

Volume 2

Number 3

August 1991

FAMILY PROFILE THE STORY OF AN INDUSTRIOUS FAMILY

Joseph Herman (J. H.) Rucker wanted to be a history professor, but never had the opportunity to obtain an education. His fervent desire was to make sure his nine children graduated from college. His wife, Mary Ophelia Fuller, had attended two years at a young women's academy, was an excellent pianist and taught piano. Together they raised and educated nine children.

A cotton farmer, Rucker turned to dairy farming so that the children wouldn't have to miss school in the fall to help harvest the crop. Times were hard and money was scarce in the 1930s. There was no way that he could pay to educate his large family, so Rucker came up with an idea of bartering for their education. The J. H. Rucker Dairy would provide milk for McMurry College, a Methodist institution, Abilene, Texas, in exchange for tuition, books, and fees for nine children.

The children milked the cows, bottled the milk, and delivered it to the college. Rucker recognized the college's need for garbage disposal, and he presented the idea of hauling away the college's garbage for free. The table scraps would feed his pigs to sell in order to supplement the family income. Each semester he presented a pig to the college in thanks. The family continued to supply the college with milk and carry away the garbage until the dairy went out of business shortly after Rucker's death in 1957.

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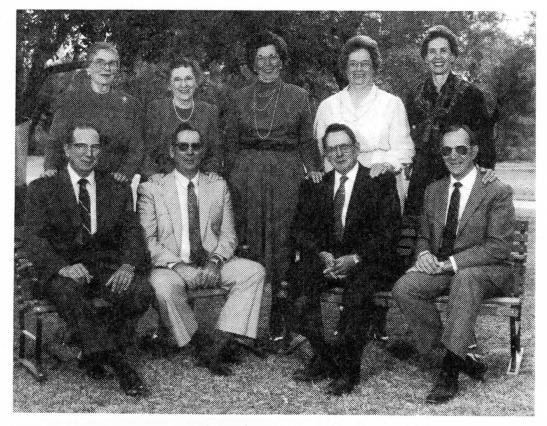
Oct. 1989 photo during McMurry homecoming

Standing, l. to r:

Alice⁸ Rucker Allen Lucille⁶ Rucker Chessmore Ruth⁶ Rucker Hickok Juanita⁶ Rucker Marshall Melba⁶ Rucker Boozer

Seated, l. to r:

Joseph⁸ Herman Rucker, Jr. John⁶ Morris Rucker James⁶ Lloyd Rucker Harold⁶ Boyd Rucker



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As the children grew up and left home, other college students were enlisted to help with the chores in exchange for room and board. The J. H. Ruckers were a hard-working, industrious, loving family, one that Peter Rucker, our Immigrant, would have been proud.

Joseph⁷ Herman Rucker's line of descent is as follows: Joseph⁶ Moore Rucker m. 2nd Alice Amanda Thompson Balch; Reuben⁵ Rucker m. 2nd Mary H. Almon; Reuben⁴ Rucker m. Mary Foster Terrill (Wood, p.13); Peter³ Rucker m. Elizabeth Terrill; John² Rucker m. Susanna _____; Peter¹ Rucker, the Immigrant, m. Elizabeth _____.

J. H. Rucker was born 7 Mar 1890 in Franklin Co., AL, and died 14 Jun 1957 in Abilene, TX. He was a county commissioner of Taylor County at the time of his untimely death of a heart attack. He married 30 May 1915 Mary Ophelia Fuller of Abilene. She was born 29 Jul 1890 in Red River Co., TX, and died 30 Oct 1972 in San Angelo, TX.

The 1989 annual homecoming celebrations at McMurry, which became a university in 1990, included special activities for the alumni of the class of 1939. As Joseph⁸ Herman Rucker, Jr., and Alice⁸ Elizabeth Rucker, first two children of J. H. and Mary Rucker, both graduated that year and planned to attend the 50th celebrations, their brothers and sisters decided a reunion of all the extended family that graduated from McMurry would be most appropriate. All of the brothers and sisters and their spouses joined in the college homecoming activities and honored Joe Herman and Alice in being with them in the affairs of the 50th. McMurry honored the Rucker family in its Fall/Winter 1989 issue of the *Chieftain*, the college magazine, with a front cover picture and article on the family.

All nine children of Joseph⁷ Herman Rucker and Mary Ophelia Fuller graduated from McMurry College. They are:

- Joseph⁸ Herman Rucker, Jr., b. 5 May 1916, bachelor's in mathematics, 1939, m. 22 Aug 1940 Mary Ruth Longbotham, live in Fresno, CA.
- Alice⁸ Elizabeth Rucker, b. 10 Sep 1918, bachelor's in mathematics, 1939, m. 30 Jun 1941 Howard Charles Allen, live in Austin, TX.
- Mary⁸ Lucille Rucker, b. 25 Dec 1920, bachelor's in mathematics, 1942, m. 30 Sep 1949 Walter Earl Chessmore, live in Ft. Worth, TX.
- Ruth⁸ Ophelia Rucker, b. 10 Jul 1923, bachelor's in science and mathematics, 1944, m. 27 Jun 1947 Herbert Nelson Hickok, live in Houston, TX.
- Juanita⁸ Frances Rucker, b. 1 Aug 1925, bachelor's in mathematics, 1946, m. 5 Aug 1950 Joseph William Marshall, live in Midland, TX.
- John⁸ Morris Rucker, b. 8 Jan 1928, bachelor's in business, 1949, m. 1st 23 Jul 1948 Wanda Maude Partain, m. 2nd 25 Apr 1969 Dorothy Fay Self Covert, live in Houston, TX.
- 7. James⁸ Lloyd Rucker, b. 5 Sep 1929, bachelor's in business, 1953, m. 26 Jun 1953 Jo Anne Duvall, live in Prosper, TX
- Harold⁸ Boyd Rucker, b. 21 Jan 1932, bachelor's in English, 1954, m. 1st 4 Apr 1958 Patsy Ruth Bridges, m. 2nd 10 Nov 1990 Nancy Elaine Gilmere Paulson, live in Richardson, TX.
 Melba⁸ Iovee Bucker, b. 20 Aug 1922, bachelor in the second s
- Melba⁸ Joyce Rucker, b. 29 Aug 1933, bachelor's in education, 1955, m. 21 Dec 1963 Van M. Boozer. They live in the family home on Lakeside Drive, Abilene, TX.
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June 30, 1991

Standing, l. to r:

Van M. Boozer Joseph⁸ Herman Rucker, Jr. Mary Ruth Rucker James⁶ Lloyd Rucker John⁶ Morris Rucker Dorothy Rucker Ruth⁸ Rucker Hickok Herbert N. Hickok, Jr. Lucille⁶ Rucker Chessmore Walter E. Chessmore Walter E. Chessmore Harold⁶ Boyd Rucker

Seated, l. to r:

Melba⁸ Rucker Boozer Josenh W. Marshall Alice⁸ Rucker Allen Howard C. Allen Juanita⁹ Rucker Marshall



ALICE RUCKER ALLEN & HOWARD C. ALLEN & FAMILY

Alice⁸ Rucker Allen, a board member of the Rucker Family Society, is currently writing a genealogy of her family. Her line is covered through the fourth generation in Wood's *Rucker Family Genealogy* and Alice is bringing it up to date. She is also covering the first four generations of descendants from our Immigrant, Peter Rucker. Hopefully it will be completed in time for our 1992 Rucker Reunion. Alice is a thoughtful, inquisitive researcher, so I know the book will be excellent.

Alice and Howard met as students at Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas, where both earned degrees in 1941, Alice's a B. S. in Home Economics, and Howard's a B. S. in Architectural Engineering. Soon after graduation they moved to St. Louis where Howard designed structural components of military aircraft for McDonnell Aircraft. After a brief military service in World War II, Howard entered general architectural practice in West Texas.

In 1966 the family moved to Austin where Howard became a consultant architect with the Texas Department of Health in its nursing home regulatory program. Howard retired from the department in 1988, the last five years of service as bureau chief.

Most importantly, Alice put her homemaking training to use as a homemaker and in carrying out her responsibilities as a mother of four children. Alice also did bookkeeping from time to time. She retired in 1989 from the Texas Legislative Service where she had worked for 10 years.

Alice and Howard have four children: Donald⁹, a paralegal; Wanza⁹, a homemaker and musician; Barbara⁹, a homemaker and music teacher; and Mary⁹ Jane, a homemaker and registered nurse. Eight grandchildren range from ages 15 to 4.



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Other family members who graduated from McMurry are:

- A. Jo Anne Duvall Rucker, wife of James⁸ Lloyd Rucker, bachelor's in elementary education, 1953.
- B. Donald⁹ H. Allen, son of Alice⁸ Rucker and Howard Allen, bachelor's in English, 1967, lives in San Antonio, TX.
- C. David⁹ Ray Rucker, son of John⁸ Morris Rucker and Wanda Partain Rucker, bachelor's in mathematics, 1972, lives in Bridgeport, TX.
- D. Cynthia⁹ Rucker, daughter of James⁸ Lloyd and Jo Anne Duvall Rucker, bachelor of science degree, 1980, lives in Abilene, TX.

Many family members have earned other degrees.

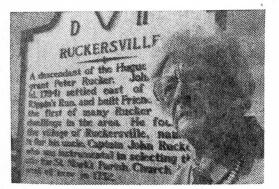
(The above is from an article in the *Chieftain*, magazine of McMurry College, Fall/Winter 1989, and from information provided from Alice Rucker Allen of Austin, TX.)

June 30, 1991

Back row, standing, l. to r: Wanza' Allen Grantier Brooks E. Grantier Donald' H. Allen David C. Bend Barbara' Allen Bend Mary' Jane Allen Phelps Mark T. Phelps

Middle row (children) l. to r: Marguerite¹⁰ Grantier Charles¹⁰ Grantier Austin¹⁰ Allen Aaron¹⁰ Bend

Front row, l. to r: Elise¹⁰ Grantier Alice⁸ Rucker Allen Howard C. Allen Hannah¹⁰ Bend Amanda¹⁰ Phelps Ashley¹⁰ Phelps (standing) page 4



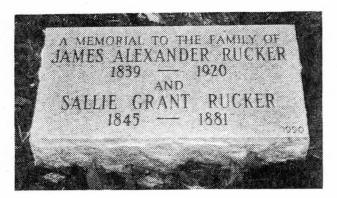
Anna Watson and The Historical Marker at Ruckersville

Last year, I proposed we collect money to place a marker in memory of James Alexander Rucker whose grave site is unmarked. Some of the family members decided that it was their prerogative to do that and this picture is of the marker placed at the James A. Rucker cemetery in Amherst County, Virginia.

Since the money was not used for the marker, it was decided to use the money to repair the gravestones at the Ambrose Rucker Cemetery at Graham Cove

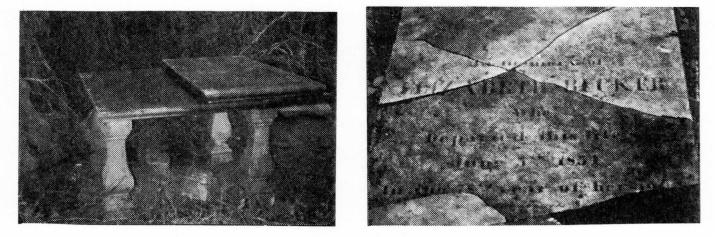
CEMETERY REPAIR FUND UPDATE

At the 1988 Rucker Reunion, money was collected for a historical marker to be placed at Ruckersville, VA. This was Anna Watson's dream and with help from the Greene County Historical Society, it was realized last year. Anna Watson invited the Rucker family to the dedication service in Ruckersville, immediately following the 1990 Reunion. We are proud of Anna's contribution to our history. The picture was taken by Matt Jones of the Charlottesville Daily Progress, printed June 18, 1990.



James A. Rucker Marker

in Amherst County. Ed Taylor and Rod Mason are looking into that now and will report to the membership at the next reunion on the repairs that will be made. Many of the stones are broken, and without repair, will disappear. The family visited this cemetery at the 1990 reunion.



Ambrose Rucker's Gravestone

Wife's, Elizabeth Rucker, Gravesone

<u>Rucker's Church</u>. Ambrose Rucker founded the first church in the area, called Rucker's Church. Later it became St. Matthew's, and finally the membership moved to Ascension in Amherst Courthouse. Sudie Rucker Wood visited the site in 1926. On p.70 of her book, she wrote: "The sunken graves surrounded by a low wall is in evidence, also the outline of the church foundation." I would like to propose, the society place a historical marker at the site to commemorate our family's involvement in the church. The location is two miles south of Sweet Briar College in Faulconerville.

"NAP" AND "JOHNNY" RUCKER MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS

1 1 1 A. A. A. A.

George⁶ Napoleon "Nap" Rucker, a grandson of Simeon⁴ Buford Rucker (George³, Thomas², Peter¹), p.188, Sudie Rucker Wood's <u>Rucker Family</u> <u>Genealogy</u>, was born Sept. 30, 1894, in Crabapple, GA. He began playing for the Augusta, GA, team of the South Atlantic League in 1905. A team mate was Ty Cobb, future Detroit Tiger star and Baseball Hall of Famer. Nap was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1907 and pitched for them until 1916. His lifetime record was 135 wins, 136 losses, and an Earned Run Average of 2.42. Considering that the Brooklyn team during most of his career did very poorly, this is a creditable record. His pitching was one of the few bright spots for the team. The Dodgers did win the pennant in 1916, Nap Rucker's final year, and he did pitch two innings in one World Series game, without recording the win or loss.

Following his baseball career, Nap Rucker became Mayor of Roswell, GA (now a suburb of Atlanta). He died Dec. 19, 1970, age 76.

John⁷ Joel ("Johnny") Rucker (Wood, p.193), "The Crabapple Comet," was the nephew of Nap Rucker and also a major league player. His nickname was due to his speedy style. He played outfield for the New York Giants from 1940 to 1946, playing in 705 games. He was the Giants regular in centerfield in 1941, 1943, and 1944. In 1941, he led the National League in at-bats, with 622. His lifetime batting average was .272, he hit 21 homeruns, drove in 214 runs and stole 35 bases.

Johnny was born Jan. 15, 1917, in Crabapple, and died Aug. 7, 1985. He graduated from the University of Georgia, where he played baseball and majored in agriculture. After his baseball career, he lived in Moultrie, GA, where he had a successful business career.

Both Nap and Johnny are buried in the Rucker Family Cemetery in Alpharetta, GA, just north of Atlanta. (Editor's note: I visited the Rucker home and Cemetery a few years ago. The Rucker home is very close to Crabapple, a tiny village, now full of antique and gift shops. The house and cemetery originally belonged to Simeon⁴ Bluford Rucker and is the burial place of his mother, Catherine Ehart Rucker.)

This article was written by Charles D. Robinson with information submitted by: Thad Morris, Atlanta, GA; Karl Rice, Moberly, MO; Bill Wagner, Highland, MD, and Ambrose Rucker Jr., Kansas City, MO. Thanks to them and everyone who responded to the "Query of the Quarter."

GEORGIA RUCKERS' FAMILY REUNION

"On the first Sunday in October, every year, the Georgia Ruckers have a reunion at the Crabapple Boy Scout Headquarters. I've been there 3 times, 1983, 1984, and 1989. Nap's name is always discussed, as is Joel⁷ (John) Rucker (Wood, p.193), born Jan. 15. 1917, who also played for the New York Giants, and died of Lou Gehrig's disease, after I met him in 1983. Joel's sister, Margaret Lee (Mrs. Charles B. Thornton), a beautiful lady, continues to live not far away. For information, write to Sue (Mrs. Bobby) McClam, Secretary, Rucker Family Reunion, 14235 Freemanville Road, Alpharetta, GA 30201."

Letter from Ambrose Rucker Jr, Kansas City, MO.

Anniversaries

Henry Ruckers

Henry and Violet Rucker were honored with a reception Oct. 14 at the home of their son, Dean Rucker, in observance of their 70th wedding anniversary.

David Rucker of Las Vegas, Nev., also is their son.

He was born Sept. 3, 1899, in Nashville, Tenn. She was born Aug. 31, 1901, in Lake Liden, Mich. They met in Detroit, Mich., where they were married Oct. 13, 1920. During their marriage they have lived in Lapeer, Mich., Boca Raton, Fla., Middleton, Ohio, and Nashville.

He is retired from General Motors. She is a retired nurse. They are Baptists.

They have 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Sunday, Oct. 21, 1990 Abilene Reporter-News



Henry and Violet Rucker

Happy 70th anniversary



Mack and Isabelle Rucker

<u>A. McDaniel Rucker Jr. and Isabelle Pettit</u>, married June 14, 1941, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on June 15, 1991 with a "gala" cocktail and dinner party for 162 of their family and friends. The Meadowbrook Country Club, Richmond, Virginia, was an elegant setting and the guests were treated to champagne, caviar and other delectable treats.

"Mack," a Rucker Family Society board member, is the retired administrator of unclaimed property for the State Treasurer's office. Isabelle taught Latin and mathematics and was the first director of the Governor's School for the Gifted in Virginia.

Alice Rucker and Howard Allen recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 29 and 30. On the 29th their four children and spouses arranged a dinner party; following dinner they conducted a program in which they recalled some of the events that took place in their parents' lives, sang songs, played skits, and as Alice says, "thoroughly honored and entertained us." On Sunday, June 30, the actual wedding date, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, and many of their families attended church with them at the First United Methodist church. During the afternoon Alice's and Howard's children hosted a reception at the church for their many family and friends. See picture, p.3.

Mary Whitley, Edythe Whitley's daughter, and Harold Hopton, of Norco, CA, celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on July 21, 1991.

25th anniversaries were celebrated by: <u>Martha Rucker and Ray Diggle</u>, June 22, 1991, Carmel, Indiana (married June 25, 1966). <u>Nancy Chappelear and Al Baird</u>, July 23, 1991, Upperville, Virginia (married July 23, 1966).

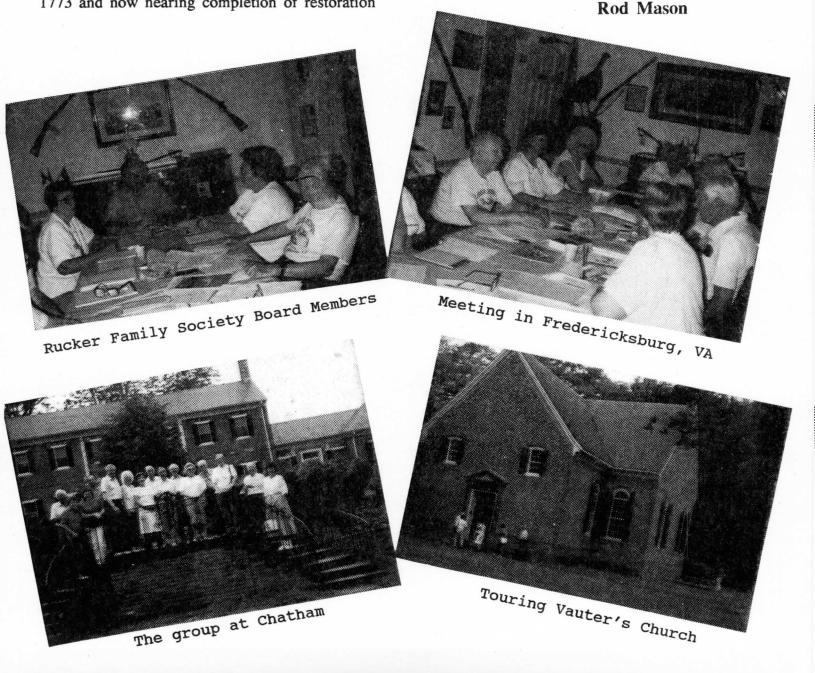
Notes from the President

The reprints of The Rucker Family Genealogy were mailed in May. If anyone who ordered a copy has not received it, or if any copy was damaged in the mail, contact Jack White, treasurer, 9751 Firth Ct., Vienna, VA 22181. About three dozen paperback copies @\$16 and two hard bound copies @\$46 are still available from Jack.

Our society's board of directors met in Fredericksburg, Virginia on May 18-19. We agreed unanimously to change the name from The Rucker Society to The Rucker Family Society in order to more accurately describe our organization. We were privileged to tour Vauter's Church, whose original brick walls built in 1719 and enlarged in 1731 are still in excellent condition, and Blandfield, a large Georgian house of Palladian design built in 1769-1773 and now nearing completion of restoration under the direction of two Colonial Williamsburg experts. It is now occupied as a private residence.

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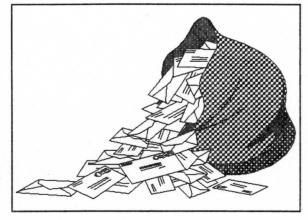
The Board set October 10-11, 1992 for our next reunion; this should be enough advance notice that nothing else already on your calendar should interfere. Although Peter Rucker's family first settled in Essex County, the reunion will be headquartered in Fredericksburg, about 30 miles away; because of more adequate facilities and more activities of general historical interest. Roland Pittman, our vice president, has agreed to chair the reunion; those of you who attended the Ruckersville reunion in 1988 will remember what a bang-up job he, Anna Watson and the others on that committee did. Mark your calendars now and many more details will follow as they are developed. My best regards to all.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MORDECAI³ RUCKER and other descendants of William² Rucker (Peter¹) came to McMinn County, TN, in the 1700's.

"My husband, St. Clair Harper, is of the Colby Rucker line. We've just sent in dues to join the Society. Sounds like an active organization! Enclosed are indexes on Ruckers who settled in McMinn Co., TN. We have the McMinn Co., TN, record books and if there are researchers of this line among your subscribers, I'll be happy to check these books." From Shirley Bogart Harper, 4873 Butternut Hollow Lane, Bonita, CA 91902.



Shirley sent a copy of the Ruckers in the indexes of the following McMinn Co., TN, books: <u>Chancery Court Records</u>, <u>Deeds and other data</u> <u>1820-1880</u>, <u>Wills and Estate Records 1820-1870</u>, <u>Marriage Records 1820-</u> <u>1870</u>, and <u>Tennessee Tidbits</u>, Vol II, <u>1778-1914</u>. If anyone is interested in this line, Shirley will be happy to share with you.)

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MORDECAI RUCKER, m. probably in McMinn Co., TN, ca. 1826, to MIRIAM WITT (b. in Jefferson Co., TN), dau. of Nathaniel Witt and Mary Cate. They moved to IL in 1853. "This Mordecai was quite a prestigious fellow." At least 2 children: Wilford Rucker and Miriam Matilda Witt Rucker (1850-1886) who m. Wm. Harrison Hutsell, b. Riceville, McMinn Co. Patti Adkins Rochette, 1001-B West 101 Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64114.

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<u>Will of Mordecai Rucker</u> (W. B. CC, p.274, filed 8 July 1857, McMinn Co., TN) submitted by Shirley Harper, Bonita, CA:

Mordecai Rucker died before Sept. 1855 leaving widow MIRIAM and children: <u>SILAS N.; RACHEL</u> wife of Hamilton Wasson of MO; <u>SARAH C.</u> wife of Hilton H. Burke; <u>NANCY</u> wife of Levi Swinford of Smith Co., TX, in 1854; <u>MARY M.</u> wife of Pleasant B. Bryan of Smith Co., TX, in 1854; <u>JAMES</u> <u>C.</u> of Smith Co., TX, in 1854; <u>WILLIAM A.</u>, <u>JOSEPH C.</u>, and <u>MIRIAM M.</u>, minors; <u>JOHN E.</u>, a minor, unmarried, who died one week after father died; <u>WILFORD</u>, a minor, who died about a week before father died.

(One statement says that the Swinfords are of Williamson Co., IL. Ervine Rucker is brother of Mordecai, dec'd.)

So glad to receive Sudie R. Wood's Rucker Book!! I am descended from Peter¹, John², John³, James⁴, Joshua⁵, George D.⁶, Lysimackus⁷, Callie⁷ Ann Rucker, Susie⁸ Banta, who married William⁸ Maddox on my paternal grandmother's side. I'm also descended from Peter¹, John², Isaac³, Moses⁴ Hawkins, Steepleton⁵, William⁶, Rhoda⁷, and William⁸ Maddox who married Susie⁸ Banta. on my paternal grandfather's side. Will correspond to "cousins" in both lines. There is confusion about wives names for James⁴ and John⁴. Does anyone know the correct names? From Shirley Rucker Batts, R. R. #1, Box 73, Pleasureville, KY 40057. RUCKERS OF KENTUCKY: I am interested in members of the Rucker family who came to Kentucky by 1795. 8 Feb. 1797, NANCY RUCKER married CHARLES MCALESTER in Mercy Co., KY. The marriage bond was signed by Ephriam Rucker with no indication of his relationship to Nancy.

EPHRIAM RUCKER was on the tax list in Mercer County for the year 1795 being taxed on two horses and ten head of cattle. This would indicate he was over 21 and would have been born prior to 1774. The Ephriam Rucker shown in the 1820 census in Franklin Co., KY and 1830/ 1840 in Anderson Co. would not have been the same person. Based on the ages in the census records, he would have been born between 1780-1790 and was probably a son of the earlier Ephriam.

I believe these Ruckers came into Mercer County from Virginia. Every family line seems to have had an Ephriam and a Nancy, but I have not been able to pick up an indication that one of them went to Mercer County, KY. Any help would be appreciated.

From Helen M. Sutherland, 863 Pinkney Drive, Lexington, KY 40504.

Correction to Wood book, p.110: New Member Florence Parks Rucker Collins, Lake Minchumina, Alaska 99757, is the daughter of Benjamin Parks Rucker and Florence Dickey, incorrectly reported as a son. Contributed by Eleanor M. Chisholm, Arlington Heights, IL.

<u>Correction to Rucker Society Newsletter</u>: Volume 2, Number 2, May 1991, mistakenly written as Volume 2, Number 1. Please correct your issue for future reference. Mary Rucker Snyder suggests placing your newsletters in a notebook for easy reference and permanent filing.

<u>Washington State Rucker Reunion</u>: Sandra and Earl Bartell have invited the Ruckers of Washington State to a reunion at her home. She is expecting 25 people, including her parents, Jack and Dagmar White of Vienna, VA. They have made T-shirts with the Rucker emblem. We look forward to hearing all about it in the next newsletter.

COFFEY COUSINS' CLEARINGHOUSE, a newsletter of the Coffey family, \$8.00 a year, four issues: Write to Bonnie Culley, 1416 Green Berry Road, Jefferson City, MO 65101. Next Coffey Reunion, May 1, 2, 3, 1992, in Antonio, Texas.

QUERY OF THE QUARTER: Mike Rucker is writing an article for the next newsletter on the Rucker Harpsichords. Three generations of the Rucker family made the finest Harpsichords in the world. This Rucker family of Flanders made musical instruments for nearly 100 years. If anyone has information on the Ruckers and their harpsichords, please send it to Michael P. Rucker, 1003 W. Centennial Dr., Peoria, IL 61614.

RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY \$5.00 MEMBERSHIP FEE NOW DUE FOR THE YEAR 1992

MEMBERSHIP DUES
\$5.00 for 1992 Membership, now due:
Reprint of Sudie Rucker Wood's <u>Rucker Family Genealogy</u> Cost \$16.00, paperback (9 left). \$46.00, hardback (1 left).
Donations for the Cemetery Repair fund and the future historical marker to be placed in Faulconerville for the Rucker Church.
Name(s):
Name(S):
Address:
Please make check out to The Rucker Society and mail to:
Mr. Lewis M. White, Treasurer 9751 Firth Court Vienna, VA 22181

1992 RUCKER REUNION, OCTOBER 10 & 11, FREDERICKSBURG, VA.
Q ² SEP 5 0 P M 1991 V A.
FIRST CLASS MAIL

Mrs. Alice J. Rucker 13331 Gridley St. Sylmar, CA 91342

THE RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY

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Jean B. Robinson, Editor 304 Charmian Road Richmond, VA 23226

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED