



## **FAMILY ASSOCIATION**

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### **NEWSLETTER January 2002**

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IF A RENEWAL FORM IS ENCLOSED, YOU NEED TO PAY DUES

#### **WHAT IS THERE TO DO IN ELBERT COUNTY, GEORGIA? 2002 Reunion Information From Jim Vaughters**

Now that we have decided to go to Elbert County, Georgia, for the 2002 reunion, some may be wondering what will go on that is so interesting. With Swift and Julian Vaughter gone, we will be walking the ground that ancestors walked 200 years ago, honoring their lives and reconstructing some events.

Finding Elbert is the first job. From the west, I-20 goes through Atlanta, then exits at Madison (Jim's hometown) or Thomson will get to Elberton. From west and northwest, take interstate highways to Chattanooga (I-40 to Nashville, I-24 to Chattanooga, I-75 from Knoxville). Take I-75 to Atlanta, north loop of I-285 around Atlanta, then east on I-85, Athens Highway, or I-20. From the northeast, take I-85 south to Lavonia (where former Gov. Vandiver lives), then south to Elberton.

Housing has changed slightly. The cottages at Richard Russell State Park are full. The Holiday Inn Express, 706-283-8811, and the Days Inn, 706-283-2300, are more than half full. The reunion host does not recommend staying in any of the other motels in Elberton. The nearest other acceptable one is a Days Inn at Hartwell, 15 miles north of Elberton. That phone number is 706-376-4707.

Several professional catering services are bidding for our business for the evening meals on Friday and Saturday. The motels and other cafes serve good breakfasts, and a variety of restaurants offer lunch.

The reunion host spent parts of a week in December making some of the arrangements. The schedule has changed slightly (this is only the first change):

Wednesday, July 31 – View the farm, cemeteries, buildings.

Thursday, August 1 - Drive to Franklin County; visit courthouse, historical society, Vaughter farm and cemetery; lunch in Lavonia; Gov. and Mrs. Vandiver have asked to host a reception at their home; registration and executive meeting at Elberton Civic Center.

Friday, August 2 – Opening meeting; State of Georgia ceremony at farm to dedicate land; tour house, store, barn; lunch in Elberton; view original records at courthouse; drive to Winder to Doug Vaughters' house to see furniture and other artifacts from buildings; view 200-year old restored house; catered supper at Civic Center.

Saturday, August 3, Sons of Confederate Veterans ceremony at grave of Swift and Julian Vaughter's father; Sons of American Revolution ceremony at grave of John Vaughter (deep in the woods), if the S. A. R. accepts the evidence we are submitting as sufficient proof that he was a soldier in the war; Ruckersville; story-telling; banquet and closing meeting.

Sunday, August 4, Attend service at Harmony Baptist Church.

The main attraction are the Granite Museum, which is adjacent to the Civic Center; Veterans Park; the Georgia Guidestones; and the Nancy Hart cabin. Each one is unique, and will be described in the next issue.

For those who are worried about chiggers, we have the good news that former VVV president Beth Melton has volunteered to be the "chigger patrol." She is making a quantity of her sulphur compound, which she guarantees will keep the redbugs off!

## **NEWSLETTER INDEX**

About two years ago, the Historian/Archivist suggested that because the newsletters have become so voluminous, an index is needed. Patricia Vawter Renton, of Pipe Creek, Texas, immediately volunteered to do the job. The CD she has created arrived just in time to announce in this issue that the job is done.

On this CD, Patricia has included all the newsletters from the very first one in 1977 through 2001. She added a section of excerpts pertaining to Vawters taken from Studie Rucker Wood's "The Rucker Family Genealogy." As an added bonus, the CD also has the entire Grace Vawter Bicknell book, "The Vawter Family in America."

In the next newsletter, we will give information on how to obtain copies of the CD.

Meanwhile, we say "Thank you, Patricia! Your hard work, dedication and wisdom have created a wonderful work that will endure and be helpful to many."

## **ONCE A HOOSIER**

Members of the Indiana Genealogical Society are invited to submit information about their 19<sup>th</sup> century ancestors, either native born or temporary residents who moved on to other states. The following biography appeared in the August 1993 Vol. 5 No. 4 issue of the society newsletter.

WILLIAM HAMILTON STAPP, born in 1843 in Madison, Jefferson Co., Indiana, to William and Margaret Julia Norris Stapp; married Anna Cornelia Robinson (born 25 July 1843 in Jefferson Co., Indiana, died 4 February 1936 in Dallas, Dallas Co., Texas) on 12 February 1867 in Madison, Jefferson Co., Indiana. Children: William E., Mary Margaret and Florence Elizabeth.

William H. Stapp worked in his father's cap and boot store in Madison, Indiana, and served as a sergeant in the Indiana cavalry during the Civil War. In 1878 he moved to Taylorsville, Williamson Co., Texas, to raise sheep. He left Texas in the 1880s to dig silver in Colorado and California. His death date and place are unknown.

Elias Stapp, William's grandfather, born 11 January 1786 in Orange Co., Virginia, to Achilles and Margaret Vawter Stapp, died 1 February 1867 in Madison, Jefferson Co., Indiana; married on 29 June 1810 in Jefferson Co., Indiana, Susan Branham (born 1 March 1789 in Kentucky, died 15 May 1859 in Jefferson Co., Indiana); moved to Kentucky with his parents in 1789 and later to the Madison, Indiana, area.

William Stapp, William H. Stapp's father, born in 1814 in Jefferson Co., Indiana; died 1902 in Jefferson Co.; married Margaret Julia Norris (born 1822 in Jefferson Co., died 6 February 1865 in Jefferson Co., ) on 30 April 1840 in Jefferson Co., Indiana.

Submitted to the Indiana Genealogical Society by Edward Robert Whittlesey-Stapp, 8348 Lullwater St., Dallas, Texas 75218.

## **SOME INDIANA WRITERS AND POETS**

Edited by Alonzo Rice  
Teachers Journal Printing Company  
Marion, Indiana, 1908

Clara Vawter was born in Boone county, Virginia, September 25, 1873. She removed to Greenfield with her parents when she was quite a child. She graduated from the Greenfield High School. Her principal work in "Of Such is the Kingdom." A writer said of her, "Too much cannot be said in praise of the literary ability of Miss Vawter. She is natural, modest and unassuming in her writings and it may be said that this is one of the reasons of her success as a writer and for the enthusiastic way in which her work has been received." The illustrations were by her brother, Mr. Will Vawter, and they fulfill their mission – they illustrate. We see the genuine child attitude, unconscious as a bird or a bee; the artless turn of the head, and turn-in of the toes, the girls' funny little pigtail and her round-cornered apron, the boy's home-cut hair and home-made trousers.

**THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION**

Atlanta, Georgia January 21, 2002

Senior Couple to Sell Last Farm in DeKalb

Sunday suppers at Nannie and Papa's farmhouse are a cherished childhood tradition Beth Henley is having a hard time saying goodbye to. After attending church in Decatur, Henley recalls, her parents would take her and her two sisters to the Lithonia farm that has belonged to her grandfather for 56 years.

"They would cook homegrown vegetables from the farm and have fried chicken and roast and all the fixin's" remembers the 28-year old Henley, who now lives with her husband and two children in Conyers. "Nannie would make a cake when she was well."

A lot has changed since then. Nannie and Papa – known to the rest of the world as Rebecca and S. B. Vaughters – are admittedly "of age, and 89 and 90, respectively. They've sold the livestock and let the gardens go. They lease their property to a truck driver who cuts the hay to sell. And soon, their 141 acres of rolling hills lined with century-old oaks and rare granite outcroppings – believed to be the last working farm in DeKalb County – will be no more.

In the next few months, the state will complete the lengthy process of purchasing the farm as part of a green space initiative supporters hope will one day connect Arabia Mountain Park and Panola Mountain State Park. The 940-acre site – part of a planned 4,000-acre preserve stretching across three counties – will be the largest undeveloped tract of land in highly urbanized DeKalb County.

Vaughters is a Dawsonville native and University of Georgia graduate who goes by his initials. He dropped Silvey Brice from his name because it sounded too feminine. He said he agreed to the appraised \$2.8 million price tag for his farm "so it would stay like it is. I didn't want it to become houses or an office park".

Vaughters paid \$4,230 for the land in 1946 to raise cattle. He says he declined dozens of requests to sell to commercial real estate developers for much more than the state is paying. The state is leasing the land to DeKalb County for "a nominal fee" as part of the county's green space initiative, according to Paul Michael, chief of real estate for the state Department of Natural Resources.

The property is located near Evans Mill Road in Lithonia, not far from the explosion of retail and commercial development surrounding the Mall at Stonecrest. "Nearly all the rest of DeKalb County is covered up with homes and businesses," Vaughters said. "You can drive from Lithonia to Dunwoody and not find a piece of open land. I didn't want that here."

Neither did a lot of others. Vaughters' quest to leave his land virtually unchanged has the support of community groups, neighbors and lawmakers, including Gov. Roy Barnes and U.S. Sen. Max Cleland, a Lithonia native. "If Mr. Vaughters had not been willing to do this, it would have become a subdivision, no question about it," said Kelly Jordan, president of the Arabia Mountain Alliance, a nonprofit corporation that advocated green space preservation in south DeKalb. "A lot of lucky things happened, mainly that Mr. Vaughters was willing to stick it out."

Once the transaction is complete in the next four months, state officials plan to put a park ranger's station on the current site of the Vaughters' two-bedroom stone ranch house. Vaughters built it for \$2,200 in 1947 with the help of family members and a seventh-grader hired from a nearby school, according to his autobiography, "Real Life Experiences," published in 1989.

The couple is looking at houses now in Newton and Walton counties, still within a 30-minute drive of their four children, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren scattered throughout Rockdale, DeKalb and surrounding counties. "We're going to miss knowing that it's there. We did most of our growing up at the farm," Beth Henley said. "But we're glad it's going to be preserved, and it won't be a big neighborhood or shopping center."

Looking back, Vaughters says he has no regrets about giving up his property so others can enjoy its beauty for years to come. "I bought this land because I got a good deal, and nobody wanted it," Vaughters said while surveying the land one recent afternoon. "I'm glad I held on this long, so others can take advantage of it. But I'm going to miss it, for sure."

**“HOW CAN THESE BE SAVED?”**

By Jim Vaughters

In her 1905 book, “The Vawter Family in America,” Grace Vawter Bicknell wrote A Personal Word before launching into the history. In the first paragraph, she showed her motivation for the work:

“My father had some old records in his possession which came to him from his father. These were yellow with age and falling to pieces. In another generation they would probably have been lost. In looking those records over, the thought came to me: ‘How can these be saved?’ It was then that the present history was begun, with no hope or prospect of pecuniary reward, but with the desire of preserving to our children the records of their fathers.”

These words are as true today as they were when they were written 97 years ago. Family members collect writings, photographs, letters, research (census, wills, deeds), and now CDs, Internet printouts, etc. How can all this data be saved?

First, it needs to be organized (the nemesis of many genealogists). Second, a family needs to talk and decide who gets the data in the next generation. Third, if no one wants it, don’t throw it away. Consider donating it to the VVV Archives.

Many people have given their records to the Association during their lifetime. Their material makes up a major portion of the archives. But most people want to keep their records all of their lives.

A simple thing to do is to include a paragraph in a will that has the effect of giving the records to the Association. The following could be used as a model:

“During my lifetime I have collected genealogical information only ancestors named Vawter/Vauter/Vaughter(s). These records contain writings, photographs, letters, research, deeds, wills, CDs, computer programs, etc. I hereby give all such records to the archives of the Vawter/Vauter/Vaughter(s) Family Association. I direct that my executor contact that Association and arrange for the organizing, packing and shipping of such records to the Association. I further direct that my executor pay all expenses of such organizing, packing and shipping from my estate as an expense of administration, before distributing any proceeds to my heirs or devisees. In the event that my estate does not have funds available, my executor shall request the Association to bear the expenses. Finally, I give such records to the VVV Family Association with the hope and expectation that the Association will maintain them and make them available to members in perpetuity.”

***BITS ‘N PIECES***

Fred Wicker is recuperating and doing well after having quadruple by-pass surgery on January 21.

The Rev. Karen B. Woodruff has resigned as Priest in Charge of Vauter’s Church in Virginia. Her last Sunday service was December 30, 2001.

### ***QUERY***

From: Cheryl Dewey [Cheryl---dewey@ram-mail.com](mailto:Cheryl---dewey@ram-mail.com)

Cheryl is seeking information on Rachel Crawford who married Peter Smith. Rachel was the daughter of James M. and Lucy Vawter Crawford.

### ***IN REMEMBRANCE***

**Ann Vawter Felton**, 100, died 30 January 2002 at Methodist Healthcare-Brownsville Hospital in Brownsville, Tennessee. She was born in Milan, Tennessee, the daughter of James Alma and Bessie Bryant Vawter.

Mrs. Felton was a graduate of Milan High School and West Tennessee Business College. She worked for Carroll Paper Company for twenty years and was a retired Staff Member of the American Red Cross, having served for ten years. She was a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

Survivors include two stepsons, Paul Felton of Sugar Land, Texas, and Robert Felton of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and a niece, Mary Jane Felker of Brownsville, who was her caregiver. She was preceded in death by her husband, Henry D. Felton.

Funeral service was held at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Burial was at Ridgecrest Cemetery.

Mrs. Felton had been a member of the association for many years. She was a cousin of the late Robert M. "Pete" Vawter.

**Thomas H. Vawter**, 68, of Milan, Tennessee, died January 2002 at Memphis Veterans Medical Center. He was a truck driver for Travis Pallet Company, and an Air Force Veteran of the Korean War.

Survivors include a daughter, Angela Manne of McKenzie; his mother and step-father, Ida Mai Vawter Earls and Carson Earls of Milan; three sisters, Mary Medlin of Collierville, Martha McLeod of Oakland and Linda Dison of Conway, Arkansas; and a brother, John Vawter of Walls, Mississippi.

Burial was at Oakwood Cemetery.

**Julian Carey Pike**, 88, a lifelong resident of Prentiss County, Mississippi, died 10 February 2002 at Booneville Baptist Hospital. He was born 3 December 1913, the son of James Edward and Julie Lyle Pike.

He was a member of Tuscumbia Baptist Church and a farmer

Survivors include his wife of 65 years, Trana Barker Pike; a son, Jerry Pike; three daughters, Elizabeth Mathis, Martha Lindsey, and Linda Martin; a sister, Martha Barker; several grandchildren and several great-grandchildren, all of Booneville. He was preceded in death by four brothers, Wythel, Keith, Rupert and Randy Pike.

Carey Pike, his brother, Rupert, and their families attended the reunions that were held in Tupelo. Many will remember being entertained by Rupert's excellent Harmonica playing.

## **IN REMEMBRANCE**

Francis Elizabeth “Beth” Vawter Sabel, 82, of Portland, Oregon, died 29 December 2001, at St. Jude Care Center in Portland. She was born 29 September 1919 in Fruita, Mesa County, Colorado, the fourth child and eldest daughter of Vernon Day and Renabelle Eliza Cope Vawter.

She graduated from the eighth grade in Grand Junction, then stayed home to help with chores. At age nineteen she went to Salvation Army Officers Training College in San Francisco, and was a Salvation Army officer for about six years. Beth worked as a fur finisher for several years, then as a seamstress. She was proud of the fact that she helped make the first uniforms worn by waitresses in the restaurant of the Seattle Space Needle.

For twenty years, Beth worked as a housekeeper in the maternity department of the Multnomah County Hospital. She was devoted to the babies, and would buy bolts of fabric to make layettes for the poor families who had nothing for their newborns. After retiring, she crocheted hundreds of tiny hats for “preemie” babies so they would not lose body heat from their heads. She also crocheted stocking caps to give to the Salvation Army for poor people at Christmas. Her goal was to make 100 caps each year.

Then she starting crocheting little Christmas wreaths. After entering an assisted living facility, she made a wreath for each of the staff members, then one for each of the residents, then 100 for the Christmas tree in the activity room. Finally, there was a basket of them on the counter with a sign that read “Made by the loving hands of Beth Sabel. Help yourself.” After she forgot how to make the little wreaths, Beth kept herself busy at the facility by clearing the tables after each meal. Her entire life was spent helping others.

Survivors include a son, Thomas Vernon Griffith of Portland; a granddaughter, Deborah Cheryle Griffith; two brothers, James Byron Vawter of Springfield, Missouri, and Charles Dalton Vawter of Crooked River Ranch, Oregon; four sisters, Alberta Vander Mei of Portland, Eleanor Marie Spink of Boring, Oregon, and Bertha Rose Craft and Dorothy Irene Vawter, both of Reno, Nevada; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by three brothers, Harry Cope Vawter, Virgil Dale Vawter, and Ronald Earl Vawter; a niece, Pamela Ann Vawter; and a nephew, Ronald Dean Vawter.

At Beth’s request, there was no funeral or memorial service. Memorials may be made to Doernbecher Children’s Hospital Foundation, 1121 SW Salmon St., Suite 201, Portland OR 97205.

Beth was a longtime member of the association, and before Alzheimer’s Disease made it impossible for her to travel, she enjoyed attending the annual reunions. She was a past officer of the association and had assisted with the newsletter.

## ***THANK YOU***

Special Thanks to Ellen Cummings, the Rev. Ralph Fall, Richard Greene, Alberta Vander Mei, Jim Vaughters, Norma Jean Vawter and Wordna Wicker for providing information for this newsletter. All help is greatly appreciated.!

## ***Members and Friends Registered at 2001 Reunion***

Because of lack of space, this list was not printed in the October 2001 newsletter.

### **ARKANSAS**

Terry and Nancy Haynes  
Gene and Gay Herndon  
Harold and Sybil Lansdale  
Jean Lee  
Charles and Janis Vawter  
Vernon and Trudy Vawter

### **CALIFORNIA**

Glena Swinburn  
Garry B. Vawter  
Marjorie Vawter

### **COLORADO**

Jim Vaughters

### **DELEWARE**

Robert and Donna Vawter

### **GEORGIA**

Betty Burt  
Richard Greene  
Cheryl Kelley; Tim and Kristy Glasgow

### **ILLINOIS**

Paul and Connie Bugos  
Edith Vawter

### **INDIANA**

Milton and Charlotte Pickett

### **MICHIGAN**

Patricia Vawter Klein

### **MISSISSIPPI**

Judith Crawford  
Sue Hunt  
Jackie Hudson  
Martha J. Hudson  
Norma S. Vaughters  
Fred and Wordna Wicker  
Ken and Norma Wicker  
McDaniel Wicker

### **NEW YORK**

Richard and Dorothy Vawter

### **OKLAHOMA**

Bill and Sharon Coursey  
Melba Harris  
Bill and Virginia Vawter  
Joe Don Vawter  
John N. Vawter  
Oscar and Erma Vawter  
Patricia Vawter  
Silas Vawter

### **SOUTH DAKOTA**

Georgene Jurgensen

### **TENNESSEE**

Bill and Julia Blanks  
Nolen and Eloise Bradley  
Caroline Vawter Scarlett  
Barbara J. Vawter; Emily J. Defur  
Katelyn Vawter  
Norma Jean Vawter

### **TEXAS**

Randy and Donna Joyce  
Beth Melton  
Rick and Judy Pennington  
Karla Vawter Quigley; James  
Patricia Vawter Renton  
Joy Vawter Richter  
Phil and Peggy Vaughter  
J. W. and Diannia Vawter  
Jesse and Laneil Vawter  
John H. and Sue Vawter

### **VIRGINIA**

Ned and Ellen Cummings; Frederick

### **WISCONSIN**

Evert and Maxine Joling  
James Joling  
Jordan Joling



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