

the Rucker Family Society

NEWSLETTER

Volume 11

Number 4

December 2000

FIVE GENERATIONS OF SUDIES

by Sudie Rucker Mann Wilson

SUDIE I:

Sudie Rucker Wood (1871-1957): Grandmother Wood was a great lady! She was beautiful and stood so erect and, in my mind, she reminded me of Queen Mary. She really looked like royalty. Grandmother was a gardener and a golfer as well as having many other talents. Her main interest was genealogy. She belonged to many genealogy organizations, but her favorite was the DAR. She wrote a couple of books including *The Rucker Family Genealogy*. Grandmother and her husband William P. Wood enjoyed their life together in Richmond, Virginia and at their summer home/farm in Amelia County, Virginia. They traveled to many places around the United States, the Caribbean and Europe. They had five children: Sudie, Bill, Lil, Jean and Garland.

Sudie II:

Sudie Wood Mann (1903-1972): My mother was also a beautiful lady. She created many beautiful gardens. She and her husband, Roger ("Jack") L. Mann, moved several times and each time she designed the perfect garden for that location. She loved people and enjoyed entertaining. Later in life, she had her leg amputated and walked on crutches, but with my Daddy's wonderful help, it didn't hinder her in the least.

continued on the next page

PHOTO OF FOUR SUDIES

Taken in the early 1950s



Clockwise from the top left:
Sudie II, Sudie III, Sudie I and Sudie IV

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She would get out in the garden early in the morning, work until it got hot and come in, dress and was ready for the day.

Sudie II had a flair for decorating and made gorgeous flower arrangements. As a flower show judge, she was in great demand. For many years she was editor of *The Garden Gossip*, newsletter for the Garden Club of Virginia. She was the founder of the Three Chopt Garden Club, which became one of the most prominent garden clubs in Richmond. She and Daddy had three children: Sudie, Roger, and Billy.

SUDIE III:

I am Sudie Mann Wilson and am married to Thomas ("Tom") Eugene Wilson. We first lived in Greenville, NC, later moving to Rock Hill, SC. I also enjoy gardening and have created a garden in each of my homes. We have two daughters: Sue and Bev, and seven grandchildren.

My greatest achievement was organizing and directing the Junior Assembly, a cotillion for young people, in Rock Hill for 22 years. It is well established and the third director is now running it. (My daughter, Beverly Wilson Sumner started the Junior Assembly in Gastonia, NC ten years ago and it, too, is successful.) Another accomplishment was serving as president of the Episcopal Church women, twice. The first time in 1970 and again in 1999.

SUDIE IV:

My oldest daughter, Sudie ("Sue") Wilson Moore, also a beauty, was slow to begin gardening, but when she started, it really took and she loves it as did her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother before her. At this time she is working at Self Memorial Hospital in Greenwood, SC. She was married to John Marion Moore, but they are now divorced. She has three wonderful children: Sudie, John and Thomas.

SUDIE V:

Sudie Rucker Moore, my granddaughter, was married November 11, 2000 to Christopher Scott Clem, in Greenwood, SC. She graduated from Columbia College and the University of South Carolina with a Masters of Social Work degree. She is presently employed with Behavioral Health Services at Self Memorial Hospital in Greenwood. I am sure that one day, she will be a gardener also. In the meantime, she is embarking on a wonderful new life with her husband.



Wedding photo of Sudie Rucker Moore

Editor's note: It's interesting that these five Sudies are all the oldest child in each generation. May the line continue!

ANOTHER SUDIE

The story of the Five Sudies wouldn't be complete without mentioning one more Sudie. She is the namesake and granddaughter of Sudie I—Sudie Rucker Wood. She is the daughter of Garland A. Wood and Marion Fugitt and the youngest of their six children.

Sudie is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA. She is currently employed by Kids World Learning Center in Richmond and teaches four-year-olds in a pre-Kindergarten curriculum. Her main hobby is floral design. She also enjoys gardening, tennis and entertaining. Another favorite pastime is swing dancing.

She helps plan social events for the Community Fellowship Program. She is an active member of Third Presbyterian Church.



Photo of Sudie Rucker Wood
with her cute West Highland Terrier named Mollie

The Rucker Family Society Meeting Williamsburg, Virginia

October 13 - 15, 2000

by Lawrence A. Watts

Sept. 6, 2000

The time has come to fish or cut bait on the Rucker Family Society meeting in Williamsburg. I made the room reservation at the Fort Magruder Inn several months ago thinking I would attend. I could not go to the last one two years ago, and it will be two years before the next one after this one, so at my age I'd better get going or I will be too old. My wife, Sis, has been telling everyone that I was going to a family reunion in Williamsburg, but she has yet to say she will go with me. Her family, the Sherks, doesn't have reunions, that I know about. So, today I fill out the registration, write the checks, and send them to Charles D. Robinson. Who is Charles D. Robinson? He must be Jeannie's husband.

Sept. 25, 2000

Sis tells me she would like to accompany me to the Rucker Family Society meeting in Williamsburg. She loves Williamsburg, and I knew she would enjoy being there even if she did not attend the meeting with me. So, I write more checks and send them to Charles D. Robinson.

October 13, 2000

We couldn't have picked a more perfect day to take a ride through the country to Williamsburg. We leave from our home in Greenville, NC, drive over to Tarboro and pick up highway 258 and go North. I always enjoy driving through the country of my childhood. Northampton County has not changed since the War Between the States ended in 1865. Rich Square, Woodland, and Murfreesboro are just as they were in 1932 when we moved there.

We arrive in Williamsburg and find the Magruder Inn by four p.m. I find the front

entrance, park the car, and go in to claim our reservation and get our room assignment. There is little evidence of the Rucker Family Society meeting so I ask the room clerk if I have the right motel. She confirms the Ruckers are here and shows me a little notice on a nearby stand. She also tells me the Ruckers have Room 370 as the hospitality room. I look to my left and see Ed Taylor in one of the other entrance doors. I call to him but he does not hear me.

I return to the car and drive around the building to a more suitable parking place. Getting into a motel room gets to be more of a struggle every day. We should travel with fewer clothes.

While Sis is getting unpacked and adjusted to the room, I leave her to go scope out the Hospitality Room. It was a right long walk but on the same floor as our room.

The door to Room 370 was closed and things seemed quiet inside. I eased the door open and came face to face with a lady about my age. I asked if that was the Rucker Family meeting place. She confirmed that it was and we introduced ourselves. There were three ladies present. As we greeted each other, I was looking around the room. What I saw was a bucket of ice, a plate of salted peanuts, and about a dozen bottles of Coca Cola. I had to remind myself that I was not at a college fraternity party. Not everyone drinks a bourbon and water at five p.m. I fix myself a Coke, meet the other ladies, and move onto the men's side of the room. There were four men: three of them were seated on the two sofas, and one was seated on the floor. What struck me was that two of the men, who were almost my age, had on tee-shirts with the shirt tails out, with a message printed on the chest. Well, not everyone dresses to make a good first impression. I find it helps to make a good impression on the motel room clerk.

Well, my first exposure to the Rucker Family was wonderful. No one could have been more hospitable than those seven people, and they were doing it cold sober. I could not tell if they knew each other or not but they were certainly nice to

me. I had come to the right meeting.

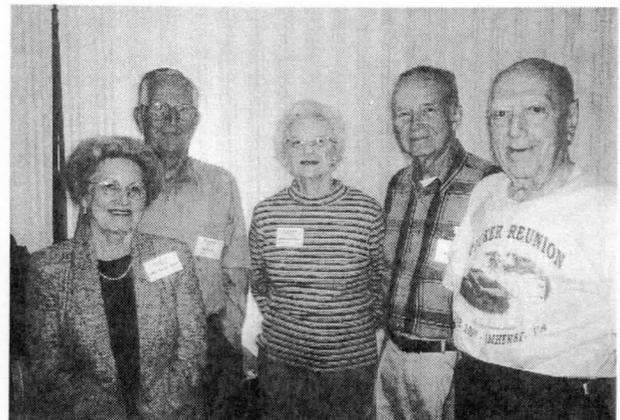
Sis and I went down to the main town square at Williamsburg and had a nice dinner. After dinner we walked around the stores and Sis planned what stores she would visit the next day.

October 14, 2000

Sis and I are slow getting to the dining room of the hotel for breakfast, which means I was about five minutes late arriving to my first-ever meeting of the Rucker Family Society at 10 A.M. Sis went off to enjoy shopping.

When I looked into the meeting room, I did not see a single vacant seat. I could not believe there would be so many people here and so few in the hospitality room last night. I had on my name tag.

So this is what Charles D. Robinson looks like. Jeannie is delightful looking and very naturally at the podium. It was reported there were 85 members present, and I know there were more than that in this room. There is \$12,189.00 in the treasury. That makes an excellent impression on me, as does all the other business of the meeting. It is like a family reunion. People have come from all over the country and I am seated beside a couple from California. The program of the morning was presented by Gerry Hedgepeth, who must be an employee of Colonial Williamsburg. He knows the history of this area and Jamestown like the back of his hand. It is nice to get new (con't)



At the Hospitality Room — from the left: Patsy Boles & her brother Ira Rucker; Lou Mason & her brother Hannon Burford and Lou's husband, Rod Mason with his Rucker Reunion tee-shirt

historical information and be reminded of when the English came to America. He will conduct the tour this afternoon of Jamestown, which I will miss.

The light lunch was a big sandwich and a salad. Very nice.

Sis met me at the room about one p.m. and she had lunch down town. Sis and I return to the market square where she does more shopping while I read a book, I bought, by John McCain, about John McCain. I believe George W. Bush would make a better president!

Sis and I got to the hospitality room almost on time at six p.m. This time the door was open and the room was full of people—wall to wall—and one of the first people I meet is Jeannie Robinson. She charms my shoes right off. She points out Charles D., better known as “Chuck,” and I go over and meet him. Then I meet dozens more, and this is wonderful. I look around and Sis is having a good time making like she is a Rucker also. I am impressed by so many people being interested in genealogy, and in MY genealogy. There are people who have a Watts, Burford, and Rucker connection, and this makes me feel right at home. So many people have come from Amherst County. I met several with whom I have corresponded earlier, and one who spent her childhood on the property at Burford Station where we think my grandfather lived before 1900. But no one seems to have any information on Robert White Watts who was married to Mary Ann Rucker. But one of these days someone will, I am sure.

Sis and I did not find anyone to buddy up with so we again went down to the main square of town but to in a different restaurant. This time, as luck would have it, a couple from Greenville came in and were seated at the table next to us. It is a small world. We had a nice dinner and visit with friends from home.

October 15, 2000

We got to the hotel dining room on time to finish our breakfast. Since we had on our name tags, we found others in our group to sit with for breakfast. Sis and I got to the Rucker Family



Southern Hospitality in the Confederate Fort
at Fort Magruder, Williamsburg

Society meeting at 10:00 a.m., on time. In fact we were early. The meeting room was larger and I had the feeling we had lost some of our members. The business portion of the program was just as impressive. The Board of Directors were introduced and there was an auction of a Sudie Rucker Wood book. The instruction portion of the program was not as impressive as the previous days meeting had been. Yes, it might have been that I was not as interested in the subject matter. Lunch was served in the Fort which is in a courtyard behind the hotel. It was an outdoor affair and the weather was perfect for this type of occasion.

It seemed a shame to pick up and leave just when we were getting acquainted but the meeting was over at the close of this lunch. So, back to the room and pack it up again. We were on the James River ferry by two o'clock, headed back to North Carolina, via the same route we followed on Friday going to Williamsburg. After another beautiful drive through the country side we were back home.

* * * * *

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Lawrence Watts for writing about his first Rucker Reunion. He must have visited the Hospitality during the board meeting Friday night and missed the get-together that was took place later.

NEW RUCKER DESCENDANTS BOOK

Alexander Stirling and Ann Alston in Spanish Feliciano

Compiled by Ann Alston Stirling Weller, 1999

Imagine the Editor's surprise when she returned from vacation in January to find a fabulous new Rucker book waiting for her. This book is a 592-page volume containing the descendants of Alexander Stirling, immigrant to America.

According to his will, Mr. Stirling came from Forfar, Angusshire, North Britain, and according to Spanish records, he arrived prior to 1777.

Ann Alston, who became Alexander's wife, was sent with her siblings to Benjamin Farrar's place in Pointe Coupee for protection sometime after the revolt at Fort Panmure in the Natchez District in 1781. Ann's father, John Alston, one of the leaders of the revolt, had absconded, later to be imprisoned in New Orleans, and her mother, Elizabeth Hines Alston, had died.

Alexander befriended the children, who were having a difficult time, and in 1784, he and Ann Alston were married in the District of Baton Rouge. They had twelve children, the second being Lewis Stirling who married 14 July 1807 to Sara Turnbull, daughter of John Turnbull and Catharine⁴ Rucker (Peter³, Thomas², Peter¹).

The book is well documented, illustrated and indexed. Chapter 4 covers the Stirling-Turnbull material and their issue, all Rucker descendants. Appendix E. gives the Rucker-Turnbull data.

Many thanks to Ann for sending the Editor a copy of her book for the future Rucker library.

For a copy of this book, please send a check for \$45.00 (postpaid) to Ann Stirling Weller, P. O. Box 270, Wakefield, LA 70784.

JOSEPH T. RUCKER

From Beverly Rucker McAllister

After hearing you mention that there was Rucker who went with Admiral Byrd to the South Pole, I found the following books in the Wichita, Kansas Public Library. You might enjoy looking for them at your local library.

Little America by Richard E. Byrd, 1930, G. P. Putman's Sons, NY & London (1928-1930 Expedition). Pg. 413: Joseph T. Rucker, photographer, is in the list of participants of the Winter Party of 1928-1930.

Page 56 describes the two photographers, Rucker and Van der Veer dealing with a "mass of photographic gear." The footnote indicates that Rucker was also employed by Paramount News.

Page 170-171 describes the two photographers as craftsmen in their line. In a conference with Byrd, they requested more time to take pictures, but at that time he felt they were needed to help build snow houses. Byrd did promise to try to give them more freedom.

Page 232 describes the problems the photographers had with their motion picture cameras. "The instruments were usually left outside, for on coming in contact with the warm air of the houses they immediately were covered with frost. In cases where cameras were brought in, before they could be used again, it was necessary to take them apart, wipe them thoroughly and bake them for several hours near the stove. If Rucker or Van der Veer breathed on the lenses, however slightly, the vapor froze in irremovable frost and went out of action. Yet these two men accepted this inconvenience as part of the job."

Discovery by Richard E. Byrd, 1935, G. P. Putnam's sons, NY (1933-1935 Second Expedition). Page 255, Jos Rucker, "a member of the first expedition was speaking [on the radio] . . ."

50th Wedding Anniversary

Gordon Everett Vallandigham and Jean⁸ Ellen Berry (Mary⁷ E. Clark, Margaret⁶ E. Rucker, William⁵ T., William⁴, John³, Thomas², Peter¹) were married April 2, 1950 (see photo at left) and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 2, 2000 in Eureka, California.



They raised four children: John, Joan, Larry and Linda; and now have six grandchildren.

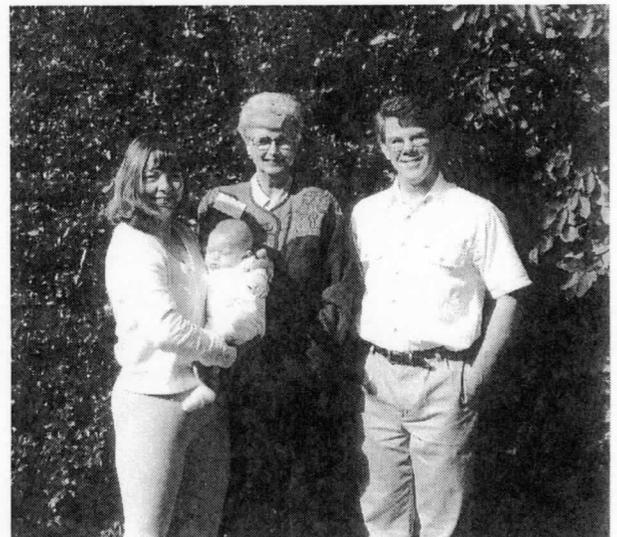
Jean Ellen taught kindergarten for 30 years and Gordon taught school becoming a school Principal. After retirement, they owned and operated a clothing store for nine years. They have now become interested in family history and attended the 2000 Rucker Reunion in Williamsburg. They were one of the couples that traveled the farthest to attend the reunion.



Jean Ellen and Gordon Vallandigham

YOUNGEST REUNION ATTENDEE

One of the family members in attendance at the Williamsburg Rucker Family Reunion (October 13-14, 2000) and who has the most lines of descent back to Peter Rucker was also the youngest. Sabrina Marie Rucker (age three months at reunion time) was born July 3, 2000 to Derek and Diane Rucker of Apple Valley, Minnesota. (See articles in RFSN, Vol. 2, No. 1, p.1 and 10 and RFSN, Vol. 5, no. 3, p.38.) Sabrina has seven lines of descent to Peter. Only one other family member in attendance had seven lines of descent—and that is (guess who), her father, Derek.



From left, Diane and Sabrina Rucker, Jeannie Robinson, and Derek Rucker

Submitted by Sabrina's proud grandfather, Mike Rucker.



QUERY

Who were the parents of John Rucker who married Elizabeth Price in Kanawha Co., [W]VA?

Janet Martin <gus@nccoast.net> wrote the Editor that she thought John was the son of Claiborne Rucker (Peter³, John², Peter¹) who was in the 1810 and 1820 Kanawha Co., [W]VA census and moved to Shelby Co., Indiana. Claiborne left a Will and does not mention a son named John. Now that doesn't prove that John was not the son of Claiborne, but it's a good clue.

What does prove the parentage of John Rucker (Joel⁴, William³, Thomas², Peter¹) is a letter written by John's son, Milton W. Rucker, of Wills Creek, to the Editor of the Clendenin Courier, Sunday, June 27, 1915. Here are some excerpts:

"I will write down a few things, if you see fit, you may put down in your good paper . . . My grandfather's name was Joel Rucker, he had four sons by his first wife, their names are as follows: John, Fielding, Samuel and Benjamin who was the father of Smiley and Wesley, who died June 25, 1915. As I have just been told Wesley was born August 4, 1831 and Smiley his brother was born May 12, 1835. Now my grandmother on my mother's side was Elizabeth, a daughter, and she married Edmond, a gentleman whose name was Edmond Price"

"Now my mother's name was Elizabeth, my father's name was John Rucker. He was born 1780, he died June 22, 1848. My mother died November 22, 1859. They had 9 children, all are gone except 2. John, born 1829 and George born April 30, 1834, William S. Rucker, my oldest brother, born April 12, 1825, died August 1906.

"July 15, 1915, My grandfather on my mother's side his name was Edmond Price. Grandmother's

name was Elizabeth, she was named for her mother so that she was called Elizabeth Price. My father and she were married and raised 9 children, the youngest died 79 years old. Nancy Rucker, Jonathan Strickland's wife, Elizabeth, became William Strickland's wife, Sarah became Jarret Bowen's wife. Claricy was Ephraim H. Strickland's wife. William L. Rucker, his wife was Sarah Price, 3rd wife living. John W. Rucker, he died April 23, 1916, 87 years. Benjamin F. Rucker, Julia Price wife, is dead. George is still living September 21, 1919. Milton W. Rucker his wife still living September 2 or 19, 1919, Martha."

Much of the Joel Rucker information is covered in the book *MY FATHERS, THE ELK RIVER ANCESTRY OF JAMES ELVIN BLACKWELL*, by Lyle M. Blackwell, 1979. (The Editor found it in the Roanoke City Library, but perhaps you can find it on the Internet or through interlibrary loan.)

FAMILY LETTERS

Family letters are very important in the study of genealogy. We could not prove the parentage of John Rucker, above, without the letter quoted above.

Jane B. Decker of Simpsonville, SC has been so kind to send the Editor many letters from Sudie Rucker Wood. They were written to Cornelia B. Dillard of Lynchburg, VA, dated from 1921 to 1941. They mostly pertain to genealogy, but have some family stories that are very meaningful to the Editor. I treasure them and will place the originals at the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond. The Editor does appreciate Jane's sharing them with her.

Do you have any family letters that you would be willing to share?

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Editor remembers well, her grandmother, Sudie I's regal statue. Sitting erect in a chair, her back never touched the back of the chair. She was definitely an elegant lady. In addition she benefitted us all with her Rucker Genealogy. The photo of the four Sudies is a wonderful treasure.

Where did the name Sudie originate? It is a very unusual name. Sudie Rucker Wood (Wood, p.54) was named for her aunt, Susan Margaret Rucker Smith (Wood, p.52). Her nickname must have been "Sudie" as another niece was named for her: Sudie Margaret Rucker (Wood, p.51). There were two other people named for Sudie Rucker Wood: her niece, Sudie Hite Skinker (Wood, p.55) and another granddaughter, also named Sudie Rucker Wood (see p.33 of this newsletter).

Many thanks to all the people who have donated articles to the Rucker Family Society: Ann Alston Stirling Weller for the gift of her book (p.36); Jane B. Decker for sending me the wonderful letters of Sudie Rucker Wood (p.37); Mike Rucker for bringing a *Rucker Family Genealogy* to the reunion to be auctioned and for his Terry the Tractor books; and Henry Rucker of Aiken, SC for memorabilia on his ancestors.

2002 RUCKER REUNION

My thanks to Chuck Berry <cfberry@jps.net> for volunteering to help with the next reunion to be held in Missouri sometime in 2002. Please let Chuck or me know if you can assist in any way or if you have any ideas on where it should be held and what places we should visit. Choices are Kansas City, St. Louis or Jefferson City.



THE RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY YOUR 2001 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOW DUE

Please check your mailing label to see through what year you are paid. The first number is the year through which you have paid, the second number is your membership number. If it says 00, please pay.

Please make your membership check payable to The Rucker Society and send to OUR NEW TREASURER:

Mrs. Leslie B. Cabral, Treasurer

5601 S. 37th Court

Greenacres, FL 33463

E-mail <LeslieCab@aol.com>

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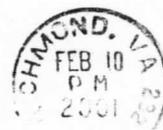
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PHOTO CORNER

Can anyone identify the ladies in the photo? The lady seated at the extreme right is my grandmother, Frances Keeble Rucker McKee, 1865-1910. She was the sixth of ten children of Samuel J. Rucker (Western⁵ T., James⁴, Benjamin³, John², Peter¹, see Wood, p.125) and Adelaide Mitchell. She married Luke Vigo McKee on 20 December 1899 in the Hillside Community in McLennan County, Texas. I don't know who the others in the picture are, and none of the Texas Rucker cousins, whom I know, can identify them. (Editor's note: Could they be her church group or her sewing club? Why not search the local historical society for clues.)

From David R. Hoffman, P.O. Box 247, Harrisburg, PA 17108.



THE RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY



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