

# the Rucker Family Society

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 6

Number 4

December 1995

### FAMILY PROFILE - ELIZABETH REES SHEARER

#### "THE BATTLE OF ARLINGTON HOUSE"

by Michael P. Rucker



Roanoke Times and World News and several other newspapers on May 18, 1995.

If Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, is aware of Elizabeth's previous defense of the integrity of Arlington House, he would do well to take note of her complaint. Elizabeth's prior concern was the opening salvo of public indignation which led to the resignation of James Watts, one of Mr. Babbitt's predecessors as Interior Secretary.

First, you need to know that Elizabeth<sup>8</sup>, a double Rucker descendant (Ella<sup>7</sup> Blanche Rucker, Daniel<sup>6</sup> H., William<sup>5</sup> B., George<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>, Wood, p.52) and (Daniel<sup>6</sup>'s wife, Mariamna<sup>7</sup> Rucker, James<sup>6</sup>, Jonathan<sup>5</sup>, George<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>, Wood, p.46), worked at Arlington House as a volunteer historical interpreter for some 24 years. She appeared in period costume (circa 1860) and escorted countless schoolchildren and other members of the public through the historic mansion. She was good at

"Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, is now subject to clear and present danger." Thus wrote Elizabeth Rees Shearer to the

it. One young student stated in a thank you note, "... I know so much history from that house that I'm going to brust with all the history I learned."

Arlington House was the home of the Custis family into which Robert E. Lee married in 1831. Arlington was the home he came back to while serving at various posts of duty with the United States Army. It was at Arlington House that he made the painful choice between leadership of the Federal Union forces and the command of the Army of Northern Virginia in 1861.

The U.S. Army needed a military cemetery and, in 1862, appropriated the 1100 acre Lee-Custis estate for that purpose. This was the beginning of Arlington National Cemetery which now contains more than 425,000 graves. Arlington House, which is situated in the cemetery, overlooks the Memorial Bridge. By an act of congress, Arlington House is the memorial to one of America's most capable and beloved generals, Robert Edward Lee.

During her time as a volunteer for Arlington House, Elizabeth witnessed occasional private parties there by high ranking government officials. At such functions, liquor was served and smoking took place in the fragile and priceless old house. This practice occurred in contradiction of an explicit policy that forbade smoking

on the premises. In mid-December 1981 when Secretary Watt and his wife took over Arlington House for two holiday-related private parties, Elizabeth had had enough.

In a letter to the Washington Post, dated December 19, 1981, she voiced her complaint, expecting nothing more than to see it published among the Letters to the Editor. Instead, on December 31, they printed a full scale expose of the events, citing Elizabeth as the initiating source for the information. The paper quoted from Elizabeth's letter, "The public should know that Interior Secretary James Watt and Mrs. Watt have put to private use a national memorial for which he is the public trustee."

The Secretary's staff replied that Mr. Watt used Arlington House for the parties rather than a government office building because "The secretary didn't feel it appropriate to have liquor served in a government building." Mr. Watt was quoted as saying at one of the affairs, "Mr. Reagan has the White House. I have Arlington [House]."

Post columnist Jack Anderson had a field day drawing out more and more damaging details concerning the arrogance of Mr. Watt. Post political cartoonist, Herb Block, contributed no fewer than five cartoons to fuel public indignation.

All this led to more excuses by Mr. Watt and his staff and more indignation by the press, the public and Congress. When Mr. Watt's staff attempted to excuse his wife's involvement by saying she was an "extension of the secretary's office," Elizabeth fired another missive to the Post. She stated, "To be an extension of another is to be less than a whole person. A woman is neither an extension of her husband, nor of any office or building. A woman is a whole person in and of herself . . . I must conclude that

Mr. Watt and the secretary's office are no more sensitive to women as persons than they are sensitive to the value of preserving our national treasures against improper use."

The Democratic Congress, possibly sensing a means to damage the reputation of the controversial Interior Secretary, responded by directing the General Accounting Office (GAO) to investigate and by setting a hearing by the House subcommittee on Oversight of the Department of the Interior. Elizabeth was called to testify. In response to Secretary Watt's contention that there were ample precedents for use of Arlington House by government officials, Elizabeth read a policy adopted by the National Park Service Policy Council which clearly showed that Secretary Watt was out of line in holding private parties at Arlington House. The GAO report revealed a misuse of funds.

While Elizabeth Shearer did not personally bring down the controversial Interior Secretary, he eventually resigned because of this and other indiscretions. No doubt, however, the "Battle of Arlington House" was among the most painful and damaging.

Who is this feisty and highly principled woman?

She is the second of two daughters of Ella Blanche Rucker and NaAndrew Rees. Ella was born in Amherst County, Virginia, the fourth of five daughters and ninth of ten surviving children born to Daniel H. Rucker and Mariamna Rucker (cousins). Ella's brother, George H. Rucker, moved to Northern Virginia where he was elected Circuit Court Recorder and founded George H. Rucker Realty Corp. (See RFSN, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 4 & 5. Page 5 has a photo.)

NaAndrew Rees was born in Rock-

bridge County, Virginia, where his father, Nathaniel, was a farmer, as well as builder of canal locks and covered bridges. He had come from Pennsylvania to work on the Richmond and Kanawha Canal. At Fincastle, Virginia, in Botetourt County near May's Roaring Run, Nathaniel met and married Mart Ann Mays.

Ella Rucker and NaAndrew Rees were married November 16, 1904. From their Rockbridge County farm (Fairview Farm), they moved to Northern Virginia in 1910 upon the invitation of Ella's brother, George H. Rucker, to come and join his rapidly growing real estate business. In Arlington, NaAndrew was elected to the office of Justice of the Peace. The older of their two daughters, Margaret Virginia Rees was born May 18, 1908. Her sister Elizabeth Ann was born November 1, 1911. Margaret is married to Dr. Tracy E. Strevey, PhD. of Laguna Hills, California.

After attending Clarendon School, in then Alexandria County, VA, followed by Columbia Junior High and Western High School in the District of Columbia, Elizabeth studied at George Washington University where she received her B.A. Degree in Political Science in June 1932. It was on that campus that she met Ross Sterling Shearer, a young Texan who had come "North" to gain a higher education. After Ross completed law school in Texas, he and Elizabeth were married April 16, 1938. They lived in Austin, Texas. Beginning in 1941, Ross was employed by the federal government for 35 years until his retirement in 1975. He served in the Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office of the President, the U. S. Atomic Energy Department and

with the Departments of Commerce and Labor. He was assigned in 1959 to Bangkok and in 1967 to Vietnam. Following retirement, Ross worked in behalf of senior citizens and disadvantaged children. He also served as Clerk of the Courts of Justice Committee in the Virginia General Assembly.

They have two sons, Rees Rucker Shearer and Ross Sterling Shearer, Jr. Rees and his wife Katherine ("Kathy") Cuning live in Emory, Virginia, where Rees works as a counselor for the Washington County Schools. Rees and Kathy have a son, Daniel Rees Shearer (13). Ross and his wife Linda Corrine Wilson have two children, Stephen Ross (19) and Corrine Elizabeth (15). They live in Vienna, Virginia. Ross works for the U.S. Department of Labor. Both Rees and Ross, like their parents, are disposed to help others.



Elizabeth Rees and Ross Sterling Shearer

When Elizabeth and Ross celebrated their 50th anniversary, their sons and daughters-in-law asked the U. S. Park Service if they could be permitted to fund the planting of a tree at Arlington House to honor their parents' anniversary. Photos of Arlington House from the Civil War era showed an unusual tree to the southeast of the house. From an 1863 photograph by the U. S. Army Signal Corps, the tree was identified as a Kentucky coffee tree. In a special ceremony, the Park Service thanked Elizabeth for her many years as a selfless volunteer at the Robert E. Lee Memorial.

Elizabeth's high moral and ethical concerns were, no doubt, factors in her active role in her lifelong church, First Baptist Church of Clarendon in Arlington. Besides active leadership there, she was elected president of the Mt. Vernon Baptist Association which now includes 100 congregations in Northern Virginia. She also was active in the Southern Baptist Convention, serving on the Foreign Mission Board for eight years. This board administers several thousand missionaries and an annual budget exceeding two-hundred million dollars.

As her reputation for highly principled decisions became known in Northern Virginia, she was asked to serve on the eighth Congressional District Disciplinary Committee of the State Bar of Virginia. This is a review board which considers complaints against lawyers who may have engaged in unethical professional behavior.

One important service Elizabeth and Ross have provided over the years has been as a host family for Washington International Center [now Meridian House International]. This organization arranges American hosts for overseas visitors -- generally from developing countries -- who come to attend meetings or receive training in an American university

or another institution. Since 1952 they have hosted hundreds of visitors from Argentina to Zambia. The neighbors must have often wondered what was going on at the Shearer house as students from Africa or the Far East occasionally engaged in an impromptu session of drumming, singing and dancing as they said farewell to their gracious American host and hostess. "Sometimes they even cried when it came time [for them] to go," Elizabeth reports. The couple have two thick guest books filled with heartfelt comments and the signatures of their numerous and varied visitors, some with high posts in government or business -- others from humble social status, yet capable of participating in an international relationship.

Suffice it to say that Elizabeth Shearer has led a life of active involvement. --- And the beat goes on. What is the "clear and present danger" Elizabeth has recently pointed out to the press and Secretary of Interior Babbitt? It is a plan to convert the remaining 24.4 acres of forest at Arlington House into additional gravesites for Arlington National Cemetery.

The problem for Arlington National Cemetery is simple: by the year 2025 it will have run out of space. The proposed addition of the wooded ravine behind Arlington House would extend the deadline by only five years. Elizabeth points out that some of the oaks in the proposed acquisition are 200 or more years old. In her letter she also makes the point, "... I understand that the presence of springs and deep ravines render this portion of the Arlington House estate to be less suitable for gravesites."

The press and public are coming

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## IN MEMORIAM

**WILLIAM COLE RUCKER**, a retired farmer, died July 1, 1995, at his home in Monroe, Amherst Co., VA. Age 86, he was born June 2, 1909, son of John Wesley Rucker (James<sup>6</sup> A., Willis<sup>5</sup>, John<sup>4</sup>, Isaac<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>) and Florence Powell.

He is survived by his wife of more than 60 years, Margaret Burks Rucker. He is also survived by three sons and daughters-in-law, William W. and Cecile Rucker, Lawrence D. and Janice Rucker and Raymond L. and Mary Rucker; and one daughter and son-in-law, Margie R. and Frank Staton, all of Monroe; one brother, C. Scott Rucker of Madison Heights; four grandchildren, five step-grandchildren, seven great grandchildren and six step great-grandchildren. He was buried at the Smyrna United Methodist Church cemetery. (From the Lynch-burg, VA, News and Advance, submitted by Laurie Sutherland Giudice of Forest, VA.)

William is Lou Mason's first cousin, once removed.

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**MARGARET ELLIS KEYES WRIGHT**, age 82, widow of Clayton Earl Wright, died November 11, 1995 at Guggenheimer Nursing Home. She was born Nov. 25, 1912, in Bedford County, VA, daughter of Aubrey Carroll Keyes and Margaret Ellis Rucker.

She is survived by four sisters, Mrs. Myrtle K. Baldock of Miami Beach, FL; Mrs. Thomas (Elizabeth) Henson of Franklin NC and Mrs. Billy (Mary) Gaddy and Mrs. King (Lucy) Childress, both of Lynchburg, VA. A brother, Robert Leslie Keyes, preceded her in death. She was buried at Virginia Memorial Park in Lynchburg. (From the Lynchburg, VA, News and Advance, submitted by Laurie Sutherland Giudice of Forest, VA.)

Three of Roland Pittman's close relatives have died this year, all children of Charles<sup>8</sup> Robert Pittman (Robert<sup>7</sup> Calvin, Virginia<sup>6</sup> Jane Rucker, Blyfield<sup>5</sup>, Joel<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>) and Lillian Harris.

**LUCY PITTMAN BROWN GEMENY** (Roland's aunt) born November 20, 1902, Albemarle Co., VA, died February 1995, Waldorf, MD. She married 1st George Albert Brown in 1929, and 2nd Andrew Gemeny in 1969.

**CHARLES CALVIN PITTMAN** (Roland's uncle) born July 8, 1906, at Ivy, Albemarle Co., VA, died at the age of 89, July 30, 1995, Charlottesville, VA. He married 1st Margaret Gentry, April 4, 1928, and 2nd Ada Serber. He was preceded in death by a son, Harry Calvin Pittman. He is survived by one granddaughter, Karen Pittman of St. Louis, MO, and one grandson, Alan Pittman of Providence, RI. He was a member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church and a member of the Monticello Guard since 1925. He was an auto mechanic, and an avid wood-workman. He was buried at Monticello Memory Gardens.

**ARTHUR HARRISON PITTMAN** (Roland's father) born July 18, 1919, at Ivy, Albemarle Co., VA, and died September 8, 1995, at Charlottesville, VA. He married January 28, 1939, Augusta Co., VA, to Helen Frances Bailes who died in 1988. His four children are A. Roland Pittman of Ruckersville, Kathryn Tomlin of Charlottesville, Jacqueline Pittman of Charlottesville, and Frances Pittman of Ruckersville.

"Pitt," as he was known, was a veteran of World War II and served with the 114th Infantry. He was employed for many years at Peyton Pontiac Cadillac Dealership in Charlottesville. He was a member of Laurel Hill Baptist Church where he served on the Board of Deacons. Burial was at Holly Memorial Gardens.

continued next page

## IN MEMORIAM - Continued

**BILLIE HARTMAN ROBINSON**, died January 14, 1995. She is survived by her husband Marvin ("Robby") Robinson, now living at Presbyterian Retirement Community in Harrisonburg, VA. Billie and Robby were married 66 years ago on August 8, 1928. Robby's father was Thilen<sup>8</sup> H. Robinson (Lucy<sup>7</sup> Catherine Rucker, Allen<sup>6</sup>, Blyfield<sup>5</sup>, Joel<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>).

Robby would enjoy visits and/or letters from you. His address is 100 Sunnyside Drive, Unit 44, Harrisonburg, VA 22801, phone (703) 568-8288.

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**THOMAS JACKSON RUCKER**, 67, a retired Navy commander and hospital administrator in the Medical Service, died of an aneurysm, September 22, 1995, in a Fairfax, VA, hospital.

Cmdr. Rucker, a descendant of Simeon<sup>4</sup> B. Rucker (George<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>, Wood p.186), was born in Roswell, GA, graduated from the University of Rhode Island and the Naval War College.

He began his Naval career at the end of WWII and served in the Medical Service Corps, assigned to bases around the world. He moved to the Washington area in 1972 for a post with the Navy's Bureau of Personnel.

He retired from the military in 1979 and went into real estate business for Mount Vernon Realty and Re/Max Realty. He retired in 1992.

Survivors include his wife, Mary E. Rucker of Annandale; three daughters, Janet R. Webb of Springfield, Robin A. Sullivan of South Bend, IN, and Leigh-Ann Rucker of Harrisonburg, VA; three sisters, Jane Huddleston of Fayetteville, GA, Shirley Parrish of Virginia Beach, and Sara Lucas of Novato, CA; three brothers, Bill Rucker of Rome, GA, Joel Rucker of Imperial Beach, CA, and L. C. Rucker of Melbourne, FL; and 7 grand children. (Obit from the Washington D.C. Post, Sept. 25, 1995, submitted by Lewis M. ("Jack") White, Vienna, VA.)

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



**CORRECTION** to Vol. 6, No. 3, p.37: Wilma Yablonsky's name was spelled incorrectly. It should be Yablonsky (not Yablonski) -- begins and ends with a "Y." Please correct your copies.

My apologies to Wilma.

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**A THIRD JEREMIAH RUCKER:** The following notes came from Carole Pannhoff of Mason City, Iowa. She found another Jeremiah in the census records and would like to know how he fits into the chart in the last newsletter, Vol. 6, No. 3, p.37, "Two Jeremiah Ruckers." She suspects he may be Jeremiah Jr. born 1854, the same line as Wilma Yablonsky. If anyone knows any more about this Jeremiah, please notify the Editor.

**BUTLER COUNTY, IA, [SPECIAL] CENSUS, Shell Rock, 1 Jan 1895:**  
**JERRY RUCKER**, 42, b. KY, laborer  
**CHRISTINA**, age 42, b. IL  
**FLORENCE E.**, age 21, b. IL  
**GRACE P.**, age 13, b. IA.

**BUTLER CO., IA, CENSUS, Shell Rock twp., 1 Jun 1900:**  
**JEREMIAH RUCKER**, b. Oct 1853, KY, m. 27 years, carpenter  
**CHRISTINA** (wife), b. Mar 1854, IL, 3 children, 3 alive, father b. NJ, mother b. England  
**FLORENCE E.** (dau), b. Apr 1874, IL  
**GRACE T.** (dau), b. Dec 1881, IA  
**GEORGE S. ANDERSON**, b. Sep 1862, IL, m. 7 years, father b. Canada, mother b. Maine, painter.  
**MINNIE M. [RUCKER]** (dau), b. May 1875, IL, 3 children, 2 alive, father b. KY, mother b. IL  
**GLADYS** (granddau), b. Jan 1896, IA  
**FREDA M.** (gr-dau), b. Feb 1898, IA  
**William Angelow**, boarder, b. 1833  
**Alice S.**, servant, b. Jun 1881.

SILAS RUCKER, born ca 1840, married ca 1862, Ohio, to Elizabeth Jane Hunt, born 1845. Children: Sarah Elizabeth, b. 1866, OH; Thomas, b. 1868; John William, b. 1874. Would like to correspond with any relative of Silas. I am willing to share my information on the Lemuel S. Rucker family. Does anyone know the exact date of Sarah Rucker's marriage to John Hunt about 1850? Silas and Sarah were children of Lemuel<sup>5</sup> Rucker (Ambrose<sup>4</sup>, Lemuel<sup>3</sup>, James<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>, Wood p.258 and RFSN Vol. 6, No. 1, p.8).

Marilyn has submitted a photograph labeled "Dr. William Leeper Rucker & Boys." He is a brother of Silas and Sarah. The photo was unlabeled except for Dr. Rucker who is seated to the right of the picture with an X. If anyone knows the exact identity of the "boys" in the photo, please let Marilyn know.

The names of the children of Dr.

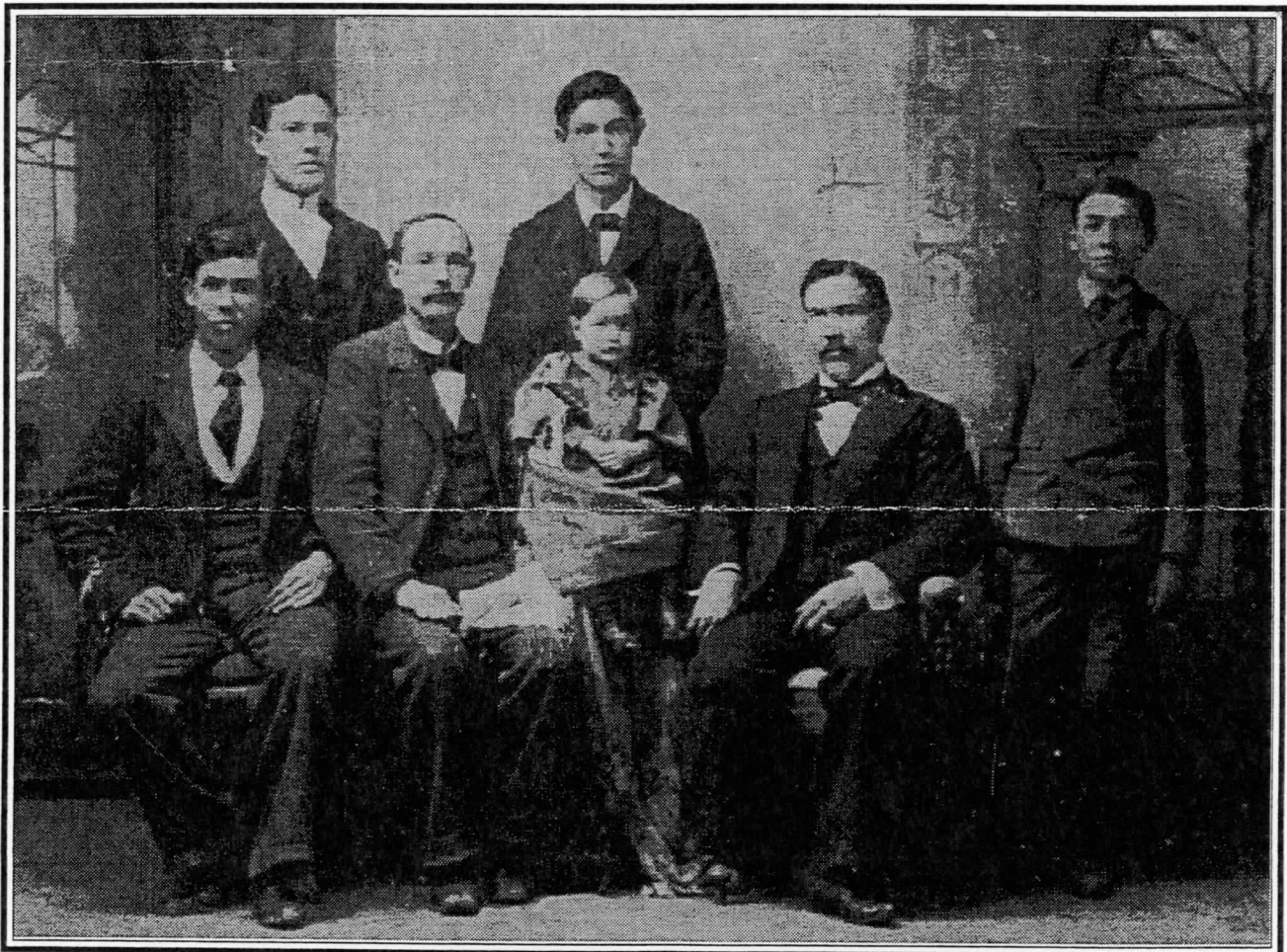
William<sup>6</sup> Leeper Rucker (d. 13 Apr 1894) and wife, Martha Frances Wren, are as follows:

1. William<sup>7</sup> N. Rucker, b. Feb 1863
2. Charles<sup>7</sup> A. Rucker, b. 1870
3. Lemuel<sup>7</sup> ("Lemmie") Rucker, b. 6 Mar 1872, d. 13 May 1879
4. Lena<sup>7</sup> D. Rucker, b. 1874
5. Winfred<sup>7</sup> Rucker, b. 1876
6. R.<sup>7</sup> Harvey Rucker, b. 22 Mar 1878, d. 13 Apr/May 1896
7. Roscoe<sup>7</sup> C. Rucker, b. Dec 1880
8. Herbert<sup>7</sup> Rucker, b. Jan 1884
9. Mattie<sup>7</sup> Wren Rucker, b. 1 Jun 1886

The sons are underlined and are probably the ones in the photo except for Lemuel who died in 1879.

Marilyn thinks the photo was taken about 1886 when Herbert was about 2 years old. Your help in identifying these "boys" will be greatly appreciated.

From Marilyn L. Elliott, 2410 57th Street, Des Moines, IA 50310.



Doctor William L. Rucker & Boys

**JEANETTE PITTMAN** would like to correspond with someone working on her line. She descends from Edward Herndon and wife Nancy<sup>4</sup> Rucker. Edward's parents were William Herndon and Catherine Diggs. Nancy was the daughter of Thomas<sup>3</sup> Rucker Jr. (Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>, Wood p.204), and Elizabeth Wisdom. They moved to Georgia in 1803.

If you have any information for Jeanette, please contact her at Route 5, Box 353, Jasper, TX 75951.

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**SICILEY TANNER** born 1826, Arkansas, died ca 1870-80, Texas, married George Adkins Hill ca 1849.

Siciley was the daughter of the Rev. **RUCKER TANNER** b. ca 1794, New Madrid, MO, died 1829, Hempstead Co., AR, married ca 1824, to Sarah Devers born ca 1800, Tazewell Co., VA, died 1857, van Zandt Co., TX.

Rucker Tanner was the son of **JOHN TANNER** born ca 1732, Chesterfield Co., VA, died June 1812, Cape Girardeau, MO, married July 1792 to **SALLY RUCKER**, born 1776, died ca 1840-50, Trigg/Caldwell Co., KY.

Sally Rucker was the daughter of **JAMES RUCKER** born 1 Dec 1747, died 2 March 1826-28, married ca 1767 to Ann (Nancy) Morton.

I am looking for proof of the above relationships. Please write to June Moosberg Sherman, Route 1, Box 54, Lockney, TX 79241-9464.

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**JIM W. CAVE** of Palm Coast, FL, submitted the newspaper article, opposite, from The Hart County, KY, News-Herald, dated Feb. 2, 1993, of the 50th anniversary of Hazel Terry and Richard C. Rucker. Jim, also from Hart Co., KY, would like to know who they are. If you recognize them or know who they are, please write to Jim at 22 Cedar Point Drive, Palm Coast, FL 32164. Also let the Editor know for the next newsletter.

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**HARRY C. VAIDEN III**, of Augusta, GA, wrote that the descendants of William Rucker were gathering on October 22, 1995, at Hickory Knob State Resort Park, near McCormick, SC. Sorry this did not reach me in time to place in the last newsletter. He said they usually have about 100 people in attendance, mostly descendants of Frances Thornton and her husband, the Rev. Thomas<sup>6</sup> Jackson Rucker (William<sup>5</sup> Barden, Barden<sup>4</sup>, William<sup>3</sup>, William<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>). I hope this group will join the Rucker Family Society at our next reunion in Roswell, GA, October 5 & 6, 1996. If you are interested in joining them at their next reunion, write Harry at 11 Woodbridge Circle, Evans, GA 30809.

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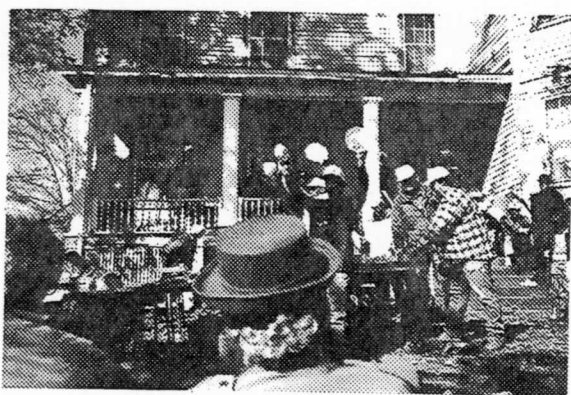
Richard and Hazel Rucker

### *Ruckers celebrate 50th wedding anniversary*

Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Rucker of Munfordville, KY, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Friday, February 5. Richard and the former Hazel Terry were married at Glasgow by Judge Carroll Redford.

They are the parents of three children: Brenda Gardner of Munfordville, Betty Staples of Cub Run, and Lydia Ramsey of Munfordville. Mr. and Mrs. Rucker have seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

All friends and family are invited to come celebrate with them Saturday, February 6, at 5:00 p.m. at the Leitchfield Crossing Baptist Church in Munfordville.



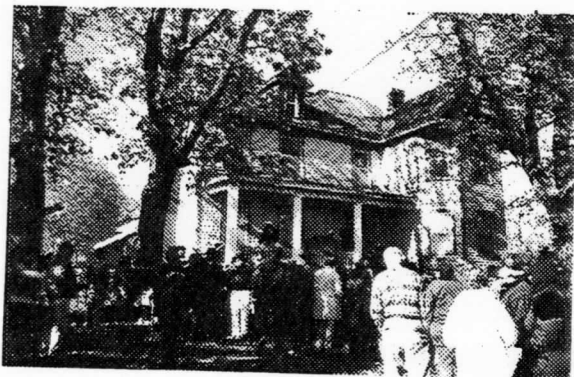
## THE END OF AN ERA

"Sold to the lady in the red hat!" sang out the auctioneer at the estate sale of Dr. S. L. Rucker Jr. (Dr. Sam) in Moneta, VA. The date was November 4, 1995, the place was the Rucker home-stead, beginning in 1910 with Dr. S. L. Rucker Sr., and his wife Elizabeth Phelps, and their children, later the home and office of Dr. S. L. Rucker Jr. There was an accumulation of three generations of possessions, from both the Rucker and Phelps families. Dr. Samuel<sup>8</sup> Leonidas Rucker (Lewis<sup>7</sup> W., Tinsley<sup>6</sup> S., Thomas<sup>5</sup> C., Ambrose<sup>4</sup> Jr., Ambrose<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>), b. Jan 1873, d. 1931; m. 1900, Elizabeth Margaret Phelps, b. 5 Jan 1875, d. 25 Sep 1956. They moved into their large clapboard home about 1910 with their then seven children and had six more (a daughter died at 17 months old). Dr. S.<sup>8</sup> L. Rucker is listed on page 99 of Wood's book. I knew nothing of the 16 children of L.<sup>7</sup> W. Rucker until seeing an article from the Richmond Newspaper files on 80 year old Elizabeth Margaret Phelps Rucker who was chosen as Virginia Mother of the Year, March 1955. All of Elizabeth Phelps Rucker's and Dr. S.<sup>8</sup> L. Rucker's children (listed in the article) were college educated and most became either doctors, dentists, nurses or teachers.

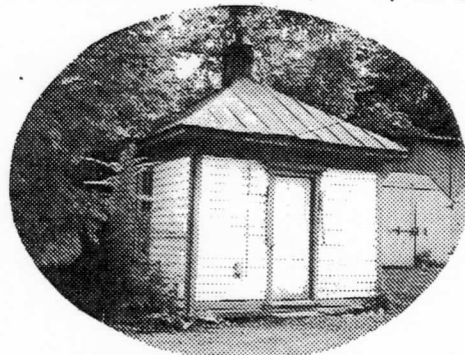
Issue of Dr. S. L. Rucker and Elizabeth Margaret Phelps:

1. Dr. Joseph Edward Rucker, b. 18 Oct 1901, physician at Veterans Hospital, Roanoke, VA.
2. Thomas Francis Rucker, b. 8 Mar 1903, pharmacist, Lynchburg, VA; m. Frances Carson.
3. Elizabeth Rucker, b. 4 Jul 1904; taught at Appalachian State Teachers College; m. W. W. Williams.
4. Frances Elinor Rucker, b. 19 Aug 1905, a registered nurse at the Veterans Hospital in Roanoke; unmarried.
5. Dr. Samuel Leonidas Rucker Jr., b. 9 Oct 1906; unmarried. He took over his father's practice.
6. Virginia Moulton Rucker, b. 1 Mar 1908; m. Carlyle Crigler; became a home demonstration agent.
7. Dr. James Hammet Rucker, b. 19 Jul 1909, a dentist in Rocky Mount, NC; m. Juliette Weber.
8. Mary Kathleen Rucker, b. 10 Oct 1910, Moneta, Bedford Co., VA, d. 4 Jun 1994, Bedford, VA; unmarried. (Obit in RFSN, Vol. 6, No. 2, p.16.)
9. John Phelps Rucker, b. 2 Jul 1912, d. 24 Mar 1995; m. Georgie Shelton. (Obit in RFSN, Vol.6, No. 2, p.16.)
10. Margaret Key Rucker, twin, b. 28 Sep 1913, registered nurse; m. Paul Olin, lived at Boylston, MA.
11. Ruth Rucker, twin, b. 28 Sep 1913, d. 1949; unmar.
12. Emily Rucker, b. 1916, d. in 1917, aged 17 months.
13. Dr. Richard Anthony Rucker, b. 18 April 1918, dentist of Gretna, VA, now of Bedford; unmarried.

Two children are living: Elizabeth of Boone, NC, and Richard, resident of a retirement home in Bedford.



Auction Day at Dr. Sam L. Rucker's home, Moneta, VA



Christmas tree ornaments of Dr. Sam L. Rucker's office, pictured above, are being sold by the Moneta Ruritan Club. The white, two-inch, round ball has a drawing of Dr. Sam L. Rucker's Office in red. If you would like one, send \$5.00 to the Ruritan Club, %Byron Petty, Route 4, Box 343, Moneta, VA 24121. 1995 is the only year this particular ornament will be offered.

# "A FAMILY TREE," A POEM BY EMMA B. NOCK

The following poem was found in Vol. 8, Rucker papers, Franklin, TN, library. It was written by Emma L. (Benson) Nock, Denver, Colorado, about 1926 and sent to Edythe Whitely along with family information and a request for help with her ancestry. She was a descendant of DeWitt Rucker (from the line of James<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>) who married Polly Sloan.

The poem was written about Emma's aunts and uncles, children of Ephraim<sup>6</sup> Falwell (Margaret<sup>5</sup> Rucker,

Dewitt<sup>4</sup>, ?<sup>3</sup>, James<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>) and Mary Starr.

1. Margaret<sup>7</sup> Falwell
2. Elizabeth<sup>7</sup> Falwell; m. John Boyle
3. Elethe<sup>7</sup> Ellen Falwell; m. Harrison<sup>6</sup> Turner Benson (Annie<sup>5</sup> Rucker, Dewitt<sup>4</sup>, ?<sup>3</sup>, James<sup>2</sup>, Peter<sup>1</sup>)
3. Amanda<sup>7</sup> Falwell; m. John Tutcher
4. William<sup>7</sup> Richard Falwell
5. George<sup>7</sup> Emma Falwell (female, so named because of disappointment that she wasn't a male); m. Moses Lieberberg

## A FAMILY TREE (OR, THE CHILDREN OF A PIONEER)

Margaret, the eldest, sweet and fair  
In her guileless heart was ever a song or Prayer  
And in the depth of her hazel eyes  
Was a light from the hills of Paradise.

Elizabeth came as a Valentine.  
Awhile in the cottage house to shine  
Her eyes were blue as the summer skies  
When sunlight over the landscape lies.

Elethe, bright Lethe, the household's pet  
With soft dark eyes and curls of jet;  
Her every thought was filled with love  
As pure as the angels in Heaven above.

Amanda, so queenly, slim and tall  
Would grace with her presence, cottage, palace or hall.  
Nature to her a charm had lent  
That gave her favor wherever she went.

William Richard, a curly haired boy  
Of his parents hearts, the pride and joy  
A sturdy little fellow full of fun  
And guileless in heart as a cloister nun.

If in earnest and half in fun  
George Emma they named the youngest one.  
Disappointed because she was not a boy  
A playmate for their pride and joy.

December the month of joy and cheer  
The wedding bells rang loud and clear  
When Margaret left the house so dear  
Another house awhile to cheer.

Six years had passed, the bells tolled low  
The little house was filled with woe  
Beautiful Margaret with hazel eyes  
Joined the angels in Paradise;  
They folded her white hands on her breast  
And laid her down in her grave to rest.

April the month of smile and tear  
The wedding bells again rang clear  
and solemn words again were said  
As white robed Elizabeth was wed.

Elethe, bright Lethe, the household's pet  
With soft dark eyes and curls of jet  
Fled one dark and stormy night  
And married the man of her heart's delight.

A loving Mother, a faithful wife  
But I'll draw the curtain over her life  
Her greatest joy in heaven above  
Would be to have her husband's love.

When apples are mellow and ripe must fall  
Queenly Mandy, slim and tall  
Went away from the old roof tree  
And married a man from over the sea.

William Richard, the only son  
In May when summer had begun  
Said he, the house seems devoid of life  
And he took unto himself a wife.

The days went by like the ebb of the tide  
George Emma, the baby, became a bride;  
She left the valley smiling and fair  
A song on her lips, in her heart a care.

Sitting alone by their quiet hearth  
Long years the scene of joy and mirth  
The parents smiled and talked of days gone by  
And sometimes breathed a low deep sigh.

Now all but two have passed away  
George Emma and William Richard are old and gray  
waiting to hear the last clear call  
That sooner or later comes to all.

The years they came, the years they went  
Sunshine and shadows strongly lent;  
When over the land so fair and bright  
The war clouds rolled as black as night.

From his house a husband and father went,  
His heart with grief was almost rent;  
That God, for his dear ones, would care  
Was night and morn his daily prayer.

Four years the land was filled with gloom  
The roar of guns, the cannon's boom  
And then the war clouds rolled away  
And blessed peace o'er the Nation lay.

Filled with aches and racked with pain  
To his house the husband and father came  
Thanking God in his daily prayer  
For keeping his loved ones in his care.

~~~~~

Continued from page 42

down on Elizabeth's side in this latest "Battle of Arlington House." The International Herald Tribune agreed with Elizabeth in its July 7, 1995, issue that the taking of this ancient forest which contributes so much to the setting of Arlington House would be, "... most unfortunate and sad." The matter has been reported by the Associated Press, and many newspapers, radio and television stations across the U. S. and Canada.

The "Second Battle of Arlington House" is just now getting underway. Elizabeth Shearer has learned a lot during her years as a docent there. Among other things, she knows, like General Robert E. Lee, how to aim her cannon for maximum effect when

engaging the enemy in battle. Her accuracy was excellent and devastating in the "First Battle of Arlington House." Secretary of the Interior Babbitt would do well to take note and withdraw his forces as this current engagement heats up.

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DEAD-LINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES  
AND INFORMATION TO THE NEWSLETTER:

March Issue - March 1st

June Issue - June 1st

September Issue - September 1st

December Issue - December 1st

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#### MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Check your mailing label to see if you are paid up to date. The 1st number on your address label is the year you are paid, the 2nd is your membership number. If your label says 1995, please make a check out to The Rucker Society for 1996 dues and mail to:

Mr. Lewis M. White, Treasurer  
9751 Firth Court  
Vienna, VA 22181

clip here -----

#### 1996 MEMBERSHIP DUES:

\_\_\_ \$7.00 for 1996 Membership dues: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ \$14.00 for 1996 and 1997 dues: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Donations for the Preservation and Memorial Fund \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Reprint of Sudie Rucker Wood's Rucker Family Genealogy  
Paperback copy, a reprint--not an update, at \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For new members: Please send your Rucker line of descent.  
For renewals: Please send any news on your family.

Dear Rucker Cousins,

Reunion plans are being made and I hope you will put October 5 & 6, 1996, on your calendar. Our headquarters will be the Holiday Inn in Roswell, GA. We will have a reception Friday evening, meeting and luncheon on Saturday morning, and joint meeting with the Crabapple Ruckers on Sunday. More information will be forth coming, but in the meantime you may want to make hotel reservations. The Holiday Inn is holding 50 rooms, phone (404) 992-9600, cost is \$79.00, plus 12% tax, per night. Nearby is a Budgetel, cost \$49.95, plus 12% tax, per night, phone (404) 552-0200. Be sure and mention the Rucker name to get the quoted rate.

Suggestions for a Christmas gift: Membership in the Rucker Family Society or a reprint of the Sudie Rucker Wood book.

Our newest grandchild, William Ross Nuckols, was born Sept. 12, 1995, in Charlottesville, VA. He is the son of Lisa Pittman and William ("Bill") Nuckols.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Looking forward to seeing you at the reunion in Georgia in 1996!

Roland Pittman  
President

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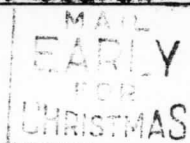
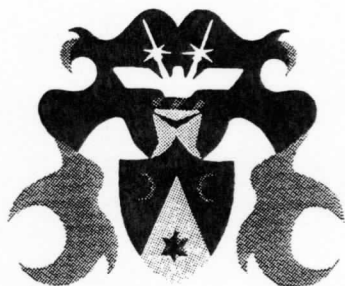
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