

Roots &
Branches
Genealogical
Society of
West Volusia
County

Winter
Newsletter

Jan-Mar
2013



DeLand Area Public Library
130 East Howry Ave., DeLand, FL 32724

A quarterly newsletter published Jan (Winter), Apr (Spring), Jul (Summer) & Oct (Fall)

Winter 2013

THE PACKWOOD MURDERS

by Esther Gould

Francis Joseph "Frank" Packwood came to Florida from New York about 1880 and grew rich at fruit growing. In 1889 Mrs. Packwood died, and her sister, Adelaide Bruce of Brooklyn, came to Florida to superintend her brother-in-law's home and care for his little son. Frank and Adelaide had plans to marry soon. They were living at his home at his orange grove on the Indian River (then known as the Hillsborough River) about half-way between New Smyrna and Oak Hill. Back of the yard was a dense hammock, which extended along the edge of the marsh, both north and south. To the west of the hammock was the open pine wood, stretching away for miles. It was a lonely spot.

On December 10 Frank Packwood left for DeLand to sell his orange crop. Miss Bruce, fearing to stay alone in the place, sent over to her neighbor, Mrs. Hatch, to come and spend the night with her, or until Mr. Packwood should return. Mrs. Hatch went over, accompanied by her son.

On Friday morning, December 12, 1891 the bodies of Miss Bruce, five-
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R&B Web Site QR

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Editorial Policy

Submissions by members are ESSENTIAL to the continuation of this newsletter. The editor cannot possibly fill the newsletter by him/her self. If you enjoy receiving this newsletter you MUST submit articles about your family history research. Without your participation this newsletter WILL cease to exist. The Editor reserves the right to edit articles, files or queries prior to publication. Neither Roots & Branches Genealogical Society of West Volusia County nor the Editor assumes any responsibility for errors on the part of the contributor. Material contained in this publication may be quoted if credit is given for the source.
Editor's eMail: GLHale1955@gmail.com

Suggestions? Ideas? Criticisms? Queries?

We strive to produce an interesting newsletter with original material. Our goal is to leave a trail that will help others. Our focus is **an ever expanding circle**: 1) West Volusia County 2) Volusia County, 3) Florida, 4) SE United States, 5) New England 6) the Middle West and 6) the World.
Are we succeeding? Please send feedback to guide us. Send your ideas and your problems, perhaps someone in the Society can assist you with a brick wall. Have a Query? We will include it in the newsletter so the WORLD will see it and assist. The newsletter is widely distributed including to the **PERSI** database at Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana (ACPL).

**Roots & Branches Genealogical Society
of West Volusia County**
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____	Family / Single \$15.00
Address _____	Make checks payable to: Roots & Branches Genealogical Society
City _____	Mail to: Roots & Branches Genealogical Society c/o DeLand Public Library 130 E. Howry Ave. DeLand, FL 32724
State _____ ZIP + 4 _____	
Tel: _____	
eMail _____	
(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)	Annual dues run from 1 Jan to 31 Dec

Dues are considered delinquent if not received by the last day of February.

PROGRAMS (2 p.m. - Auditorium)

Jan 20 - Bruce Pauley - *History to Go With Your Ancestors*
Feb 17 - Ann Staley - *Overlooked Research Sources - A Gold Mine to be Discovered*
Mar 17 - George Morgan - *Alternate Records You May Never Have Considered*
Apr 21 - Barbara Costello - *Historical & Genealogical Treasures in the Government Documents Collection at Stetson University.*
*** HANDOUT AVAILABLE ON THE WEB SITE**

LESSONS (1 p.m. - Conference Room)

Jan 20 "What Is and How to Start a Family Tree"
Feb 17 "Vertical Files and PERSI and Timelines"
Mar 17 "Newspapers and Immigration Trails"
Apr 21 "The Elusive Female"
May 19 "Avoiding Mistakes"
Jun 16 "Plan and Take a Research Trip on the Road"
Sep 15 "Skeletons in the Closet"
Oct 20 "Indentured Servants; Preserving Materials"
Nov 17 "Hitting a Brick Wall"
Dec 15 "Religion and Churches in America (Colonial to Present)"
*** HANDOUT AVAILABLE ON THE WEB SITE**

Check the calendar for any changes <http://tinyurl.com/2c7bnzv>

From the Desk of the President

Dear Members,

January is here and this is the last call to attend our Volusia/Flagler Council of Genealogical Societies Seminar to be held at Palm Coast at the African American Cultural Society Center on January 19, from 9 AM to 3:30 PM.



Speaker will be Melissa Shimkus of Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana. During the three sessions, her topics will be "Discovering Your Female Ancestors," "Overlooked Records for Hurdling the Census Chasm" and "Knocking down the Brick Wall."

Three choices for lunch are included in the price of \$40.00. There will be door and raffle prizes and a vendor with fun stuff for genealogists. It seems like an excellent beginning for the year, after you convince yourself to get up early enough for the trip.

The winning entries for "My Most Esteemed Ancestor" contest have been selected by the three judges and awards and certificates were presented at our December meeting. First prize went to Carolyn Jones, second prize to Jerry Hale and third prize to Darell O. Elliott. Howard Fisher was the chairman and we wish to thank him for a job, well done.

There have been excellent programs this past year planned by Carol Izzo and Bob Weaver. The Christmas program featured a lot of good refreshments and the opportunity for members to visit with each other.

The Friends of the Library building project, funded by the Friends, is now under way on the northwest corner of the front of the library. At completion there will be a new book sale room and much lugging of books across the library will no longer be a necessity.

You may have read of the recent sale of Ancestry.com. It will be interesting to see what changes this will bring. In the meantime, remember if you don't have it at home, it is available on the computer in the Genealogy and Local History Room at the library.

An area in which we all should take notice is that of online webinars, which are seminar/classes that you watch from your computer. An excellent way of providing instructional material, it has become a very popular method of providing genealogy instruction and demonstration of software. Millennium Corporation, the producer of Legacy Family Tree software, is announcing their schedule for 2013. More than 40 classes from genealogy's leading educators on a wide variety of topics will be available free of charge throughout the year. The complete printable list is available at <http://goo.gl/xjTFC>. If you sign up now, an e-mail reminder will be sent both one day and one hour prior to the webinar. Register at www.LegacyFamilyTree.com/wclinars.asp

As the New Year arrives and resolutions are made, be sure to include genealogy research in your list, and also the promise to bring new members into our Roots and Branches Genealogical Society.

My personal best wishes to each of you for a New Year with hopes and dreams fulfilled.

Louise

R&B Christmas Social

Most Esteemed Ancestor Contest Awards



Howard presents 1st place to Carolyn Jones

2nd place went to Jerry Hale and 3rd place to Darrel Elliot.

After the awards were presented



Marsha Zitzelberger as "The Spirit of Christmas"

Marsha Zitzelberger as "The Spirit of Christmas" presented "The History of Santa Claus" and brought Santa himself and his elf helper (Marsha's

granddaughter Andi). Her presentation was very well received and the whole affair was most enjoyable.

After the presentation we all had some time to visit and get acquainted while we enjoyed the food. Our thanks to Marsha and her crew. Well done.



Santa & his Elf

(Continued from page 1)

year-old Frankie Packwood, Mrs. L. D. Hatch and her seven-year-old son, Benny, were found lying on the floor in pools of blood. Mrs. Hatch was shot through the eye. The two boys were shot, and their throats cut ear to ear. Miss Bruce had been outraged and her skull and face had been smashed with some heavy weapon. Her face had also been shot through and her throat cut.

The intruder had smashed the sash and glass to gain entrance to the house. A large revolver was found at the entrance of the broken window, two chambers having been emptied. A double-barreled shotgun with the stock broken into splinters lay on the bed by the side of Miss Bruce. A long-bladed butcher knife was on the bed near the body of the Hatch boy.

Saturday morning Irvin Jenkins, the Indian (who was reputed to have a white mother) who lived on the McRae orange grove 2 or 3 miles to the south, stopped at the Packwood place on his way to New Smyrna, so he said, to see if Miss Bruce wanted him to do any errands for her in town. He was a tall, well-shaped mulatto, quite intelligent and bright appearing. He found the gate to the place open and cows in the yard. Thinking something was wrong, he continued on to the house and found the window smashed in. He looked into the house and there saw that a crime had been committed. He notified the neighbors in the immediate vicinity, who hastened to the place to make an investigation.

Irvin Jenkins was arrested and put into jail at New Smyrna Beach for safekeeping, many suspecting that he knew more than he would tell. A large posse, headed by Deputy Sheriff Dimick, started southward Saturday night to scour the country for the murderers. Jenkins was held in jail for months, but since they could not further implicate him, he was released. Then he was arrested again, on a charge of selling liquor to railroad hands, and taken to Jacksonville. He had been shadowed during his freedom, but one or two little suspicious acts of his caused his second arrest, the real purpose of which was to get him

away from the influence which seemed to restrain him from making a confession. One day while he was in prison he remarked that if some people didn't get him out of jail they would regret it.

The search intensified. It was known that Irvin Jenkins and Will McRae lived in the same house. McRae had wooed Miss Bruce, but been rejected. McRae had a dog, and the footprints of a dog were found in the blood clots on the floor. The dog was never seen after the day of the crime. Jenkins and McRae sometimes made orange wine at the grove, and once in a while had over-indulged. Will McRae came from a good family, being a son of Dr. McRae of Sanford. He was about 30 years old and lived on a grove about one mile from the Packwood house.

A bullet had passed through Miss Bruce's cheek and into the wall. They could readily see that it belonged to a 32-caliber pistol. There was no one in the country who was known to carry a weapon of this size. Over a year after the crime, a small boy was found with such a pistol in his possession. Upon being questioned, he said that Marion Clinton, gave it to him. Traced further, it was discovered that a railroad contractor, who had been in the neighborhood with a gang of men about the time of the crime, had given, lent, or sold this pistol to Clinton. It was also learned that Clinton spent the night of the crime with McRae and Jenkins. Marion Clinton was about 20 years old, ignorant and uneducated, and lived about 2 miles from the Packwood house.

This evidence was all presented to the Volusia County Grand jury in session at DeLand during February and March of 1893. Meanwhile, Jenkins had been arrested again and put in jail at DeLand ; Clinton and McRae were present as witnesses.

Grand Juror Cowert resolved to resort to a little strategy. He induced Clinton to accompany him to the edge of the town and the two sat down together under the shade of a tree. He told Clinton that a man who turned state's evidence was never punished, and then drifted to the Packwood murder and wormed out of the boy some very
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incriminating statements. Like wildfire the news spread the Clinton had confessed to being a participant to the extent that he accompanied McRae and Jenkins in a boat to the Packwood house, but waited in the boat until the job was finished; that he lent his pistol to McRae and that the latter did the shooting while Jenkins cut the throats of the victims. Rumor also had it that all had gotten drunk on orange wine and bitters before they left the McRae Place.

Acting on this confession, the men were indicted. But it was found impossible to secure a jury in Volusia County, and a change of venue was taken to Lake County. The defendants were represented by one of the leading lawyers of the state, Major Alexander St. Clair Abrams. The McRae family was one of the most prominent in Orange County. Since the indictment of Will McRae for these murders his aged father and mother have both died, and it is alleged of grief at the probable conviction and hanging of their son.

The local paper in November wrote an editorial disclaiming that a fair trial could not be had in Volusia County. They claimed it was an insult to the honesty and intelligence of the people of our county. Since every paper in the state and southeast had extensive coverage of the crime, fair trial would be difficult elsewhere.

Trial started in March, 1894 in Tavares lasting for three weeks. The state rested its case on April 17th and the defense announced that it would introduce no witnesses. No one believed that a case had been made out against the defendants, since all the evidence has been circumstantial and not very strong at that. The confession was thrown out as coerced.

April 21, 1894 Jenkins, McRae and Clinton have been found guilty of the Packwood murders, though in the case of Clinton the jury made a recommendation of mercy. The verdict was a surprise. It was the general opinion that the defendants committed the murders and the public opinion will support the verdict, despite the

apparently disjointed character of the state's evidence.

June 10, 1895, the Florida Supreme Court reversed the conviction. Chief Justice Mabry delivered the opinion. The case was brought up on writ of error from Lake County circuit court.

Again there was a trial held in Tavares, Florida. On January 30, 1896, following a trial lasting sixteen days, Irwin Jenkins, Marion Clinton and William McRae were acquitted of what are known as "the Packwood Murders." The evidence was purely circumstantial. In the second trial the state was handicapped by the absence of material witnesses and did not make a strong case.

The two trials have cost Volusia County thousands of dollars and bankrupted the defendants and their families.

(Compiled from issues of newspapers of Volusia County Record and the Atlanta Constitution)

SIDEBAR:

Francis Joseph Packwood was born 22 February 1842 in New York. He died 10 Aug 1941 in Duval County, Florida. His father was Samuel Packwood (b. 15 Feb 1775 New London, Ct.; d. 22 Aug 1858 NY) and mother was Mary Arnold Charlton (b. abt. 1807 in Ct.) He had 5 brothers and 1 sister. It is said that he came to Florida by way of New Orleans. He married Kate D. Bruce abt. 1881. She was born 1853 in New York; died 1889. His only child was Frankie Packwood, who was murdered in New Smyrna in 1891

OF INTEREST TO THE ABOVE STORY:

Volusia County Record; DeLand, Florida.
Wednesday 23 Dec. 1891

The place where the murders were committed near New Smyrna recently while not in the same house is the identical spot where the last Indian massacre took place in the state.

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It was December 23, 1856 and the closing scene of the Indian hostilities which had been raging in the state for years. Governor Broome was the presiding executive of Florida, the father of Capt W. B. Watson was the high Sheriff of Volusia County, and it was Col. Bullock then who had charge of the state troops in this section, stationed at old Melonville, with a detachment camped where Hon. H. E. Osteen now resides.

The father of Capt. Dolph Sheldon was then a famous Indian scout and hunter. In locating and running down the Indians he was a holy terror, and upon him Billy Bowlegs and his tribes had sworn vengeance.

The Indian camps and tribes had been routed, and most of them captives on their way to old Tampa from which place they were to be removed to the West. While these Indians were being driven by troops to the west coast about 30 of them escaped in the first day's march. Finding themselves once more in their lone trails they proceeded to the Hillsborough River (now the Indian River) after the scalps of the Sheldon family. In the meantime, Mr. Sheldon had sold his property to a family by the names of Shives, from South Carolina, who moved upon the property and the Sheldons the same day moved up to New Smyrna.

Arriving one morning in the vicinity where they supposed the Sheldons yet resided, the red skins began preparations for the attack. They

found old Mr. Shives and a son out in the field at work. They were both killed and scalped. They then attacked the residence, killing two other sons and burning the house over the bodies. During this attack Mrs. Shives had gathered her babe in her arms and ran down to the water's edge nearby to make her escape in a boat. Just as she was shoving the boat from off the oyster bar she was captured and with her babe, murdered, left in a nude state and her body horribly mangled, pieces of glass bottles sticking about in her body. The news of this massacre soon reached Col. Bullock, who dispatched the detachment stationed at where Osteen is now, to the scene and in pursuit of these Indians. They were never captured.

**THE CONSTITUTION:
ATLANTA, GA., [Page 2]
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 1894**

The Packwood Murder Trial.

Tavares, Fla., April 3.—The second day of the trial of the three men charged with the Packwood murders was uneventful. Mr. Francis J. Packwood was the only witness examined, and he was on the stand when court adjourned. There was nothing sensational in the evidence. It is evident that the state relies solely on circumstantial evidence. Just how strong the case against the suspects is cannot be told at present.

Source: Fold3

The Florida Times-Union

February 1, 1896

CLINTON AND MCRAE

After Being Acquitted at Tavares They Left For Their Homes.

Crow's Bluff, Fla., January 31, 1896- Quite a number of witnesses in the Packwood murder case at Tavares were here Thursday en route to home, and also one of the defendants, Marion Clinton. Clinton, with McRae and Jenkins, has been in jail at Tavares for over two years, consequently he looks decidedly bleached out.

How to avoid barking up the wrong tree!

Jerry Hale

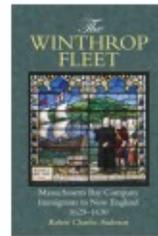
(inspired by an article by Chris Zdeb of the Edmonton Journal 14 Jul 2012, thank you Bob Weaver.)

With all of the hype about genealogy these days it is very easy to "jump the track" and go off in the wrong direction. Here are a few pitfalls you should rigorously avoid. 1) ALWAYS start with yourself and work back. 2) interview your own family members and gather as much information from them as possible, it will save you a lot of time later. 3) all records are local, you must know where your ancestors lived before you can hope to find the records 4) be mindful that county lines changed throughout history. Most states started with a few counties and split them up over time. Example: Iowa had 2 counties in 1849, it now has 99 on the same land. 5) ALWAYS record the source of EVERY fact. It is laborious but necessary. The farther you get into your family history the more you need to be able to weigh conflicting information to determine which is the most accurate. Example: after a year of research I encountered a new cousin who had my mother's birthplace as Decorah, Iowa. I knew she was born in Waukon but had no way to prove it. I discarded a years work and started over, recording my sources. If the best source you have is "Mama said" then that's your source. When you find something more concrete keep the first fact and it's source and record the more correct information with the new source. The next time you encounter that wrong fact (and you will) you can quickly move past it. 6) The census is the best and quickest way to establish where your ancestors lived between 1790 and 1940. 7) Decide early what method you will use to record your research. Ancestry's Family Trees is a good method but has its drawbacks. Family Tree Maker is favored by many 8) NEVER accept information just because somebody has posted it on line or written it in a book. You MUST verify each fact for yourself.

UNDOCUMENTED GENEALOGY IS MYTHOLOGY.

Genealogy Room Acquisition

The board of directors has acquired a new book for the Genealogy & Local History room. "*The Winthrop Fleet: Massachusetts Bay Company Immigrants to New England, 1629-1630*" by Robert Charles Anderson, published Aug 2012.



"This volume describes the organization of the Winthrop Migration and the Winthrop Fleet in some detail, and provides detailed genealogical and biographic information on each of the more than two hundred families and individuals who came to New England in 1629 and 1630 as part of this movement. Each sketch begins with information on the English origin of the immigrant, when known, and the evidence for his or her arrival in 1629 or 1630. This is followed by biographical data, on education, officeholding and the like, and genealogical data, including birth, death, marriage and children. The sketches often include information on the place of each immigrant in the migration process, whether as master or servant, and of unusual and interesting features of their lives."

Read more about this great addition to our early history at: <http://tinyurl.com/c8bqbhe>

ADDITIONAL eBOOKS

I have received three CDs of historical ebooks. They are out of copyright, many available on the www. They will be placed in the Genealogy eBook folder of the SCAN SNAP area on the offline computer. Most, if not all, are OCR'd and so fully searchable.

FLORIDA, 7 volumns: A History of Florida; Church & State in Spanish Floridas; Conquest of FL Under Hernando de Soto; FL Scenery, Climate & History; Old & New Florida; Plantation Records; The Everglades.

CONNECTICUT, 13 volumns: Bio Encyclopedia of CT & RI; Catalogue of CT Volunteer Organizations; CT & RI Gazeteer;

(Cont'd on back page)



130 E. Howry Ave
DeLand, FL 32724



TO:

Founded in 1986, Roots & Branches Genealogical Society of West Volusia County serves the cities of DeLand, Deltona, DeBary, Enterprise, Osteen, Pierson and Seville. The purpose of this Society is to stimulate and promote interest in genealogical and historical research and provide instruction in the use of efficient mechanics and adherence to scientific principles of accuracy and thoroughness in research. We meet the third Sunday of each month, except July and August, in the Auditorium of the DeLand Public Library at 130 East Howry Avenue in DeLand, Florida. We have a 45 minute lesson in the Conference room (behind the Audio Visual Desk) given by one of our experienced members. Guests are always welcome. We also cover the Genealogy and Local History Room on the second floor of the library, attempting to provide a volunteer whenever the library is open. Library hours are: M-Th 9:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fri, Sat & Sun 1:00 p.m. to 5:0

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First Puritan Settlers of CT; Maritime Connecticut; Names & Ages of Old People; Popular Biography of Ct; Refugees from L.I. to CT; War of Rebellion Record of Service; Court Records, Colony of CT to 1665 (4 vols); **NEW HAVEN COUNTY** (18 vols): Cheshire CT Hist; Derby Hist & Genealogies; Early New Haven; East-Haven Old Stone Church; East-Haven Register; Guilford Hist; Hamden Hist; Meriden Historical Sketches; Meriden Hist; Milford Tombstones before 1800; New haven Colonial Record 1638-49; New Haven Colony or Jurisdiction; New Haven Tombstones before 1800; Waterbury & Her Industries; waterbury Burying Grounds; Waterbury History; Waterbury Proprietors' Records; waterbury Soldiers' Monument; **PLUS THESE ALREADY ON THE COMPUTER:** Annals & Family Records of Winchester CT 1873; Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale Univ; History of Ancient Windsor; History of Ancient Woodbuy CT; History of Canton CT; History of Litchfield County CT; History of Norfolk CT; History of Simsbury, Granby & Canton 1643-1845 by Phelps; History of the Town of Litchfield CT; History of the Town of Plymouth; History of Waterbury