



FAMILY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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Dues - \$7.00 per year

1993 REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

The sixteenth annual reunion of the VVV Family Association was held August 5 - 8 in Oklahoma City. Hosts were Bill M. and Dorothy Vawter and their family. To them all, we say, "Thank you for a job well done!" Anyone who has ever planned an event such as this knows that it takes much time and effort.

Early registration began on Thursday afternoon. Of course, by that time many members had already arrived, with some having been at the motel since Tuesday or Wednesday. Following a 6:30 P.M. dinner, an informal meeting was held. Entertainment was provided by Diane Ashburn Wilmonen, who sang a solo "Wings of a Dove." She was accompanied by her mother, Melba Vawter Ashburn. Melba then gave a reading, "The Bear Story," by James Whitcomb Riley. Making a return visit to the reunion was "Lotta Buttons" (aka Beth Melton,) and her father, Roger Byler. They had an original skit, written by Roger, "The Clown and the Preacher Discuss Genealogies."

Friday began with the annual business meeting at 9:00 A.M. The meeting was called to order with the traditional ringing of the VVV cow bell by the president, Bill M. Vawter. The opening prayer was given by Roger Byler. Minutes of the 1992 meeting were read by secretary, Beth Melton, and the treasurer's report was given by Sue Vawter. An invitation to hold the 1994 reunion in Tupelo, Miss., was extended by Fred and Wordna Wicker. This was voted on and accepted.

Again this year, the ancestor charts were color-coded and placed on the walls. Descendants were asked to sign their names under the proper ancestor. Each child of Bartholomew and Winifred Hodgson Vawter was represented by a different color, and ribbons of that color were worn along with the name tags.

At 11:00 A.M., most of the group left for a bus tour of Oklahoma City, including a stop at the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Some people stayed at the motel to talk and share information they had learned doing family research during the past year.

On Friday evening, following a buffet dinner, a sing-a-long was led by Hazel Hersh and Gladys Garriott, friends of Bill M. and Dorothy Vawter. Hazel then provided piano entertainment.

Sally Brown presented "Another Visit with Winifred Hodgson Vawter," telling how everyday living was during 1714. Her presentation is included as a part of this newsletter.

A memorial service was conducted by Fred and Wordna Wicker, with the assistance of their granddaughters, Rebecca Cummings and Caroline Wicker. The service began with a violin solo by Ila Vawter.

William Dwight Vawter, son of the hosts, led a tour of the Family History Center at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on Saturday. Several members were able to find helpful information, and the computer and microfilm readers were kept quite busy all the time the group was there.

Following the Saturday evening buffet, musical entertainment was provided by a quartet, Robert and Chris Russell, and Warren and Cathy Willis. Also, by what has quickly become a highlight of the reunion, the VVV Children's Chorus, under the direction of Ellen Cummings. Those who sang were Eric and Stephanie Chaviers, Frederick and Rebecca Cummings, Emily DeFur, Krista and Timothy Glasgow, Matthew Loch, Keith and Kim Smith, Alicia and Jared Vawter, Caroline, Margaret, and McDaniel Wicker.

Fred Wicker, reporting for the nominating committee, made a motion that all officers be re-elected for another year. This was unanimously approved.

The annual roll call of the states showed there were 16 states represented, with Oklahoma having the most present, followed closely by Texas.

Special recognition was given these individuals:
Traveling the farthest: Kareen Hund Krein, Mt. Vernon, WA
Oldest: Velma Tidwell, 94, Oklahoma City
Youngest: Jon Taylor Loch, 21 months, Moore, OK

Past president, John H. Vawter, was presented a certificate. Also recognized was Charles Parker of Oklahoma City. He had generously made copies of a song he had written, and provided each person with a copy.

One of the most popular events, the awarding of door prizes, took place on both Friday and Saturday. They were distributed by Shirley Vawter Beasley, and Mike and Michelle Alexander, with the help of most of the children in attendance.

The reunion concluded on Sunday with a chapel service led by William D. Vawter. His message was "The Importance of Families."

ANOTHER VISIT WITH WINIFRED HODGSON VAWTER

Researched and Written by Sally Vawter Brown

"Do you remember me? My name is Winifred Hodgson Vawter and I am the wife of Bartholomew. We've talked before. Well, here it is, tobacco growing time again. 1714 has been a really good year so far. The indentured men and our black people are carefully tending the plants so they will all thrive. There has been plenty of rain this year and the plants look wonderful. Before we know it, it will be harvest time. Tobacco prices are better than they have been in a long time, so it looks like this year will be a good one for us.

"As I said, there's been plenty of rain this year, but we don't drink that water because there is such a danger of "country fever" during the "sickly months" of summer. All of us, even the children, drink beer or apple cider. It is much safer to do that.

"Speaking of the children, they are growing up so fast. The big boys, John and William and David, are almost as tall as Bartholomew already. Bartholomew and I know that we are very blessed. We have only six children, but each one is strong and healthy and intelligent. We are very proud of each one of them. Of course you know that the idea on the frontier is to have lots of children to populate the land and to have lots of workers for the fields.. Also, people have a big family so they can take care of their parents in their old age. I hear that there is one woman over to South Carolina who has had 34 children! Can you imagine feeding that many? Women often marry as young as 12 years old. Well, I surely don't want our Margaret to do that! There are lots of families around who have from 16 - 22 children. Often the children are from two or more wives. When a spouse dies, the one that is left usually marries again fairly soon. Some people marry five or six times in their lifetime. Well, six children is the right number for us. With only six, we can enjoy each one of them.

"Did you know that on long winter's evenings we all sit around the fireplace and take turns reading aloud from the bible while the men carve out wooden trenchers and spoons or make shoes, and the women piece quilts or knit or mend? We make quilts out of every usable scrap of material from worn out clothing. We don't waste a thing. Often, while we sit there, someone pops some corn for a treat. The children love "popped corn" and so do Bartholomew and I. The Indians taught us how to do it.

"Those wooden trenchers and spoons that the men make are for every day use. I also have pewter plates and spoons that we use for special occasions. But my dream is to one day have enough real china to use for very special occasions. I do have a few pieces already that my mother brought over from England, and then Bartholomew has bought me a few more pieces in Williamsburg from a ship captain. He is so good to me."

"I could never use china every day because we usually eat so hurriedly that the wooden trenchers are much more practical. Sometimes we don't even sit down to eat. Everybody gets up about 6:00 and we start our chores. Then about 9:00 we come in and eat breakfast whenever it is convenient with our work. We eat some cold meat, hominy and hot bread. I keep a pot of stew on the fire all the time and that is what we have for dinner. It is usually served around 2:00. Our evening meal is a very light one about 8:00. It is usually just some fruit, milk and cheese.

"Speaking of my stew, I start a large pot and just keep adding to it every day depending on what is available. The men say that the older it is, the better it tastes. Usually I start with some meat; frequently it is pork or venison if the men have been out hunting. Often I use turkey or fish. Then I add cabbage, beets, onions, carrots, peas, beans, and always corn. I also add fresh mint and sage or some of my special herbs. That is what makes my stew so good!

"Corn is one of the main crops in my "kitchen garden." The Indians have taught us so many ways to use it. You know they saved our early settlers' lives because people had never seen corn in England, and many of the different types of seeds they brought over with them would not grow here. We eat lots of bread made from our corn which is so good. Oh, I do like bread made with wheat flour too, but here in Virginia we never have been able to raise wheat successfully. Once in a long while, Bartholomew buys some from a ship captain, but it is so expensive that I can't make very much with it. Most often we eat ashcakes that the Indians taught us to make. We also eat hoe cakes that are baked on a shovel or a hoe held among the hot coals. For a really special treat, I make spoonbread with lots of eggs and butter. Mmmh, it is so good! If the men are going hunting or traveling up to Williamsburg, I bake Johnnycakes for them to take along. They are good eaten all by themselves or with a stew that they might make along the trail. Johnnycakes are made with cornmeal, salt, boiling water and milk.

"We have a root cellar under the house where the servants and I store lots of food during the growing season so we won't have a "starving time" near the end of winter like people used to have. We store potatoes, beets, carrots, corn, onions and apples. Plus barrels of salted or pickled beef or pork, crocks of pickled fruit and vegetables, and eggs smeared with fat and then packed in ashes and straw. (Don't make that face, they really are good!) We also dry lots of fruits and vegetables and meat during the summer. Those things we string on a thread and hang them in the sun to dry. In the winter we are very glad to have them to put in our soups or stews.

"Did I ever tell you about the first place we lived here in Virginia? You know that Bartholomew and I were married in 1698 and we had a pretty, little log cabin that he built for us before we

got married. He cut the logs all by himself from our land. It had one big room with a huge fireplace and a loft for sleeping. I loved it! After the children began to come, he built us this nice big house that we live in now. It is much more comfortable with our family, but we all still spend a lot of time together around the fireplace just like we did in our log cabin.

"With our big house, we are able to invite travelers to stay overnight with us. People who travel this far out on the frontier can only camp out if settlers like us aren't hospitable. Besides, we love to have people stay with us because they bring us news about what has been happening along the way.

"At Annie May and Tom's wedding last week, several of us from around here got to talking and decided it was time to hire a dancing instructor to teach our children, especially the girls. It is so important for a girl to be a good dancer. Don't you think so? The instructor will come live with us while he is teaching dancing and maybe some music, too. Many people think it is more important for a girl to dance well than to cipher well. I disagree with that, but I do want Margaret to be a good dancer. I want all our sons to dance well, also. Bartholomew is such a good dancer and dancing has always been fun for us.

"Did I remember to tell you that Bartholomew recently bought another 200 acres of land along the river from a man whose father had patented thousands of acres of land in the early 1600's? This new acreage will give us so much more land to raise a larger crop of sweet scented tobacco and some corn and still have land to cut for timber. Bartholomew and several other plantation owners have gone together and chartered their own ship to take their tobacco to market in England. Every year, Bartholomew sells our tobacco on consignment to a British merchant who handles the marketing of the crop for a commission. Our neighbor is a man who received a land patent after he had completed his indenture service to Bartholomew, and now he grows his own small tobacco crop. Bartholomew lets him ship his tobacco to market with ours so that he is able to get a better price. He is a fine, hard worker who is married and now has one son and his wife is pregnant again. He always worked well for Bartholomew, so Bartholomew is glad to help him get a good start.

"Thirty-eight years ago, after Bacon's Rebellion ending in late 1676, Virginia leaders began to search for a solution to the area's almost total dependence on one crop - tobacco. A consensus emerged that if towns were established, this would diversify the economy away from tobacco. The towns would provide immigrant shopkeepers and craftsmen with a place to locate. Leaders envisioned prosperous villages dotting the countryside that would foster education, religion, and a more satisfying social life.

"Along about 1680, the General Assembly passed a law requiring every Virginia county to establish a town. On March 25, 1682, our

own Rappahannock County purchased 50 acres of land on the south side of the river to establish a town. It was first called Hobbs Hole. (I still call it that.) A Hole usually means deep water where a ship could anchor. There are several "Holes" along the Rappahannock. They later tried to call it New Plymouth, but that didn't last. Now, they call it Tappahannock.

"In 1692, Essex County was created out of all the land on the south side of the river in Rappahannock County. We taxpayers have paid dearly for the privilege of having a new county, with a heavy tax of 73 pounds of tobacco collected for every white man, servant and slave.

"Well, enough about all of our problems with the government. It is time for me to get busy. I must make some of my very special Johnnycakes because Bartholomew and our boys, John, William and David are all leaving for Williamsburg tomorrow. Margaret and the little boys, Edward and Benjamin, will be staying here with me of course. (Edward and Benjamin would be a real handful on such a long boat trip.)

"It has been good to visit with you again. Stop by and see me anytime you're in the neighborhood. We have plenty of room and we always look forward to visits, especially from our relatives."

MEMORIAL SERVICE

The following VVV members and friends were remembered at the memorial service conducted on Friday evening of the reunion:

1. Frances Buchanan Piatt Guynes, 84, E1 Paso, TX, died 9 Nov 1991
2. Catherine Bloom Vawter, 50, Aurora, NY, died 21 Apr 1992
3. Virgil D. Vawter, 75, W. Sacramento, CA, died 26 Aug 1992
4. Helen Cripe Vawter, 88, Ajijic, Jalisco, MX, died 28 Aug 1992
5. M. Glen Vawter, 74, Normal, IL, died 25 Sep 1992
6. Mary Vawter, 97, Louisville, KY, died 13 Oct 1992
7. Swift Vaughter, 93, Elberton, GA, died 31 Jan 1993
8. Effie Reece Chambers, 79, Dahlonga, GA, died 1 Feb 1993
9. A. Lucille Keir, 69, Columbus, OH, died 3 Feb 1993
10. John Edgar Taylor, 86, Memphis, TN, died 17 Feb 1993
11. Rudy M. Vaughters, Hyattsville, MD, died 24 Feb 1993
12. Bettie D. "Betsy" Nash Miller, 57, Kenedy, TX, died 4 Mar 1993
13. George William Vaughters, 83, Dawsonville, GA, died 7 Mar 1993
14. Thomas Lamar Wiley, Sr., 69, Tupelo, MS, died 8 Mar 1993
15. Alliene Jenkins Corbitt, 79, Martin, TN, died 9 Mar 1993
16. Annie Vaughters Stovall, 85, Dawsonville, GA, died 2 Apr 1993
17. Arthur D. Vawter, 93, Grangeville, ID, died 10 Apr 1993
18. Erna Vawter Greer, 99, Milan, TN, died 20 May 1993

IN REMEMBRANCE

Thomas Lamar Wiley, 69, Tupelo, Mississippi, died Monday, 8 March 1993, at North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo. He was born in Hickory Flat, Mississippi, the son of Thomas Street and Emma Vawter Wiley. He was a graduate of Mississippi State University, was an Air Force veteran of World War II and the Korean Conflict, and was a life member of the Reserve Officers Association with the rank of Lt. Colonel. He had been in the air-conditioning and heating business in Tupelo for 37 years. He was an active member of First Baptist Church where he served as deacon.

Survivors include his wife Pearl Robbins Wiley; two sons, Dr. Thomas L. Wiley, Jr. of Jackson, Mississippi, and Robert A. Wiley of Tupelo; three daughters, Lera Triplet of Woodbridge, Virginia, and Ellen White and Linda Bowlin, both of Tupelo; a brother, William S. Wiley of Nettleton, Mississippi; three sisters, Vallie Cox of Texarkana, Texas, Mary Lansdale of Fordyce, Arkansas, and Addie Edwards of Concord, N. Carolina; and 14 grandchildren. A sister, Ora Wiley Wicker, preceded him in death.

He was a member of the VVV Association and had assisted with the 1986 reunion in Tupelo.

QUERIES

From: Gem Misenar, 6225 Delphi Rd. SW, Olympia, WA 98512

"Mary Ann Vawter was born July 1761 in Virginia. She married Christopher Chafin 22 August 1778 in Powhatan County, Virginia. Who were her parents? Was she the daughter of David Vawter and Mary Rucker? Will exchange information on the Vawter family prior to 1800."

From: Ann Montgomery, 409 Paddock Lane, Montgomery, AL 36109

"Need information on Harriet J. Vawter born in Tennessee, living with Isaac C. Hall and his family in Henderson County, Tennessee during 1850 census. Has anyone whose name is Waters found that it was originally Vawters or Vauters?"

From: Ruth R. Houghton, 2907 E Fairmount, Phoenix, AZ 85016

"I am interested in knowing more about the family of Bartholomew Vawter, a very early settler in Essex County, Virginia."

"PASSING THE WORD ALONG"

An article in the June 1993 Guidepost tells about Gary Vawter, of Garland, Texas, making a trip to Russia in March 1990. He went there to help the Christian Information Service deliver Russian-language Bibles.

THANK YOU

From: Bill Vawter, Houston, Texas. "Thank you for the card that I received from Oklahoma City. I carefully read all names, and knew all but about 10. Some of them I remember from our second reunion at Lake Murray."

VVV MEMBERS AND FRIENDS ATTENDING THE 1993 REUNION

CALIFORNIA

Edith Goodson

DELAWARE

Robert L. and Donna Vawter

FLORIDA

Ralphe and Caroline Vawter

GEORGIA

Charles and Betty Burt

Pam Burt

John Carlson

Cheryl Glasgow

Krista, Timothy

Bud Stephens

Lula Vaughters Thompson

Flara Vaughters Waters

IDAHO

Melba Vawter Ashburn

Merril and Velda Hogaboam

Erma Vawter Hund

Glenn Vawter

Diane Ashburn Wilmonen

ILLINOIS

Mike and

Michelle Alexander

Shirley Beasley

Darlene Gaskins

May C. Vawter

INDIANA

Mary McDaniel

John

John E. and Lois Vawter

Bonita Welch

MICHIGAN

Robert and Margaret Vawter

Robert L. and Ila Vawter

MISSISSIPPI

Martha Hudson

Emory and Clarice Mayer

Caroline Wicker

Fred and Worda Wicker

Ken and Norma Wicker

Margaret Wicker

McDaniel Wicker

OKLAHOMA

Edna Bowers

Duncan and Sally Brown

Donald and

Marquetta Chastain

David and Shirley Clagg

Vernessa Vawter Clagg

Connie Connely

Wilma Connely

Bill and Diana Loch

Amber, Jon Taylor

Matthew, Zachery

Charles Parker

Irene Pavey

George and Nona Thompson

Velma Tidwell

Bill M. and Dorothy Vawter

Joe Don Vawter

Silas and Osa Vawter

William and Diana Vawter

Alicia, Jared

SOUTH DAKOTA

John and Ellen McDaris

DeWitt, Jared

TENNESSEE

Betty Corbitt Callis

James S. Corbitt

Emily DeFur

Jake DeFur

Robert M. (Pete) and

Norma Vawter

TEXAS

Juanita M. Baker

Roger and Shirley Byler

Danny and Renae Chavier

Eric, Stephanie

Patti Darnell

Rubyann Darnell

Joe and Beth Melton

Millard Noell

Celeste Roberts

Nick Sallee

Betty G. Smith

Keith, Kimberly

Carolyn Vaughter

Phil and Peggy Vaughter

Courtney

James and Mary Vawter

John H. and Sue Vawter

Melinda Vawter

Oscar and Erma Vawter

VIRGINIA

Ned and Ellen Cummings

Frederick, Rebecca

WASHINGTON

Kareen Hund Krein

WISCONSIN

Everett and Maxine Joling

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