



RAMBLERS' RAMBLINGS

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EVERTON GENEALOGICAL HELPER

BY JAMES L. BOONE Jr.

Many of us remember the Everton publications, which were so helpful in the earlier days of genealogy before the big money guys jumped in and ran the little folks out of business. Many people credit Everton as the founder--or at least a major "helper"--of the modern genealogical movement. Everton Publishers began to slip after Mr. Everton died. Leland K. Meitzler tried to keep it going as editor of *The Genealogical Helper*, but the company went under when its bank called in a loan and wiped out their working capital. Mr. Everton had accumulated a library of 80,000 titles, and it was about to be auctioned off piecemeal, but several genealogists managed to block the sale, and the collection is now in the Logan, UT library.

I donated the last couple of issues of the *The Genealogical Helper* to the Ramblers' Library, if anyone would like to see what they looked like. I also have the last issue of Everton's *Handybook for Genealogists*, which was very handy, indeed. It had the history and record storage locations for every county in the U. S. when that information was not available anywhere else (before computers and the internet). Fifty years ago my mother depended very heavily on the Everton publications, as there were very few other places for genealogical support in those days.

World Vital Records took over the Everton mailing list, and I sent them a considerable amount of money for several years--until I decided WVR was not worth the cost. Every time they added a database they wanted more money from their subscribers, and I never was able to locate an ancestor on any of their databases.

Today there are many sources for genealogical information, so perhaps we no longer have a need for Everton. Nevertheless, it seems a shame to let the Everton name disappear from the genealogical scene. Now, an email from Leland Meitzler has arrived. He is trying to revive Everton "on a shoestring.". He has bought the Everton website.

I thought that Ramblers would be interested in this bit of history, and might want to participate in the resurrection of Everton. You can't beat the price--the new newsletter is free.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY LIBRARY

Barbara Franz, head of the Genealogy Department of the Montgomery County Library at Conroe is retiring after 27 years service. Barbara will be sorely missed by all of us who have been frequent research at the Conroe Library. A come-&-go reception was held on her last day March 31st from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm.

TEXAS TRIVIA

What was Isla de Malhado?

MASON LOCKE WEEMS

1759 - 1825

The work of Parson Mason L. Weems, a clergyman and early Washington biographer, is a prime example of rewriting history for instructional purposes.

His stories of Washington's life were entitled, *A History of the Life and Death, Virtues and Exploits, of General George Washington* (1800) and later *The Life of George Washington, with Curious Anecdotes Laudable to Himself and Exemplary to his Countrymen* (1806).

The incident of the future hero chopping down a cherry tree and refusing to tell a lie about it seems to be a complete fabrication. No contemporaneous letters or other documents contain the story and it did not appear in other literature until after Weems' account was published.



Weems also provided an account of Washington praying on his knees in the snow at Valley Forge . This scene

has been memorialized in many ways over the years - a famous painting, prominent magazine cover, stained glass window in the Capitol, postage stamps and so forth. Yet most historians doubt the event occurred; Washington most likely was a Deist, like many of the leading political figures of the day. He attended church regularly, but declined to take communion. Washington did not request prayers or the ministrations of a clergyman while he suffered his final illness.

Parson Weems died unexpected in Beaufort, South Carolina on one of his book-selling trip. He was buried in the St. Helena Churchyard and later removed to Dumfries Virginia where his family resided. *The History of Beaufort County South Carolina; Rowland, Moore & Rogers, University of South Carolina Press*

Parson Weems' son, Mason Locke Weems II, was born in Dumfries, Prince William's County, Virginia. He moved to Beaufort County, South Carolina where he lived for a while, then left and came to Texas in 1837, landing at Matagorda, and moving inland to Wharton County. Mason living there about ten years before removing to Columbia in Brazoria County, where his descendants including Mason Locke Weems VI lives today. *"A Narrative History of Brazoria County"; James A. Creighton, 1975*

Parson Weems in his biography of George Washington attributes Washington's ability to win the Revolutionary War over Britain and the overwhelming odds to a lesson he learned while fighting during the French & Indian war with General Braddock.

TRIVIA ANSWER

Isla de Malhado (Isle of Misfortune) was the name given by Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca to a Texas island where he and eighty other Spaniards, along with an African, were shipwrecked in November 1528. Though many have claimed it was Galveston Island, it is far more likely to have been San Luis Island given the description and distances recorded by Cabeza de Vaca. *Texas Reader; Copano Bay Press, Rockport, TX.*

TEXAS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

At the time of the American Revolution, Texas was a backwater province of Spain's New World empire.

The capital of Spanish Texas had just been moved from Los Adaes (near present day Robeline, Louisiana) to the village of San Antonio de Bexar on the Western frontier.

To encourage men of means and ability to settle the area, the crown had begun a generation before granting large ranchos in the San Antonio river valley. By the 1770s there were huge droves of longhorn cattle on the plains from San Antonio to La Bahia (Goliad).

Cut to the British colonies on the Eastern seaboard. They had just declared their independence and were going toe to toe with the greatest military power on the planet. Their ports were blockaded, keeping their French allies from landing supplies. American leaders turned their eyes to the back door of the continent: the Mississippi.

Patrick Henry wrote Bernardo de Galvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana (and the man for whom Galveston is named), asking for military supplies. Galvez was happy to help. Over first two years of the war over 2000 barrels of gunpowder, tons of lead and even clothing made its way up the Mississippi to the Ohio River and into the hands of a grateful General Washington.

Of course the Brits didn't like this development and prepared to put a

stop to it. They had forts at Baton Rouge and Natchez, putting them in a pretty good position to do so. But Galvez was determined to keep the back door open. He raised an army to run the Brits out of the Gulf region. Only problem was he didn't have the means of feeding them in the field. That's when he turned to the rancheros of Texas.

In 1779 the first cattle drive in Texas history started from San Antonio and made its way along El Camino Real to Nacogdoches and on into Spanish Louisiana. Nearly 9000 head made the same trip from 1779 to 1782.

Sustained on Texas beef, Galvez and his men would chase the British from Baton Rouge and Natchez, take Mobile from them and Pensacola, too.

Supplies would then make it up the Mississippi for the entire war and having to contend with Galvez on the Gulf front used up British resources. General Washington made full use of both these gifts.

America would win her freedom, and Texas longhorn cattle played a part in it. [Texas Reader: Copano Bay Press, Rockport, TX.](#)

MARY COLLIE COOPER LECTURE

The annual MARY COLLIE COOPER LECTURE was held on February 23rd in lieu of our regular monthly meeting and was presented by Bill Page, member and librarian at the Evans Library on the campus of Texas A&M University.



Bill gave four sessions during the Lecture including: *Getting the Most of the Ancestry Database*, *Genealogical Research in U.S. Federal Documents*, *Research in Digitized Newspaper* and *Finding Death Records*.

"INTERNET RESEARCH"

By Jane A. Maxwell

BOULDER COLORADO - March 16, 2011 - Mocavo.com™
(www.mocavo.com) a free search engine geared toward genealogists and people interested in learning more

about their family history, launches today. Mocavo.com enables the search of more than 50 billion words- including billions of names, dates and places, all within fractions of a second. Mocavo.com fills an important industry need by providing the first large-scale, free search engine for family history research. Coupled with the speed and accuracy by which search results are produced, Mocavo.com represents a major technological breakthrough within the genealogy world.

RAMBLING SECTION

...Introducing a new column for "Rambling". We need pictures and/or news items, stories from the Ramblers' past for publishing in future "Ramblers' Scrapbook" columns. We need your help "looking back."



DO YOU KNOW THESE PEOPLE?

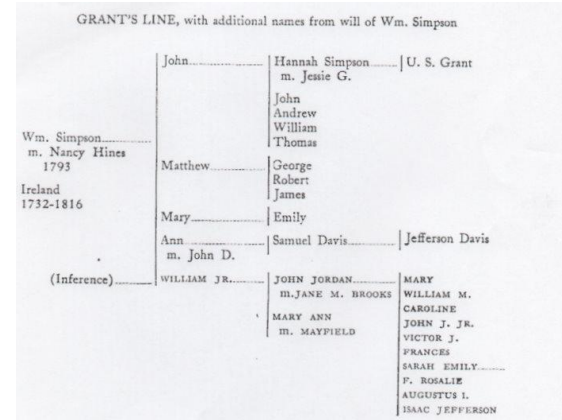
A WHISPERED RELATIONSHIP

by MARY JANE MILLENDER

Sometime when researching family names, when you're sitting in a quiet genealogy library or scanning your computer, a name or a family relationship appears and you think, "Whoa!" And that's what happened to me last year.

Why? Because while looking for additional information on my g.g. grandfather **John Jordan Simpson**, Nacogdoches, Texas, I finally discovered sates and facts to support his father's name and siblings. Here it was: g.g.g. grandfather was **William Simpson, Jr.** and he had a brother **John**, and a sister named **Ann**.

O.K., I'll add these names to my family tree. So far so good. Then Looked at the next paragraph: it says **Ann Simpson** married **Samuel Davis** and they had a son named **Jefferson Davis!** **Jefferson Davis?** Here is the first "Whoa?"



I remember, when I was a young child, some reference to a Davis/Simpson relationship from my grandmother, but I filed that away in a part of my young brain that didn't include genealogy. But, I do recall, my grandparents always smiled when mentioning the South and Jefferson Davis. Was that significant?

Years later, when researching my paternal grandparents, the Simpsons, and their lineage, I was filling in blank limbs on my tree when I started researching the names of my g.g. grandfather's brother, **John Simpson** and his children. I found a daughter **Hannah** listed and **Hannah** married **Jessie Grant**. Is this another "Whoa" approaching? **Hannah Simpson Grant** had a son named **Ulysses Simpson Grant!** Now the next "whoa" became a "Can this be right?"



Augustus Irion Simpson

John Jordan Simpson and **Jefferson Davis** were first cousins and **U.S. Grant** was his second cousin? These three men all grandchildren or a g. grandchildren of **William Simpson, Jr.**? And no one in my family ever spoke of this relationship? Why?

Didn't take me long to answer that question. My family members were Texan, their roots ran deeply in the South and they were loyal to the confederacy. The **Ulysses Simpson Grant** cousin relationship was whispered, not shouted!

Genealogy research breaks down brick walls, it unlocks family secrets. In the Simpson, Davis, Grant connection, how do I react to discovering that two presidents are in my family tree: Ulysses Simpson Grant and Jefferson Davis.

Well, I am the g, granddaughter of Capt. Augustus Irion Simpson, CSA, Company G, 7th Regiment, Texas

Volunteers ...and this is where this part of my family story ends.

YOU NEVER KNOW WHO

BY JOYCE LOUIS

Recently I was researching (actually for months) Jesse Grimes, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, for the Star of the Republic Museum at Washington -on-the-Brazos. The museum wanted to invite all known descendants of the signers to a two day celebration of the 175th anniversary of the signing of the declaration. Dan, my husband, mentioned just before the February 26-27th event that there was a Grimes in the Ramblers. Had I ever talked to her?

So I called Vee Davis Grimes and yes, her husband was a descendant of Jesse Grimes' uncle. Vee attended the Grimes family dinner in Brenham, one of 65 people there, and she met about nine other descendants from Grimes's uncle. One of the dinner attendees lives in North Carolina and drove to Brenham, stopping in Houma, Louisiana to pick up a cousin to join the group attending the reunion dinner and the upcoming festivities in Washington-on-the-Brazos. Descendants of 59

signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence were recognized and honored during the 175th anniversary celebration that weekend.

In my Grimes family research, I also found that Jesse Grimes' son Alfred

C. Grimes, died at the Alamo four days after Jesse signed the declaration.

Jesse and Alfred Grimes both were true Texas patriots!

HELP WANTED

Ramblers, we need your brick wall stories, your genealogy stories or your unusual research findings, It's not that fellow members are exactly nosey, it's that everyone enjoys reading how each of us has solved a family mystery or torn down a personal brick wall.

And who knows your success story may lead to others finding a successful ending to one of their problem searches. Then they'll write *that* story for us!

Email jmillender1@suddenlink.net and we'll save a space for it in the issue.

... A REMINDER

FROM HENRY HANSON

If you know someone interested in getting started in Genealogy there is a beginners class that starts April 12th at the Teen Exit Center. There is plenty room available and you still

have time to enroll. Cost is \$35 and you get enough handouts to fill a 1½ notebook. Class meets at 9:00 am to 11:30 am on Tuesdays April 12th through May 24th. Call College Station Parks & Recreation to register.

HISTORICAL TRIVIA

BY JANE THOMPSON

In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back while others showed both legs and both arms. Prices charged by painters were not

based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are limbs,' therefore painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression, "Okay, but it'll cost you an arm and a leg."

(Artists know hands and arms are more difficult to paint)

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