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Dues - \$7.00 per year
IF A RENEWAL FORM IS ENCLOSED, YOU NEED TO PAY DUES

AUSTIN, TEXAS
30 JULY - 2 AUGUST 1998

If you have not yet made a reservation for the 1998 VVV Association reunion in Austin, Texas, it may not be too late. Call the Radisson Hotel on Town Lake at 512-478-9611 and check on the availability of rooms.

Early registration begins on Thursday evening, July 30. The opening session is Friday morning, followed by a genealogy discussion on Friday afternoon. That evening we have a buffet dinner at the hotel and the distribution of door prizes.

Saturday will be a day to spend visiting some of the attractions of Austin or to just simply relax. Saturday night we go to a traditional Texas B-B-Q, entertainment by the Vawter Family Singers, and the memorial service.

Those who can stay on Sunday morning are invited to worship at Riverbend Baptist Church where a section has been reserved.

A few reminders: Please limit the door prizes brought to one per household. This will allow more time for visiting with the friends we see only once each year. If you are interested in being a part of the Vawter Family Singers, be sure to tell Ellen Cummings, who is the director of the group. Anyone, regardless of age or ability can participate. Obituaries for family members that have not appeared in the newsletter should be given to Wordna Wicker for the memorial service.

MARY OLYMPIA RAVENEL VAWTER
Contributed by Willard C. "Bill" Grant
Great-grandson of William H. and Mary O. Ravenel Vawter

Mary Olympia Ravenel Vawter was born 1 April 1825 in New Orleans, Louisiana, to Benoit Ravenel of Paris, France, and Annette Manenti of Marseilles, France. She was baptized in St. Louis Catholic Cathedral on Jackson Square in New Orleans, the same place where her parents were married. Mary and William H. Vawter of Bedford, Kentucky, were married in Carrollton, Kentucky 25 November 1845.

Although it is not definite why Mary moved to Bedford, it is thought by some of the family that Mary's mother and the other children would come up to Bedford to escape the hot, humid, disease ridden summers in New Orleans. Jessie Vawter Hughes, Mary's youngest child, says that her father would meet the boats coming up the river. He would then take the passengers in his horse and wagon to the hotels in Bedford Springs. She said this is where her parents met.

Mary was baptized a Roman Catholic; she raised all of her children as ardent Methodists, especially Absalom, Carrie and Jessie. Why did she become a Methodist? Once again there are two stories. One says that she had a summer job keeping house for an Episcopalian couple in Bedford and that eventually she became a Protestant. This story is attributed to her daughter Jessie. Her daughter Carrie says that she was converted at a Methodist camp meeting. The Vawters had been Baptists, so it is doubtful that her marriage to William made her a Methodist. It is also doubtful whether she was thoroughly converted. Her great-granddaughter, Catherine O'Conner, says that she would sneak off to Mass when her son Absalom was not around.

During the Civil War, Mary suffered a great deal. She and William chose to side with the South, probably because of her loyalties. She was from the Deep South and would have been more loyal to the South's cause than would William. It was necessary to bury all their food and valuables so that the Union soldiers would not steal them. Her oldest daughter, Mary Ellen, was sent farther South to a Private school to protect her from the Union soldiers who off and on occupied Bedford. Her husband and son once sneaked home during the occupation of the Union troops. A neighbor with Northern sympathies reported them to the Union authorities who came looking for them. Mary was warned by another neighbor and hid her menfolk under a feather mattress upon which she put her two daughters. The soldiers began to search the house. When the searchers got to the bedroom where the two younger girls were "sleeping," Mary said, "You're welcome to go in there, but I must warn you that the girls have mumps." The soldiers declined Mary's invitation to search the bedroom. Once the Union soldiers found her crippled son, Henry, hiding under the bed. They pulled him out ready to shoot him when they realized that he was handicapped.

After her husband's death, Mary and her son, Henry, ran the store that the family had established in Chicago. Their store was

right at the stairway going up to the "el" station. It was a good location and they did well. They lived in an apartment behind the store. Later, Mary lived with her daughter, Carrie Jemison. She loved her grandchildren and often would do their chores while they were in school. She died 28 February 1907.

Mary's granddaughter, Jessie Jemison Grant, said that every evening before Grandma Vawter went to bed, she would sit in a chair beside the bed and smoke her clay pipe. When the children had an earache, she would blow smoke into their ears. They would often ask her to sing songs to them in French. These were no doubt songs she had heard and learned in her childhood in New Orleans.

Mary's granddaughter, Jessie Jemison, says that it was her job to clean the lamp chimneys and that her father would get quite angry with her if he had to read from a lamp that had a dirty chimney. Sometimes when Jessie would forget, Grandma would do them for her so that she wouldn't get into trouble.

Daughter Carrie said that her mother was a quiet person, very alert and kind, and in her later years content to sit and read, smoke her clay pipe and talk to her grandchildren.

On 28 February 1907, Mary O. Vawter passed away. She was 82 years old. She and her late husband, William, are buried in the cemetery in Bedford, Kentucky, where perhaps they had gathered their most precious memories.

According to the "Undertakers Report of Death," as recorded with the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Department of Health, City of Chicago, we have the following information: Mary O. Vawter died at 9:10 p.m. on 28 February 1907 and was buried at 4:30 p.m. on March 2. She died of gastric and intestinal indigestion, bronchitis and pneumonia. She had been suffering these ailments for five or six months. The following is a tribute to her at the time of her death. It was written by her daughter, Mary Ellen.

"At the home of her only living son, A.G. Vawter, 2464 Superior Street, Chicago, Illinois, February 28, 1907, Mary O. Vawter, in the 82nd year of her life. Mrs. Vawter lived for 36 years in Bedford, Kentucky, and reared to manhood and womanhood her seven children, as the youngest was 13 years old when they removed to Chicago. Mrs. Vawter's strongest characteristic was her love for and her pride in her children and grandchildren, two sons-in-law and her only daughter-in-law, who stood by her bed when the summons came. Silently, sweetly, as fades the light away, her life went out, leaving her dear ones here, to go to those who had passed on before. Mrs. Vawter was a kind neighbor, and loyal true friend. Born in New Orleans, all the attributes of the Southern character were hers. She was the last of the Ravenel family, as her only brother and three sisters had all gone on before. Rev. N.A. Sunderline preached her funeral at the home of her son. A large concourse of friends gathered to pay the last rites of respect to "Grandma." Her remains were taken by her son, A.G. Vawter, and her two daughters, Carrie Jemison and Jessie Hughes, to her old home where beside her husband she will wait the resurrection morn."

QUERIES

From: Susan A. Henderson sahenders@aol.com

In a list of soldiers who fought in the Black Hawk War from Sangemon County, Illinois, Susan saw a Vauter Henderson listed. Several of the soldiers in his unit trace back to central Kentucky where her Hendersons lived. She is searching for the children of James Henderson, ca 1755 Scotland - ca 1850 Green County, Kentucky, and his wife Elizabeth, ca 1757 Virginia - ca 1850/1860 Green County, Kentucky. Is Vauter Henderson their son, and was Elizabeth's maiden surname Vawter/Vauter?

From: David McCann, 8624 Westridge, Raytown, MO 64138--2620

David is seeking information on Allen V. Vawter who married Betty A. Sinclair on 26 December 1874. They had at least five children: (1) Joseph, d. 19 June 1876, age 8 mos 17 days; (2) Allene, married 7 July 1914 to Gary York Vandever; (3) Josephine, married Olie Lamont Settle; (4) Margaret E., b. 24 September 1880, Columbia, Missouri, d. 8 April 1966, Tulsa, Oklahoma, married Albert T. Kunz; 5) Walter. Allen V. Vawter died 9 May 1888 and is buried in Bonne Femme Cemetery in Columbia, Missouri.

From: Dowell Sterrett, P.O. Box 427, Jefferson, TX 75657

Dowell is the son of M.D. Sterrett. Sr. (1904-1987), whose father was Robert A. Sterrett (1876-1908.) Robert was the son of Major Dowell Sterrett (1840--1919) and Sarah Julia Vawter (1850-1934.) He is looking for any information on the family. [This Vawter family is on pages 362--365 of "The Vawter Family in America."]

From: George A. Swan, 1045 Edith Road, Pasco, WA 99301

George is just beginning to search his Vawter roots, and was put in contact with the VVV Association by a cousin.

George's grandmother was Harriet "Hattie" Elizabeth Vawter, who was born 26/27 November 1892 (place unknown) and died near Wellington, Kansas in August 1921. She married George Milo Anthony in Wellington or Sumner County. She was the daughter of Samuel Michael Vawter and Margaret Ellen Laveta Augretta White, and had a sister, Fern, and a brother, John. Samuel Vawter had a brother, Henry, and two sisters, Sarah and Lina. Samuel's father's name is unknown; his mother's maiden name was Gentry.

Several people have had queries printed in the newsletter. If you have received answers, please share your information with us.

ERIC JASON TAYLOR AND JENNIFER LYNNE SJOQUIST

Eric Jason Taylor, son of Thomas C. and Diana Taylor of Aleppo, Syria, and Jennifer Lynne Sjoquist, daughter of David and Virginia Sjoquist of Atlanta, Georgia, were married 27 December 1997 at Wesley United Methodist Church in Lexington, Kentucky.

Eric is a graduate of Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, and was formerly employed with J. Peterman Company in Lexington. He is now manager of implementation of the Consumer Financial Network in Atlanta. Jennifer is also a graduate of Earlham College and is now attending Georgia State University. They live in Atlanta.

Eric, the nephew of VVV news editor Bonita Welch, is a descendant of Jennings County, Indiana, pioneers William and Frances Vawter.

WALLACE READ VAWTER, JR. AND CHARLOTTE WHEELWRIGHT MOORE

Wallace Read Vawter, Jr. married Charlotte Wheelwright Moore on 17 August 1997, and they reside in Ajijic, Jalisco, Mexico. Charlotte has three adult sons, Raymond, Ronald and Robert. "Read" is the son of the late Wallace Read and Helen Cripe Vawter. Wallace's father, Everett Bates Vawter, was the son of Philemon Vawter and grandson of William and Frances Vawter.

EMILIE NICOLE VAWTER

Emilie Nicole Vawter was born 4 May 1998 in Clear Lake, Texas. She is the daughter of Eric Nell and Kelli Rochelle Mills Vawter of League City, Texas. Emilie's Vawter lineage is: Grandparents: Jesse Lewis Vawter b. 31 May 1941 and Lanell Marie Peterson Vawter b. 31 Dec 1941.
Gr-grandparents: Archie Strode Vawter b. 12 Mar 1916 d. 25 Dec 1997, and Fannie Lois Botard Vawter b. 15 Oct 1921 d. 28 Dec 1990.
Gr-gr-grandparents: Jesse Franklin Vawter b. 1 Nov 1886 d. 7 Feb 1981, and Beulah Ann Hopkins Vawter b. 6 Oct 1886 d. 16 Aug 1984.
Gr-gr-gr-grandparents: Theodore Vawter b. 6 Sep 1862 d. 19 Dec 1936, and Josephine Elmina Bullock Vawter b. 25 Mar 1863 d. 23 Dec 1899.
Gr-gr-gr-gr-grandparents: Lorenzo Dow Vawter b. 12 May 1812 d. 17 Mar 1897, and Frances Fowler Vawter b. 1 Feb 1830 d. 3 Mar 1915.

DYLAN SCOTT BUGOS

Dylan Scott Bugos was born 19 May 1998 in Champaign, Ill., to Brad and Kris Bugos. He weighed 8 lbs. 8 oz., and was 21 inches long. Paul and Connie Bugos of Farmington, Ill., are the grandparents. Great-grandparents are Edith Vawter of Farmington and the late Harry Vawter. Harry was the son of Alva E. and Pearl Vawter, and the grandson of John S. and Elizabeth Grinstead Vawter. Dylan has a six-year old brother, Tyler.

"THE VAWTER FAMILY IN AMERICA"

"The Vawter Family in America" was written by Grace Vawter Bicknell and first printed in 1905 by Hollenbeck Press. In 1969, Edna Reynolds and her sister, Vera Wheatly, had the book reprinted with a supplement update of their line, the O'Conner family. For several years, this reprint edition could be ordered from Edna. With the cooperation of the Reynolds family and a generous interest free loan from a VVV Association member, the remaining books were purchased by the Association in 1994.

However, none of the books are in perfect condition. Many have entire sections out of place or upside down, or have several pages or the index missing. For some, though, it is just a matter of one or two pages missing or having faint print, and those are the books being sold at this time. We send the best available and enclose replacement pages for you to insert.

Recently this book has come under some criticism because of errors, especially in the very early history. We need to remember that this research was done in the late 1800s and early 1900s; before most of our modern conveniences. There were no fax or copy machines, computers, e-mail, etc. On a personal note, discovering the book in our local library as a young child is what sparked an interest in genealogy. I kept the book so long that my parents received a call from the librarian. Please, consider the book "half full" instead of "half empty."

"The Vawter Family in America" reprint is softbound and has 422 pages, including an index. The cost is \$20.00, plus \$3.00 for postage. Order from: Bonita Welch, 4145 N 900 W, Scipio, IN 47273.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Elsie Herron Hunter, 80, of Hot Springs, Arkansas, died 8 April 1998 in Hot Springs. She was born 19 November 1917 in Cedar Glades, Arkansas, the daughter of Jethro and Hattie Vawter Herron.

She was a homemaker and a member of Piney Baptist Church and the Agape Sunday School class. She was a lifetime resident of the area.

Survivors include a son and daughter-in-law, James P. and Helen Hunter; a sister, Gladys Roberts; a sister-in-law, Velma Oleana Herron; a granddaughter and her husband, Tami and Jamie Feld; a grandson and his wife, Jason Paul and Melissa Hunter; and two great-grandchildren, Teajae and Jesi Feld. All of the survivors live in Hot Springs. She was preceded in death by her husband, Paul A. Herron. (?)

Elsie Herron Hunter was a cousin of Vernon Vawter of Hot Springs, who along with his wife, Trudy, is a long-time member of the VVV Association.

(This issue of the newsletter has only six pages instead of the usual eight.)

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