

laid his purse (wallet) on the top of his cabinet and it stayed there. We got a new Home Comfort cook stove with a big reservoir on the side next to the fire and the sink where we could get warm water. That was really nice.

*Doris and her brother Fred believe this to be an "Air-Forcer" pump invented by James Monroe Rucker of Bedford County, Virginia. See *Rucker Newsletter* Vol. 17, Nos. 3 & 4 for the article from the *Richmond Daily Whig & Advertiser* of 6 Aug., 1872.

**William Richard Rucker married Addie Christian Wilkerson in the Methodist parsonage in Rustburg, Virginia and moved to Utah in February 1917.

Doris has three lines of descent from Peter Rucker:

1. Doris⁸ L. Rucker, William⁷ R., Henry⁶ W., Nathaniel⁵ W., Isaac⁴, Ambrose³, John², Peter¹.

2. Doris⁹ L. Rucker, William⁸ R., Henry⁷ W., Francis Jane Jones⁶, Mary McDaniel⁵, Margaret⁴ Rucker, Ambrose³, John², Peter¹.

3. Doris¹⁰ L. Rucker, William⁹ R., Eliza Elizabeth Morris⁷, Margaret M. Jones⁶, Mary McDaniel⁵, Margaret⁴ Rucker, Ambrose³, John², Peter¹.

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Robert Malcolm Rucker,

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a now departed age and imagine the lifestyle of those in each exotic scene. Seeing a Robert Rucker painting is almost like taking a vacation to southern Louisiana.

He created a huge volume of paintings during his career and according to the Jean Bragg Gallery of Southern Art in New Orleans, the premier source for his paintings today, "His star is rising." That is to say the prices for his works are rapidly accelerating. Originals of his works now typically fetch between \$5,000 and \$15,000. He was named a Louisiana Legend by Louisiana Public Broadcasting in 1997 four years before his death.

Robert Malcolm Rucker was born into a family of steamboat captains. His father, Edward Augustus Rucker, Jr., and both of his grandfathers were captains, as were two of his father's brothers. But a life on the river was not to be for Robert. In 1948, when he was just age 16, he had displayed enough talent and productivity in his paintings that his mother opened "Rucker's Studio" in the French Quarter in which to exhibit and sell his works. The shop was on St. Peter Street across from Pat O'Brien's.

Then tragedy struck! The very next year he contracted

crippling poliomyelitis. From 1948 to 1952 he underwent a number of operations before he turned 21. Fortunately the disease did not stymie his creativity. Because of his illness the Louisiana Department of Education funded his schooling at the John McCrady School of Fine Arts at 910 Bourbon Street in New Orleans for five years. In fact, his affliction probably enhanced his artistic ability. In an interview with the Baton Rouge *In Register* in 1997 he stated, "*I don't know if I would have had the discipline I do if not for the polio. It taught me discipline I didn't have. - To this day, I bet I can sit down in a chair longer than you and not go crazy. I can literally sit and paint for hours.*"

Although his oils are most often seen today Robert Rucker was equally gifted in a number of other art forms including watercolor, acrylic, lithography and etching. Careful preparation was one of his hallmarks. His oil paintings and most of his watercolors were executed only after he had prepared a careful pencil understudy. Many of his works could be called "impressionistic" on account of the flickering brushwork and handling of light, he was a skilled draftsman and often included a wealth of detail in many of his paintings. One can study a Robert Rucker painting at length and continually find interesting previously unnoticed small details. Of significance,