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GENEALOGY SESSION REPORT

A genealogy session was conducted at the VVV Reunion held last August in Austin, Texas. The following report, written by Ralphe Vawter, was received too late to be included in the reunion highlights of the October newsletter.

"Twenty-two hearty souls gathered in the Skyline Room of the hotel Friday afternoon to explore Vawter genealogy. Ralphe Vawter served as the interlocutor and introduced Joyce Carter, our champion compiler who has amassed a database of 10,200 names, 1/3 of which are spouses and parents of spouses. They constitute five generations with an estimated 20,000 additional names to follow.

"Absent but favorably described was Georgene Jurgenson, probably our strongest technical genealogist in the VVV Association. With Joyce's input and her own (from multiple sources) Georgene has prepared a 163 page *Study of the First Four Generations of Vawters in America Beginning with Bartholomew Vawter and Winfred Hodgson of Essex County, Virginia*, copies of which were made for interested parties.

"Jim Vaughters, first President of the VVV Association, held forth for almost three

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(Genealogy Session, con't)

hours. After briefly tracing VVV forebears in France and England, he led a trail state by state as the American clan grew. Considerable contributions were made by Dr. Nolen Bradley and the Rev. Roger Byler and his wife Shirley Vawter Byler, and Lynwood Peterson, Joyce's newly announced fiance.

"It was an interesting and often quite definitive trail that we followed. Members added their e-mail addresses to Georgene Jurgensen, who provides periodic updates to our members. She can be reached at 910 Palmer Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685-1810; phone 813-787-3193; fax 813-789-2317; e-mail rvj1207@msn.com."

Ralphe Vawter,
Historian-Archivist

A THANK YOU FROM VAUTERS CHURCH

September 29, 1998

Dear Mr. Burt,

Thank you for your generous check from the Vauters Family. The church is small and has a very small but loyal congregation and each of us appreciates the interest that your group has shown. I hope you will return to Loretta, Virginia, soon.

Best Wishes,
Frances H. Ellis
Treasurer, Vauters Church
P.O. Box 154
Champlain, VA 22438

QUERIES

From: Betsy Jo Jones, 14238 Sand Ridge Road, Bowling Green, OH 43402

Betsy is a descendant of Andrew Finks and Lucy Vawter. She would like any information on this couple.

From: Larry Vawter, 22051 Alma Avenue, Red Bluff, CA 96080

Larry is seeking information about his grandparents, Frank and Florence Hawkins Vawter. They were the parents of four sons: Charlie, Harold, Jack, and Larry's father, George. All four brothers served in the Navy during World War II. George was on the USS Vega. Frank Vawter was on the police force in San Francisco. Larry thinks the family links to the Missouri Vawters.

From: Kimberly Vawters-Jones, LovelyKJ@aol.com

Kimberly's father, Richard David Vawters, is from Alabama. Richard's father was Ted Vawters who had a brother, Willie, and sister, Susie. She would like information on this family.

Obituary of Edwin James Vawter, Sr.
The Vernon [Indiana] Times
Friday, July 10, 1914
Reprinted from *The Outlook*, Santa Monica, California

FORMER VERNON MAN DIES IN CALIFORNIA

"Death has claimed two more of Santa Monica's pioneers. While both died last night away from this city, they were both nevertheless never considered other than residents here and their loss will be keenly felt on all sides. E. J. Vawter, Sr. died after a brief illness in Monrovia and George Scollard in Los Angeles.

"Edwin James Vawter who has been connected with every forward movement on the beach thirty-five years and served the city in many capacities was widely known as a useful, influential citizen. He was born in Vernon, Ind., November 26th, 1848, son of Williamson Dunn and Mary Charlotte Tilghman Crowder Vawter, a descendent of an old and distinguished Virginia family.

"Backed by a good education he made his first business venture as a newspaperman on the *Vernon Banner*, but was soon taken into partnership with his father in the general merchandise business at the old "Vawter Corner" in Vernon. The partnership was continued when the family came to California in 1875, first settling at what is now Pasadena, as stockholders in the Indiana Colony. A few years later the family located in Santa Monica building the pretty home on Fourth street, then one of the Mansions of the city, which is still known as the Vawter Homestead on Fourth street where the sisters still reside and from which the funeral will be conducted. Santa Monica's history settles around a few families like Vawters, who opened the first general store here and conducted for many years a successful mercantile business previous to entering into real estate business on a large scale and railroad interests. It was the Vawters who started the first railway and practically made possible the first electric railroad here and the civic prominence of the father continued down the family.

"Mr. Vawter himself has taken a large part in financial and business affairs of the beach and has always been known as booster and investor in every movement for the growth of the city. He was president of the City Water Company, organized in 1896; cashier of the First National Bank of Santa Monica until Senator Jones bought it; in 1899 began the first large enterprise of growing and selling carnations and other flowers for the market; founder of the First National Bank of Ocean Park, started in 1905 and of which he was president for two years, that office later passing into the hands of his son. As a member of the City Trustees, Library and School Boards, he served the city long and faithfully and he was also interested in politics having participated in many big Republican conventions. He was a thirty second degree Mason, a Knight of Pythias, and Pioneer of Los Angeles County. His first wife, Laura E. Dixon, died in 1886 and in 1888 he married Mrs. Isabella L. Nelson of this city.

"Mr. Vawter is survived by only one child, a son, E. J. Vawter, Jr., also a prominent business man and banker of the city, and by a brother, William S. Vawter, Post Master,

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(Edwin James Vawter, Sr. con't)

and four sisters, Mrs. Mary Ellen Leavitt, and the Misses Jane Cravens and Emma Vawter, all residing here, and Mrs. Septius Vawter of Lafayette, Ind. Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Vawter and the sisters residing here were with Mr. Vawter when he died at the mountain home in Cloverleaf Canyon, near Monrovia at six o'clock last evening. He was in the best of health until stricken with apoplexy Thursday a.m. His son was in the Yosemite, and on his way home now. Mrs. Vawter is at Granite Pass, Ore., visiting her son and family and it was there that the sad news greeted her yesterday. It is probable that she will come south for the funeral arrangements, for which are awaiting the arrival of Mr. Vawter's son. The body is at the Third street parlor of Brease [?] Bros. and Todd. - *The Outlook*, Santa Monica, California."

(Although the sister of E. J. Vawter, Sr. is given as "Mrs. Septius Vawter" in this obituary, it should be "Mrs. Septimius Vater." Aramantha Charlotte "Mattie" Vawter, daughter of Williamson Dunn and Mary Crowder Vawter, married Septimius Vater on 16 October 1866 in Vernon, Indiana.)

On 27 July 1928, Emma Knowlton Vawter of Santa Monica, California, sister of Edwin James Vawter, Sr. began corresponding with William Snyder Vawter who was compiling information for a new family book. The following are some of her letters. Emma K. Vawter was born 21 August 1853 in Vernon, Indiana, and died 1 June 1943, She is buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in Santa Monica.

July 27, 1928

Dear Mr. Vawter,

The blanks to be filled came to me sometime ago. As I was caring for an elder sister Mrs. Mary Vawter Leavitt, who has recently died, I have been too busy to comply with your request until now. I gave Mrs. Bicknell what help I could when she brought out the history of the Vawter family, since then we visited in Essex Co., Virginia, and saw the Vawter Church. Also saw the old Bible which had had early records, but they had been torn out. In Tappahannock we went to the Courthouse, but as we had but an hour to look at the old records could not do very much - copied down a few facts but I think there must have been many others that would have been interesting. I am interested in the history of the family and a number of years ago a man by the name of Gustave Anjou Ph.D. wrote to my brother Edwin who asked me to write him. I had several letters - will send you one. We considered his terms too hard so did not get his manuscript. I enclose the names of some Vawters in Los Angeles.

Very respectfully yours,

Emma K. Vawter

August 14, 1928

Dear Sir,

I am sending you two letters and the pamphlet sent by Gustave Anjou. Had he allowed us to use it in connection with the Vawter book at the time, we might have taken his information, but he stipulated we could not make any copies out of our own family. We wrote several letters back and forth and each time he made the price a little higher until he reached \$650.00. Mrs. Bicknell when in New York at one time called at his office and as no one was there did not see him.

He wrote to one of my brothers first, and as he was a busy man turned the correspondence over to me. That is my connection with it. After so long a time you may not be able to find him.

Have you read the book "A Tour Through Indiana in 1840, The Diary of John Parsons of Petersburg, Virginia" edited by Kate Rabb? It gives some interesting things about some of the Vawter family who were of the line from which I sprang. Jesse Vawter spoken of was my father's grandfather.

Mrs. Bicknell did hear from Commander A. A. Veater from London in 1922. He was in United States during the war for a short time and wrote to her of the various ways in which the names of Vawter is spelled in different parts of England. He gave his home address as - Commander A.W. Veater, "Triginna," 11 Prideaux Road, Eastbourne, Sussex. He might give you something of interest.

Respectfully yours,

Emma K. Vawter

December 2, 1929

Dear Mr. Vawter,

Since I wrote giving you information concerning our family I have changed my address from 1428 Fourth St. to 838 Fifth St., my new home.

I think since writing you two of our family have passed away. Mrs. Mary Ellen Leavitt - my sister - wife of Ward Leavitt, daughter of Williamson Dunn Vawter and Mary Charlotte Crowder Vawter. She died Wednesday night, May 23rd 1928. Mrs. Sarah Marie McClaskey Vawter, wife of my brother William Smith Vawter, who died July 16th 1929.

I hope your work is progressing well and that you will have a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely Yours,

Emma K. Vawter

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(Letters from Emma K. Vawter, con't)

November 22, 1930

Dear Mr. Vawter

Since I last wrote you I have changed my residence in Santa Monica from 1428 Fourth St. to 838 Fifth St. Since there have been some changes in the family relationship if it is not too late, you might wish to add.

A letter from Cousin Grace Bicknell before she sailed with her husband for Russia and Germany said you had been down into Virginia. I hope you stopped at Tappahannock where in the courthouse there are records dating back to early times. I spent probably an hour looking over old records, but it seemed only a beginning. I found the names of early Vawters a number of times in deeds, sales, wills, etc.

I do not know if I wrote you after the death of Edwin James Vawter, Jr., son of Edwin James Vawter, but these I am sending are of later date.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Emma K. Vawter

This information was enclosed with the November 22, 1930, letter:

Mary Ellen Leavitt, wife of Ward Leavitt, daughter of William[son] Dunn Vawter, died in Santa Monica, Calif., May 23rd 1928.

Sarah M. Vawter, wife of William Smith Vawter (son of Williamson Dunn V.) died at her home in Santa Monica, July 15, 1929.

James Vawter Pollock, son of Lieut. James Conner Pollock and Marjorie Vawter Pollock (daughter of Edwin James Vawter, Jr.) was born at San Diego, March 7, 1930.

Helen Edwina Vawter, daughter of Edwin James Vawter, Jr., was married in Santa Monica, Calif., to Ensign Samuel David Dealey of Dallas, Texas, June 14, 1930.

"THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS"

At the 1998 reunion several books were displayed, each covering a different aspect of the Vawter, Vauter, Vaughter(s) family. Doug Vaughters has written what he entitled "There's Gold in Them Thar Hills," the story of the VVV's in Georgia. He copied W.T. Vawter's article about Old Rappahannock, Virginia, and Hazel Vawter McCandless' bridge from Virginia to Georgia. The Georgia portion is his own work and is based upon white men shoving the Cherokees out and then settling in the mountains of North Georgia. Descendants of John III, John IV, James and Samuel (such as VVV president Phil Vaughter and his brother, Paul) should find this work informative and enjoyable. Doug started doing genealogy more than 20 years ago when Bill Vawter and his sister, Hazel McCandless, called from a hotel and asked from what part of the family he descended. Doug's address is: 541 Pendergrass Road, Winder, GA 30680. (From Jim Vaughters)

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Darren Welch and Kristina Swenson of Indianapolis on the birth of a daughter, Anna Louise, who was born 16 November 1998. Anna has a brother, William Frederick, who was three years old in December. Grandparents are Joseph and Bonita Welch of Scipio, Indiana, and Kermit and Helen Swenson of Indianapolis. After four sons and two grandsons, Grandma Welch is happy to have a girl in the family! The Welch/Swenson family moved to Indianapolis last summer after living in Columbia, Missouri, for four years.

JONATHAN VAUGHTERS

Many longtime VVV members and reunion attendees will remember a young Jonathan Vaughters ringing the cowbell to open the 1980, 1981 and 1982 reunions. A few years after this, Jonathan became interested in riding and racing on bicycles. The sport was big in Colorado at the time and he liked the challenge and competition. He has taught himself, trained hard, and excelled. Wins include many races at the junior level and most national races as a professional. Now he is a member of the U.S. Postal Service team, the only American team that races full-time in Europe. Tentatively he is scheduled to race the Tour de France, Vuelta a Espana, and world championships in 1999. Jonathan's parents are Jim and Donna Vaughters of Englewood, Colorado.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Martha Evelyn Jackson Compton, 90, of Indianapolis died 5 March 1997 at a hospital in Indianapolis after having a stroke. She was born 1 May 1906 in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, the daughter of Charles and Willa Frances Vawter Jackson. She married Jerome Compton on 19 December 1931.

Martha was active in many community activities. She was in the same Homemaker's Club for 40 years; worked at the polls until she was 65; attended the same church and Sunday School for 61 years, holding various offices; and was a member of the Indiana Geology and Gem Society. She enjoyed genealogy, handicraft and photography.

Survivors include two daughters, Roselyn Marin and Janice Sue Leavell; four grandsons; and several great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, in 1956, and a daughter, Joanne, who died at the age of six.

Martha Jackson Compton's grandparents were William Alexander and Ella King Vawter, who lived in Trimble County, Kentucky. She was the second cousin of Willard Grant of Westland, Michigan.

* * * * *

We have also learned of the deaths of two other VVV members. Glenn L. Vawter of California died 14 November 1998 in Palm Springs. Harry A. Crouch of Chatham, Illinois, died 14 August 1998 in Virden, Illinois. Glenn was the brother of Robert L. "Bobbee" Vawter, and Harry was the brother of Garlin Crouch. Obituaries of both will be in the April newsletter.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Roy "Wilkie" Taylor, Jr., 67, of North Vernon, Indiana, died of cancer on 5 December 1998 at his home. He was born 13 April 1931 in Rushville, Indiana, the son of Roy Taylor, Sr. and Hilda Beree Clarkson Taylor. He married the former Helen Walt on 8 March 1952 in Lexington, South Carolina.

He established Cherry Park Christmas Tree Farm in 1956, and later began growing ornamental trees, shrubs, and perennials. He had also operated a sawmill for several years.

He was U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War, where he received the Purple Heart; attended officers candidate training at Fort Knox, Kentucky; and served as a second lieutenant in the Indiana National Guard. He was a member of Bethel Baptist Church, North Vernon Veterans of Foreign Wars, the VFW honor guard, Disabled American Veterans, First Cavalry Association, Black Knights of the Fifth U.S. Army Cavalry, and the Nurserymen Association.

Survivors include his wife, Helen Walt Taylor; his father, Roy Taylor, Sr. of North Vernon; two sons, Donald Robert and James Daniel Taylor, both of North Vernon; two daughters, Deborah Jean Taylor of New Albany, Indiana, and Cynthia Sue Burton of North Vernon; a brother, Thomas Charles Taylor of Aleppo, Syria; a sister, Bonita Welch of Scipio, Indiana; a grandson, Benjamin Burton of North Vernon [see next obituary]; a granddaughter, Lucynda Burton of North Vernon; a great-grandson, Austin Burton; and a great-granddaughter, Patience Burton.

Burial was at the Vernon, Indiana, Cemetery with military graveside rites conducted by members of North Vernon Veterans of Foreign Wars.

* * * * *

Benjamin Brand Burton, 18, of North Vernon, Indiana, died as the result of a traffic accident on 28 January 1999. He was born 18 February 1980 in Seymour, Indiana, the son of Larry and Cynthia Taylor Burton.

He was employed by Mascotech in North Vernon and also worked on the family's Cherry Park Christmas Tree Farm.

A 1998 graduate of Jennings County High School, he was a member of the football, baseball and wrestling teams and had played trumpet in the band. He also attended vocational school in Versailles, Indiana.

Survivors include his mother, Cynthia Sue Taylor Burton; his father and stepmother, Larry and Lois Burton; a son, Austin Burton; a sister, Lucynda Burton; two half-brothers, Joseph and Larry Levi Burton; a niece, Patience Burton; a grandmother, Helen Taylor; and a great-grandfather, Roy Taylor, Sr. All live in North Vernon. He was preceded in death by his grandfather, Roy Taylor, Jr.

Burial was at the Vernon, Indiana, Cemetery.

Roy Taylor, Jr. and his grandson, Benjamin Burton, were descendants of William and Frances Vawter, early settlers of Jennings County, Indiana. Several members of the association are from this line.

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