represents a family tradition of which NHG's descendants can be most proud.

DNA Research Project Launched

Recently an exploration of our genetic past was begun by your editor. It is the inception of a project which will take a substantial amount of time — probably some years — to yield a significant outcome. It is unlikely that it will ever be completely finished, but meaningful results should be expected periodically. Indeed, some preliminary findings are already in.

The effort is fraught with difficulties of various kinds. Laboratory testing is sufficiently expensive to deter some from participating. Many potentially helpful kinfolk are unlikely to participate, being reluctant to become involved for different reasons — not the least of which is a lack of interest in family history and genealogy. Distant relatives whose DNA information might be an invaluable aid in our experiment need to be located and then persuaded to submit to testing. These are daunting impediments in our attempt to gain genetic evidence of our origins and scientifically establish the biological inheritance of Nathaniel Hunt Greer.

The most important thing to know about DNA research is that it is *statistical*. The findings and their relevance are derived from *population* studies where the knowledge of an individual's DNA is only an element in a pattern of relationship. Taken alone, one person's DNA makeup is of little consequence. Truly significant results only appear when many people are found to be related through a comparison of their DNA.

It seemed that the most promising strategy was to determine the descent of the Y chromosome from father to son among NHG's male ancestors. The reason for this is that tracing the line of male descent is historically the way in which genealogy has been practiced and such associated records constitute the great bulk of available documentation. Tracking the female descent is also possible, but not as likely to yield results — although it too should eventually be done so that we can learn as much as we can of NHG's ancestry.

The way in which Y chromosome genealogy is done is to examine certain genetic markers and compare results with those of other men who have contributed DNA samples. There are many, many such markers. The markers that are examined are those which have experienced the most mutations over many human generations (based upon population studies). Markers which exhibit little or no mutation offer no insight into a man's paternal descent and are thus ignored.

Over many generations, a man's Y chromosome will tend to vary at those markers chosen for study. Although everyone is related at some point in ancient history, within a common line of descent these genetic variations will be the same or very similar. Thus, if my markers were to match those of another man, we would likely be in some close degree of relationship. If my markers were quite different from his, then it is unlikely that we would be related in the conventional sense. However, my DNA comparison with that of another man would be virtually irrelevant from a statistical point of view — if no *group* DNA evidence were available to render contextual meaning. Without the group DNA to provide a context within which to make the comparison, very little can be known with any certainty.

I chose the Houston firm called Family Tree DNA (FTDNA). This company offers the most complete Y-chromosome testing currently available — that of 25 genetic markers recognized as especially valuable for genealogical study. The testing of 12 markers is a lower-cost option, but it yields results that are far less statistically compelling when making a determination.

The regular price of the 25-marker test is \$229, but I got a discounted price (under \$190) because I enrolled in an existing surname project — the MacGregor DNA project. I did this to facilitate a comparison with MacGregor participants so that the theory of our MacGregor lineage could be put to test.

FTDNA is associated with the genetic laboratory at the University of Arizona where the DNA of all participants is stored for a period of 25 years. A DNA database is built from this information and serves as the primary means by which initial meaningful results are obtained. One's DNA information can also be compared with that from other sources and facilities which have come into existence in recent years.

Because of the necessity of group evidence in rendering a valid genealogical finding, the more participants the better. Thus, it is inevitable that at the outset results will be meager. As time passes and more men participate, the greater will be the pool of data against which comparisons are made. Eventually, if much of the population is tested, there will be amassed so much data that profound results will be easily obtained and it will become clear with whom we Greers are genetically related — but until then, we must settle for what we can get.

In June I submitted a DNA sample for analysis. This simple procedure involved gently scraping the inside of my cheek with two toothbrush-like probes. The probes were then sealed in a special liquid within *two* small vials (a redundant measure to guard against false results) and the vials then returned to a lab for testing. The laboratory analysis took several weeks.

My test results were ready in early August and I began learning about my genetic relationships. Broadly speaking, there are two groups with whom I can compare results: the men who have had all 25 markers tested and those who have had only 12 markers tested.

Upon receiving my results, I learned that — within the FTDNA database — I had an exact DNA match with 36 men for the basic 12 markers (whether or not more markers had been tested). At first this sounds remarkable, but an examination of the list revealed that *NONE* of the men were Greers! This serves to illustrate how weak is the information gained through the use of only 12 markers.

It is still possible that in their male line one or more of these 36 men had a change of surname, had been adopted, had an ancestor born out of wedlock, etc. On the other hand, the same possibilities exist within my male line — although documentation strongly argues against that within the last two centuries.

Resolving these issues and probing deeper into the data presents challenges that can be overcome — and new insights that can be obtained. Much more about my DNA research will be reported in the pages of future issues.

— Bill Greer

More on Laraine Day

Great article on a wonderful lady. She is my great aunt.

Just a quick note of "Did you know." Laraine was a twin.

Her husband, Mike, produced the movie *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*. Laraine's twin brother was Lamar Johnson. He was married twice and died just last year in California. Laraine and Lamar were the youngest of (7 and 8) of 8 children. She is a wonderful woman inside as well as beautiful to look at.



Update on Steven Fromholz

Friends and fans may not even know that a stroke changed Steven Fromholz' life dramatically this spring – there's been little said of it in the press. Some of those who do know still worry about him, but Fromholz himself doesn't seem troubled. He has no doubt he will return to the stage, the rivers, and the wilderness trails that he loves so much. It will just take time. "My job is to heal," he said in late June. "That's been my job for months now, just to get better. I'm going to get better and better and better. I am, day by day." — a very brief excerpt from the much longer article at :

www.fwweekly.com/issues/2003-07-16/feature.html/page1.html

Johnson Point Monument Installed

This past May, a monument was installed to the memory of Nancy Reddick Greer Johnson – NHG's sister – by a dedicated group of her descendants

The site was where she died as described in Vol. 7, No. 3, of last December. Well done, to everyone who helped!



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Wallace Taylor Passes

Our late president passed away not long after our last issue was mailed. He succumbed to cancer at his home in Greensboro, Georgia, less than a year after having been diagnosed.

I never met Wally, but had the pleasure for several years of exchanging genealogical email with him. He had a keen interest in family history and contributed to our knowledge of NHG and our Georgia cousins.

At our 2001 reunion in Texas it was time to choose a new president, but in accordance with our rules, the new president needed to be selected from a branch of the family not previously represented. The gathering was lightly attended and when no one at the reunion could fill in, I suggested we ask Wally to take the position although he was not present. Being the good-natured and helpful person that he was, Wally accepted. That's the way Wally was — always ready to help out and do what he could for others, especially our greater family.

I wish I could have met him personally, and regret not having the opportunity to do so. I know that his family and friends will miss him dearly. Please see his obituary on our last page. — Bill Greer

David Searcy Greer

— A Very Important Cousin —

On May 19, 1921, Catherine Ellen Camp told her life story to Willard Farr who then recorded it. On June 10, 1992, her great-grandson Errol G. Brown retyped and printed it for her descendants. In it she told of how she met Thomas Lacy Greer—

I ... said to mother, "Well, I have met the man I am going to marry ... When he got home, he told his mother [NHG's widow] he thought he had met one of his kin-folk. She said, "Yes, it was Sister Camp's daughter.

The memoir did not explain how they were related, but important clues about the relationship can be deduced from the following obituary of Ellen's uncle. It was extracted from *Death Notices From The Christian Advocate, Nashville, Tennessee 1880-1882* by J.K.T. Smith, published in 2000 :

"DAVID SEARCY GREER ... died at his residence near Memphis, Tenn., Feb. 17. 1881. He was born in Clark county, Ga., Aug. 21, 1804. He was carried by his father, while quite an infant, to Robertson county, Tenn., where he was reared to the age of 17 years. He then removed to Henry county, Tenn., and lived near where now stands the town of Paris, before the lots were sold on which the town is settled. In the year 1835, he was happily married to Martha Jane Dunlap [died May 15, 1888] ... Soon after his marriage he removed [in 1837] to Marshall county, Miss., assisted in locating and laying off ... Holly Springs, and represented the county in the State Legislature one term. Thence, in 1843, he removed to Memphis, Tenn. And since that time has been a valuable citizen and resident of Shelby county."

In Goodspeed's 1887 *History of Tennessee, Shelby County*, "a biographical sketch of John R. Greer ... stated about his father, David Searcy Greer, that he 'married ... a daughter of Hugh Dunlap [and Susanna Gilliam] ... born in Roane County, April 8, 1815 and is still living at the old homestead in Shelby County.'

David Searcy Greer

"The father of David S. Greer ... was Captain James Greer, a native of Bedford County, Virginia who is reported to have moved to Georgia in 1790 where he married and later moved to middle Tennessee, then in 1822 to Henry County in west Tennessee and thence, in 1836, to Holly Springs, Miss.; advanced in years he and his wife moved shortly before their deaths to DeValls Bluff, Arkansas with his daughter and son-in-law, Martha and J. J. Worsham. ... The remains of Captain James Greer and his second wife, Rachel Greer, were removed from Arkansas and reburied in ... Memphis... On a shaft tombstone, the names and dates of the old couple were inscribed: JAMES GREER born Bedford Co., Va., September 21, 1774; died Prairie Co., Ark., October 8, 1851. RACHEL GREER [his 2nd wife], born Wake Co., N. C.; died Prairie Co., Ark., August 6, 1851 aged 58 years.

"In May 1885, James Micajah Greer ... grandson of Captain James Greer ... wrote a genealogical memoir, quoting extensively from his uncle, David S. Greer's genealogical "memorandum"... My grandfather on my father's side was named James, was born in Pennsylvania, January 15th 1742 and married Mrs. Ann Love. She had two children by her first husband named Stephen and Polly. My grandmother, whose maiden name was Haynes, was born May 2, 1744 [d. 1832]. My grandfather died in ... 1824 or 1825, leaving his property to be divided at my grandmother's death, but she sent a request to her children all to meet at her house in Clark County, Georgia on the 1st day of January, 1827, which most of them did, and she divided the estate. ...

"James Greer born in Bedford County, Virginia on the 21st of September, 1774 (on Stanton River). Susannah Searcy born on the 29th of October, 1780 and after giving birth to ... 9 ... children [including Diannah, grandmother of Catherine Ellen Camp] died on the 16th day of September 1819. ...

"In James M. Greer's memoir, he wrote that Captain James Greer's father, James Greer was 'a lieutenant or 'loftenant' as he always pronounced the word, on the American side during the Revolution of 1775"; that he moved from Bedford Co., Va. to Georgia, having come from Pennsylvania originally

whence his own father, another James Greer, had come from northern Ireland.'

The foregoing extract reveals significant family traditions that agree with those of NHG's line:

- A connection with Bedford Co, VA.
NHG's first child was born in Bedford Co.
- An ancestor in PA.
NHG's grandfather was from PA.
- An immigration from Northern Ireland (Ulster).
NHG's great-grandfather was from there.

Family traditions — either NHG's or Catherine Ellen Camp's — could easily include information which is incorrect. Such inaccuracies could be either mis-remembered or invented. But it seems unlikely that the traditions of two apparently kindred lines would be so similar unless based on mutual facts.

Despite the impressive correlations between these two traditions, there is a dissenting view. Many people (including Ralph Terry, editor of the now-defunct *Greer International Newsletter*) list Lt. James Greer as born in Baltimore County, MD, the son of Elizabeth Lowe and Aquilla Greer, son of Sarah Day and John Greer, the immigrant — with no ostensible connection with Northern Ireland.

John Greer, the immigrant, is widely purported to have been the son of James Grear of Capenoch who is also alleged to have been the father of Henry Greer who was founded a Greer line in Northern Ireland as part of the extensive plantation of Scots to that area during the 17th century. Thus, there is still a purported connection of NHG's ancestors to Northern Ireland — but one that is rather tenuous.

Aquilla Greer, son of Sarah Day and John Greer, relocated from Baltimore County, MD, to Bedford County, VA. Therefore, he is a plausible ancestor because of the common Bedford connection.

However, these genealogical waters are still murky and in need of further research. An examination of these competing theories will be the subject of future issues of this newsletter.



DNA Report



Because mutations occur at random, it is possible that a comparison of the Y-chromosomes of a distant cousin and I might show that we match exactly on all tested markers, but a similar genetic analysis of my brother and I might fail to show an exact match. Such a situation would occur if my distant cousin and I both had Y-chromosome markers that had not mutated since our common male ancestor begat children — but a random mutation occurred in my brother's Y chromosome.

It is this randomness of mutations in the Y chromosome that compels our use of probability and statistics to estimate the Time to the Most Recent Common Ancestor (TMRCA). TMRCA calculations are quite complex and depend on the rate of mutation and the actual number of mutations that have occurred from the time of the common male ancestor.

Neither of these factors can be determined exactly, so certain assumptions must be used. One of the most common models employs the following assumptions:

Rate of Mutation = 0.002

This assumes that in every generation there is a 0.002 chance that any marker will mutate. Expressed another way, any marker — typically — would be expected to mutate once in 500 generations. Although this rate is the average of a number of studies, it is thought to be rather conservative. Thus, it results in a TMRCA that is longer than would be obtained with mutation rates that are greater than this assumed average.

Each change is caused by one mutation

Each marker is examined for either a match or a non-match. Any change in a marker is considered the result of a single mutation. This method of counting often underestimates the TMRCA because it ignores the possibility that a marker could have mutated, then mutated again, returning to its original value and thus escaping detection — and hiding an *older* descent.

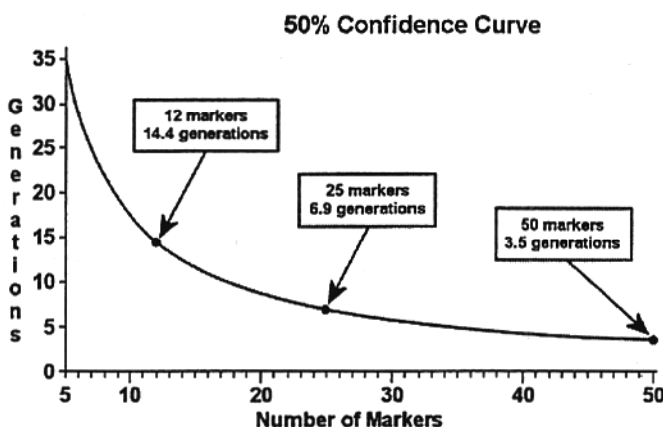
The above two assumptions are the basis of the cumulative probability table shown below. It shows the number of generations that correspond to 50%, 90% and 95% probability levels for different degrees of marker matching.

Score	Meaning	TMRCA (generations)		
		50%	90%	95%
12-0	All 12 markers match	14	48	62
11-1	11 of 12 markers match	37	85	103
10-2	10 of 12 markers match	61	122	144
25-0	All 25 markers match	7	23	30
24-1	24 of 25 markers match	17	40	48
23-2	23 of 25 markers match	28	56	66

This table shows, for example, that if a match occurs on all 25 markers, there is a 50% chance the most recent common male ancestor was within the last 7 generations. If greater precision is desired, we could use 90% probability and decide the patriarch might be as far back as 23 generations. If we wanted more accuracy using 95% probability, we would be

forced to allow that the common ancestor could have lived 30 generations ago — again, if all markers match.

The more markers used, the more accuracy obtained and fewer generations are needed to connect to the common ancestor. The following graph shows that increasing the number of tested markers will decrease the number of generations to the common ancestor — for the case of all markers matching.



DNA testing can be a valuable genealogical research tool when combined with traditional research. Results can confirm or disprove a suspected connection between families. It is impossible to identify a common ancestor from these tests, but with supporting non-genetic evidence it may be done.

Comparing Two NHG Descendants

Thus far, I have found one other NHG descendant (a third cousin, once removed) who has taken the Y-chromosome test, but only for 12 markers. When comparing our scores, we found a mismatch on one of our 12 markers.

The table on the left shows that — for a confidence level of 95% — a match on 11 of 12 markers forces us to allow that our most common ancestor could be as far back as 103 generations ago — that is, before the time of Christ! Yet I am in the 5th generation from NHG and my cousin is in the 6th. What does this mean? Either my cousin's line or mine has apparently suffered a mutation — and far more frequently than probability would predict. Thus, it is obvious that statistical expectations have not been borne out in our situation.

Compare this result of two NHG descendants with the fact that I have found (thus far) 50 other men with *exact* matches with me on all 12 markers. And absolutely none of them bear the Greer surname (or anything similar to it).

The above results emphasize the fact that studies of a couple of men, or even several, cannot yield reliable information. Many men must be tested before something definite can be determined. In fact, several male descendants of NHG should be tested before we can reliably estimate what were *his* markers. Also, we should strive to ascertain all 25 markers that belonged to NHG. Then we can probe into his genetic ancestry with confidence.

Are there any male NHG descendants among our members who are ready to help out in our DNA research project?

Announcements

It is with sorrow we announce the death of our late President **Wallace Lee Taylor** on September 4, 2003, in Greensboro, GA. He was born in Laketown, UT, on March 15, 1934, the son of Joseph Warren Taylor and Alley Vernon Johnson, daughter of Eliza Rachel Kearn and Willis Johnson, son of Sarah Hunt Greer (daughter of Nathaniel Hunt Greer) and Snellen Marion Johnson, son of Nancy Reddick Greer (sister of Nathaniel Hunt Greer). As Vice President of Construction for AMI Company, now Tenet Health Care, Wally oversaw the construction of hospitals internationally. In that capacity he lived and worked in the Middle East and London.

He was preceded in death by brothers Jay Taylor and Vernon Taylor.



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We sadly acknowledge the death of our oldest family member, Pauline McCleve. Her passing was noted by the news media and the following obituary appeared in the East Valley Tribune of Mesa, AZ. Readers will recall a previous biography about Pauline which ran in Volume 2, Number 2, of The Greer Way West, published in September of 1997. For more about Pauline's remarkable life, please see that issue. Her descent is traced on page four of our current issue.

Arizona Pioneer Dies at 108

Pauline McCleve lived in 3 centuries

Pauline Greer McCleve's life spanned parts of three centuries, and, when she turned 100, she discussed her Arizona pioneer life on "The Phil Donahue Show." The show's producers had tried to get her to go on "Donahue" twice before, but she had regarded it as trash TV and turned them down.

The strong-spoken woman, who was a hairdresser for 50 years in Holbrook, died Friday nine days short of her 109th birthday. A resident of Tempe since 1974, McCleve lived the past 20 years at Friendship Village.

She was born Jan. 11, 1895, in Greer, named for her pioneering family that settled in territorial Apache County. One of 11 children, she and her family moved to Holbrook where she would live for 74 years. She often told how a meteorite from outer space exploded in midair near Holbrook on July 19, 1912, creating the loudest sound she had ever heard.

"It was coming right toward us, and we thought we were going to die," she would say. It exploded like shrapnel across a 3-mile area, and her father and brother made more than \$2,000 that summer finding and selling pieces of the dense black stone.

With a passion to grow flowers, McCleve was frustrated by the alkaline soil of the town.

"You couldn't grow a thing there," said her daughter,

So, McCleve advertised that if anyone would haul in a load of mountain dirt in for her yard, a woman in that household would get a free permanent. "Permanents — Dirt Cheap" was her promotional line. It was said [that] McCleve grew the most beautiful flowers in town, often giving them away.

She was her Mormon ward's first organist, taught piano lessons and played the organ for the silent films shown in the Holbrook movie theater in the 1920s.

"Grandma was a cultured woman living in an uncultured area," her grandson said. "She lived at a time when they had to do their own entertainment, so she and grandpa memorized poetry," some of which she could recite until recently.

"She was extremely well-read and well-traveled (visiting every continent except Antarctica)," he said.

When McCleve arrived in New York for the Donahue show, "he was kind of patronizing to her," he said. "She had flown in and Donahue kind of expected a bumpkin getting off the plane, so he asked her how the flight had been. She said, 'About the same as every other time I've flown.'"

She attributed her long life to good farm food, hot cereal and never drinking anything "stronger than root beer."

Our Carol Burnett Connection

NHG's great-grandson, Jack Burnett, used to claim that the entertainment star Carol Burnett was a cousin. Recently the relationship has been researched and is as follows.

Jack's parents were Ellen Maude Greer, daughter of MSG (Babe), and Dr. James Henry Burnett who in his later years managed the Greer homestead near Kopperl, TX, where he practiced medicine. Dr. Burnett was one of six children born to John Henry Burnett (who died in Bell Co, TX, in 1901) and his second wife, Mahala Davis. Another of John and Mahala's children, Joseph Hiram Burnett married Nora Belle Potter. They had Joseph Thomas Burnett who married Ina Louise Creighton — and they became the parents of Carol Creighton Burnett, the entertainment celebrity. Thus, Dr. Burnett was Carol's granduncle.

Carol's upbringing was unhappy, both parents being alcoholics, and so it is not surprising that she never knew too much about her Burnett family. In fact, her knowledge of her family largely resulted from her investigative efforts in the latter part of her life. Her autobiography, which is alternately moving and humorous, is entitled *One More Time*. It is a well-written book, easy to read and always interesting and insightful.

Although Carol is not a blood-relative of the Greers, it was thought our readers would nevertheless find it interesting to learn of our the relationship-by-marriage.



Seeking Dixon–Greer Ties

NHG's eight child was Dixon Hamlin Greer. The names Dixon and Hamlin are unusual as given names and would seem to be derived from surnames. Common alternate spellings are Dickson and Hamblin.

In trying to find a source of the name, a search has been conducted under the premise that NHG named his eight child after someone bore such a name. If the origin of the name to be found, it might yield information that would throw light on our early American origins.

Internet searches for some original person named Dixon (Dickson) Hamlin (Hamblin) have been unsuccessful. A Dixon Hamlin was found born in the late 1800s, but that of course is too late to be of aid in our search. Nevertheless, some clues, possibly helpful, have been discovered.

Regular readers of *The Greer Way West* will recall that NHG's father John D. Greer is thought to have been born in 1761 to Jane Dunlap and Thomas Greer in either NC or PA — the site being dependent on when exactly the family moved south. The prevailing theory

is that John was born in Mount Pleasant, York Co, PA. On January 22, 1800, the local area was taken from York Co to create Adams Co in honor of President John Adams.

It just so happens that the very first census of Adams Co (in 1800) listed one Dixon Greer as a resident, apparently aged 16-26 with three other family members also resident on the property.

In the February 17, 1802, issue of the *Adams Centinel* (sic) published in Gettysburg, a public debt is acknowledged to Dixon Greer for furnishing a stove for the county jail.

During the next couple of years, similar notices appear in the same newspaper. In the May 9, 1804, issue, Dixon Greer is identified as proprietor of a store from which books could be purchased. It would appear that the store was located in Gettysburg.

Was this Dixon Greer — resident of the same county as NHG's grandfather — somehow related to our line? Thus far, the ancestry of this Dixon Greer has not been traced.

In seeking Dixon–Greer relationships, some indications have emerged that the connection could have originated in Northern Ireland where several Greer–Dixon marriages seem to have occurred. This, it would seem, strengthens the case for our Greer migration taking the path from Northern Ireland to Pennsylvania and then southward to the Carolinas.

The research goes on and will be reported here in future issues. Until then, we welcome any insights into these matters which any of our readers may have.

Murder of NHG's Granddaughter Gets National Attention

Many of our readers will recall the tale of the terrible murder of one of the daughters of Gilbert Dunlap Greer at their home near where the railroad town of Kopperl would be established a few years later. I recently discovered that the crime was deemed so sensational it was recounted in newspapers back east—less than one month after it occurred! The following reprint ran November 20, 1875 in The Landmark of Statesville, NC, and contains more detailed information than I originally related.

LOVE – JEALOUSY – MURDER.

The horrible story is told by Dr. Spalding¹, of Kimball, Texas, in the Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution:—

There is a wealthy farmer living three miles below Kimball, on the west side of the Brazos river, near Powell Dale Church. His name is G. D. Greer. He has several brothers living here—wealthy, influential, good citizens. They came originally from Georgia. He had two daughters just grown—Miss Willie², eighteen years old, and Miss Nannie³, sixteen—both handsome, intelligent, amiable, and beloved by all who knew them. The oldest was an unusually sweet girl.

About twelve months ago a distant relative of Capt. Greer's first wife (the girls were children of a second marriage⁴), Robert Simms⁵, a young stock raiser, passed through here on his way to Colorado, to which place he was driving his herds. Stopping among his relatives, he became enamored with Miss Greer. Whether they were engaged or not is certainly not known. She probably loved him, as perhaps any sweet girl eighteen years of age would love a handsome, fearless, rich young man who might court her love. And yet she feared him, for he had killed a man in a difficulty, so it is said, in the south-west part of the State. He went away, however, wearing her ring and she wearing his. He kept up a correspondence with one of her uncles⁶ to whom he seemed to be very much attached.

Eight months ago, a young, good looking Baltimore physician named Frazer secured board at Esquire Lane's⁷, the father of Mrs. Greer, and began practice. He met Miss Greer, courted her and they became engaged, and were to be married on Nov. 11. On Saturday morning, October 23, Miss Greer came to town to make some purchases.

Her father had gone with his cotton crop to Dallas, and was to return that evening with her bridal outfit. On the

Thursday before, Bob Simms returned, having received a letter from his uncle stating that Miss Willie Greer was soon to be married. He called on Miss Greer, found out the state of her feelings, chided her, told her they were made for each other, and that no other man should claim her as wife.

On Saturday morning he gave to a friend with whom he was staying a letter from his sister, saying, "Answer this letter to-morrow if I do not return. I am going over to Capt. Greer's, and if I never return wind up my business."

He went over, and called for Miss Willie, who was with her mother and Dr. Frazer, her betrothed, in the sitting room. When asked for, Miss Willie said, "Doctor, have you your pistol? I am afraid of Bob; he said he would kill me. Shall I go in?" The Doctor said, "I am not armed. Go in if you like." All three went in. Simms asked Miss Willie to Walk with him in the garden, but she declined.

He then asked her to walk out on the back porch, as he wished to have a good-by cha[t], with her. She went, and he followed shutting the door after him.

The mother heard them conversing, and heard him say: "And you are the cause of it," heard her sob; heard her say, "O, don't do that, Bob." Then bang! bang! bang! went his six-shooter; then a pause, then bang again. The mother threw open the door. There lay her beautiful daughter dead on the porch. One shot entered near the heart, one entered the left eye and came out at the back of her head; the other entered the centre of the forehead and came out also at the back of the head. He must have supported her with his left hand while shooting her. Near her lay Robert Simms. The fourth shot had fired through his own head, from back to front. The doctor ran out, turned the murderer's horse loose, and ran to the next house to get a gun. A runner was sent to meet her father, who was a few miles off on the Dallas road, coming home. His agony I hope neither you nor I may ever have. Next day, Sunday, they brought her body here to Kimball and buried it. His body they carried to a graveyard near Powell's Dale, where it was buried.

The carpet-bagger will stick out. As danger approaches he takes to his heels and hound-like sneaks off. Instead of protecting the brave girl from her jealousy-madened [sic] lover, the cowardly Frazer runs off in the neighborhood to borrow a shot gun! That he didn't ride off his dead rival's horse is a mitigating circumstance.

The foregoing newspaper article did not speak about the following aspect of the tragedy—possibly because it was not discussed outside the family: When GDG rode in from Cleburne that day, he knew something had happened before he was told of it. He said that as he approached a stream on his way back home, Willie's spirit had floated over the water in front of him.

¹ W. E. Spalding was also a director of the Kimball Academy.

² Willmirth Sarah Greer, GDG's 2nd child by his 2nd wife, Marion Bonita Lane.

³ Nancy Matilda Greer, GDG's 3rd child by his 2nd wife.

⁴ Susanah G. Corathers was GDG's 1st wife.

⁵ Robert Y. Simms was Susanah G. Corathers' 1st cousin, once removed.

⁶ The identity of this uncle is unknown.

⁷ James Addison Lane was Marion's father.

Recently Bill Greer made a business trip to Coventry, England, where he posed under the statue (erected 1949) of our ancestor Lady Godiva. See Vol. 4, No. 2, for our descent.





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Enough Money for a Pick-up

The following memoir was submitted quite a while ago by [redacted] It is a fine tribute to more than her Dad; it is vivid portrayal of livestock operations so common to our family members whose lives have been devoted to ranching. I am glad I finally have good place to run it. Thanks for your patience Jo!

As a man in his sixties, my dad, Leland C. Greer, acquired Smoky, the offspring of Gordon Cowley's stud and Harris Greer's mare. He often fed him sweet feed, a combination of rolled oats and rolled corn with molasses, at the corral in town. When he moved his cows from his forty acres to leased pastures nearby he hauled him back and forth in his horse trailer. "I think Smoky recognized Daddy by his felt or straw hat," recalled his son [redacted]. He often took him north of town to a swampy area for grazing. After he had a stroke he was dismayed to look out the window to see a man and a boy riding him double in the gravel and the asphalt. Both the weight and the surfaces were hard on the horse.

Daddy was a carry-over from the heyday of the American cowman, the time from the end of the Civil War through the 1890's. A hard-working individual he wore a felt or straw hat with a tall crown and a very wide brim. Lee's jeans, long-sleeved cotton work shirts, and high-topped work shoes. He felt that boots were an important part of an outfit because in 1971

both bedrooms of his house for a pair. I suspect he would have liked to be an open-range cowpuncher or the owner of a large spread like his father and grandfather.

Thomas Lacy Greer met and married my great-grandmother, Ellen Camp, in Salt Lake City in 1855 and spent twenty years in Texas before grazing his cows in Woodruff for a while. Then in 1879 he purchased a ranch in Hunt about twenty miles from St. Johns in east central Arizona. I remember my dad saying that when he was a boy the grass on their grazing area was waist-high. Later the area was so over-grazed that the hillocks of grass looked almost invisible.

When my brother [redacted] was twelve and I was seventeen my father bought seven Charolais cows from a rancher in Adamana, a ranch close to Hunt and twenty miles from Holbrook by the Puerco River. The river is an arroyo most of the time but sometimes flows with muddy water. Charolais are a breed of large white or cream-colored beef cattle with long wavy hair. The tall, big-boned cows are easy to care for, have good calves, and supply a good amount of milk.

[redacted] the light-colored cows seemed to be more sensitive to the sun and sometimes got pinkeye, an acute, very contagious form of conjunctivitis. The affliction may be caused by infection, allergy, or injury and is marked by redness and swelling of the eyelids and eyeballs. Leland treated the infections with a medication that was likely a Sulfa drug. When one of them got a cancerous growth on one side of her eye he talked to a St. Johns veterinarian about the surgical procedure.

[redacted] the day of the operation. They hog-tied the animal with cotton ropes to immobilize it. Then Daddy cut a ring around the eye with a scalpel. That was when I passed out," [redacted] When he woke up he was looking through the bars of the calf pen at Daddy cutting until there was a hollow nothing. He irrigated the area and then sewed it up with a curved needle and some kind of thread—maybe it was catgut. The cow recovered in the corral for a while where she bumped into things. When the incision was healed he returned her to the pasture. She eventually had a couple of calves.

I was amazed that my dad would attempt such a serious procedure. [redacted] my neighbor and a veterinarian, confirmed that the tear ducts water in pinkeye and the bacteria that causes it probably comes from the ground. He indicated that he and his partner probably wouldn't operate unless the cow is real valuable. Confirming that a white-faced cow like a Hereford (or Charolais) is more likely to get sunburned he asserted that it is important to catch the pinkeye early. If cancer does develop he tries to operate before it spreads to the bone.

[concludes as "Enough Money ..." on page 4]

he looked in the storeroom, attic, den, and



DNA Report



In this issue there is so much to report about DNA matters that our DNA Report is expanded to two pages!

A couple of months ago, after our last issue was already printed, your editor was informed by our treasurer of the following exciting news. Thanks

What follows is a slightly edited article by Carrie A. Moore which ran last winter in the Deseret Morning News. By now several readers will have heard of it, but for the rest — read on!

Utah Project to Link DNA and Genealogy

In a move they believe will forever alter the way family history research is done, local geneticists are opening a **free** DNA-based genealogy database to the public.

The Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation announced it has established a Web site — www.smgf.org — that allows anyone who has had a simple DNA test to input information that may link them to their ancestors, both known and unknown.

Scott Woodward, chief scientific officer for the foundation established by Utah billionaire James Sorenson, said the database is the beginning of a project his organization will continue to expand in size and scope over time. The Web site is designed to build one-sided pedigree charts — or family trees — for those looking for their paternal ancestors through genetic testing. To use the database, participants must undergo an inexpensive mouth swab test done by a genetic testing company.

Once that procedure is complete, researchers process the saliva sample through a laboratory and come up with coding sequences that define specific genetic markers people carry through their Y-chromosome DNA — their father's bloodline. Those markers can then be entered into the Web site database, which searches for links with others whose genetic information matches their own.

To date, the foundation has catalogued information about the DNA of more than 5,500 participants and plans to add as much new information to the database every three months as it is able to collect. [On May 6, 2004, the Foundation updated the Y chromosome portion of its database with new haplotypes, genealogies, and mutation rates. — ed.]

Though the scope of the data currently available is limited mostly to those with West European ancestry — because the vast majority of collected data is from Americans of European descent — the database has the potential of virtually unlimited expansion into family lines from every ethnicity on Earth.

As additional people are tested and offer their genetic information — and their family history records — to the foundation, the larger the database will grow, Woodward said.

While it doesn't circumvent the need for accurate family history data — names, birthdates, marriage and death dates, place of birth and other vital statistics — it supplements such information by providing what many consider to be definitive proof of familial relationships: a genetic "match" meaning people are related "with a high degree of probability," Woodward said.

That probability is in the "high 90 percentile."

Available family history data was gathered from those whose genetic information is stored in the database and will be requested from those who want to join the database in the future.

The DNA tests are especially accurate for ancestors up to eight generations back, he said, noting that technology makes it possible to go back "even 50 or 60 generations" but cautions that genetic markers become less reliable the further back they are traced because DNA undergoes slight alterations over time.

Many people seeking to uncover their ancestry run into numerous roadblocks in their search, including faulty information about family lines and surnames that have been changed over time. Genetic testing offers a way to bypass such roadblocks — if the information about ones' ancestors is a part of the Sorenson database, or others that exist in a variety of laboratories in the United States and England.

The difference at this point is the Sorenson Foundation is offering access to such information not only on the Internet but **free of charge** to users. By providing the information and encouraging people to not only use it but to add to it, Woodward said his organization hopes to map the world's entire human family tree through genetics at some point in the future.

Woodward, who started his work several years ago at Brigham Young University and is considered one of the world's leading researchers in his field, is now working for Sorenson, the medical devices pioneer who was recently recognized as the state's wealthiest man.

Sorenson told the *Deseret Morning News* he is dedicated to expanding the project indefinitely in the quest to help people the world over understand "how similar we are, rather than how we're different. . . . We need other people and they need us."

Sorenson said he established the foundation as a nonprofit organization "to move this work along globally" rather than having it confined to one university or research organization.

"We want to prove the science and let that carry us to the next level of human kindness and dignity," Sorenson said. He said he truly believes that as people come to understand their similarities, even in genetic makeup, they will be more inclined to "brotherhood, peace on Earth and love for all our fellow men. We're all connected in so many ways, and don't even realize it."

Woodward said the information provided through the database protects the identity of people currently living. If someone finds matching genetic markers and retrieves a paternal pedigree chart through the database, only people who lived prior to 1900 will show up on the chart. There are many reasons for that, he said, including the possibility that people who believe they are children or grandchildren of specific people will find their parentage lies elsewhere.

Sorenson isn't particularly concerned with such revelations, he said, believing truth will ultimately come out and that understanding the truth better serves those who are seeking to definitively establish their ancestral lines. He sees his work as

[continued on page 3]



DNA Report



an extension of science but acknowledges there is an additional motivation because of his faith.

For Christians — and particularly members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — who are familiar with the biblical reference in Malachi to “turn the heart of the fathers to their children and the heart of the children to their fathers,” the technology provides a stunning example of how literally that process can now happen. The LDS Church is considered the world’s leading organization for family history research, and Sorenson admits it is no small coincidence that his research is being conducted within blocks of the church’s headquarters.

Sorenson himself is a Latter-day Saint, as are Woodward and many others employed by the foundation. “It’s a ‘turning the hearts’-type process, and a lot of people working here are working on the basis that they feel something more than just a test-tube study.”

But science is at the forefront, he maintains.

“Genomics is the big deal” in the future of family history research, he said. “It’s huge. We’re fortunate to have some platform work done by the Mormon Church, but if we were trying to make this simply an LDS phenomenon, we would lose the rest of the world. [end of article]

Well, I investigated <www.smgf.org> and discovered that among those tested were three other descendants of NHG (beyond myself and a cousin mentioned in Vol. 8, No. 3)! Note that although these three men are anonymous (because those born after 1900 are not identified in the online database) it was still possible to recognize their line of descent since they had published their pedigrees — as requested by the project.

A chart of my findings appears on this page, but needs some explanation. The left column lists the technical names of those genetic markers selected from the Y-chromosome because they exhibit frequent mutation through the centuries and are thus helpful in identifying relationships. The second column lists my values for these markers. The other three columns list the marker values for the three NHG descendants that I discovered in the project. If their values match mine, a checkmark appears in the column — if not, their values for the markers are listed. Lines of descent from NHG appear in square brackets.

Recall from December’s newsletter that I had 25 markers tested, but only 21 markers are listed in the chart. DYS385 and DYS459 are actually double-markers (variants a & b) and so have two values for each. And DYS394/19 is only one marker but is known by two different names. This disparity exists because the Sorenson project does not test for all the same markers as the DNA lab who tested me — so when examining the results, only the 21 common markers are compared.

The three men who have participated in the Sorenson project (so far) figure in the chart in the following way: Column 1 is a descendant of Thomas Lacy Greer (TLG), born August 8, 1895, a grandson of the original TLG. Column 2 is a descendant of Orson Pratt Greer, son of Americus Vespucius Greer (AVG). Column 3 is a descendant of Robert Stansell “Bud” Greer, another

son of AVG.

Column 4 is a man not in the Sorenson project. He descends from Dodd Lacy Greer, born August 4, 1892 — another grandson of the original TLG. He is the man cited in December having only 12 markers tested so his missing values (boxes containing dashes) cannot be compared with the others or me.

Since I am a great-grandson of Matthew Simeon “Babe” Greer, the chart depicts DNA results for three lines from NHG.

Only two men (1 & 2) match exactly — but they descend via two different lines: TLG & AVG! AVG’s progeny (2 & 3) fail to match one marker. And TLG’s descendants (1 & 4), although the latter has only 12 markers for comparison, nevertheless fail to match at marker DYS390.

The most striking thing revealed is that so much mutation has occurred in our descent from NHG. And it hinders our efforts to determine his markers. Still, of the 21 compared markers DYS394/19, DYS448 and DYS458 seem to be the only markers in doubt in deciding what were NHG’s markers.

Note that at marker DYS448 a **triple** mutation has seemingly occurred — since my value varies from those of descendants 1, 2 and 3 by a count of three. Because the DYS448 marker values of 1 and 2 match, it appears very likely that NHG would have had that same value (22), but this presents another problem which we will discuss in our next issue.

[concludes on page 4]

Markers:	Bill Greer's Values: [MSG]	Cousins :			
		1 [TLG]	2 [AVG]	3 [AVG]	4 [TLG]
DYS385 (a-b)	11-14	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS388	12	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS389I	13	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS389II	29	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS390	24	✓	✓	✓	25
DYS391	10	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS392	13	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS393	13	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS394/19	14	15	15	15	✓
DYS426	12	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS437	15	✓	✓	✓	—
DYS439	12	✓	✓	✓	✓
DYS447	25	✓	✓	✓	—
DYS448	19	22	22	22	—
DYS449	29	✓	✓	✓	—
DYS454	11	✓	✓	✓	—
DYS455	11	✓	✓	✓	—
DYS458	16	✓	✓	14	—
DYS459 (a-b)	9-9	✓	✓	✓	—

Enough Money ...

Daddy also lanced the jaw where sand burs, cockle burs, sticks, and pieces of wire got stuck. He would clean out the gooey-looking stuff from the big knot on the side while the cow was immobile.

Sometimes the cows would get in the alfalfa and bloat, a swelling in the first compartment of the four sections of the stomach. In this condition excessive gas forms following fermentation of ingested green forage and often leads to death. One time several cows were bloated and one cow was all the way down. Daddy and the boys kept the cows moving that were still on their feet. On the sickest one Daddy felt for the spot that was the biggest, and said, "This is where we gotta do it." He made a three-inch slash in the right spot and a putrid smell like undigested manure gushed out. The three watched her for a couple of hours and then put her in the corral and stitched her up.

Leland and his sons branded the old-fashioned way by lassoing and throwing the calves. Throwing the calves was often harder than it sounds—some were feisty, kicked, and ran away. Big outfits have tables or chutes that hold the calf while it is treated and branded. With the young calves the men caught and threw them to the dusty ground of the corral; the older ones they had to lasso first. One guy pushed one back leg forward and one backward, a second held the head with his knee, and then the third vaccinated, cut the ear, and branded. "Daddy vaccinated in the soft flesh of the neck, branded without getting too deep, and swabbed the new brand with Smear 62 to prevent infection,"

The bull calves had to be castrated by removing the two oval glands called mountain oysters. Once in our early married life Bert helped with the round-up. After the cutting Daddy threw the "oysters" in the branding fire. They popped, cracked, and oozed out. Then the teasing and bantering began. "No way. I'm not going to eat those," the words were Bert's. The way he remembered it no one else ate them either.

The calves would jerk around so the blood from the cut ear would splatter everywhere. At the end of the day the men smelled of burned hair, smear, blood, AND they had s_____ all over them.

Some years the sale of the calves in the fall brought enough money to buy a new or used pick-up. Daddy had a '51, '65, and one about '79. His last was a white six-cylinder Chevrolet with a ½ ton bed. The rack in the bed of the truck was called a headache rack, built to keep bales of hay from smashing the cab.

DNA Report (continued)

At this point it is tempting to think that the marker values for descendants 1 and 2 (which match perfectly) reflect those which actually existed for NHG, but it is too early to claim that with confidence. We need more men to join the Sorenson project!

Regarding participation in the Sorenson project, note the following: It is **absolutely free** and it is **very simple**. Those who join will NOT get back a lab report. (To get a report of one's Y-chromosome markers, a **paid** analysis must be done with another testing facility.) You must provide the Sorenson project with your lineage for at least four generations but for both paternal and maternal lines. (This is how I will be able to identify your place in the project). If you decide to participate, please do not report to the project any paternal ancestors earlier than Thomas Greer, grandfather of NHG. This is because earlier pedigrees are questionable — adding confusion and creating problems for researchers. Please join !!



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Shootout in St. Johns

Some of our readers will be aware of this oft-told story but many will not. The most accurate retelling is this one by our own Errol G. Brown — which he wrote over a dozen years ago. Many thanks to Errol for sharing this with us.

The early settlement of St. Johns and the surrounding territory, had many problems — along with the harsh environment — to contend with. There are many events, sometimes exciting, often monotonous of a nature, that took place in the lives of those sent here to settle.

Our story following tells of two tragic deaths. Two young men wounded, and a lot of action associated with the early settlement of Western America.

Nathan C. Tenney was killed while helping to settle a gun fight involving my grandfather, John Harris Greer and his two older brothers, Nathaniel (Nat), and Richard (Dick), and a young cowboy who worked for them on the Greer Ranch near St. Johns, named James H. Vaughn. James was also killed in the fight against a large number of early Mexican residents of St. Johns, June 24, 1882.

There has been at least ten, or more, stories written about the gun fight in past years, that I have read. Several of the stories in Western Magazines have compared the gun fight to that of the OK Corral gun fight in Tombstone, Arizona.

Through the years I have known of several versions of the event — usually not in favor of my grandfather, and his two brothers, along with the five cowboys from the Greer Ranch.

Let me give you an accurate account, from family records that I have, and my talking to Nathaniel (Uncle Nat) Greer in the summer of 1936 when I first became interested in the gun fight, and when I first started gathering information and history of the Greer family, with the thought in mind to some day write a book on the interesting history of this, my family.

Uncle Nat was 80 years old when I sat down with him to go over the event, I was 22. The details that he gave me, while admitting that he felt some remorse about the event, that the three of them, the Greer brothers, along with four others about their same age, and one cowboy, Jeff Tribit being some what older — showed some recklessness leading up to the gun fight, but he felt that the gun fight, would never have happened if the fifteen or twenty St. Johns residents had not gotten out of hand, and started shooting.

Following are mostly the actual comments from Uncle Nat about the events that started the gun fight, June 24, 1882.

“During the winter of 1881–82 while riding the range taken in by our ranch operation, which was mostly open for 20 to 30 miles all around the ranch, we had to try to keep a close watch over our stock — numbering well over a thousand head — we kept missing some of our cows and horses, we knew that they were being stolen and driven to ranges out of our territory. We found only three or four dead animals.

“Following our spring round-up and branding in 1882, we found that we were missing more than fifty head — mostly grown cows who would have calves by this time, and several fine mares and colts. We were naturally quite upset at the losses as our mother, Catherine Ellen, who was managing the ranch operation — with eight children still at home to look out for — Gilbert, just two years younger than I was and myself, both of us married, also depended somewhat on the ranch income. Also mother usually had five or six cowboys employed that she had to pay.

“Our father, Thomas Lacy, had died the previous summer of 1881 of a bullet that he had carried from the war with Mexico, since 1846 — in the last battle at Mexico City. He had been a member of the Texas Rangers when joining in the war. We missed him a great deal as he had been a big help in helping us to maintain and keep our ranch operation going, with large sheep and other cattle operations moving in around us.

“During our spring round-up and our winter rides, we had only one person who we could pin an actual act of stealing on. I had caught a fellow leading one of our horses — heading out of our range at a fast gallop. When I caught up with him, and had him stopped, I asked him in Spanish, ‘Shall I shoot you right here, or should I ear-mark you so that we can get this stealing stopped.’

“He chose the cutting of the ear-mark.

“We always, in the days of open range rights, considered stealing of cows and horses as a ‘capital offense.’ I have known of several cases in Texas, when a known thief was taken to the nearest tree and strung up. This happened before our move here in 1878.”

Uncle Nat continues: “The small settlement of San Juan, (later changed to St. Johns) was about 18 miles southeast from the ranch which father had purchased from E. Leon Dubois, in 1878. It consisted of 160 acres and several hundred acres of grazing rights - with five fine springs. In a few years, my four brothers and I, together with our mother, and our five sisters all working together were grazing about a million acres. We made what was considered the largest horse sale made in Arizona, when we sold five thousand horses to the King Brothers, of Texas. We had several Morgan stallions and along with about 100 mares we had brought from Texas, and many mares running on the range wild, we had more horses than cows.

[continues on page 2]

"Following our spring round-up, we received word from St. Johns, that they were having their annual celebration, 'San Juan Festival'. They invited us to come up. Harris sixteen years old, Richard, eighteen and myself twenty-six, decided that we would go as the people sending us the invitation said that they would also be selling small lots of cattle and horses. They were also having a bullfight, with a matador coming from Mexico City and some acrobatic events.

"On the morning of June 24, 1882 we three brothers, with five of our cowboys: Joe Woods, Hyrum (Hi) Hatch, Frank Drew, James Vaughn and Jeff Tribit, who was in his forties and had been with our family in Texas before the Civil War and had chosen to remain with us, was considered as a fine cowboy, and when father was alive he had always been with him as a sort of body guard, and his right-hand man. The other four cowboys were in their early twenties.

"We got in St. Johns about 10 that morning, stopped at our brother Gilbert's home in town, and went to see the acrobatic events going on then. We were told that we had to turn in our guns when we arrived there — which we refused to do as many of the men there had their guns on them, as we did. We were also told that the cattle and horses that were to be sold, and that we were especially interested in, had not yet arrived.

"While all of this was going on, we noticed that quite a few of the local men were going in and out of a nearby saloon. Nearly all were armed, and were getting quite rowdy and excitable.

We left the acrobatic area and decided to go to Will Platt's store to get something to eat before going to the bullfight, and the cattle sale. I stopped near the front window in the store, and looking out on the main street, saw some fifteen or twenty men coming our way — all with guns — both six guns and rifles, I told the others with me that we had better move fast, split up and work our way out of town.

"Joe Woods, Frank Drew, Hi Hatch and Jeff went out of the back door of the store, and headed for Gilbert's place to get our horses. Harris, Richard, James Vaughn and I, headed out the front door — we were going to try to get to a vacant house, and from there try to get to our horses.

"We were nearly to the house when the shooting started. Most of the oncoming men were in front of the Barth Hotel, about a hundred yards away. We started shooting back — part of them went inside of the hotel and immediately started to shoot again from the upper story windows. The four of us in the house had only our six guns, plenty of bullets in our belts, but our shooting wasn't too effective at that distance.

"Not long after we got in the house James Vaughn was hit by a rifle shot from the hotel window. It knocked him down on the

floor. Harris received a bullet in his hand, we wrapped it up in my neckerchief and he was able to keep shooting — but we were not able to help James and he died in a few minutes.

"We decided to stay away from the windows in the house, and save our bullets — with James dead and Harris wounded, we decided to wait and see what our enemies' actions might be.

"It seemed to me that we had been exchanging gunfire about fifteen or twenty minutes, when we saw our friend Nathan Tenney coming up the street from the west with a white flag. Mr. Tenney got the firing stopped from the hotel. He came into the house and said we had better give up, or we would surely all be killed, with the big odds against us. He told us that Hi Hatch had been shot in the shoulder before the other four had got out of town, and that only one of our enemies had been hit, and he was only wounded.

"I asked Mr. Tenney to go get the sheriff, E. S. Stover — which Mr. Tenney did. Sheriff Stover said that he would lead us out to safety. Mr. Tenney went first and was immediately shot from

the hotel area, he went to the ground and we could see that he appeared to die almost immediately.

"Sheriff Stover, on seeing Mr. Tenney killed, gave me back my pistol and ran from the house. I heard several more shots, but no damage done. Soon after the sheriff had gone, his deputy, Tom Perez with Alejandro Peralta, came to us and told us to give up, which we agreed to do.

"I had \$125 in my pocket when they arrested us. Richard and Harris had smaller amounts on them. The money and our guns were never returned to us. The next morning after we were put in jail, Lorenzo Hubbell, who together with Sol Barth controlled most of the people on the east side in St. Johns, I felt, could have prevented the gun fight. Hubbell sent word to me that day if I would give him six thousand dollars, he would turn us out. I refused his demand.

"I didn't feel that we were responsible for the shooting. True, I had ear-

marked one of their companions for stealing, and on several occasions had had run-ins with other sheepmen and cattlemen, who at times had drove our livestock out of our range — and we had at times dispersed various sheep camps in retaliation, but I felt that the shooting that had taken the life of our friend and employee James Vaughn, and the unnecessary killing of our friend Nathan Tenney, was not right.

"We were released on bond after a few days and a trial was set for July 9, 1882. The three of us, Richard, Harris and myself were charged with assault, with a deadly weapon — with intent to commit murder.



Three of the eight Greer brothers, and their companions, who took part in the early-day gun battle in San Juan, June 24, 1882. Reading left to right: Joe Woods, Nathaniel (Nat) Greer and Frank Drew. This photo was taken about 1883. Woods and Drew were working on the Greer Ranch at the time

John Wilburn Greer

— Another Important Cousin —

Last December in Volume 8, Number 3, of this newsletter, we recounted the significance of David Searcy Greer — A Very Important Cousin. Now another important cousin comes to our attention. Most of what follows was taken from page 201 of Families of Falls County, Compiled and Edited by the Falls County, Texas, Historical Commission. Additional genealogical material was obtained from the LDS FamilySearch web site (Compact Disc #41, Pin #497767).

John Wilburn Greer (JWG) was born March 5, 1806, in Georgia (probably Greene County) and died May 13, 1870, in Falls County, Texas. He was buried on his farm at Cedar Springs, Texas. In some genealogical records he is erroneously known as John Welborn Greer.

John's parents were Susannah Tillery and Henry Greer. Henry was an older brother of Captain James H. Greer, Jr. James was a grandfather of Catherine Ellen Camp who wed NHG's son Thomas Lacy. Therefore, John Wilburn Greer was a first cousin (once removed) of Catherine Ellen Camp.

In the 1820s JWG moved with his parents and siblings to Lowndes County, Mississippi, where he married Sabina McElroy who was born around 1810. They had three children, all born in Mississippi: John Greer, Jr., born about 1830, Susan Greer, born about 1832, and Nancy L. Greer, born in 1840.

After Sabina's death (possibly giving birth to their third child), John W. Greer married Catherine Allen by 1843. She was born to Mark Allen and Rachel Howard on January 14, 1817 in Tennessee. She died June 25, 1900, and is buried in Calvary Cemetery, Marlin, Texas.

After their marriage, John and Catherine moved to Sevier County, Arkansas where their only child was born: Sarah Melvina Greer on September 11, 1845. She died December 25, 1937 and is near her mother.

On November 8, 1853, the family, including Catherine's father (her mother had died in 1843 in Mississippi) and a large number of slaves, moved to Falls County, Texas, where they first made camp along Pond Creek. John began acquiring land, prospered and became one of the principal figures in the county — amassing about 8,000 acres before his death. His plantation stretched from the Brazos River, near Cedar Springs, to the area around Travis.

John Jr. had enlisted in the Confederate States Army during the Civil War. At the close of the war, he was murdered during his return trip home to Falls County.

After the war, the family slaves were freed and JWG lived only five more years — his demise possibly hastened by the murder of his son and the reversal of the family fortune that resulted when the Confederacy lost the war. His grave, "sealed with brick and mortar", is on property that was subsequently bought by Thomas Roberts and eventually by Guy Herman Barganier.

JWG was one of the earliest settlers in western Falls

County. He was a successful farmer, cattleman and had fine horses. Some of his descendants have remained in the county for over 130 years.

JWG's murdered son, John Jr., apparently never married.

JWG's daughter Susan wed James F. Miller on December 7, 1847. They had three children.

JWG's daughter Nancy married James Estes of Falls County, Texas, and had six children.

The small Texas town of Rosebud is situated on State Highway 77 some thirty-eight miles south of Waco in southwestern Falls County. It was developed in 1889 and then incorporated in 1905. The original settlement was known by two designations, Pool's Crossing and Greer's Horsepen. It was on the west bank of Pond Creek. In 1884 a post office was established there called Mormon, after a group of Mormons who had settled in the area. The settlement was destroyed by fire in 1887 then rebuilt and renamed as Rosebud, the post office officially becoming Rosebud on April 23, 1887.

Greer's Horse Pens, named for John Wilburn Greer, can be found on the Falls County map between Travis and Rosebud.

Consider the evidence: a *Mormon* community in Texas that was named *Greer's Horsepen or Horse Pens* after a *first cousin* of *Catherine Ellen Camp*. It would appear quite possible from the foregoing information that it was here that the sons of Thomas Lacy Greer came when they needed horses for their huge business out west. It is known that after moving to Arizona, they returned to Texas to acquire horses. Perhaps it was here that they acquired at least part of their stock to expand their Arizona herd. What better place than their cousin's 8000 acre ranch widely noted for its fine horses?

St. John's Day

The principal article in this issue deals with the "Shootout at St. Johns", a story well-known to many of our readers. But did you know how significant this day is to our family?

Our illustrious ancestor Robert the Bruce won the famous Battle of Bannockburn — and independence for Scotland — on St. John's Day in 1314.

St. John's Day also figures prominently in Freemasonry since Masons hold St. John the Baptist in high regard. This is significant because the first four or five leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints were all Masons and it is commonly alleged that the rites of Freemasonry have much in common with similar rites of the LDS — the religion that NHG and his family adopted en masse.

Then there was the shootout in St. Johns that occurred on St. John's Day.

And last, but certainly not least, Nathaniel Hunt Greer succumbed to cholera on June 24, 1855 — St. John's Day.

Is all this a coincidence? Maybe, but maybe not. Do you know of other events meaningful to our family that transpired on St. John's Day?

Shootout in St. Johns

"I feel that justice was partially served when we were tried before a jury, and they brought in a 'not guilty' verdict. Apache County had just been formed, and St. Johns was made the County seat. This was in 1879. Most of the officials in charge at that time were in opposition to our Mormon belief, and had moved to the area from New Mexico and Mexico. I sometimes felt that many of them resented our coming into the Arizona Territory from Texas, but felt that as American citizens, we could go where we wanted to."

Uncle Nat said: "In later years after our gun fight problems had partially blown over, I made, and still have quite a few friends among the Spanish speaking people in Apache and Navajo counties. Lorenzo Hubbell and Sol Barth and their families were also numbered among our friends, by the Greers. Mother spent most of her life in Holbrook, after selling the Greer Ranch to Harris in 1895. Richard and I have both had ranches, and have run livestock at times in the past. We both live in Holbrook. Mother passed away in 1929 at the age of 92 years; she was among the most outstanding pioneers and mothers in our western America."

And so ends Uncle Nat's story, that has been mistold in some instances. My mother, Myrtle Greer Brown, was the oldest of fourteen children raised on the Greer Ranch by John Harris and Orpha Nicoll Greer. Grandfather Greer died in 1926 with the ranch and a beautiful orchard and garden still under his supervision and ownership. The ranch was much smaller than the nearly million acres that it once was.

Two grave stones in the St. Johns west side cemetery tell part of my story:

On one grave stone: "In honor of Nathan C. Tenney, July 28, 1817, Ontario, N. Y. — June 24, 1882 St. Johns, Ariz. — Elder Tenney died while saving life and making peace."

In the nearby Greer grave plot: "Farewell James H Vaughn, born in Hill Co., Texas Oct. 15, 1861 — Murdered by a Mexican mob, June 24, 1882."



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Our Dunlap Ancestry

Our earliest historically definite Greer ancestor was Thomas Greer, father of John D. and grandfather of NHG. The wife of Thomas was Jane Dunlap and her parents were Gilbert and Agnes Dunlap. Thus, Gilbert and Agnes, great-grandparents of NHG, are our earliest ancestors of whom we are reasonably certain. But further back we cannot verify — records fail us. We can, however, glean general information which may help us.

Family tradition claims our Greers migrated from Ulster (Northern Ireland) although no records explicitly uphold this. Some evidence reported in Volume 8, Number 3, lends modest support of an Ulster Greer origin in the history of Catherine Ellen Camp's uncle, David Searcy Greer whose grandfather James Greer purportedly came from Ulster. In addition to that linkage, David S. Greer wed Mary Jane Dunlap, a daughter of Hugh Dunlap — born in 1769, in Londonderry Co, Ulster, and who migrated thereafter and wed the Virginia-born Susannah Harding Gilliam. Hugh's father was named Harry, but nothing is known of Harry's parentage or provenance.

Since presumed Greer cousins are tied to both Gilbert Dunlap and Hugh Dunlap, one naturally wonders if these Dunlaps were kin. If so, then Gilbert or his ancestors likely came from Ulster where Dunlap is a popular surname that originated in east Ayrshire, Scotland (where it was and is spelled Dunlop).

Both Brythonic Celts (Welsh, Strathclyde British) and later DalRiadan Goidelic Celts (Irish, Scotti) applied the name Dunlop (Fortress at the Bend) to the stronghold built on a hill (shown below) around which flows a stream named Glazert. It is some 15 miles southwest of Glasgow and still known as Dunlop Hill. According to legend, a Celtic Chief who ruled here in pre-Roman times was called the "Dunlop of Dunlop".



Dun Lop in Ayrshire, Scotland

The first historical use of the name appears in a 1260 indenture between Godfrey de Ross and the Burgesses of Irvine, witnessed by Dom (lord) Willelmus de Dunlop.

The 200,000 Scots who migrated to Ulster and settled there during the Plantation period (1605–1697) are known locally as "Ulster-Scots" but usually in America as "Scotch-Irish". In 1704 an Act of Parliament stated that only Anglicans could hold office in Ireland. Since those of other faiths were excluded, many non-Anglicans emigrated thereafter to America — and this could well have included our ancestors.

The Public Records Office of Northern Ireland contains The Dunlap Papers (T1336) — some 26 documents relating to the Dunlaps of Strabane, Co. Tyrone, including those of John Dunlap who emigrated to Philadelphia and famously became the printer of the Declaration of Independence. He may well be a distant cousin of ours. But of more immediate interest are documents relating to the Co. Donegal family of Delap (a variant spelling, seemingly from the Irish pronunciation of Dunlap). This revelation that Delaps could be our kin started me searching along those lines — and what I found is encouraging.

The Delaps of Donegal seem to have descended from Hugh Dunlop of Scotland who moved to Co. Sligo, in the early 1600s. A grandson of this Hugh was named Gilbert — the only instance to date of my finding a Gilbert Dunlap/Dunlop across the Atlantic! In this family we also have found namesakes of *both* Gilbert and Hugh Dunlap, respective ancestors of NHG and Catherine Ellen Camp. So far, this finding is unique.

One of the brothers of the Irish Gilbert was named Robert Dunlop whose children used the Delap surname. One of these children, Samuel Delap, was a Presbyterian minister whose son William emigrated (1743–1750) to Menallen Township, Adams Co, PA. This is especially significant since Adams County, PA, is reportedly where our ancestors Thomas Greer and Jane Dunlap were wed!

So a possible scenario is this: Gilbert Dunlop who was born in Ireland in the 1630s — or a brother of this Gilbert — had a descendant who emigrated to Adams Co, PA, to be near his cousin William Delap. We know that our Gilbert Dunlap did not stay in Pennsylvania, but moved south to North Carolina sometime prior to 1763 (some say before 1760). However, William Delap and his family chose to stay in Adams County, PA, for the remainder of their lives.

So far, the foregoing theory is just that — a theory. But it is perhaps the most plausible theory to explain the origins of our Dunlap ancestry. Do any of our readers have additional information that may illuminate our Dunlap ancestry?

When I Was a Kid in Kopperl

The following article by Steve Fromholz appeared in the January 2003 issue of Texas Co-Op Power. A Texas-born singer and songwriter, Steve captures life in rural Texas in his acclaimed musical tribute, "Texas Trilogy." The University of Texas Press also published a book entitled Texas Trilogy, by writer Craig Hillis and photographer Bruce Jordan. The book draws from Fromholz' ballads for inspiration in exploring the history and people of Bosque County. It also has a digitally remastered CD of the original "Texas Trilogy," recorded in 1969 by Fromholz and Dan McCrimmon. For Steve's descent from Matthew Simeon (Babe) Greer — last son of NHG — see our June 2003 issue.

I was neither born nor reared in the very small town of Kopperl, but as we Texans say, "Mom'n'em were."

Kopperl lies on Highway 56 in northeast Bosque County seven miles north of Morgan and 15 miles south of Rio Vista, just a few miles southeast of the Kimball Bend of the Brazos River, near Lake Whitney.

The town has always been small, but a century ago it bustled in its own small way. Cotton was king and the local cattle ranchers shipped their stock to market via the Santa Fe Railroad, which made a daily stop in Kopperl.

My mother's mother, Hirstine Hughes, lived in a white, wood-frame house on a corner lot with a white picket fence around it, catty-cornered from the Church of Christ. In that house she reared her four children by herself after my grandfather, Steve Hughes, died from injuries sustained in an accident at the cotton gin. It was in that house, at my Granny's side, that I learned what love is.

By the time my mother and dad first brought my brother and me to Granny's house in the middle of the last century, Kopperl had ceased its bustling and was well into the slow process of dying common to little back-road Texas towns. But to five-year-old Stevie Fromholz, it was a childhood paradise.

The cotton gin had long since closed, and the bank building had a gaping hole in the front, but George Lane still picked up the mail at the depot about 2:15 every afternoon, and Granny and I would go to the post office to see what catalogs had come for us to marvel over. Every day but Sunday, you could hear the ring, ring of Carlo Brown's hammer in the blacksmith's shop, and I could sit for hours in the dark, smelling the brimstone, while Carlo and my Daddy talked about the world by the fiery glow of the forge. Granny would take me to Walter and Fannie Day's grocery almost every day for what we needed for supper, and there was always an ice-cold Dr. Pepper at Sleepy Hill's Drug Store or Alleen's, just down the street. Mr. Suggs' pool hall was a safe place for us kids to be, and it was there my Uncle Pickard taught me to shoot snooker and eight ball and it was there I heard my first juke-box blaring out Hank Williams singing "Your Cheatin' Heart."

The caliche streets of Kopperl were the playgrounds for all the kids in town. We were always barefoot and running through the chalky dust from house to house and adventure to adventure. Everyone in town knew who you were and who you belonged to

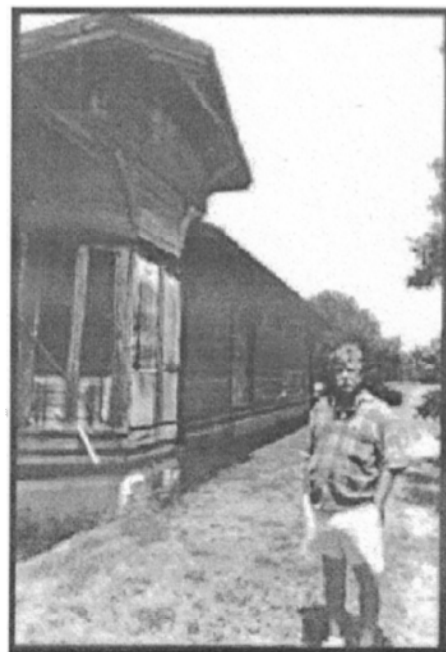
and who to tell if you were caught misbehaving (and you were always caught). The streets of Kopperl were safe because everybody in town was watching after all the children.

To me, Granny's old house was the heart and soul of the town. From her I learned my manners, and to always tell the truth and to say my prayers. I learned to operate the big Motorola radio so we could listen to "Gangbusters" and "The Grand Old Opry" on Saturday night. I learned that a cooling breeze always blew through the northeast bedroom. I learned that we had to go to the root cellar when the sky turned green and the thunder rumbled and the rain fell in torrents. I learned how to play "42" and Canasta, and that a "red three" was worth a hundred points. I learned you can put buttermilk on a sunburn. But most importantly, I learned what unconditional love is.

I think Granny loved me more than anyone else ever has. She was strong, kind, loving and, it seemed to me, always a little sad, just like the town in which she lived almost all her life. She was the very best of the past and when she died in the early '60s, she, like her little town, had little hope for the future. They were simply both worn out by hard living.

My Uncle Steve sold Granny's house shortly after she died, and the new owners tore it down and put a manufactured home on the lot. Now when I visit my Granny, I go to the Kopperl Cemetery across the road where the Santa Fe rails used to run, and there she is, with most all my Mom'n'em, resting in peace as the preachers say.

One day, before too long, I will buy that corner lot and build a white, wood-frame house with a white picket fence around it, and I will sit on the porch in my rocking chair and wait for my grandkids to visit their old Pappy. Now that's resting in peace.



Steve Fromholz in Kopperl at the old Santa Fe depot.



DNA Report



We Are Not Celts at All but Galicians

This article by Brian Donnelly appeared in the September 10, 2004, Web Issue of The Herald. It gives strong support to the legendary descent which the Irish have long claimed from the "Milesians" of Spain.

CELTIC nations such as Scotland and Ireland have more in common with the Portuguese and Spanish than with the Celts of central Europe, according to a new academic report.

Historians have long believed that the British Isles were swamped by a massive invasion of Iron Age Celts from central Europe around 500BC. However, geneticists at Trinity College in Dublin now claim that the Scots and Irish have more in common with the people of northwestern Spain.

Dr Daniel Bradley, genetics lecturer at Trinity College, said a new study into Celtic origins revealed close affinities with the people of Galicia. "It's well-known that there are cultural relations between the areas but now this shows there is much more. We think the links are much older than that of the Iron Age because it also shows affinities with the Basque region, which isn't a Celtic region. The links point towards other Celtic nations, in particular Scotland, but they also point to Spain."

Historians believed the Celts, originally Indo-European, invaded the Atlantic islands in a massive migration 2500 years ago. But using DNA samples from people living in Celtic nations and other parts of Europe, geneticists at the university have drawn new parallels.

Dr Bradley said it was possible migrants moved from the Iberian peninsula to Ireland as far back as 6000 years ago up until 3000 years ago. "I don't agree with the idea of a massive Iron Age invasion that took over the Atlantic islands. You can regard the ocean, rather than a barrier, as a communication route."

Archaeologists have also been questioning the links between the Celts of eastern France and southern Germany and the people of the British Isles and the new research appears to prove their theories.

The Dublin study found that people in areas traditionally known as Celtic, such as Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Brittany and Cornwall, had strong links with each other and had more in common with people from the Iberian peninsula.

It also found people in Ireland have more in common with Scots than any other nation.

"What we would propose is that this commonality among the Atlantic facade is much older, 6000 years ago or earlier," Dr Bradley added.

There are also close links between Scotland and Ireland dating back much further than the plantations of the 1600s when many Scots moved to Northern Ireland in search of fertile farming lands, the research showed.

However, the researchers could not determine whether fair skin, freckles, red hair and fiery tempers truly are Celtic traits.

Stephen Oppenheimer, professor of clinical socio-medical

sciences at Oxford, said that the Celts of western Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Cornwall were descended from an ancient people living on the Atlantic coast when Britain was still attached to mainland Europe, while the English were more closely related to the Germanic peoples of the interior.

He said: "The English are the odd ones out because they are the ones more linked to continental Europe. The Scots, the Irish, the Welsh and the Cornish are all very similar in their genetic pattern to the Basque."

The study headed by Dr Bradley was published in the *American Journal of Human Genetics*.

We Are All Related to Man Who Lived in Asia in 1,415 BC

This article by David Derbyshire, Science Correspondent for the Telegraph Group Ltd, appeared at telegraph.co.uk on September 30, 2004.

Everyone in the world is descended from a single person who lived around 3,500 years ago, according to a new study.

Scientists have worked out the most recent common ancestor of all six billion people alive today probably dwelt in eastern Asia around 1,415 BC.

Although the date may seem relatively recent, researchers say the findings should not come as a surprise. Anyone trying to trace their family tree soon discovers that the number of direct ancestors doubles every 20 to 30 years. It takes only a few centuries to clock up thousands of direct ancestors.

Using a computer model, researchers from MIT attempted to trace back the most recent common ancestor using estimated patterns of migration throughout history. They calculated that the ancestor's location in eastern Asia allowed his or her descendants to spread to Europe, Asia, remote Pacific Islands and the Americas. Going back a few thousand years more, the researchers found a time when a large fraction of people in the world were the common ancestors of everybody alive today — while the rest were ancestors of no one alive. That date was 5,353 BC, the team reports in *Nature*.

The researchers, led by Dr Steve Olson, stressed that the date was an estimate.

"Nevertheless, our results suggest that the most recent common ancestor for the world's current population lived in the relatively recent past — perhaps within the last few thousand years," he said.

He added: "No matter the languages we speak or the color of our skin, we share ancestors who planted rice on the banks of the Yangtze, domesticated horses on the steppes of the Ukraine, hunted giant sloths in the forest of north and south America and labored to build the Great Pyramid of Khufu."

Although some groups of people may have lived in isolation from the rest of the world for hundreds of years, the researchers say no one alive today has been untouched by migration.

NHG's Reddick Ancestry

It has been reported that Nancy Reddick, NHG's maternal grandmother, was born around 1742 and that she married Nathaniel Hunt in Lincoln Co, NC, during the early 1760s. Her parents are strongly presumed to be Abraham and Hannah Reddick based on the sale of their land to John D Greer on 17 JUN 1787. The identities of Abraham and Hannah are unknown, but new promising information has emerged.

"The name Riddick is believed to have been of common origin with Ruddock or Ruddick, which was a nickname used for the Robin Redbreast. It was given as a nickname to its first bearers, being later taken as the patronymic of the sons of those so called. In ancient British and Early American records the name is found in the various forms of Ruddock, Ruddick, Rudoc, Rudok, Ruddoc, Ruddocke, Redock, Reddock, Rudduck, Redike, Redik, Reddicke, Redick, Reddick, Ridok, Riddock, Ridick, Ridicke, Riddicke, Riddick and many others ..."

At this time, the following is highly conjectural:

Information in the LDS files of Family Search identifies an Abraham Riddick as born about 1694 in Nansemond Co, VA, and his wife as one Hannah Finch (who was otherwise unknown). The date of birth of this Abraham is quite early to have been our Abraham, but not out of the question. (It is also possible that birth year of 1694 could have been for the *father* of this Abraham, but this is all speculative). The parents of this Abraham are alleged to have been Lemuel Riddick and Mary Willis, a daughter of Thomas Josiah Willis.

A story about the early Riddicks of Nansemond Co, VA, claims that the original grant known as "White Marsh" or the "old Place" was made to Henry Mills in 1685. This site was about one mile from the town Suffolk and located near Cypress Chapel. Mills had a daughter named Laura who was tutored by a man named Riddick. Laura and her tutor fell in love but their union was not approved by her father, so they eloped. While pursuing them through the woods in a storm, Mr. Mills was killed by a falling tree. Laura then inherited her father's plantation. DAR Library records indicate that a Laura and James Riddick had a son Lemuel who married a "Miss Willis". This apparently corroborates Abraham's alleged parents in the preceding paragraph (but another source claims Lemuel's mother was one Mary Dunstan).

A Captain James Riddick or Reddick (born about 1675) was the burgess from Nansemond Co, VA, in 1715, 1718, and 1720-1722. He is thought to have been the "tutor" and eventual husband of Laura Mills. This James is alleged to have been the son of another James who was on a coroner's jury list for Surry Co, VA, in 1664. And then a John Shepherd died intestate on 20 APR 1669 and the administration of his estate was requested by James Riddick. This James (senior) later married "the relict of said Shepherd" whose given name seems to have been Alice because on 21 APR 1695, a document grants Alice "relict of James Riddick" administration rights to his estate.

It must be pointed out that there were other Abraham Reddicks of that era and locale — especially one having 400 acres per the Nansemond Quit Rents Rolls of 1704. And one Abraham Reddick (born ca 1678) married Elizabeth Pleasant and reportedly had, among other children, an Abraham who seemingly wed Ann Thach in 1758 and died about 1780.

The familial relationships of that day are often sketchy and sometimes theoretical. However, the aforementioned Abraham Riddick and Hannah Finch are the only couple found so far with given names to match our ancestors.

The Reddicks/Riddicks described above, although not certain ancestors of NHG, are members of a wider family which will be further investigated and reported in future issues. Does anyone have other information to add in this regard?



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Early Education in Alabama and Texas

What must it have been like for our ancestors as they struggled to obtain an education in the pioneer days? What follows is a recollection by a an elderly man who practiced medicine in early Washington Co, TX. He had retired to Galveston and there wrote this article in the 1890s — just a few years before the great hurricane of 1900 obliterated that city. The source of the material is Sixty Years on the Brazos: The Life and Letters of Dr. John Washington Lockhart, published in 1930.

This article is of special interest to us because the author's early life was so similar to NHG's children. Lockhart was born July 4, 1824, in Perry Co, AL, and moved to Washington Co, TX, at the age of 14. Compare this with Thomas Lacy Greer who was born September 2, 1826, in DeKalb Co, GA, lived several years in Chambers Co, AL, before moving to Washington Co, TX, at the age of 10. Both experienced early education in Alabama and finished their education in the same Texas county during the Texas Republic.

I omitted text I deemed irrelevant to our concerns and created new paragraphs where the originals seemed too long. And I have added section titles.

ALABAMA

[A reminiscence] carried me back just sixty-five years, when I attended my first school in the state of Alabama. I could not but think of the vast difference between now and then in the mode of teaching and discipline. They appeared so happy in their simple amusement, whereas we at that time of our life were a most miserable lot.

The rod was used freely and effectually by the master and was considered by both parents and teachers as the key to the average boy's brain. The teacher was judged as to his proficiency by the number of switches he kept near his chair, and the frazzles at their ends.

In the early times the advantages for gaining an education at the old field schools, as they were called, were exceedingly limited. These school houses were

usually built of rough logs, as near the center of the scholastic population as possible, though there was an eye to convenience as to wood and water. The children had these two indispensable articles to pack to the school house themselves.

Alabama was at that time a comparatively new country, and the average parent cared very little about giving his children any but the common rudiments of an education. My initiation into school life I shall remember with a keen sense of terror as long as I shall live. My father's moving to Texas in the fall of 1838 closed my experience with school life in Alabama, and was the beginning of a new experience in Texas, my father having settled in the old town of Washington, on the Brazos, in 1839.

TEXAS

The children labored here rather under more adverse circumstances than in Alabama, on account of a scarcity of school books, having such to use only as were brought by our parents from the old states, whether suitable or not. The first school I attended in Texas was taught by Judge W. P. Ewing, in the town of Washington, who taught in a double log house just on the outer edge of town. Judge Ewing was a man of fine legal attainments, but owing to his defective hearing had to relinquish the practice of law and resort to teaching. He was also a justice of the peace for a long while, of that precinct.

After Judge Ewing's time expired, Rev. L. P. Rucker taught in an old shell of a house about one mile south of the town. This old shell was called the academy. Mr. Rucker was a good man, and had the interest of his pupils at heart, but we did not appreciate his motives, having imbibed so much of the wildness of the country, which seemed to permeate the very air we breathed. He was soon forced to resign. ...

[continued on page 2]

A PRANK CLOSES SCHOOL

In our old age we are apt to recollect more of the ludicrous side of life than the more solemn and serious. In looking back I remember one of the incidents of our school life which afforded us at the time a good deal of amusement.

Early one morning some of the boys killed a large snake and at recess there came along a lank, lean yellow dog. No sooner was he seen than Joe was in for a frolic. He coaxed the dog by giving him food to let him approach him. As soon as possible he had the dog tied and blindfolded. He gave orders to bring forth the snake. In a very short time Joe had the snake tied securely to the tail of the dog. He then cast him loose.

At first the dog, in his eagerness to secure the scraps which we had thrown from our dinner buckets, seemed not to notice the snake, his whole attention being given to the satisfying of the demands of his appetite, but in moving around he felt that his caudal appendage had been wonderfully elongated. To see what was the matter in that direction he turned and smelled the snake. In applying his cold nose to the snake he caused it to squirm. At the sight of the squirming and catching the scent, it seemed that a new revelation was on him, and in an instant he was off at full speed, yelping at every jump.

He happened to head for town. Of course all the boys set out after him, but in a few minutes all that could be seen was a trail of dust rising gently into the air along the road. This, however, was not the last we heard of that dog. Captain W. P. Rutledge lived about half a mile on the road to town. His front gate happened to be open, and as it was warm weather the doors to his house were also open. About the time the dog made the distance to the house he had taken on a tremendous amount of fright and, seeing the gate open, he darted into the yard and into the house, took a turn around Mrs. Rutledge's parlor, and, not getting any relief, ran into the dining room, jumped onto the table which had been spread for dinner, swept a portion of the dinner dishes off and then ran out of the back door and onto a little chicken house in the back yard, where the snake became entangled in a crack in the boards and was left there, doubtless to the dog's great relief.

Mrs. Rutledge, witnessing the actions of the dog, became thoroughly alarmed. Soon, Captain Rutledge coming home to dinner and finding some of it on the floor and his good wife nearly in hysterics from fright, commenced an immediate search for the cause of the tragedy, but as it is in all such cases, no one knew anything of the occurrence, and so it ended. ...

The patrons of the school, seeing that their boys were more disposed to educate themselves in the art of playing shinny, bull pen, town ball and like games, than to study their books, with the advice of Mr. Rucker, closed the school.

A STERN MASTER SPARES THE ROD

Soon after this, having some business to settle up in Alabama, my father left for that state and while there he met with an old lawyer who had sold his property to a man who had fled to Texas for debt. This old man was a bachelor, and from the bad treatment he had received, was as sour as a crabapple. He wished to come to Texas to look for the man who had despoiled him of his property. It struck my father that he would be the very man to manage the boys at the old Washington academy, so he employed him, and when he returned Mr. Nash came with him, and was installed as the regular and only professor for all the departments of learning. It did not take long for the boys to size him up. The unanimous opinion was that he was one-half vinegar and the balance cayenne pepper, ginger, and all the odds and ends of the hot things in nature. It was not long before Mr. Nash thought to try what virtue there might be in the rod, and so arming himself with a good sized hickory, he proceeded to try to use it. The boy, however, objected, and manifested his objections by the production of a long knife, which he pulled from his pocket. It then occurred to Mr. Nash that he was in Texas and that the ways of the Texan were not the ways of the Alabamian. After this he never attempted the use of the rod again, but resorted to the use of his tongue, which he wielded to perfection. We had a regular concert during school hours, but not of that sweet musical sort which it is always pleasant to hear. ...

[continued on page 3]

READING AND SPELLING

There were no small and interesting story books for them to read, nothing simplified as it is today. There was nothing attractive about the school house. We had to be on hand at sunrise, or as near that time as possible, and sit on hard benches, made often of split logs, with no backs, our eyes kept steadily on our books and the only movement allowed was, if the benches were high enough, the swinging of our feet under them. In this position we had to sit until 12 o'clock. Two hours were then given, if the master was in a good humor, for play time. At 2 o'clock the master would walk to the door and cry out "books," when all would resume their seats, there to remain until near sundown. These were the regular hours for school in the olden times.

Instead of some little interesting primer, with pictures to break the monotony and afford at the same time picture lessons of what the scholar was to spell or read, he was initiated into Webster's spelling book, with the letters of the alphabet printed up and down the page. These he would plod over for perhaps a month or two, and, after he had committed them to memory, was promoted toward words of one syllable. Then "baker" and "crucifix" and "Constantinople" and "immateriality" followed, and finally, in the course of the year, he might arrive at "cheval-de-frise," I believe I have spelled it correctly, but it is the first time I have made the attempt in fifty years. All of these words, hard even for a man to spell, were expected to be mastered by the small boy. After he had learned the whole of the book, he was taught to read. Did one ever think how tiresome it is to read without mastering the ideas intended to be conveyed by the words? If not, let him take a Latin book and sit down for an hour and read it without the aid of a dictionary or grammar. He will find himself, at the end of an hour, worn out and disgusted without having obtained a single idea. This is just so with the schoolboy of the olden time. After he had mastered the reading in the spelling book he was advanced to the introduction to the English reader. In this we learned:

'Tis education which forms the common mind—
Just as the twig is bent the tree inclines,

which, interpreted, meant to the schoolboy that the application of the rod was a very important factor in straightening the twig. The next course of his reading was the English reader, a large book which would compare favorably in size with the present law and medical works, and, to his juvenile mind, was equally as intricate. It would be hard reading for the average man of today, as it contains essays and speeches from the most eminent men of that day. This book finished up his course in reading. After the boy

had made such progress in reading as the master thought sufficient, he was then promoted to the study of arithmetic.

ARITHMETIC

We had only two arithmetics to select from, and the one usually adopted was the one which our master had used in his previous schooldays. Those in use were one by Thos. Y. Smiley, the other by Pike. Either one was far in advance of the mind of the boy who was required to master its problems, so much so, indeed, that a whole session was frequently consumed in the mastery of one rule. The boy could usually be tracked through the book by the dog ears, as they were called, and his thumb marks. To pick up his book and turn a few leaves would direct you at once to his lesson. The book would almost invariably be open at the multiplication table, and the marks of battle could be found all around that part of it. The time ordinarily consumed in the mastery of this complex array of figures was from one to two years. A session usually consumed one year.

After the student had mastered the multiplication table and providing he had been a good boy and well trained by the use of the rod he might consider himself a "trustee," with the privilege of retiring to the lonely shade tree or the jamb of the chimney, there to wrestle with the intricacies of his rules and figures. In filling the position of trustee, he was not to be molested, but was expected to make his report of the work done by presenting himself at the door, call the attention of the teacher by saying: "I have the answer," at the same time exhibiting his slate full of figures. On the approval of the master by a nod of the head, he retired to his shade, sometimes without having worked the sum at all, merely having an array of figures on his slate. Masters were very lenient in this department, for they were not ordinarily overbright themselves, frequently having to use keys in working the examples for the boys. When such a thing occurred the master

[continued on page 4]



usually followed the example of the judges of law in those days, by taking the case under advisement and working it out with their key at night.

The old fashioned pedagogue was once a power in the land and it is amazing to look back and see to what an extent the parent submitted his offspring, both body and soul, into their keeping. Like Selkirk on his little island, they were monarchs of all they surveyed, and there were none to dispute their control over the poor boys. Their acumen was often measured by the number of hickories and stubs seen in and around their sanctums.

GRAMMAR AND GEOGRAPHY

For the study of grammar there were likewise two kinds of books printed then, Murray's and Kirkham's. Geography was also taught. We had Olney's and Adams'. Geography was considered of minor importance. All of the United States west of the Mississippi river was an almost unexplored region. It was given over to the wild Indian, buffalo, deer and antelope and was truly the great happy hunting ground, in which they dwelt in primeval ignorance and bliss. We generally learned something of the United States, such as their boundaries, principal towns, rivers, capitals, etc., but the average person cared very little about them, as a journey to New York was considered as difficult and was attended with as many dangers as a trip to Peking, China now is. London, Liverpool, Paris, Vienna and all the great cities of the old world were on the maps, but were considered as almost on the outside of the world, and were little thought of. The map of Africa was marked in its interior position in large letters as the great Sahara desert; this and the mountains of the moon were all that was to be learned about Africa, with the exception of a few small dependencies around its border.

If ignorance is bliss, then the majority of our people were in that condition, for they knew and cared little for any knowledge outside of their neighborhood and state. I do not pretend to say that all men were ignorant, some were as cultured those days as at the present. I speak here of the maps. Then should we much wonder at the little attention paid to the proper education of their children? Man is a very strange animal at least. It has taken unknown centuries to raise him to his present condition, and in the known centuries his progress has been slow. His early training and teachings hang like millstones around his neck, and often when the doors are open for his further advancement he hesitates, pulls back, as the mule would in being led over a new bridge for the purpose of grazing in pastures new. Even with the present advanced state surrounding him he will sometimes look back and long for the old worn out walks he traveled when he held on to his father's fingers trotting along by his side, and learned the scant lessons taught him in his youth. Then can we blame the boy of long ago for preferring his games while at school, and indulging in his harmless amusements, such as tying snakes to dogs' tails, drawing pictures on his slate, etc., instead of exercising the higher qualities of his mind in trying to unravel the deep mysteries of such books as were placed before him?





The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Searching for Cross-Atlantic Ties

In Volume 9, Number 3, we examined some clues to our Dunlap ancestry — noting how the surname Delap was interchangeable and how some clues pointed toward Ulster (Northern Ireland). Recently I found more noteworthy ties to Ulster in the following two letters from the immigrant William Hinshaw and an Ulster Quaker record of 1741 on page 2 (each document edited for length) —

Sandy Creek, North Carolina, Orange County

20 January 1769

William Henshaw to Thomas Greer

Friend Thomas

Having this opportunity to let thee know ... all of us arrived safe after ... ten weeks and three days sail and had our healths reasonable well ... I am truly thankful ... to the fountain from whence all good comes ... also thy good advice is fresh on my mind ... I have bought 68 acres of deeded land with 12 acres clear and pays 3/4 yearly rent ... I live handy to four meetings, the farther of 12 miles. I was at three meetings with Reachel Wilson from

England, Samuel Morton from Phyladelphia was her comanion hear. let Jacob Haddock and Joseph Haddock know their two brothers and families is well, to wit Jacob Henshaw and William.

North Carolina

the 8th Day of the 8th Month in the year of our Lord 1784

friend Tomas Greer this is to inform thee I and my wife is well and my Children is well also my son John is not maride yet But my sister Alice keeps house for Ezra and Thomas ... we have had very Pearlous times and lost much But through Devine Providance is Blessed with sufficient of the Nessarys of Life ... Let William Delap or his heirs know that William Hinshaw and mary his wife and son Thomas is yet alive which being the very Lives of the lease Readford which I certify william Hinshaw ... This year there is small flying Bugs in great numbers which have destroyed a great deal of wheat and is in a likely way of spoiling some corn.

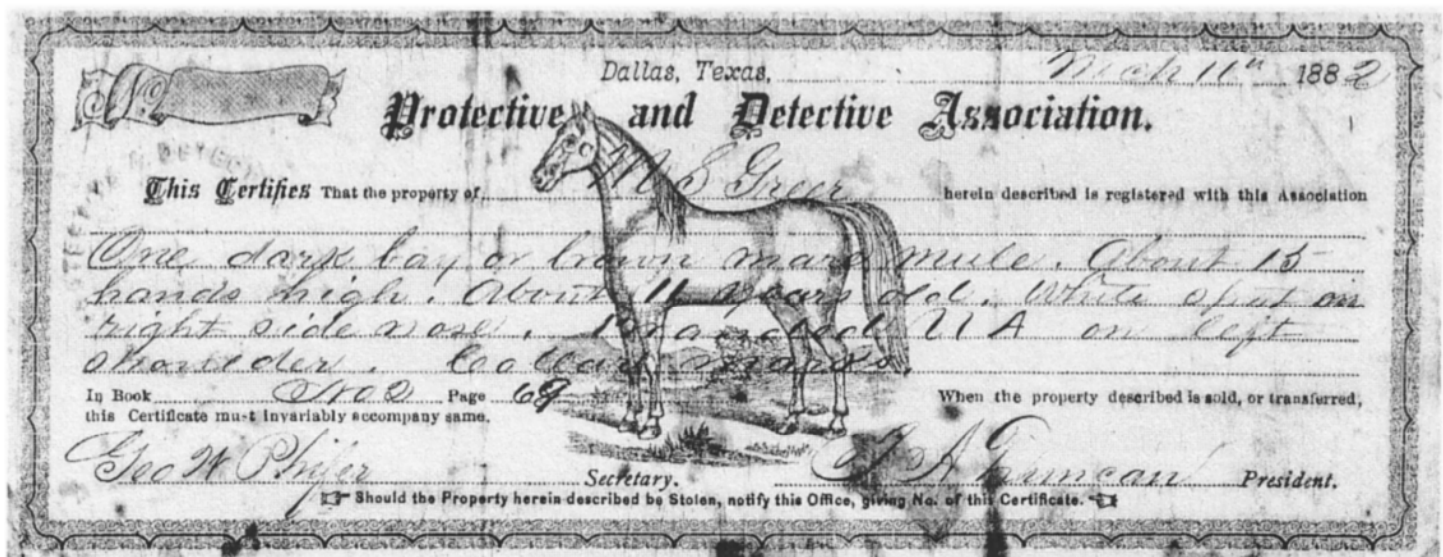
[continued on page 2]

Babe Greer Guards Against Livestock Thieves

During the 19th century, the theft of livestock was a significant problem. In response, various companies formed to help protect the owners of livestock. Pictured below is a certificate illustrating how Matthew Simeon "Babe" Greer, NHG's youngest child, tried to mitigate the chances of losing his property to thieves.

The certificate was signed March 11, 1882, by two officers of the Protective and Detective Association of Dallas and reads:

This certifies That the property of M. S. Greer herein described is registered with this Association. One dark bay or brown mare mule. About 15 hands high. About 11 years old. White [unreadable] on right side nose. Branded UA on left shoulder. Collar marks. In Book No 2, Page 69. When the property described is sold, or transferred, this Certificate must invariably accompany same. Should the Property herein described be Stolen, notify this Office, giving No. of this Certificate.



[continued from page 1]

I have often wrote but have Received no answer father and mother with friends and neighbors are Either Dead or forgotten us or els I would expect some of them would have wrote Be pleased to let father and Mother see this letter if living ... write ... let me know how it is with thee and thy familey and with father and mother and with the three young men that lived with thee when I came away ... I remain thy affectionet friend and Brother in the truth ... thou may be informed by my well asteemed Friend Zechoria Dix

William Hinshaw tha lived in killey Nail formerly

The foregoing two letters introduce potentially significant information. The Hinshaws, like many farmers, supplemented their income by weaving linen at home then selling it at a "brown linen market". Thomas Greer, a leading Quaker in the Grange Meeting, was a linen draper who bought brown linen for bleaching, before selling it. He kept a book of his transactions for several brown linen markets. His 1758-1759 Market Book records that the Hinshaws (especially William) periodically sold about 25 yards of linen at prices ranging from 13 to 17 pence per yard.

Thomas Greer of Rhone Hill near Dungannon in county Tyrone, the above Quaker merchant, was kin to the Greers from whom our unproven family tradition claims descent. The common ancestor was James Greer of Lisacurran in county Armagh. He was born June 1653 in Northumberland and his father Henry migrated to Ulster soon after.

A 1741 record of preparations to emigrate is in the minutes of the Preparative Meeting of Grange, near Charlemont, county Tyrone, Northern Ireland, for the meeting of 2 Mo. 3, 1741:

Patrick Holm & his wife, also Hugh Kennedy & his family, [declared] Intention of Removing to America, ... being poor ... & in want of help ... to pay ... for ye Jurnay ... John Whitsitt, James Pillar, William Delap, Thos Greer & Benjn Marshall ... to Draw Suitable Certificates for [the emigrants].

The above record reveals some key names (in bold face) that reinforce the hypothesis that a relationship existed between the Delaps/Dunlaps and the Greers not only in America but also in Northern Ireland. These clues do not necessarily indicate the origins of our immigrant ancestor. However, they do add more support to our family tradition that our Greer ancestor embarked from that shore.

But there is more than just a Delap/Greer relationship. The following proven descent is from *Burke's Irish Family Records*. It shows (in bold face) several marriages of Greers to other people listed in the above three letters (again, in bold face): Wilson, Morton, Whitsitt and Pillar.

Note that although William Hinshaw wrote from North Carolina, two of his acquaintances visited from Philadelphia, not so far from York county (later, Adams) from whence hailed our Thomas Greer and Gilbert Dunlap. And, of course, Thomas and Gilbert moved their families to North Carolina!

In the following descent you will find Thomas Greer, our traditionally alleged ancestor, whose father (Thomas Sr, husband of Rachel Morton) is recorded as dying (in Ireland) ca 1738. And you will note that our alleged ancestor is also listed as dying (still in Ireland) ca 1755 — apparently dashing our hopes of claiming him

as our true ancestor. **But there is conflicting evidence:** A few days before his death, Thomas Sr left a will that named heirs: his brothers Henry and James of county Armagh, his wife Rachel, and children under 21 years old: James, Samuel, Rachel, Elizabeth. Our alleged Thomas is not mentioned!

What can we make of all this? What little we can say is mere surmise — nothing definite can be determined. But you can see that there is ample evidence to support our belief in an Ulster origin and to justify further research. Our next issue will dig deeper and comment on the surname Greeve[s] below.

1—Henry GRIER (aka Henry Greeve) of Redford near Dungannon, co Tyrone (1629–bet 1673 and 1677)

sp—Mary TURNER (abt 1629–1691)

... 2—James GREER of Lisacurran, Lurgan, Armagh (Jun 1653–bef 18 Nov 1718)

... sp—Ellinor REA (25 Feb 1655–abt 1736)

... 3—Henry GREER (5 Mar 1681–7 Jul 1756)

... sp—Sarah HENDERSON (bef 1690–5 Oct 1756)

... 11 known children — no Thomas

... 3—Mary GREER (7 Feb 1685/86–1765)

... sp—William DOUGLAS (bef 1695–1756)

... 3—John GREER (9 Sep 1688–1740/41)

... sp—Mary HANKS (bef 1700–aft 1740)

... 4—**Thomas GREER, the aforementioned linen draper**

... sp—Sarah GREER (–)

... six other known children — no Thomas

... 3—Thomas GREER, Sr (1 Feb 1690–17 Feb 1737/38)

... sp—Ann HENDERSON (abt 1692–17 Nov 1718)

... 2 known children — no Thomas

... sp—**Rachel MORTON** (15 Feb 1687–25 Jun 1792)

... 4—**Thomas GREER (1724–abt 1755) our alleged ancestor**

... sp—Sarah THOMPSON (–)

... five other known children — no Thomas

... 3—James GREER (18 Aug 1693–1761)

... sp—**Anne WILSON** (–)

... 3 known children — no Thomas

... 2—Robert GREER (aka GRIVES) of Redford (1655–1730)

... sp—**Mary WHITSITT** (abt 1670–9 Dec 1742)

... 3—Thomas GREER (abt 1695–15 Nov 1746)

... sp—Elizabeth BELL (bef 1700–1 Aug 1772)

... 6 known daughters, no sons

... 3—John GREER (1696/97–2 May 1742)

... sp—**Mary WHITSITT** (bef 1700–aft 1725)

... 4—Joseph GREER (abt 1717–aft 26 Apr 1728)

... 4—William GREER (abt 1719–3 May 1776)

... sp—Mary MORTON (1 Jul 1725–7 Feb 1814)

... 12 known children surnamed GREEVES

... 4—Abigail GREER (abt 1730–)

... sp—**Robert DELAP**, son of William Delap of Grange, co Armagh

... 3—Mary GREER (abt 1699–19 Apr 1771)

... sp—**James PILLAR** (–)

... 3—Jonathan GREER (aft 1700–1 Aug 1774)

... sp—Sarah RICHARDSON (–)

... 4—Robert GREER (22 Mar 1735–20 Oct 1740)

... 4—Thomas GREER (29 Sep 1736–bef 28 Jul 1744)

... 4—John GREER (11 Jan 1738/39–bef 3 Feb 1746)

... 4—Robert GREER (28 Dec 1742–aft 1803)

... 4—Thomas GREER (31 Aug 1744–)

... 4—John GREER (24 Aug 1746–27 Mar 1752)

... 4—Joseph GREER (17 Dec 1749–13 Jun 1815)

... sp—**Ruth WHITSITT** (bef 1770–1789)

... 4—Jacob GREER (17 Jul 1756–3 Oct 1756)

... two daughters

... 3—Robert GREER (abt 1705–28 Sep 1742)

... four more daughters

... 2—Thomas GREER (1657–1689)

... 2—Mary GREER (aft 1660–)

... sp—John HOULDEN (–)

A Tale of Violent Ends

The violence that often attended pioneer life included notable events which connected to the Greers — although our ancestors were not participants in the story related below. What follows is a validation of the adage that “those who live by the sword, die by the sword”.

A remarkable collection of unfortunate events began after a drunken quarrel on 16 FEB 1829, when Jethro Jackson was murdered in Upson Co, GA, by his neighbor Phillip Haddox, a son of Moses Haddox and Rachel Coe. The Jackson family posted a \$500 reward in newspapers from Kentucky to Florida, and — due to the family’s prominence — \$200 more was added by Georgia’s governor. But Phillip (a widower) had collected his three children, added his mother’s maiden name to his own and fled for Texas. In 1830 he settled at what he dubbed “Tiger Point” near the fork of Mill Creek in what would become Washington Co. He acquired land, prospered and became known as “Old Tiger” Coe from his community, his turbulent nature and his aggressive action in 1834, 1835 and 1842 when he led men against hostile Indians.

In March 1837, NHG led his family to Texas and settled near Tiger Point and immediately began dealing with Coe. On 1 SEP 1837, he sold his slave Louisa to Coe. For the next few years, NHG probably rented land from Coe before buying 720 acres from him along Mill Creek on 9 JUL 1841. Coe operated a horse-racing track near Tiger Point (aka Tigertown) and it is likely that NHG frequented the races held there — since one family tradition asserts that NHG once dealt in racehorses. Coe was partners with NHG’s friend Sam Houston in importing purebred race horses from Tennessee.

In the spring of 1842, NHG’s eldest son Gilbert served under Phillip Coe in pursuit of Rafael Vasquez who had raided San Antonio. A few months later Gilbert again enlisted under Captain Coe in the ill-starred punitive Somervell expedition.

Although Coe eventually homesteaded 4,446 acres in Gonzales Co (per 1831 grants), he remained a landowner in Washington Co. In the summer of 1839, Elizabeth Coe gave birth near Tiger Point to a son named Phillip Houston Coe. It is likely the babe was known to NHG and it’s possible his wife Nancy (as tenants of the Coes) helped Elizabeth before and after the birth — as female neighbors were wont to do in those days. But within months, the Coes moved to Gonzales Co.

Coe was well-respected in Texas (where his criminal past was unknown) and life was peaceful until fate dealt a fatal blow in a Gonzales saloon. In a poker game on 6 DEC 1852, Tiger Coe was shot four times by neighbor John Oliver. Mortally wounded, Coe rode home to Coe Valley where he died a week later after penning a will which began, “being severely wounded and my life uncertain”. Ironically, like in Georgia 23 years earlier, the prominence of the

victim led the Texas governor to add \$300 to the \$1000 reward posted by Coe’s widow. A further irony was that a daughter of Coe had wed a nephew of Georgia’s governor!

Phillip Coe Jr was 12 when he watched his father die, but he did not appreciate the lessons of a dissolute life nor the pitfalls of liquor, gambling and violence. Like so many others, young Coe served in the Civil War — honorably, in fact — rising to the rank of lieutenant before ending his duty in 1863. After the war Coe became a professional gambler, working in Austin with his wartime friend, the notorious Ben Thompson. In the late 1860s Coe spent much time in Brenham, where he met and gambled with the unsavory James Madison Brown, John Wesley Hardin, and Bill Longley. The following spring, Coe followed the trail drives north to Kansas — eager to separate drovers from their wages. In 1871 he again joined with Ben Thompson, this time as co-owners of the Bull’s Head — the most expensive saloon in Abilene — where he ran up against the city marshal, “Wild Bill” Hickok.



Bill Greer & “Hickok” in Troy Grove, IL

James Butler Hickok was born 27 MAY 1837 in Troy Grove, IL. His father later ran a station on the Underground Railroad and was eventually killed because of his abolitionism. In the Civil War, Hickok was a Union Army scout and spy. After the war, he scouted for George Armstrong Custer. In the late 1860s he worked as a marshal in various places and was appointed marshal of Abilene in 1870.

Hickok made his office in the posh Alamo Saloon — etched glass doors, brass and mahogany decor, ferns, uniformed waiters and a host of gambling devices — a rival joint to the Bull’s Head Saloon. Coe and Hickok tangled over several issues and each both sought the affection of a local madam; Hickok lost. On the evening of 5 OCT 1871, before he was to leave for Texas, Coe and some other Texans got drunk and started shooting up the town. Hickok tried to break it up. He and Coe were about eight feet apart when they went at one another. Each man fired twice. Hickok wasn’t hit, but Coe was gut-shot by both bullets.

Just as Hickok shot Coe, another gunman rushed up and Hickok fired twice more at the man who turned out to be his own deputy. Hickok wept as he carried his dying deputy to a billiard table in the Alamo. Coe lingered in agony before dying 9 OCT 1871 — the last man to be killed by Wild Bill Hickok.

That December, the Abilene city council terminated Hickok’s employment and the legendary gunman held odd jobs, even joining Buffalo Bill Cody on stage and in an early version of his Wild West Show. But failing eyesight prompted Hickok to return to professional gambling. On 2 AUG 1876, in a Deadwood poker game (just like Phillip Coe Sr), Hickok was the victim of gunplay. He was shot by Jack McCall who hanged for the crime.

Violent men and violent times! Almost all such gunmen died as they lived — on the receiving end of a deadly deed.

The Years Come and Go

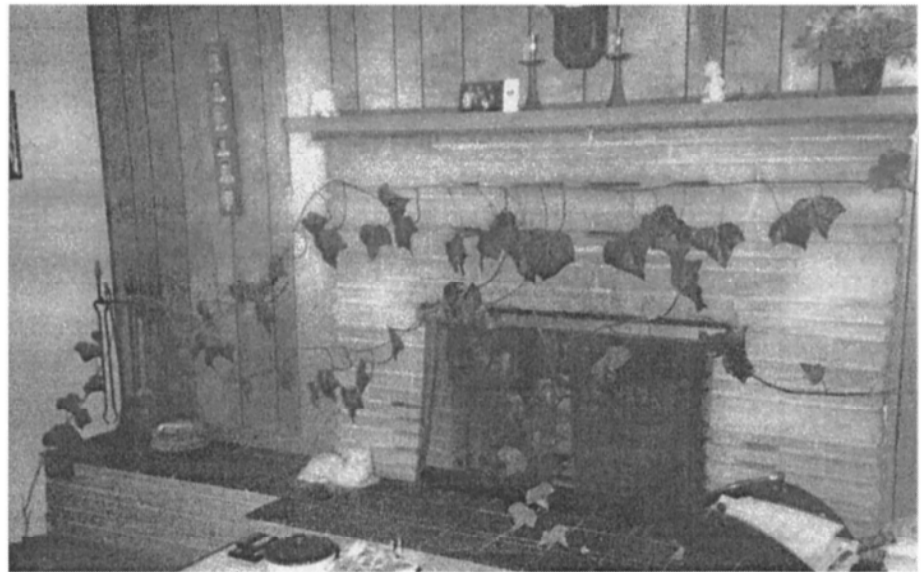
A Story of Love, Sorrow and Hope

by Errol G. Brown, a great-grandson of Thomas Lacy Greer

IT has now been 47 years since my dear wife Marilla planted a Vine near the northeast corner of our home in Kanab. She said "I hope it will grow and make our home attractive and home-like". About 11 years ago when she first became ill, and was confined to home, Marilla was the first to notice a small green leaf pop out of a small hole in the carpet near the corner of the room, just inside from where she had planted the Vine many years ago. Marilla said, "If it grows we will call it Elvina".

Well Elvina did grow, almost overnight and added several inches of stem and several leaves. We marveled at the growth and the fact that somehow, she had found her way through a board floor, a hardwood floor, a thick pad and carpet. Elvina grew and grew, we had to cut her back at floor level several times.

After Marilla passed, away December 23, 2002, I wondered if Elvina would continue to grow. Now, it seems to me as I look and marvel at her growth and vitality, Elvina is a pleasant reminder of my dear Marilla, my lovely wife and companion of 67 years, I Wonder, and Hope!



June 1, 2003, about six months after letting Elvina continue to grow, note her entrance lower left.

News of Babe Greer's Descendants

Not long ago, a Wilm descendant shared these excerpts from Bosque family letters to Amy Wilm she was while away at college. They provide news of Babe Greer's descendants.

22 OCT 1903: "Mrs. Tom Greer [son of GDG] was badly hurt yesterday evening, buggy turned over & dragged her. Dr. says one bone in her leg is broken. Don't know how she is today."

15 NOV 1903: "Mrs. Greer [1st wife of MSG's son William N.] is very bad off. Mama went to see her once. They are looking for her to die anytime. I guess you know she has been sick with consumption. Poor little Hirstine. Everybody feels sorry for her. She told Hazel she did not look for her mamma to live long."

29 NOV 1903: "Mrs. Greer is still lingering along just alive & suffering so. She wishes every day would be her last. Poor little thing. It is dreadful. Her little girl is with her."

5 DEC 1903: "Well poor little Georgia Greer is out of her suffering at last. She died on the 1st of December & her poor little orphan child was heartbroken. It would make anyone shed tears to see her."



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Babe Greer's Taxes for the Year 1881

Surviving records often help us to understand what our ancestors were doing, and when and where they were active. Such is the case with Babe Greer's 1881 tax receipt below.

We see that he paid a total of \$22.50 for lands and town lots. The town lots are in the town of Kimball — Babe had not moved his store to Kopperl because the new town was not yet established. The land for which he was taxed was 227 acres along Ploughman Creek (named after the only colonist to remain from the nearby Kent settlement that failed two years before Kimball was founded).

Babe's two lots in Kimball were numbers 6 and 7 in the northern portion of Block 31. It was here that he operated his mercantile establishment that thrived during the era of the Chisholm Trail. When we examine the plat of Kimball on page 2, we see that Babe's location was across from the southeast corner of the town square. The town square is Block 23 — the one block that has no border drawn around it. In fact, Babe's location was a truly choice one, being at the intersection of the two main Kimball streets — Lubbock, running east and west, and Crosby, running north and south. This location confirms the family tradition that the cattle (which were driven down Lubbock street straight toward the ford) went right past Babe's store and that Babe's son William Nathaniel recalled climbing as a young boy onto the roof of the store to watch the awesome scene.

Notice that Lubbock street is the only thoroughfare to empty into the Brazos river. This was because it aimed directly at the ford which figured prominently in the decision to site the town at this point on the river. Immediately after the Civil War, a man named Payne built and operated a ferry near this ford. That ferry, which conveyed many Greers across the Brazos (primarily during high water), is pictured in the upper-right portion of page 2. About 1898 Payne sold the craft to William Cleveland, a son of my maternal great grandmother's third husband. During its heyday and at high water, that ferry could bring in \$200 in one day of operation!

Another photograph in the lower left side of page 2 is of downtown Kimball looking east along Lubbock street. Babe's store location is approximately indicated by the arrow.

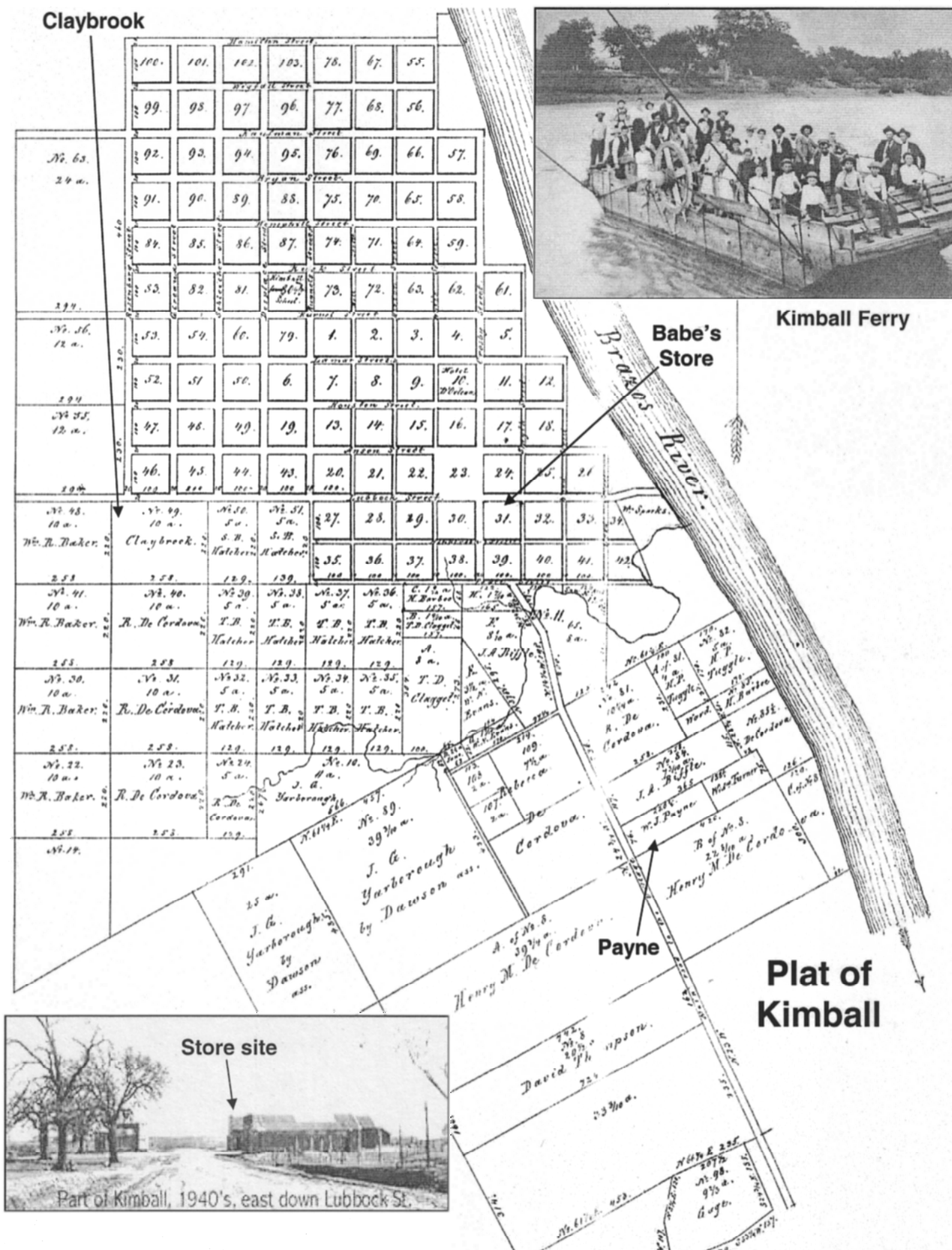
Another arrow points to the 10-acre Claybrook property, more of our ancestral in-laws. Joseph Edwin Claybrook wed Margaret Ann Lane, three of whose sisters wed sons of NHG!

Also of note are Block 80 where the Kimball Academy was sited and Block 10, home of the Hotel D'Orleans.

Lastly, several town lots are owned by Rebecca, widow of the famous Jacob De Cordova — land agent, cartographer, colonist and author — who retired to his Wanderer's Rest II just west of Kimball. De Cordova, agent for Richard Kimball, had helped locate the Kent colony on Kimball's vast land holdings before Kimball town was created in Kimball's honor.

Office of COLLECTOR OF TAXES,					TAXES:		
No. 11-11-11					State ad Valorem \$ 10.00		
Brazos County.					County ad Valorem 10.00		
Received of W. S. Greer					Revenue and School Poll. . . . 2.50		
the following amounts, in payment of State and County					County Poll. 5.00		
Taxes for the year 1881, on personal property and the					Total \$ 22.50		
following described real estate:							
LANDS.				TOWN LOTS.			
Abst. No.	No. of Acres.	Cert. No.	Survey No.	ORIGINAL GRANTEE.	Lot No.	Block No.	Out Lot No.
110	227	619		A. F. Thompson	6	31	
					7	31	
					Total value of property assessed: \$		
Meridian Texas, February 6 th 1882					J. W. Adams Collector		

Claybrook



The Mother Church of Georgia Presbyterians

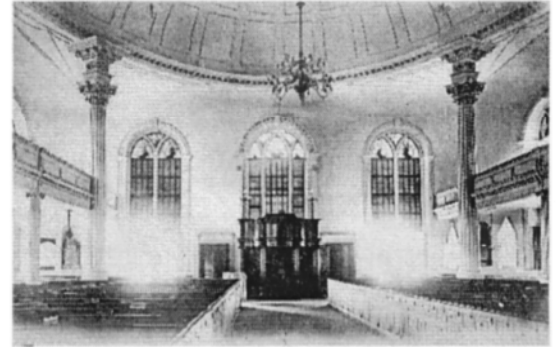
In June, 1787, John Greer and his young family settled onto land along Beaverdam creek which merges with the Ogeechee river some two miles southwest of present-day Crawfordville, GA. The religious affiliation of our early Georgia ancestors is not known, but we do know that John's son NHG was a founding elder of the Presbyterian church in Lafayette, AL, in the 1830s. But as a youngster growing up in Jasper county, where would NHG have worshipped? We can surmise that the family was likely Presbyterian at the time. We can also surmise that some members of the family — possibly NHG himself — would have occasion to travel to the great port of Savannah (the mouth of the Ogeechee river is near that of the Savannah river. If so, they would likely have worshipped at what had for many years been "the mother church of Georgia Presbyterians."

Scots had landed with James Oglethorpe at the founding of Georgia in 1733 and brought with them a strong faith. On June 3, 1755, forty-three "Dissenters from the Church of England and Professors of the Doctrines of the Church of Scotland" petitioned King George II for a Savannah building lot. Thus began the Presbyterian Church of Savannah, later called the Independent Presbyterian Church. Its first building was erected "to the intent and purpose that a place of public worship be there upon erected and built for the use and benefit of such of our loving subjects ... as are and shall be professors of the Doctrines of the Church of Scotland, agreeable to the Westminster Confession of Faith."

John J. Zubly, a member of the Continental Congress, first preached from a brick structure used by the British during the Revolution as a magazine and stable. It was destroyed by fire in 1790. By 1800, a new building had been built but was later damaged by a hurricane.

In 1819 construction of a magnificent third structure was begun at the current site of Bull St. and Oglethorpe Ave. John H. Green modeled the church after his earlier design for the First Congregational Church of Providence, RI. Amos Scudder of Westfield, NJ, supervised the construction. Present at the dedication on May 9, 1829, was John C. Calhoun, President James Monroe and members of his cabinet. The *Savannah Daily Gazette* wrote "From grandeur of design and neatness of execution, we presume this church is not surpassed by any in the United States."

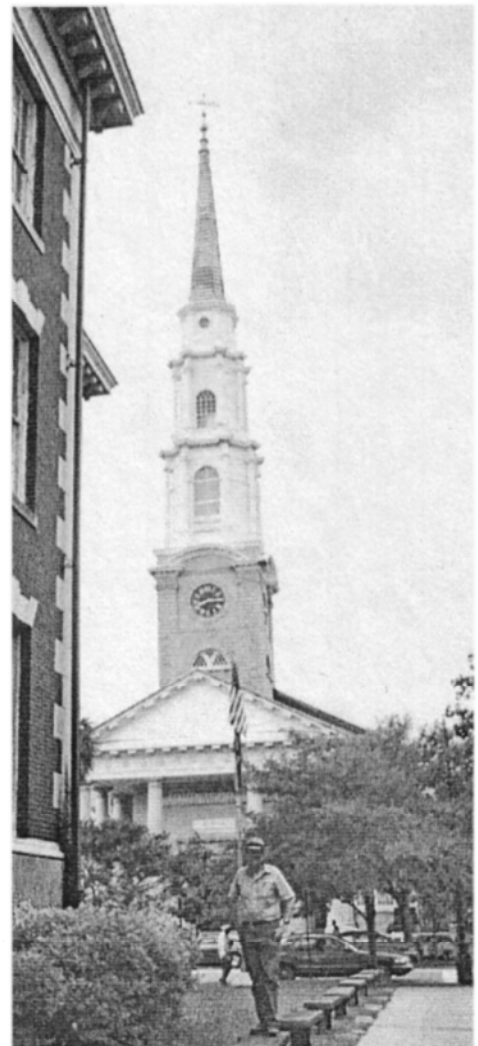
The magnificent edifice of 1819 was destroyed by the great fire of 1889. A marble baptismal font was salvaged. It was decided to reconstruct the sanctuary *exactly* as it had been. Supervising the reconstruction was Boston architect, William P. Gibbons.



The Original Domed Interior



Just Before the Fire of 1889



Bill Greer in Front of the Church

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The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Why We Do Genealogy

All but a very few people know the identities of their parents. For these people, the issue of doing genealogy seems moot. The rest of us — the vast majority of humanity — are interested with our biological origins. For many this interest is mild, with little conscious regard for ancestry. For those of us with more than a mere passing interest, genealogy becomes a pastime — and sometimes a pre-occupation.

Many ask why genealogy is worth all the bother. They do not understand why this hobby acquires such a following. Why, with all the events great and small that happen in this world, should such attention be paid to genealogy? (Actually, when comparing the importance of something against the most deep philosophical questions or the most widely-perceived attention-getting events of our day, such an objection could be raised about almost any pursuit.)

Traditionally, genealogy has been of interest for almost everyone. It provided each and every one of us with an intimate involvement in history — a personal sense of having participated in history. For many, lacking a knowledge of the wider world, one's ancestry within the local community established a frame of reference — a touchstone — for understanding how one fit in the flow of time and events. For some, this was a personal direct descent through established ancestors, for others the descent was more general — through one's identity with a family or clan where a listing of one's personal forebears was missing or incomplete.

Before the modern age and the rise of non-autocratic governments, genealogy was of considerable importance in fixing a person's place within the social order by family, caste or class. Many were the disputes of property and privilege that were resolved by proving one's descent from people of note. And because the tangible rewards could be momentous, sometimes a descent was altered — forged or fabricated — to bestow favorable results or position to selected individuals of the current generation. And just as often, a descent was challenged by someone either suspicious or otherwise critical of the alleged bloodline.

In the Medieval world, it was a cherished tribal sense-of-worth to trace one's line back to an historic figure — often one of great relevance to the establishment of a nation or otherwise pivotal in the history of a people. The sennachies of Ireland and their counterparts in other areas of Western civilization were devoted to maintaining the history of their peoples by preserving their lineage to such a remote past that critics would frequently charge that the alleged lines were

nothing more than myth and legend. This was certainly the case when the purported lines of descent were so extensive as to claim origins in the tribes of Biblical times and the perceived foundations of all mankind.

Upon learning that I am “into genealogy”, many people have asked me, “How far back can you trace your ancestry?” I typically reply, somewhat jokingly (though, perhaps not), that I can trace my descent back to Adam and Eve. For those who believe the Biblical account of our origins, such a descent is decidedly true — but not the details of the descent. Knowledge of every generation back to Adam can be gleaned from a study of the Bible, but how a modern individual connects explicitly with his or her Biblical forebears is of great controversy. You and I can claim such a descent only by presenting myth and legend as our evidence — interesting, no doubt, but hardly sufficient to satisfy the demands of fact and history.

For some people, genealogy is more than personal, historical or social — it has spiritual significance. This is especially true for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints -- who regard genealogy as a religious obligation. For this reason, Mormons are foremost in genealogical affairs and maintain perhaps the most extensive genealogical records of any organization in the world.

So we see that there are several reasons for doing genealogy. However, in the final analysis and in the variously-worded observations of some of past wise folk, “It is difficult to know where you are going without knowing where you have been.”

The Greer Way West to Cease Publication

Our next issue of The Greer Way West (TGWW) will finish Volume 10 — ten years of publication — and I think it will be our last. The reasons for this cessation are described below.

The primary purpose of TGWW was to publish material relevant to the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization, but interest in the organization has been declining for several years. The number of those receiving TGWW has fallen from roughly 200 to about 40 (including a few recipients unrelated to us.)

During the last few years, each issue has been more difficult for me to produce — meager research results, lack of material, fluctuating personal interest and other pursuits competing for my time. There is still information to uncover and relate (there

(continued on page 4)

Oldest Door In Britain Discovered At Westminster Abbey

Ethelred II (the Unready), King of England, is alleged to have been the 23rd great-grandfather of NHG. One of his sons (not our direct ancestor) also became king and is the principle figure in this article about a remarkable piece of ancient history.

The oldest door in Britain has been identified and dated for the first time at Westminster Abbey. The door to the octagonal Chapter House outer vestibule is now known to be the only surviving Anglo-Saxon door in England, dating from the time of Edward the Confessor, the Abbey's founder, who was born 1,000 years ago.

The Chapter House itself (one of the largest in England) dates from the 1250s. Monks met here daily for prayers, readings from the rule of St Benedict and to discuss their day's work. The King's Great Council (the prototype of the English Parliament) first assembled here in 1257. The House of Commons used the room in the 14th century, before moving to the Palace of Westminster. From the 1540s until Victorian times, it served as a repository for government records and is used today by staff as an access to a storage room.



The Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory carried out the tree-ring dating on this door and other historic timberwork in and around the Abbey.

It has long been known that the humble wooden door is ancient, but its true age was never proven. In the 19th century it was noticed that fragments of hide covered the door, and a legend suggested this skin was human — supposedly a man was caught in 1303 stealing from the adjoining treasury, was flayed and his skin nailed to the door as a warning to others.

A thorough archaeological study has now taken place, along with a scientific dating of the wood by the process of 'dendrochronology'. This study reveals that the timber was felled between 1032 AD and 1064 AD.

The door consists of five vertical oak planks, held together by three horizontal battens and iron straps. The battens are recessed into the planks, so that the door is flush on both sides. Medieval doors typically had a flat face with braces projecting from the rear side. The construction of this door is unique, and suggests that it separated two spaces of equal importance.

The boards were cut from a single tree and the visible rings depict growth during the years 924–1030. Since some wood was trimmed away when the planks were fashioned, the exact year cannot be determined, but is estimated to be in the range of 1032–1064 — with a date in the 1050s the most likely.

The Abbey's Archaeologist explains, "In this way, not only is this the oldest door in Britain, but it is the only one assignable to the Anglo-Saxon period. We can therefore say confidently that this was a major door belonging to the great Abbey constructed by Edward the Confessor, King of England, 1042–1065.

"The ring-pattern of the timber indicates that the tree grew in eastern England, and almost certainly came from the extensive woodland owned by the Abbey, possibly in Essex."

The door now measures 6½ ft high by 4 ft wide, but has been cut down. Originally the top was arched and the dimensions would have been 9 ft high by 4½ ft wide. One (and probably both) of the faces were covered not with human skin but with cow hides used to provide a smooth surface for decoration. Then ornamental iron hinges and decorative straps with curled ends were added, using large-headed nails and clench-bolts.

Only one original iron strap survives today (with ancient skin trapped underneath it), but the outlines of the others have been recovered by studying the nail and bolt holes and other remaining scars. Except for the paint, its original appearance can be reconstructed with confidence.

Hitherto, such doors have only been known from drawings in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, and from later Norman derivatives.

An Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory spokesman said: "From its size, and its double-sided form, it is clear that this was one of the major doors of the Saxon Abbey. Its reuse here, in c. 1250, in the Vestibule of King Henry III's magnificent Chapter House, can't have been accidental. Henry greatly revered Edward the Confessor, rebuilding the Abbey church and creating a sumptuous shrine in his honour. No expense was spared, and thus the adaptation and reuse of this ancient door must have been a symbolic act to preserve in-use a ritually important element of the Saxon Abbey. Potentially, it was the door to the Confessor's own Chapter House."



The back of the door.



It has been one and one-half years since I last reported on the results of the Sorensen genetic project (SMGF) which was last covered in the June issue of 2004. The primary reason for the lengthy delay is it took that long before significant developments occurred and were provided online.

Each participant is asked to provide as much of his family tree as is deemed to be demonstrably accurate. This is more demanding than family tradition or genealogical supposition. It took roughly a year before my family tree was published online. Until that happened, it was somewhat difficult to identify myself among those with matching or nearly matching DNA markers. The latest results that pertain to us Greers are reproduced at the bottom of this page.

The chart below is an actual screen capture of the computer display of relevant information as presented on the SMGF web site. However, it has been cropped to show only the first four rows (only these four rows depict men descended from NHG) and I have added relationships to the right of the chart to identify how each entry is descended from NHG. I am a great-great-grandson of NHG, descended through MSG — so my markers are in row two.

The most important thing to mention is that my report of June 2004 was in error! This happened because I did not realize that, according to SMGF, “Labs *follow different standards* when determining your genetic markers. We will convert your marker values for you if you select the appropriate lab on the database search page. [Our] information describes the marker conversions that are made to make your genetic profile compatible with SMGF’s.” After SMGF published an explanation of these differences, it became apparent that I had made a mistake. In June 2004 I erroneously wrote, “Note that at marker DYS448 a **triple** mutation has seemingly occurred — since my value varies from those of descendants 1, 2 and 3 by a count of three.” But we now know the “triple mutation” only appeared due to my failure to make the needed adjustments between my DNA data from FamilyTree and that determined from SMGF.

Hopefully, the chart on this page is now correct and we can begin to draw some conclusions from it. Examining the chart, notice that all 35 of my DNA markers (in line two) perfectly match those of row one because a check mark appears in every marker column for each of us. Notice also that rows three and four mismatch rows one and two on only one marker.

Row one is for a great-grandson of NHG — generationally the closest of the four to NHG. Therefore, statistically we expect these markers to most closely resemble the actual DNA of NHG. Each succeeding generation has an increased chance of genetic mutation and we see evidence of this in rows three and four. My DNA in row two matches that of row one, so there is a good chance that rows one and two actually depict the DNA of NHG. However, this observation is very weak and much more data would be needed for us to confidently make such a claim.

It is mildly disappointing that no more Greers have joined in this genetic research, but we continue to hope for more participation in times to come. In the meantime, some more interesting data is mentioned below.

The SMGF Y-chromosome database currently includes two other Greers not descended from NHG and one Macgregor (whose DNA appears quite different from ours), and it has no entries for Grier, Grear, Grierson or any other surname variant.

In March of this year, SMGF reached a milestone of one million ancestors entered into its genealogical database. This includes ancestral records from pedigree charts and records beyond what was submitted (using publicly available genealogical resources).

As of August 29, 2005, the SMGF Y-chromosome database included a total of 13,489 genotypes (participants).

If you would like to participate, please contact SMGF and arrange for a free DNA testing.

Result	Pedigree (click)	MRCA (click)	Matches	DYS385	DYS388	DYS389I	DYS389II	DYS390	DYS391	DYS392	DYS393	DYS394	DYS426	DYS437	DYS438	DYS439	DYS441	DYS442	DYS444	DYS445	DYS446	DYS447	DYS448	DYS449	DYS452	DYS454	DYS455	DYS456	DYS458	DYS459	DYS460	DYS461	DYS462	GGAAT1B07	YCAII	Y-GATA-A10	Y-GATA-C4	Y-GATA-H4		
			11 14																																					
1			35/35	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2			35/35	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3			34/35	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
4			34/35	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

gg-gs through AVG

GREER[USA]

gg-gs through MSG

GREER[USA]

gg-gs through TLG

GREER[USA]

gg-gs through AVG

GREER[USA]

(continued from page 1)

always will be), but I think it best to convey this information in another format.

These days most genealogists gather and exchange data over the Internet and, I suspect, most of our readers are included in that group. Therefore, I propose to change my efforts thusly: I will cease to publish this regular newsletter in print, and I will devote what time and energy I may have to presenting genealogical material on our long-neglected web site — but on an irregular schedule.

There will be some of us who do not have access to the Internet, but I trust these will be very few. Hopefully, those of you who cannot access the web site will, nevertheless, be kept informed by the rest of us — perhaps by someone's kindness in printing out selected portions as the need arises.

In some ways, this change may lead to better information — amassed, consolidated and arranged efficiently at the click of a mouse! Keeping a web site up-to-date is not an easy task; I know because part of my daily livelihood involves such a responsibility. Hence, I cannot promise a schedule for this online activity, but I will try my best — given the constraints of time and other challenges.

In our final newspaper issue to come out next March, I hope to publish more details about what we may expect in this online effort. In the meantime, I would appreciate hearing from you by post to my street address above or by email at greerswest@wowway.com with any comments or suggestions you may care to share with me.

Until next time, thanks for your support — Bill Greer



The Greer Way West

The Official Newsletter for Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer and Nancy Ann Terry Roberts



Our Final Issue

As reported in our previous issue, this will be our final issue of *The Greer Way West* — but *TGWW* will continue as a presence on the World Wide Web.

In some ways, the Nathaniel Hunt Greer Family Organization was a victim of the tragedy of 9/11. When the United States was thrust into war, our country began to devote far greater attention to *survival* than had hitherto been the case. Although the nature of this war is much different from those that have occurred before, it still affects us in ways that are sometimes obvious and sometimes not. For a brief time following the attacks, air travel was interrupted and when it resumed, it had changed — and air travel has been the primary means of our gathering for reunions. Perhaps this is partly to blame for the fact that we have had no more reunions after the one in the summer of 2001. And I know, personally, that it was more difficult for me to give genealogy the same importance that it had once held while more serious and pressing matters became the center of my attention.

Other concerns mentioned in our last issue — perhaps more influential than 9/11 — diminished our genealogical activities and contributed to the cessation of *TGWW*. But no matter what combination of factors led us to this point, we now turn our attention to continuing *TGWW* on the web.

As I wrote in our last issue, I have begun to give more time to our web site. I hope to make it better and present much more information than before. The most important thing for you to know is that our current site address is:

I hope to eventually post online almost all the genealogically relevant data that I have in my possession. This is an ambitious aim because I have so much more information than what you have seen in these pages. However, my greatest information (by far) pertains mostly to NHG's *alleged or presumed* ancestors. Ancestors to whom I think we connect but for which proof is lacking.

In most cases, our presumed ancestors are clearly historical figures whose reality is not questioned but for whom we merely lack one or two definite links which would establish our lineage. In other cases, our presumed ancestors are more shadowy persons whose historical reality or relationships have been questioned by historians. And in some cases, our ancient ancestors are ostensibly legendary — and in extreme cases,

essentially mythical. But all *so very interesting!*

Currently our online material is categorized thusly:

- About the Greer Family Organization
- About the Greer Reunions
- About Nathaniel Hunt Greer
- About the American Ancestors of Nathaniel Hunt Greer
- About the Descendants of Nathaniel Hunt Greer
- About our European Roots
- About Ancestor Research
- About other Sites of Interest

Initially, this arrangement may have been satisfactory, but I suspect it may need to change if forthcoming material is to fit in properly. Expect the format to evolve as needs arise. Some relevant material is already on other web pages — and simply linking to those pages could suffice. However, I tend not to trust those sites to *persist* online — so, as I think fit I will post essential parts of such material (edited to our needs) on our site.

What should we do with our remaining organizational funds? Although I do not have an exact figure, I believe the amount is several hundred dollars. For several years this money has been primarily applied to the cost of publishing *TGWW*, but now that cost will go away. We could use the money in different ways. It could help fund more reunions. It could pay for the costs of DNA or other research (as better information becomes available online, it often is not free). Perhaps you have better ideas of how to use the money?

I have recently thought of creating and moderating a *blog* (web log) as a means for us to share thoughts on our family matters, including (perhaps mostly) genealogy. A blog can cost little (or even nothing) and could be a great way for us to stay in touch. What do you think? Email me and let's discuss it.

Before I conclude this article, I want to stress the importance of current and future information posted online. A huge amount of time and effort goes into collecting this material. When I die (as we all must) and my soul returns to the infinite bosom of divine providence, what then of this material? When that day comes — tomorrow, or 30 years hence — I hope some of our family will download the material onto computers and then maintain it for future generations.

Finally, I must say how much I have enjoyed being your editor and genealogist for these past 10 years. But it is not over yet — the effort continues in hyperspace! See you online!

Pocahontas

In the very first issue of *The Greer Way West*, we briefly mentioned the family tradition that NHG was descended from Pocahontas. Now, in this final issue, we will explore the tradition as much as practical. Our treatment is rather timely since her life has been faithfully reenacted in the recent film *The New World* — a visually stunning but somewhat tedious effort.

After a couple of generations had passed from the time of Pocahontas, many people began to claim descent from her. Some of these claims have been verified, most have been refuted and some remain undetermined. (It has been estimated that her descendants number roughly 100,000.) Our claim of descent is unsubstantiated. Indeed, our tradition does not even offer a line of ancestors that can be examined for authenticity — only the vague allegation that Sarah (Sally) Hunt, NHG's mother, was in some way descended. Although we cannot determine the legitimacy of our tradition, we can honor it and present what little we can to clarify the issue in light of current knowledge.

Pocahontas (Algonquian meaning *playful and hard to control*) was actually the nickname of *Amonute Matoaka*, born September 17, 1595 (some say). She was the favorite daughter of *Wahunsunacock*, emperor of the confederacy he called *Tenakomakah*. His title was *Powhatan* and by this name he became known to the Virginia colonists at the fort on the James River that would become Jamestown.

After being captured by *Opchanacanough*, a younger brother of Powhatan, John Smith was brought before the emperor where he was “saved” by Pocahontas who had developed an affection for him during his brief captivity. It was subsequently believed that Captain Smith was not facing execution, but was being ritually adopted into the tribe.

Smith returned to James Fort where the bitter winter of 1607/1608 left only 38 of 105 colonists alive — Pocahontas saved them from starvation by bringing food when visiting Smith. She stopped visiting in October 1609 when told he was dead. Really, he was only wounded and had returned to England for treatment, but the colonists thought the deception would better satisfy the Indians.

After Smith's departure, Pocahontas married *Kocoum*, one of Powhatan's chiefs. Then in April 1613, she was captured by the English who meant to trade her for concessions from Powhatan. During her subsequent captivity at the new upstream settlement of Henrico, she met John Rolfe in July 1613, converted to Christianity, was baptized *Rebecca*, then wed John Rolfe on April 5, 1614. The marriage spawned a period of tranquility between the colonists and the Indians known as the “Peace of Pocahontas”.

John and Rebecca Rolfe lived at his *Varina Farms* plantation across the James from Henrico. Here, in January, 1615, their son Thomas was born. On June 3, 1616, *Lady Rebecca* (as she became known) arrived in England for a successful tour as a princess from the New World. After nine months in England, the Rolfes left for home but

Pocahontas fell deathly ill from an uncertain disease before the ship left the Thames. She was taken ashore and before dying, she allegedly said to John, “all must die. Tis enough that the child liveth.”

Pocahontas died March 17, 1617, and was buried four days later in the church at Gravesend, Kent. Two-year-old Thomas was left in the care of his uncle (or grandfather) Henry Rolfe, then John sailed on to Virginia, never to return.

The foregoing summarizes what is known of Pocahontas and her offspring. Although it is usually theorized that she and Kocoum were only wed *ceremoniously* to cement future tribal relations (she being only 14–15 at the time) some speculate that they *truly* married and produced a child. Aside from this purely speculative child, the only known child of Pocahontas was the previously mentioned Thomas.

Thomas grew up in England under the care of kinfolk and upon reaching the age of 20 (approximately), he sailed for Jamestown to claim his inheritance. His late father had prospered in the New World and was recognized as one of the saviors of the Virginia colony by virtue of the profitable output of his tobacco plantation.

Some time after 1640 Thomas wed Jane Poythress who is thought to have been much younger than he. From their union came Jane Rolfe, born October 10, 1650. About 1674, Jane Rolfe married Robert Bolling and on January 26, 1675, they begat John Bolling.

John Bolling had many children who would have been in the proper generation to have been a grandparent of NHG. But John Bolling's children are well-documented and none of them could have been a grandparent of NHG. This is because their identities are all known to history and none could have been the parent of NHG's mother Sarah Hunt.

However, a careful examination of the traditionally recognized offspring of Pocahontas renders the descent described above as rather peculiar, for this descent maintains that:

Pocahontas died at the age of 22 and *had but one child*.

Her son Thomas died at the age of 60 and *had but one child*.

His child Jane died at the age of 26 and *had but one child*.

As students of genealogy, we are justifiably suspicious that there was only one child of each of the three generations from Pocahontas. Indeed, a strong case has been made that her son Thomas produced another child by a previous marriage in England. It is claimed that on September 13, 1632, Thomas wed Elizabeth Washington with Elizabeth dying soon after the birth of their daughter Anne.

[continued on page 4]



Pocahontas



DNA Report

As I have reported before, getting a 12-marker match in the Family Tree DNA project is disappointingly common. As of this writing my Y-DNA has matched *319 other men*, but only ONE has the surname of *Greer*! In what follows I compare my ancestry with his, using his initials of *LDG* to preserve his anonymity. When I explored my genetic distance from LDG beyond the 12 markers, I learned our 25-marker comparison yielded only ONE miss — a very encouraging result! At 37 markers, we missed on 3 markers, not so good but still worth investigating.

So LDG and I are quite probably distant cousins. Analysis from Family Tree DNA yields estimates how far back in time LDG and I might have a common ancestor. The results are in the chart below.

Sorensen genetic project research strongly affirms that a 25-year period is roughly one generation. Thus, each column in the chart approximates one century — and there is about a 77% chance for a common ancestor for LDG and me within the past 3 centuries.

Because of this promising comparison, I contacted LDG so that we could compare our ancestries. On viewing NHG's ancestry, LDG wrote to me about his ancestor Samuel (I slightly edited it):

Samuel was supposed to have come to the States with two brothers. John D. Greer is the right age to have been one of them. Another point that I have yet to resolve is Samuel's father was supposed to be a James Greer. I had an investigator in Ireland do some research for me but nothing really came out of it.

I looked at 5 different Samuels when I first started looking into genealogy. The one that had me fooled for a while was Samuel Greer from Carlisle, PA. He owned two lots there and married a Rebecca (no last name). My Samuel was married to Rebecca Howard so I thought I had found the right man. It turns out she was Rebecca McCrackin and they migrated to Washington Co, TN. This Samuel came from Limerick, Ireland. He must have known my Samuel because he acted as a witness to the sale of land when Rebecca Howard's father passed away. Samuel and Rebecca were in KY at the time and must have chosen to not go back for the sale of the farm. Another Samuel was a Samuel Greer/Greeves born in Tyrone Co, Ireland. His father William Greer assumed the name Greeves when he married in the Quaker church. I got the feeling he had sinned when he was a Greer so had to change his name. He and his wife both died in 1801 enroute to Baltimore and their 5 children were raised in Philadelphia by Quakers. The other Samuels I looked at, the dates weren't right.

Samuel and many of his family and Rebecca's family are buried on the farm. All the graves are marked by field stones as they did

in those days. The DAR placed a plaque at the grave site stating "Samuel Greer 1758–1820, a soldier of the American Revolution."

With your Thomas, I wonder if Samuel's father is the son of Thomas's brother and if they came to the States about the same time or thereabout. Both were in PA. One question raises another.

Upon doing some Internet searching, what I found out (all unsubstantiated, of course) about LDG's ancestor is copied below:

Samuel Greer

b 1751–1758 in Ulster

d 18 SEP 1820 in Nelson Co, KY

Possible father #1: James, son of William, both of Ulster and their spouses unknown.

Possible father #2: John Greer

b 1740 in Shankill, Armagh Co, Ulster

d in Nelson Co, KY

Possible mother: Elisabeth (Elsbeth) Wauch

b in Scotland

Samuel Greer wed Rebecca Howard 1770-1778 in Cumberland Co, PA. She was ...

b ca 1757 in Scotland or ca 1749 in PA

d 1834 in Nelson Co, KY

Samuel enlisted in the army in 1778 and was at Valley Forge. He wed in Harrisburg, PA, but the records have burned. He and his family moved to Nelson Co, KY, near Bloomfield ca 1783–1785. Samuel and his wife's wills are recorded in Nelson Co, KY.

Summarizing salient points from the above information :

- *LDG and I share DNA so similar that it suggests a 77% chance of a common ancestor born around the mid-1600s — with the chance approaching certainty for a common ancestor born in the 1400s.*
- *Our alleged ancestries share a last-known old world residence in Ulster; a subsequent immigration into southeastern PA followed by a migration to the South.*

Although factually unproven, these findings nevertheless **strongly support** our traditional descent from a family of Greers in Ulster.

Research continues and will be reported on *The Greer Way West* web site as results merit publication.

In comparing 37 Y-DNA markers, the probability that William N. Greer and LDG share a common ancestor within the last ...					
4 generations is	8 generations is	12 generations is	16 generations is	20 generations is	24 generations is
12.33%	47.9%	76.84%	91.42%	97.18%	99.15%

Pocahontas continued ...

When Thomas sailed for Virginia, his daughter Anne was left in the care of his cousin Anthony Rolfe. When she was 26 or 27, Anne wed Peter Elwyn (or Elwin) and they supposedly had at least seven children, but I have been unable to link any of their descendants to Sarah Hunt.

Although there is no conclusive evidence that the Thomas Rolfe who wed Elizabeth Washington was the same man of Jamestown fame, his validity has been accepted by the *Pocahontas Foundation*.

So while our family tradition that Sarah Hunt descended from Pocahontas has not been confirmed, the apparent possibilities are that Sarah descended from:

Pocahontas and Kocoum (the least likely descent)

An unidentified child of Thomas Rolfe

An unidentified descendant of Anne Rolfe and Peter Elwyn

At this point — *assuming* we descend from Pocahontas — it seems very unlikely that we can obtain confirmation in the foreseeable future. Probably the best chance of doing so is through DNA research, but it's not that easy — as related in the following announced last November:

Archaeologists failed to identify the remains of one of Jamestown's forefathers via the excavation of a grave in Suffolk, England. A team of American scientists dug up the *wrong* body in their attempt to find the sister of Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, one of the leaders in the effort to establish the Virginia colony. Now little hope remains to prove that remains found in Virginia are those of Gosnold because he is not thought to have any other kin alive or dead. Excavation at Jamestown in 2003 uncovered a skeleton thought to be Gosnold because it was buried with a ceremonial staff. The project had been funded by a National Geographic grant.

Coincidentally, last June a pair of shell earrings set in silver and believed to be among the only surviving possessions of Pocahontas went on display at a London museum in their first public showing since 1907 (the Jamestown tercentennial). Each earring is formed of the rare white kind of mussel found on the eastern shore of the Berings Strait. They are set in silver rims, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and are worth approximately \$500,000.

The earrings were passed down through the Rolfe family although before that they are believed to have been in the possession of the Elwyns. They now belong to the Association for Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.



The Earrings of Pocahontas

The earrings were sent from Virginia to England for exhibition at the Museum of Docklands — for the upcoming 400th anniversary of the settlement at Jamestown. They were displayed through mid-July of last year, then they were returned to Virginia for the opening of a new museum of colonial artifacts in 2006.

The Jamestown collection of early 17th-century artifacts also includes tobacco pipes, freshwater pearls and a silver ear pick (for cleaning earwax) that was only used by those of high social class.