

the Rücker Society

NEWSLETTER

Volume 1

Number 3

November 1990

FAMILY PROFILE

ANNA DURRER WATSON

Anna Rucker Watson Durrer, of Ruckersville, Virginia, was born October 29, 1904, and has just celebrated her 86th birthday. She grew up at "Friendly Acres," a Rucker home that has been in the family for many generations. Anna is the Grand Dame of Ruckersville and knows more about the family than anyone else there.

Anna was educated in the local schools in Greene County and graduated from High School in Charlottesville. She received her Bachelors degree from the University of Virginia's School of Education. Her first teaching job was in Earl Post Office in a one room school house with sixteen children. She said it was like one big family with children of all ages. She would teach the lesson and the older children would help the younger ones. For lunch, Anna would cook a pot of soup over an open fire in the yard. The school grew and soon a second room was added. Anna has many fond memories of those early years.

It wasn't long before she met her future husband Marcus Lee Watson. He ran the general store in Quinke, not very far from Ruckersville. Anna and Marcus were married on Christmas Day in 1926. Marcus worked 364 days a year, his only day off was Christmas Day, so that was the day they were married. Anna then taught in the school at Ridge.

The Watsons did not have

children of their own, but they raised Virginia Evelyn Hoffman. Her mother died when she was five years old, and she went to live with Anna and Marcus. Virginia lived with them until she married Anna's younger brother, Ellis Lyle Durrer. They live at "Friendly Acres" and have two children, Richard Lee and Elizabeth Ann. Their son Richard runs the dairy farm at "Friendly Acres." He and his wife, Marie Collins Durrer, have two sons, Lyle, a student at V. P. I., and Lee, a high school student. Marie is the Clerk of Greene County.

Anna worked in the local school system for 44 years, first as a teacher and later as a principal. Her husband ran a general store for years until he retired. In 1953, they

(con't on page 2)



ANNA WATSON AT HOME—

(con't from page 1)

built their present home, calling it "Markanna," a combination of their two first names. The house is located on Route 33, on a corner of the "Friendly Acres" farm.

Anna is a very busy person. The old adage "Ask a busy person" is certainly true with Anna. She claims she doesn't know how to say no! Yet she never seems rushed or too busy to help someone.

She is a member of the Albemarle Chapter of the D. A. R., The Colonial Dames of America, and four garden clubs. She is a certified flower show judge. She is an active member of the Ruckersville Baptist



Church and teaches the Adult Women's Class. She is currently helping to write the history for the church's 100th anniversary next year. Anna entertains frequently, especially for the Democratic Party of which she has been Chairman. Anna was chairman of the Greene County School Board for ten years. She is now taking a class in Parliamentary Law at the Garden Club Center.

Anna's hobbies include

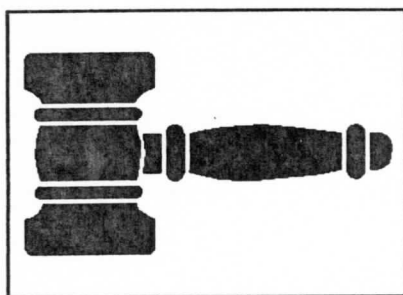
needlepoint, handwork, and quilting. She has made a quilt for each of her nieces and nephews. Her home is full of her work and the antiques she collects. She collects furniture and primitives. She has 700 pitchers displayed throughout her home. She has her brother-in-law's collection of lusterware pitchers. Most of her pitchers are beautiful, pressed glass of varied designs. Anna showed me a pair of Rucker family jelly composites, very rare thumb-print design, that she purchased from Seannie Beatty of Aspen Grove.

Anna is listed in Who's Who in Virginia, 1974-75, and Community Leaders of America, 1970-71. In 1988, Anna and Marcus were recognized as the longest married couple of Greene County. They will celebrate their 64th anniversary on December 25, 1990.

It was Anna's idea for the first National Rucker Reunion held in Ruckersville in 1988. She organized it and directed it. At the reunion, she announced her idea for a historical marker to the founders of Ruckersville. With donations from the group, her family, and the Greene County Historical Society, her lifelong dream became a reality. The dedication was held in conjunction with the 1990 Rucker Reunion. The dedication service at the Ruckersville Baptist Church, the unveiling of the marker at the crossroads of Route 29 and 33, and the reception afterwards at Anna's home, were a wonderful culmination to the reunion. See the article that appeared in the Charlottesville newspaper on page 4.

No matter how busy Anna is, she is never too busy to see a cousin. If you visit Ruckersville, Virginia, ask at any store for a member of the Rucker Family, and you will be directed to Anna Watson of "Markanna."

(con't on page 4)



President's Message

First, I want to thank Jeannie Robinson for the fantastic job she is doing on the RUCKER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER. I'm sure that I speak for many of you in this regard.

The latest report from treasurer Jack White (as of 10-30-90) is that we have 190 paid memberships, either families or singles, and 96 orders for the reprints of Sudie Rucker Wood's THE RUCKER FAMILY GENEALOGY, and they are still coming in.

We had said that the prior issue of the newsletter would be the last one mailed to non-members of the Rucker Society. However, realizing that there are probably a number of cousins who intended to join but laid the announcement aside, we are squeezing the budget to mail this issue to everyone on the mailing list. This will absolutely be the last free one. If you have not yet sent in your membership, please do so now by sending your check to The Rucker Society, c/o Mr. Lewis M. White, treasurer, 9751 Firth Court, Vienna, VA 22181. \$5 will pay thru 1991 for all family members at one address for the newsletter.

The 96 orders received for THE RUCKER FAMILY GENEALOGY are close enough to the 100 minimum required that we will be ordering the books to be printed about one month after this issue of the newsletter is mailed. From some comments which we have received, there may be some confusion about the book. This will be a reprint of the original Sudie Rucker Wood book (1932) and will not contain the updated information that several people are working on for future publication. If anyone has ordered the book in expectation of new data, you may cancel your order. We are still taking orders @ \$16 for plastic laminated soft cover and an optional hard cover can be ordered for an additional \$30. We will order only the number of copies for which we have received paid commitments, so please order immediately if you are interested.

We have heard from a number of cousins who were not on our original mailing list but who learned of the Rucker Society and Newsletter from others. Please continue to spread the word to any Ruckers we may have missed.

Best wishes to all for a great holiday season and new year.

Rod Mason



MARKANNA, home of Anna and Marcus Watson

(con't from page 2)

ANNA'S LINE OF DESCENT FROM PETER RUCKER:

PETER¹ RUCKER; THOMAS² RUCKER m. Elizabeth Reynolds; JOHN³ RUCKER m. Mary Burton; JOEL⁴ RUCKER m. Nancy Oliver; BLY-FIELD⁵ RUCKER m. Nancy White; ALLEN⁶ O. RUCKER m. Harriett Pritchett; SARAH⁷ FRANCES RUCKER m. John C. Durrer; JOHN⁸ S. DURRER m. Mary Elizabeth Deane; ANNA⁹ RUCKER DURRER m. Marcus Lee Watson.

Marker gives Ruckersville niche in history

June 18,
1990

By DOUGLAS HOLT
of The Progress staff

Greene County has seen plenty of history, but before Sunday it had never seen a roadside historical tablet of the sort dotting Charlottesville and Albemarle County.

In fact, Greene County was the state's last county to obtain a historic marker, said Julian F. Aylor, a landscape specialist with the Virginia Department of Transportation.

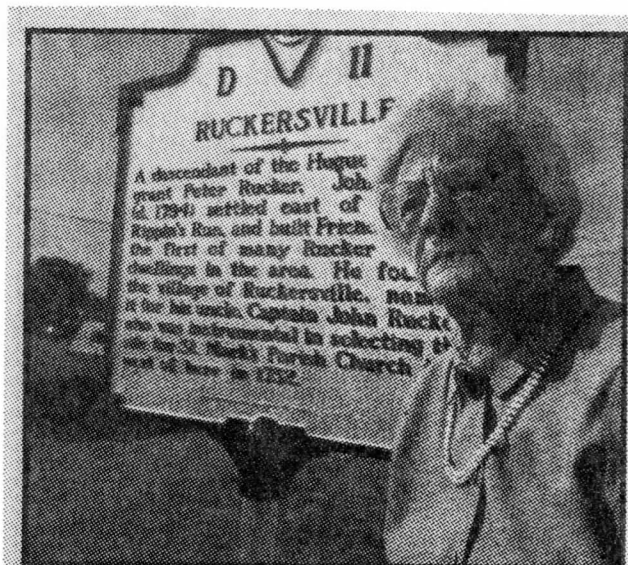
The lack of historical recognition from the DOT and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources officially ended with the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the founding of Ruckersville, population 300, near the intersection of U.S. 29 and U.S. 33.

The silver sign, with black lettering and borders, briefly recounts the town's origins.

"A descendent of the Huguenot immigrant Peter Rucker, John R. Rucker (died 1794) settled here on Rippin's Run and built Friendly Acres, the first of many Ruckersville family dwellings in the area," the sign says. "He founded the village of Ruckersville, naming it for his uncle, Capt. John Rucker, who was instrumental in selecting the site of St. Mark's Parish Church just west of here in 1732."

As a Huguenot, Peter Rucker was one of 250,000 Protestants who fled France after Louis XIV revoked

The forefather to thousands of Ruckers is believed to have survived his ship's sinking in 1690 by either swimming to shore or making landfall on a raft of rum barrels.



Progress photo by Matt Jones

Anna D. Watson, 85, of Ruckersville, a descendant of Peter Rucker, nine generations removed.

their religious freedom. Others say, however, Rucker was a German who happened to join the Huguenots in their flight.

The sign does not mention that the ship carrying Rucker to America in 1690 sank near Hampton Roads.

The forefather to thousands of Ruckers now living in the United States either swam or floated to shore on a raft of rum barrels, according to A. Roland Pittman, who gave a short Rucker genealogy at the Ruckersville Baptist Church. Pittman, a Charlottesville realtor, is related by 10 generations to Peter Rucker.

About 75 people — some 30 either Ruckers or related to the Ruckers — sang "Faith of Our Fathers" and listened to invocations before trodding off to unveil the sign and pose for pictures around it.

A primary mover behind the reunion and the marker is Anna D. Watson, 85, a life-long Ruckersville resident and a descendent after nine generations of Peter Rucker.

JEANNIE-LOGY

I came across "Tips for Genealogists" in NEWS 'n' NOTES, Vol. X, No.6, Summer, 1990, newsletter of the Genealogical Research Institute of Virginia. They sounded like good ideas, so I took the liberty to alter them slightly for Rucker family members. I hope everyone gets interested in preserving their family papers. Old letters and pictures tell wonderful stories to later generations. We don't want our children to have to quote these words from "Maud Muller," a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier:

"For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: 'It might have been!'"

TIPS FOR GENEALOGISTS

Use a typewriter for all correspondence. If you don't have a typewriter, PRINT names and addresses....on envelopes, in your letters, and in queries. Even though you think your writing is legible, the reader may misread it!

Write dates in this manner: 7 June 1879. It is an accepted rule for genealogists and is easier to decipher and no comma is used. Do not use slash marks, 7/6/1879. Is it July 6 or June 7?

When keeping copies, xerox them on good bond or acid free paper. It only takes about 20 years for regular paper to deteriorate. Store your most valuable papers in acid free folders.

Do not use staples or paper clips when storing papers as they will rust and damage papers. Never store papers with "Post-it" notes attached. The adhesive left by the notes, even though minuscule in amount, will cause the paper to begin to deteriorate in the area where the note was attached.

Try not to fold papers in storage. If it is necessary to fold a paper, such as a newspaper, refold along new lines, every so often, to prevent deterioration along that line.

If you have old letters or papers of particular interest, deposit them in a local library or historical society. If you have only one copy and that copy is lost then everyone loses. Remember that libraries and archives know how to best protect your valuable papers. Keep a copy in your file with a reference to where the original is stored.

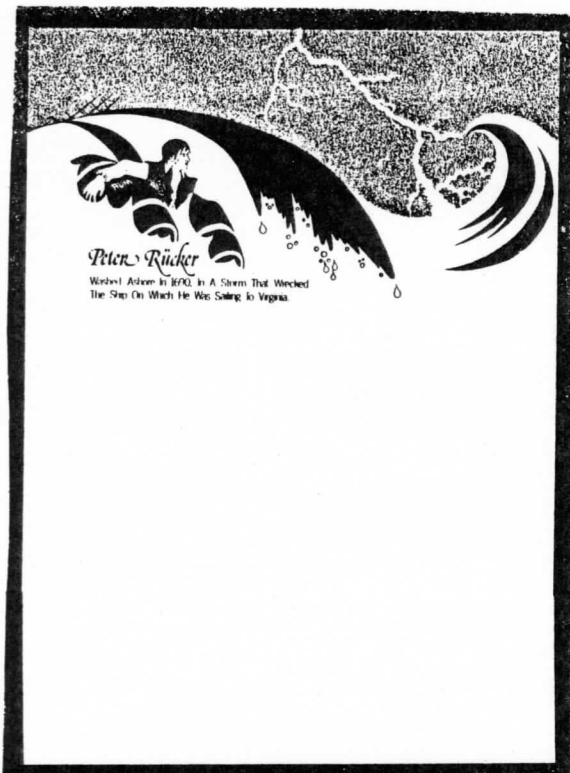
Most people are willing to share their information with others. Label your papers with your name and date and the person to whom you are sending the material. When you receive material, make sure you note where, when, and from whom it was received. When you receive material from others, do not remove their name. Years later you won't remember from where it came. It would be embarrassing to send someone their own material with your name on it.

Never write on the back of photographs. The ink will gradually come though and ruin the face of the picture. Write on a label and attach to the back. Or write in pencil along the edge. Please, DO LABEL YOUR PICTURES. You know who is in the picture, but will your grandchildren know?

PETER RUCKER'S SHIPWRECK

Peter Rucker, in coming to America, embarked in an unseaworthy vessel. The ship sank before it arrived in Jamestown. There is no official documentation of the event, but the story passed down through so many different sides of the family that we believe there is some truth to the story. Here are some of those stories:

1. Sudie Rucker Wood's The Rucker Family Genealogy, p.1, relates that Peter, about 1690, "shipwrecked near the mouth of the James River, and that he swam ashore, living there for a time."
2. Edythe Whitley's History of the Rucker Family, p.9, said John (she said John but Peter was the immigrant) "floated for three days on a piece of driftwood, being picked up by a passing vessel."
3. Eva Cutts Rucker Davidson, Rucker Kinsmen, p.45, said that Peter's ship was "wrecked in a heavy storm 12 miles from the Jamestown shore--nearly all lost. (Peter) tied two casks of rum together which buoyed him up and he floated for two days" until rescued. [This story was handed down in the family of Thomas B. Rucker, born 29 Oct. 1807, Caldwell County, KY.]
4. From an unknown source: "Ambrose Rucker...landed in Norfolk in 1701 after being shipwrecked and floating on a timber in mid ocean for three days. He landed at Norfolk with two brothers possibly three brothers... He left Norfolk in 1715 for the upcountry, and settled in Amherst Co." [Written in a letter found by James M. Rucker, Gladys, VA., among his mothers's papers. This version came through the family of Edwin Sorrell Rucker, born 8 April 1803 (Wood, p.82). Many credit Ambrose with being the immigrant.]
5. Joseph A. Groves, The Alstons and Allstons, p.147, wrote "the family of Ruckers were Huguenots and left France in the 17th Century, and settled near Fairfax, VA... The vessel which brought them to America was wrecked and every one on board lost, except Rucker himself and one companion." [This story came through the family of Jonathan Rucker (Wood, p.229) of Mississippi.]



PETER RUCKER NOTEPADS

The PR NOTEPADS, illustrating Peter Rucker's survival from the shipwreck, shown at left, are now printed and have been delivered to those who have ordered them. Designed by Edward J. Willis III, they are printed in blue ink on cream color paper. [Actual size 5" x 8"]

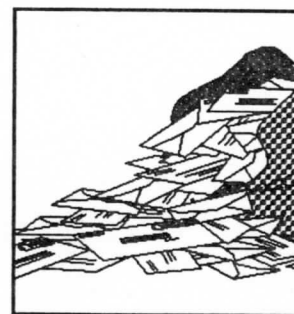
To order, send \$5.00 for each pad of 50 sheets, to the Editor: Jean B. Robinson, 304 Charmian Road, Richmond, VA 23226.

Matching envelopes are available: \$1.50 for ten, \$3.00 for 20, etc.

[Next newsletter: "Drownings of Rucker Relatives."]

Q U E S T I O N S A N D A N S W E R S

"My gr-gr-gr grandmother, ELIZABETH RUCKER, born ca. 1784, married FIELDING CROMWELL on 17 Feb. 1802 in Jefferson County, KY (Louisville area). He was the son of Louis (Lewis) Cromwell. They lived near Elizabeth, Harrison County, IN, near the Ohio River. Elizabeth died 30 July 1837 (age about 53) and is buried in Rogers Campground Cemetery near Elizabeth, Indiana. Will appreciate information about her parents, place and date of birth, brothers and sisters." From DORIS McMANIS CAMDEN, P.O. Box 214, Warsaw, IN 23581-0214.



"What a nice newsletter. I'm trying to get active once again with genealogy. I would like to know if there are folks out there from our particular Rucker line: Peter¹ Rucker, John² Rucker, Anthony³ Rucker (co-inventor of the Batteaux), Abner⁴ Rucker, Julius⁵ Rucker, Richard⁶ Morton Rucker, Thomas⁷ Loren Rucker, Harold⁸ Robert Rucker, Loren⁹ Delmar Rucker. We can't find much about generation 5 and 6, Julius and Richard. Any help would be greatly appreciated." From ALICE J. RUCKER, 16526 Arminta St., Van Nuys, CA 91406. Phone: 1-(818)-365-7027.

Help is needed for research in Franklin, Wilkes, and Elbert Counties, Georgia:

1. "Need marriage record for FRANCES/FRANKEY RUCKER and JOHN P. ROSS. Date possibly the later part of 1808, place possibly Franklin County, GA.
2. "Need proof that FRANCES RUCKER, who married John Ross, is the daughter of GEORGE³ RUCKER (Thomas², Peter¹).
3. "Would like other descendants of George Rucker to correspond with me to help complete his line."

Write SHERRILL LOMBARDI, 15 Marian Ave., Pittsfield, MA 01201.

QUERY: "JAMES SMITH, born 1792 (MD), married NANCY RUCKER, born 9 May 1800 (KY), had son SAMUEL PARKER SMITH, born 1822 (KY). Need information on the Smiths and murder of Samuel in 1873." (Wood, 24) RUTH SMITH ANDERSON, 1208 E. Eastman Lane, Maineville, Ohio 45039.

BOOK REVIEW: The Hollow Hills, by RUDY RUCKER (Morrow, \$18.95), is a fascinating science fiction (in the Jules Verne tradition) about Edgar Allan Poe. A boy, a slave, and a dog stow away on a batteau on its trip from Lynchburg to Richmond. With Poe, they join an expedition to the South Pole to search for an entrance to the interior of the earth. Deemed as having "wonderful characters and a delightful plot," this book received an excellent review in the Richmond News Leader, 31 Oct. 1990. [Who is this Rudy Rucker?]

NOTE: If anyone can answer these questions or has additional information to send to these cousins, please send a copy to the Editor of the Newsletter for future publication. Other family members are interested in this information, too.

Please send your "Questions and Answers" to the Editor:
JEAN B. ROBINSON, 304 Charmian Road, Richmond, VA 23226.

ATTENTION: RUCKER KIN

Please send your RUCKER Family Group Sheets as soon as possible to:-

Mrs. Doris Edwards
2017 43rd S.E. #U-2
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

We have had a good response since the last RUCKER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER but there are still MANY from whom we would like to hear.

This is YOUR opportunity to have your records included in:--

- 1) JEAN B. ROBINSON's update of "THE RUCKER FAMILY GENEALOGY", written in 1932 by her grandmother, Sudie Rucker Wood.
- 2) MARY RUCKER SNYDER's Newsletter, "RUCKER RUCKUS".
- 3) DORIS EDWARDS' RUCKER Family Group Sheets at the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA.

LETTER FROM ENID OSTERTAG of St. Joseph, Missouri: John and I "were not able to attend the Rucker Reunion during the summer, so I am delighted about the newsletter, and find that Edward W. Rucker is in my line, as Lemuel was my gr-gr-gr grandfather. We have visited the farm in Monroe Co., Ohio, where Lemuel is buried.

"The information on my grandmother, in the Sudie Wood book is wrong, in part. LUCY CATHERINE RUCKER, on p. 263, married Garner (sic). That is so, but first she was married to ROBERT ALEXANDER HARRIS, who was my grandfather. Her children were all Harris sons and daughters. She married secondly DAVID B. GARVER.

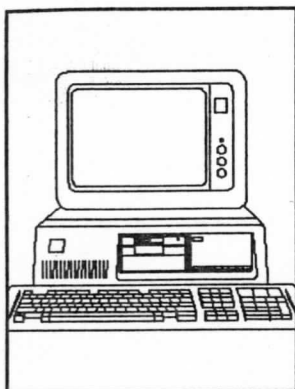
"Thanks for taking on this task - I know it is quite a lot of work, as my husband edits a newsletter for the Ostertag-Easterday Assoc. Enclosed are several names of descendants of Lemuel Rucker, I feel sure they will be interested in the newsletter." (ENID, please send us the names of the Harris children for the newsletter.)

RUCKER FAMILY COAT-OF-ARMS: CLAUDE L. RUCKER, 1814 Highland Drive, Fernandino Beach, FL, 32034, has a 35 mm color negative of the family coat of arms. (See Sudie Rucker Wood, The Rucker Family Genealogy, p.300, for a copy.) He has offered us prints: A 5" x 7" photo at \$2.50, and a 8" x 10" photo at \$5.00, cost includes postage. Let him know whether you want a glossy or matte finish.

LOST RUCKERS: The following were returned for insufficient address or because they moved. Please let us know of their whereabouts:

Mrs. Suzanne Brannan, 2856 Wakefield St., Arlington, VA 22207.
Dr. James Edwards, 1941 Twin Falls Road, Decatur, GA 30032.
Mrs. Thelma Rucker, Leisure World, Seal Beach, CA 90740.

Thanks to Kay Tomlin, Charlottesville, VA, for sending the article about the Ruckersville Marker. It appeared in the Charlottesville Daily Progress, June 18, 1990.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It has been fun, yet frustrating, learning how to use a computer. The computer is a marvelous instrument of the future, that we have now. The program, Aworks, came with my machine, but I have added Word Perfect to make columns.

Thanks to all who responded to the Summer newsletter. It is exciting hearing from so many new cousins.

Jeanne Fallen has done a great job listing all the Ruckers on her computer and making the address labels. Thanks, Jeanne for the many hours you have put in, and meeting our deadline. One of the problems she has encountered is hav-

ing two or more names at the same address. We can only put one name on each label, so I hope the name we chose is okay with you. If not, let Jeanne know and she'll correct the list.

Jack White, treasurer, has done an excellent job setting up a computer program for the treasurer's report. He has listed everyone who has sent in money for any purpose. We appreciate Jack's enthusiasm and hard work.

RSN EDITOR: Jean B. Robinson, 304 Charmian Road, Richmond, VA 23226.

MEMBERSHIP

Join THE RUCKER SOCIETY for 1990-1991. \$5.00 covers membership through 1991. If you haven't sent your dues, please do so now. We know many of you are interested and we don't want to lose you. Thanks to all who have sent in their dues and family information.

Membership for 1990-1991 - \$5.00 _____

Enclosed is a check for \$16.00 for a paperback REPRINT of Sudie Rucker Wood's The Rucker Family Genealogy. [This is not an update, this is a photographic reprint for those who do not have a copy of her book.] _____

For a hardback copy, cost is \$16.00 + \$30.00 = \$46.00 _____

Here is my donation to the Cemetery repair fund _____

Total enclosed _____

Make check payable
to:
THE RUCKER SOCIETY

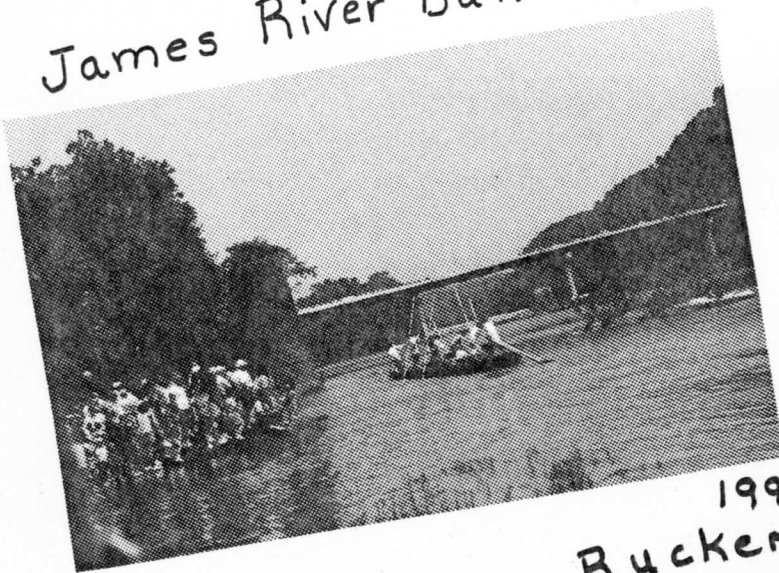
% LEWIS M. White
9751 Firth Court
Vienna, VA 22181

member's name _____
spouse's name _____
children _____

address _____
city, state _____
zip + 4 _____

My line of descent is through _____, child of Peter¹.

James River Batteaux



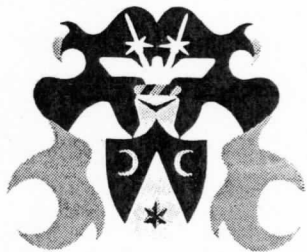
Family Groups



1990
Rucker Reunion
photos by
Jean B. Robinson



Cemetery Tour



THE RUCKER SOCIETY

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