

# The Family Tree Searcher

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## *The Editor's Page — The Fields of Guinea*

Such a topic for a “come here” editor! I typed in Guinea, VA, on my Google search engine and got 167,000 hits. I knew I was in trouble. Next step was to define and locate Guinea as the “locals” know it. More trouble.

One knowledgeable native told me with positive certainty that the **real Guinea** began at “the ditch” behind the original Union Baptist Church at Achilles, went east to Mobjack Bay waters, north to the shore of Severn River and south to the shores of York River. It did not include Cuba Island, Mark Pine Road, Little England or even Bena!

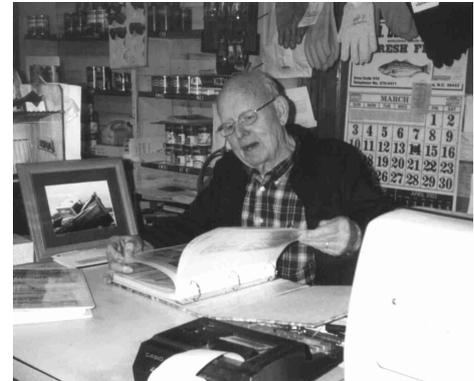
A more liberal “uptown” view included Bena, Thornton Lane, Little England area and even north to take in Saddlers Neck and Glass. The most optimistic view went west to the old Hayes Store area at “the Hook” (near present day Ace Hardware).

Without question, such places as Brown’s Bay, Belvin’s Landing, John West Creek, Monday Creek Landing, Severn River Landing, Jenkin’s Neck, Maryus, Severn, Perrin, Sedger Creek Landing and Lady at the Severn Wharf were all part of the lore and history of the indigenous Guinea of Gloucester County, Virginia.

Guinea Neck is a place, but I believe Guinea is more a state of mind as much as it is a location. This “state of mind” is bound by close family ties and customs, deeply rooted in a tight knit watermen’s community. They lived and survived their own unique way of life from the 1600’s through World War I in 1914 when the “outsiders” began to impinge on their lands and lives.

As genealogists, we look through their family generations to find social and cultural riches along with changes in the community caused by transportation, communication and population growth. The “**real Guinea**” is still a proud and industrious people, wonderful folks to know and write about. We hope you enjoy this issue and share our warmth with some native Guinea families.

Roger Caldwell Davis, editor  
olddad@inna.net



C. B. “Buck” Rowe  
“unofficial” Mayor of Guinea looks  
at a Guinea Scrapbook  
*photo by Roger C. Davis, March 18, 2002*



GAZETTE-JOURNAL  
1951 History and Progress Edition

## **My Four-B's of Guinea and Beyond**

by Nan (Nannie Mae) Belvin McComber

My first Guinea memory is that of a child less than four years old. I remember carrying dippers of water to my Grandpa Joe Belvin who was bedridden. We lived on about 48 acres of land in Guinea situated between Horsepoint and Severn Store. From our land, the Mobjack Bay was in full view, with only John West Creek and marshland between our place and the bay. Two houses, a stone's throw apart, were the only dwellings there. I lived with my parents in the newer home, built in 1935, five years before my birth. My Aunt Emma and Uncle Frank lived in the old home place with Grandpa Joe Belvin. I remember how free I felt as I traveled alone between the two houses, and as I looked out towards the Mobjack the world appeared enormous. There was a hand pump in the yard, and I remember filling the aluminum dipper and carrying the water to Grandpa Joe, carefully following my Mom's specific instructions of cleanliness, "Rinse the dipper four or five times before filling it with the water your grandpa will drink." Years later I would listen to many stories of Grandpa Joe's pride when Daddy and Mama finally presented him a grandchild, after a wait of almost twelve years. There were also sad stories of my Grandma Nannie Butler Belvin's unanswered prayers for me before her death in 1932 from a stroke. So, I became her namesake. My mom said that no one entered and left Belvin's Farm without Grandpa Joe bringing them to view his new granddaughter. My only memory of his death is that he was gone, and there was much sorrow. I learned later that he was well loved and respected within the Guinea community, and his family members were expected to fill the role he left. He was a self-taught carpenter, and he built many of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century homes in lower Gloucester County. He was known as a master builder of dormer windows. Grandpa Joe was often called on by the Guinea community to build caskets for family members and friends, and he lovingly built each to individual size and specifications, using linings selected and provided by the families of the deceased. Sadly, during that era, many babies and young children died from diseases and other illnesses. He was called on to build the little caskets, and he lined them with materials furnished by the families. Some of the materials were satins while others were as plain as printed cotton muslin from feed bags. The caskets were built with wood, and they were soaked overnight to make them water tight before they were handed over to the families for the burial.



**Joseph Henry Belvin, Sr., and Frank and Emma Belvin.  
Belvin's Farm, 1985**



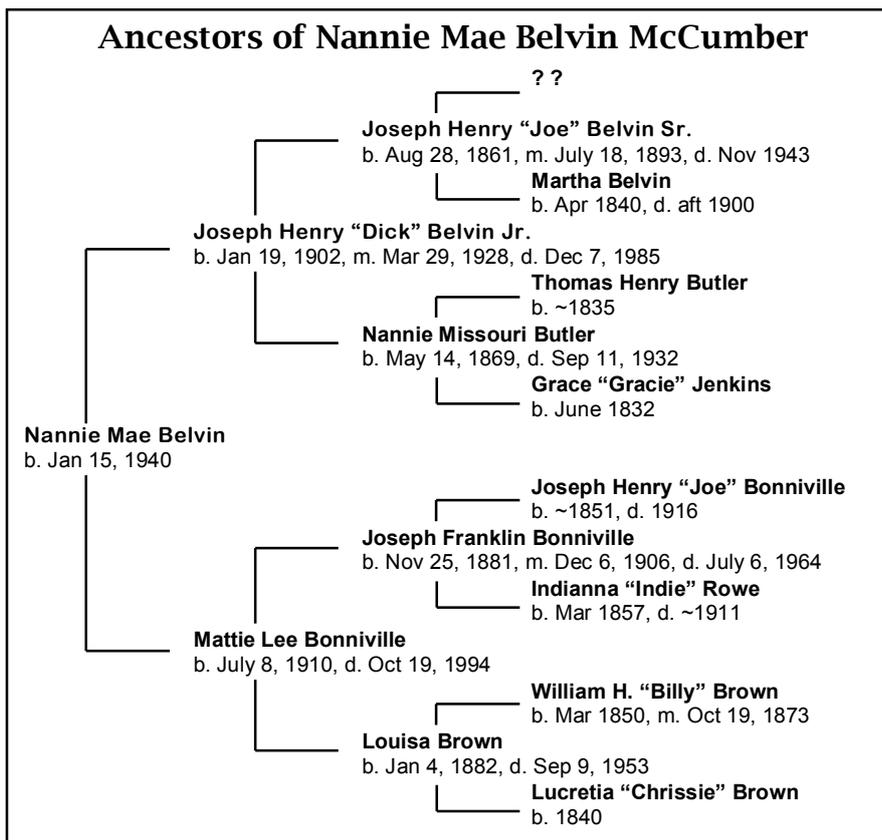
**Joseph Henry Belvin, Jr., and Mattie Lee Bonnaville  
House near Belvin's Farm,  
1985**

To provide for his family, Grandpa Joe Belvin farmed the land, raised cattle, hogs, and chickens, and the local waters provided clams, oysters, and fish. Crops from the farmland as well as the bounty from the waters were used mainly as food for his family and friends, but he did sell a few clams to the Shackelfords when times were hard.

My Grandpa Joe, Joseph Henry Belvin Sr., was born in 1861, when the Civil War was beginning. I have not found a record showing the name of his father, but records do show he was the son of Martha Belvin,<sup>1</sup> and she the daughter of George and Frances (Fanny) Belvin.<sup>2</sup> The 1833 Gloucester Personal

Property records lists, "George Belvin, son of John." GG -Grandparents George and Fanny had six other children, with G-Grandma Martha next to the youngest. Records show that G-Grandma Martha did marry James West in 1872,<sup>3</sup> and they had only two children, both living less than a year. Census records show Grandpa Joe always lived with his grandparents.<sup>4</sup> Apparently he was well loved by them, and they taught him honesty, integrity, and love of family. The 1860 census shows George and Fanny and their three youngest children, Benjamin, Martha, and Elizabeth living in the household, but the 1870 census shows only Fanny, now 70 yrs old, and her nine-year old grandson, Joseph, living in her daughter Elizabeth and husband James Green's household. Ten years later, in the 1880 census, Joseph is 18 years old and living in the household of his Aunt Elizabeth and her husband James Green.<sup>5</sup> He married Martha Elizabeth Butler in 1889, and she died at the birth of their second child in 1892. Neither of these two children, Lela Pearl and Thomas

Earl, survived more than a few days. A year later, Grandpa Joe married Martha's older sister Nannie Missouri Butler, and from this marriage, seven children were born, Ellen Grace, Thomas Henry, Daisy Linda, Joseph Henry Jr., Annie Pearl, Frank Via, and Peachie Lee, all living seventy years or more, with the exception of Peachie and Thomas Earl. He died at the age of nine from a heavy maul injury to the leg which turned gangrenous and killed him. Their youngest daughter Peachie died at the age of 35 from a hemorrhage while waiting in the



Joseph Henry (Joe) Belvin, Sr.  
1861 - 1943  
Picture taken 1941



Nannie Missouri Butler  
1869 - 1932  
Picture taken 1930

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ambulance for the York River ferry on the way to the hospital in Newport News. She left behind her husband, Joseph William (Dick) Bonnaville, and their four children, all of whom were less than seventeen years old. Grandma Nannie also had a son before she married Grandpa Joe, George Robert Butler, who was treated as a full son by Grandpa Joe. He married a lady from Smithfield, VA, and they had three children, Clarence, Susie, and George Robert Jr., but George Robert Sr. died when he was 30 years old from the 1918 flu.

The Thomas Henry (Tom) and Grace Jenkins Butler family first appears in the Gloucester County 1870 Census, although the 1704/05 Gloucester County Quit Rent Rolls from England lists a John Butler in the [Abindon] Parish, <sup>6</sup> and the Gloucester County 1800 Tax List shows a Thomas Butler. The 1880 and 1920 Census show G -Grandpa Tom Butler was born in Maryland. His wife Grace Jenkins was born in Guinea, the daughter of William and Nancy Jenkins and granddaughter of Armistead and Nancy Jenkins. The Butler name can be traced back to Normandy, France. Some family members came to England with William the Conqueror. Others followed at later dates. Parts of the family remained in Normandy and possibly emigrated from there. Of those settling in England, the family of Theobald Walter moved to Ireland and established the Butler Clan there. King Henry the Second appointed Theobald Walter as Chief Butler of Ireland as a reward for his services in the wars with Ireland. This position of honor required him to attend the coronation of the kings of England and present to them the first cup of wine. Hence, the name "Butler." <sup>7</sup>

My father, Joseph Henry Belvin Jr., called "Dick," was born in 1902 and was the oldest son to live to adulthood. His younger brother Frank was born in 1907. The family ways of living changed very little until the time my father and his brother set out in their mid-teens to earn their living from the water. They were the first in the family to have their own boat to harvest the Guinea waters and beyond. This boat, not only supplied the means of supporting these two young men, but it allowed them to support their aging parents and other family members in need. The boat, though simple by today's standards, opened up a new world for my Belvin family. It provided a means of transportation for them to meet their future wives, two beautiful young

Bonnaville ladies, Mattie and Emma, from Robins Neck. It gave them a chance to pay off the mortgage on the Belvin land so that their own children could enjoy the land of their ancestors. And, lastly, this boat was a bond of partnership between two brothers that lasted throughout their lifetime. <sup>8</sup> Both couples married in early 1928 and moved into the Joe & Nannie Butler Belvin home in Guinea. Uncle Frank and Aunt Emma produced two sons, Frank Jr., the first born in 1932 and the second, Carroll Wilbur, in 1937. My parents, Dick and Mattie, produced two daughters, myself in January 1940 and my sister Vernetta in August 1946. The Belvin land is still owned by the family today. It is interesting that the



Mr Mattie Lee Bonnaville (1910-1994); Joseph William (Dick) Bonnaville (1902-1976); Peachie Lee Belvin (1912-1947), married July 5, 1930

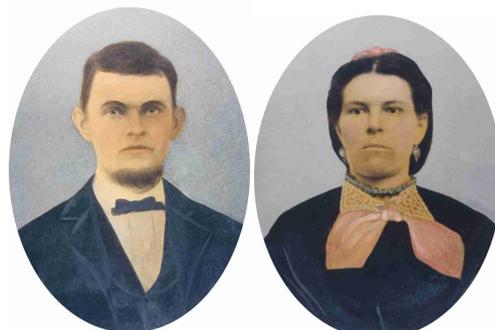
Joseph Henry Belvin Sr., b. Aug 28, 1861, m. Nannie  
Missouri Butler, b. Nov 21, 1943  
Ellen Grace Belvin, b. Feb 20, 1895, d. Aug 16, 1974  
Thomas Henry Belvin, b. Feb 3, 1896, d. July 12, 1907  
Daisy Linda Belvin, b. Aug 21, 1899, d. June 14, 1970  
Joseph Henry "Dick" Belvin Jr., b. Jan 10, 1902, d.  
Dec 7, 1985, m. Mattie Lee Bonnaville, b. 1910, d.  
1994  
Nannie Mae Belvin, b. 1940  
Vernetta Belvin, b. Aug 1946  
Annie Pearl Belvin, b. May 14, 1904, d. Dec 14, 1981  
Frank Via Belvin, b. Nov 18, 1907, d. Jan 27, 1984, m.  
Emma Bonnaville  
Frank Via Belvin Jr., b. 1932  
Carroll Wilbur Belvin, b. 1937  
Peachie Lee Belvin, b. Nov 18, 1912, d. Apr 5, 1947,  
m. Joseph William "Dick" Bonnaville

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marriages between Dick and Frank Belvin and Mattie and Emma Bonnaville were not the only unions between these two families. Two years later, their sister Peachie married Joseph William (Dick) Bonnaville, the brother of Mattie and Emma.

My Grandpa Joe Frank (Joseph Franklin) Bonnaville's family came to Gloucester from Accomac County, the Eastern Shore of Virginia.<sup>9</sup> His grandfather George Washington Bonewell and brother William first appeared in Gloucester in the late 1830's.<sup>10</sup> The Eastern Shore Bonewells came from Sutton Courtney, England.<sup>11</sup> GG-Grandpa George Washington married Nancy Foster Robins whose ancestry included John Robins who emigrated to Virginia from England in the early 1600's and John Throckmorton who also emigrated from England about 1660. It was this John Robins for whom Robins Neck was named. George Washington & Nancy Robins Bonnaville's second-born son, Joseph Henry, was my great grandfather, and he married Indianna Rowe whose ancestry dates back to the Nicholas Rowe family of England. This family's descendant, James, patented land in Gloucester in 1651.

Grandpa Joe Frank Bonnaville and his father, Joe, were regular customers of the J. M. Shackelford's Severn Store, according to the original accounts records book of the store.<sup>12</sup> Frequent trips from Robins Neck across the Severn River in their little punt (boat) were made for food and other supplies as well as social gatherings at the old country store. It was on one of these trips that Grandpa Joe Frank must have met his future Guinea bride Louisa (Lou) Brown of Munday's Creek. Grandma Lou, though less than five feet tall and weighing less than a hundred pounds, was a strong woman. She was born in 1882, the daughter of William (Billy) and Lucretia (Chrissie) Brown in a little one-room house with a dirt floor. Both of her parents' fathers were Brown descendants, her father William descending from George Brown, and her mother descending from another William Brown. The family was very poor, but the Browns worked hard to feed and provide for their family. G-Grandpa Billy left home in his little skiff before sunrise to catch fish which he sold as a fishmonger during the rest of the day. By breakfast time, he had loaded up his hand-cart (cart pulled by a horse in later years) with the day's catch,<sup>13</sup> and his strong voice could be heard along the road from Guinea to the Court House crying, "Fresh fish for Sale!"<sup>14</sup>



William Brown "Billy" 1850- c aft. 1900 &  
Lucretia "Chrissie" Brown c 1840 - bef 1900  
Married Oct . 19, 1873

My Bonnaville grandparents were married in 1906 and moved into a small one -room house, located on Whittaker Creek in Robins Neck, not far from Lands End. Within six years, their four children were born. This one -room house served as the family's home as well as the birthing place for all the children. It wasn't until around 1918 that a second building was built which became the bedrooms and parlor, with the older building becoming a kitchen. My Grandpa Joe Frank had a punt which he used for clamming. Quite often, he would cross the Severn River to Guinea (Kings Creek), and he and his brother Jim clammed. His garden provided vegetables and fruit for the family, and hogs and chickens provided the main meat for the family diet. He also grew sugar cane for molasses, and his homemade molasses was enjoyed by family and friends. He never owned a car and either walked to wherever he needed to go or traveled in his boat. Grandpa Joe Frank was an honest man and well respected in the lower Robins Neck community, especially by the Jones family of Lands End. He was a very strict disciplinarian and expected his wife and children to obey explicitly. Grandma Lou obeyed him as his wife, but it was she who managed their finances and encouraged their children to attend school. I often wondered

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where and how Grandma Lou got her education. I remember her as a master of poetry recitation and an avid reader, and she had a beautiful handwriting. My research reveals that she attended the one-room school built by Mr. John M. Shackelford, owner of Severn Store, to be used for educating his children. He hired Miss Alice Thornton of Achilles as the teacher and offered the school to any Guinea children who wanted to learn. This little school was the forerunner of the Severn School.<sup>15</sup> I also remember her as a lover of cheese. Due to illness she lived the last few years of her life with our two Belvin families in Guinea, and I remember that every grocery note for Shackelford's weekly delivery had to contain at least a half pound of sharp cheddar cheese. My Mom told many stories of how her mother sold eggs to buy groceries to feed the family, but she always kept a few cents back in a jar to buy herself some cheese. One story within the family about Grandma Lou's love of cheese centers around one Sunday when Grandpa Joe Frank, Grandma Lou, with my Mom and her sister Emma, visited his two sisters in Norfolk. Mr. Billy Whitley was also visiting the sisters, and during the afternoon he volunteered to treat everyone to ice -cream. When he got to Grandma Lou and asked what she wanted, she said, "A pound of good sharp cheddar cheese, please." After a deadly silence, Mr. Whitley said, "I'll bring you the cheese, Ma'am, and which undertaker do you prefer?" Apparently, her lifetime of eating cheese in abundance didn't hurt her cholesterol because she lived almost 72 years, even surviving breast cancer in her early 60's.

As a child growing up on Belvin's Farm in Guinea, I treasured the loving families that I had. I was not born on Belvin's Farm, but at my Mom's midwife Miss Nannie West's home, across from the current Maryus Post Office.<sup>16</sup> Plans were made for Dr. James W. Smith, the Hayes Store country doctor, to travel to Belvin's Farm when the time came. But, two days before my birth, a heavy snowstorm struck, and he refused to travel our almost one -mile road (then only a glorified cart road) with his car. My Mom was taken from our home to the midwife's home on a cart pulled by two steers (oxen). With a house of family members already, space for the birthing was not easy to find. I came into this world, nevertheless! The snow quit, and the road improved, and I am told that Mr. Willie Deal was the proud driver of the car that carried me to Belvin's Farm. I've been told that my Mom was so afraid I would choke that she only gave me liquids until I was over two years old. After hearing that a child had died from malnutrition, she consulted with my deliverer Dr. Smith about my not eating, even after offering it to me. He told her I probably would need to learn to eat first, and if I didn't eat then, she would have to be patient because, "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink." Well, at some point I did begin to eat!

I was already a student at Severn School before I understood I only had one set of parents. My first grade teacher asked me if I was the daughter of Frank and Emma or Dick and Mattie, and I was not sure of the answer. Since my two older cousins, Frank Jr . and Carroll, were former students, she assumed I was their sister, and it wasn't until someone later mentioned it to my Dad and Uncle Frank at Shackelford's Store that I was set straight. Of course, this caused some family laughter. My Dad and Uncle were away a lot working on the water for a living, and it was the two wives who were responsible for the children, homes, property, livestock, and farm land. While they were away, there were no cars, and neither wife could drive. We had no electricity, telephones, or indoor bathrooms, and we walked to the neighbors and to the Shackelford's Store.

Thinking back to those years, I can only imagine the fear those two young mothers must have had when the Nor'easters (North East) roared through Guinea and surrounded our land with tides. Although our land was considered the highest point in the area, and the high tides didn't cover our yards, I remember many times when all around us was covered with water. I remember my family talking about the August 1933 storm when

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most of Guinea was covered with water while our two houses escaped water coming inside, but the land around us was so low that cattle and hogs swam over the barbed wire fences, and friends and families from the Horsepoint area came to Belvin's Farm in their row boats for safety. My Bonnaville grandparents in Robins Neck did not fare so well. Grandpa Joe Frank saved his hogs by bringing them into his home through the first floor window via a rowboat. At the height of the storm, both humans and animals had to move to the second floor to keep out of the water.

The highest tides and most wicked storms I can remember were during my high school years, and they were Hurricanes Hazel in 1954 and Diane in 1955. I was the proud owner of my first car, a 1952 Mercury, and had driven it to school the day Diane struck. By the time school let out, the hurricane was almost in full force, and the tides were very high already. A stream of water, known as John West Run crosses our private road, and a hand-built bridge made from logs allowed vehicles and people to cross the run. When I approached the run I could only see a few floating logs, and the car would not climb the logs on my first attempt. Water came in the floor of the car around the accelerator and clutch, and I knew I had to get the heck out of there fast! So I backed the car up, revved it in low gear, and just as the car hit the log I felt it begin to sink. I revved harder and after a quick jerk the front tires bounced onto the logs, and I got home safely. Scared, but safe! As was traditional, both families always gathered in the original Belvin home in times of trouble. The calming and soothing voice of Aunt Emma is with me, even today. When things got rough, it was always her strength and faith that gave strength to the families.

As far back as I can remember, I always felt that the neighbors and families who lived through the woods in the Horsepoint area as well as the families in the Severn area were a part of our world and that I was growing up in a huge family. There were always seasonal vegetables in plentiful supply grown on our land as well as fresh figs on the fig bushes, black cherries on the trees, grapes and damsons to be harvested in the early Fall, asparagus and blackberries along the ditch banks around our property, fresh black walnuts from the trees, fresh tomatoes, cantaloupe, and watermelons. These delicacies were shared with all the neighboring families. Likewise, the fish, clams, and oysters, caught from the creek running along the Belvin property, were always shared with friends and other family members who lived outside Belvin's Farm. As children, we were hired to help with the planting, and a few outside farm hands were also employed. My cousin, Carroll, and I shared the planting chores, and we felt really grownup when we were paid a dime for planting a number of tomato plants.

It was not unusual for ten to fifteen people to join us for Sunday dinner. Two of my Dad's sisters had married and moved to Middlesex County, one to Urbanna and the other to Waterview, and Sundays were normally shared between these two families and my Bonnaville grandparents in Robins Neck. The huge dining tables were set for multiple shifts, and it was traditional for the children (of which there were many of us) to be fed last. The first car I remember was a Ford, and I think it was an A model. I remember well, long and bumpy rides to Urbanna, Waterview, and Robins Neck. The main road into Robins Neck, as I recall, was known as Featherbed Lane. It was very muddy and bumpy, and I always became carsick on those trips.

I've been asked, "What is the 'glue' that holds the Guinea people together?" Looking back on my thirty years of living in Guinea, I believe it is the kindness between families who love each other, the watermen's way of life, and most of all, honesty and hard work. Since my husband and I retired almost ten years ago, we have traveled in all the lower 48 states as well as several provinces in Canada. It was not until the summer of 2000 that I

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found a place with the aura of Guinea, and that was in two of the Canadian Maritime provinces, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. As we were leaving I realized that I had just spent several weeks in an area where the fisherfolk are plentiful, the waterman's way of life and jargon similar, and the sunsets over the water just as beautiful (well, almost!).

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### End Notes:

1. Marriage Certificate, Joseph Belvin & Martha E. Butler, June 9, 1889, and Marriage Certificate, Joseph Belvin & Nannie Butler, July 18, 1893.
2. Marriage Certificate, Martha Belvin & James West, September 26, 1872.
3. Ibid.
4. 1870 US Census, Gloucester Co., VA: Frances Belvin, age 70, and 9 -yr old grandson Joseph Belvin, living in HH of her daughter Elizabeth and husband James Green and 2 -yr old son Willie.
5. 1880 US Census, Gloucester Co., VA: James Green & wife Elizabeth (Belvin) Green; 10 -yr old son William, 7-yr old daughter Pinky, and 18 -yr old nephew Joseph Belvin.
6. 1704/05 Gloucester County Quit Rent Rolls, obtained from England by Elizabeth Lawrence -Dow, copy on file in Gloucester County Clerk's Office.
7. Roots Research Bureau, LTD, Butler Genealogical and Historical Sketch, Manuscript Number 416, pg. 2.
8. Lisa Oliver Monroe, article in Gloucester -Mathews Gazette -Journal, July 11, 1996, pg 8B, features David Bristow's collection of paintings in Hogg Funeral Home, Belvin brothers portrait displayed entitled, "Brotherly Love."
9. Various spellings have been Bonewell, Bonwell, Bonnywell, Bonnewell, Bonneville, and Bonnaville. My family adopted the spelling *Bonniville*.
10. 1842 Gloucester County Personal Property Book, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>: George Bonnyville, 1 white male over 16; William Bonnyville, 1 white male over 16, 1 slave over 16, 1 slave 12 -16, and 3 horses/mares/mules/cattle.
11. George B. Bonniwell, *The Bonniwells, 1000 Years*, self-published 1999, pgs 157-158.
12. J. M. Shackelford Store records, photocopy in possession of Nan Belvin McComber.
13. Nan (Nannie Mae) Belvin McComber, "Hand -Me-Down Tales from Guinea," GGSV, *The Family Tree Searcher*, June 1998, pg. 10.
14. Sally Nelson Robins, "Old Article about Guinea," *Glo-Quips* (Sept. 6, 1994), pg. 13.
15. Paul L. Brown, Guinea Historic Facts, undated, copy in possession of Nan Belvin McComber. Also discussion with only surviving daughter, Emma Bonniville Belvin, now 92 yrs. old, on March 28, 2002.
16. House was destroyed by fire on September 11, 2000.



"Carroll B"

# My Ride Down Memory Lane in Guinea

by Paul Lafayette Brown

## Prologue

*I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Paul Brown many times during the past several years, and we have shared many Guinea stories and memories. He has spent many years documenting family histories of Guinea, copying records by hand, and collecting photographs, and he has been generous in sharing these with me. I am honored to be the editor of Mr. Brown's memories of Guinea, written by him in 1992.*

*Mr. Paul Lafayette Brown was born on December 19, 1921, at Perrin (Guinea) in Gloucester County. He was the seventh of eight children of Alton Jones Brown, Sr. and Lela Elizabeth Thomas, whose ancestries trace back to early Guinea landowners and watermen. After graduating from Achilles High School, he attended the Warfield Bible Institute in Kentucky until he and his two brothers Lawrence and Edward joined the Army in 1942. He married Eloise Ellenwood Miller of Ohio in December 1945, and they lived in Hampton, Virginia, until moving to the Newport News Nursing and Rehabilitation Center a few years ago. She passed away in October 2000, and Mr. Brown continues to live at the Center.*



Paul Lafayette Brown

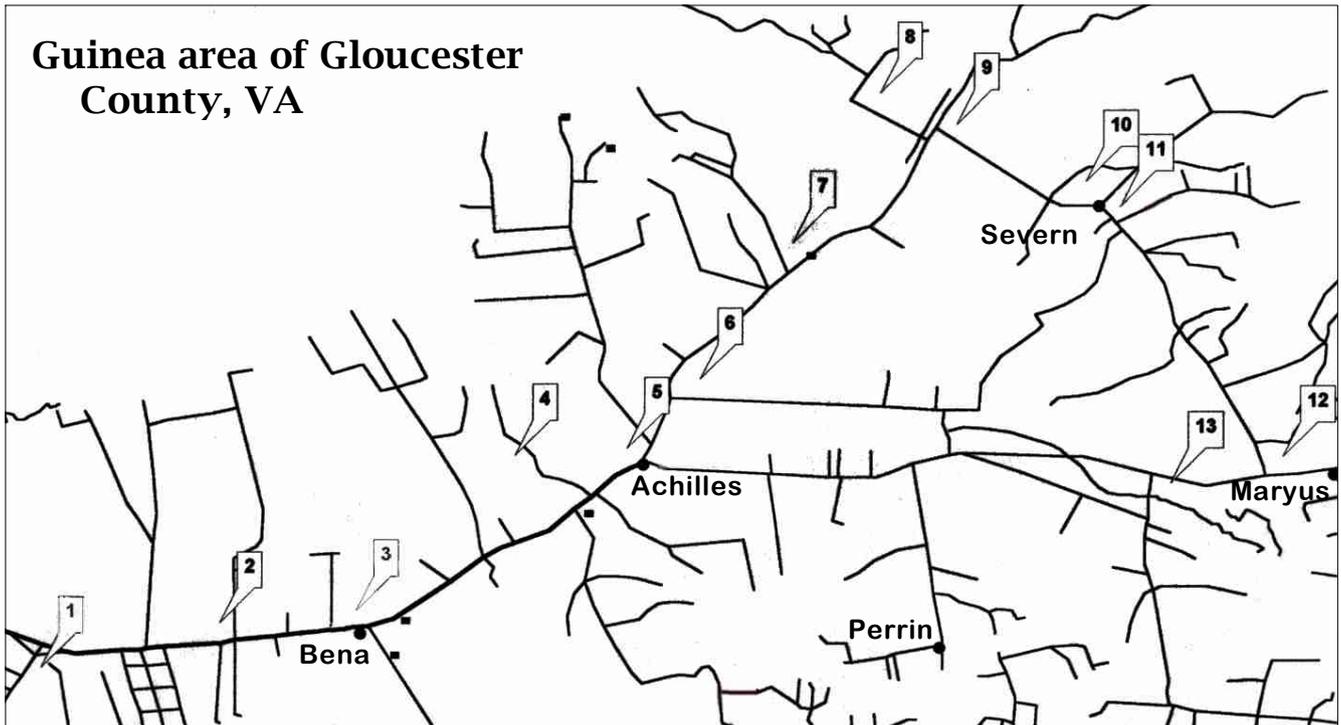
*Nan (Nannie Mae) Belvin McComber*

Numbers refer to locations on the map on page 11.

1 In the Spring of 1808, my friend and I take a ride to Guinea in a horse and buggy. Names have changed since that early nineteenth century buggy ride. Let's use the 1990 names and locations. We'll start at Bill Smith's Corner and proceed East. We must be careful, as the road is narrow and full of ruts and very muddy after a Spring rain.

2 We pass a large plantation. Slaves are busy in the field. The fertile soil seems to burst forth with shoots of new plants cultivated by slaves and horses. The cattle are now in the pasture after their morning milking, and the sheep are busy grazing. Everyone seems to be busy this beautiful Spring morning. There comes the master in his nice rig driven by his Negro servant. Shall we speak, or just nod? We don't know him well, so I guess we need just nod. As we pass him by, he tips his hat with a "Howdy!" We nod and say, "Sir!" We chat as we bump along in our buggy. What a well run Plantation this is! Everything is in order, even the wash seems to be placed there in precision. For the people of 1990, we must remember this beautiful plantation was later part of the Joel Hayes Plantation and his large store across the road.

As we come to a fork in the road (known to late 1990 arrivals as Bena) we pass on by and see a beautiful stand of pine trees. We comment on how straight and tall



3 the trees are and what good looking timber it is. We ride slowly to give the horse a breather, for Maude is not a young horse any more. We pass a little church. I tell my friend this is the Union Baptist Church, of which I am a member. This is a new church, just formed in this area a few years back.

We look to the left behind the little church and see a beautiful plantation. Every inch of land seems to be in use. This is the Thornton Plantation - so well run. It is known far and near for its good crops, even its sale of eggs, geese, cattle, and fowl. 1990 will find many of the Thornton descendants still living on part of this plantation. To the right of us across from the church is the Hansford Rowe farm, beautiful and well run. My friend said that the farm belonged to the Ransomes. He knew the family well and wanted to ask one of the field hands if the family were home, but I suggest we move on, for we want to get a good look at all of Guinea.

The thriving stores at Bena, Mr. Edgar Pointer, Mr. Clarence Rowe Sr., and Bena Post Office, are many years in the future, and so is the Morning Star Baptist Church. Bethlehem Methodist Church, just east of Bena, on Mark Pine Road, is a little over ten years old.

Let's remember, as we take our buggy ride in 1808, that Thomas Jefferson is President of the United States and our country is very young, not even fifty years old. John Tyler Sr. is Governor of Virginia.

Let's pause at Achilles. Remember - no school, no lodges, no post office, no Otis Hogge's or Marvin Crane's Store, no George Ash's Store, not even the name Achilles. In fact, there is nothing there, only the fertile soil. In fact, the road from Achilles to Perrin is not even there. This came later. The Severn Wharf road didn't come into existence until 1860. Membership was small at the Union Baptist Church. The cemetery was deeded by Mr. Joel M. Rowe to the white citizens of Gloucester in 1880.

Shall we move on? Old Maude has rested. The farm on the left belongs to Livingston Rowe, quite a large farm, and on the right a young man by the name of

## *My Ride Down Memory Lane in Guinea*

William King is struggling to get his little farm started. His children will come later on. Remember Bob, Jack, Walter, and Georgiana?

6 As we nudge Maude along, we see the Dobson property, many acres of farm land. We pause to make a turn on the Line Fence Road but decide to move straight ahead in order to see more of Guinea. The Dobson tract seems to stretch for miles. As far in the future as the year 1920, you can see that from the Joel and Milly Thomas porch to Jim Ashe's store at Perrin is all cleared land.

To the left is good cleared land, a stand of corn is being worked by someone. I don't know who owns this farm. The farmer seems to know how to raise a good crop. (To you of the future, this land will be owned by Button Thomas, Joel Thomas and his son Joel H. Thomas.)

The Smith farm comes into view, a well kept house and farm. Sam and Washington, the children, are still in the future. The Dobson's Salem Woods on the right still stretch on. The Friend's Church, the cemetery on the left, and Lafayette (Fate) Rowe, the one who donated the land for the church, have many years to go before they make their mark in life. In fact, Fate's father Sterling Rowe, is just a child of two now in 1808.

We seem to talk in riddles here for only our God can predict the future. We are looking back, choosing a date, and looking forward.

7 We are told when the turn of the nineteenth century came, the people pronounced 1800 as eighteen hundred, but 1801 was pronounced "eighteen 'ought' one," and all the way to 1809 was pronounced with "ought" as the third digit. So, 1808 was "eighteen 'ought' eight." This was also used as late as 1901 to 1909.

8 We pass on from the land of the future Friends Church and come upon the plantation of Anthony Smith, all two hundred and thirty acres. This well -kept farm stretches from the road all the way to the Severn River. His slaves are busy. There is much activity. We pause to give Maude a rest while I look to see if I can see the master around, for I have a keen interest in him and his family. For in the future, he is to have a daughter Martha Jane by his second wife Sarah, who will eventually be Great-Grandmother to many.

Washington Thomas is soon to be Anthony Smith's neighbor. He will in the future inherit from his father James Thomas, 98 acres. Look out Martha Jane - there is a dashing young man in the future for you! Washington Thomas will produce a young man who will make you stand up and take notice.

As we look East, we see the King farm, new, large, and well kept.

9 We turn to the right here and head down the road, but wait! This corner is to play an important role in the future. It will produce two stores and a post office, the James M. Thomas & Brothers Store. And, just across the road and near the marsh, is a store owned by Sheriff William (Billy) Thomas with Severn Post Office housed in the store. We, in 1990, call this place Hammond Robins' Corner. Near this same corner, Ralph (Rafe) Rowe will build a house and raise his family, but this to come later, for Ralph is only four years old in 1808.

10 We can see more of the James Thomas plantation as we move South, all 550 acres that were purchased in 1788 from Robert Thurston and his wife, Frances. Richard Haywood and his wife Sarah were also once owners of part of this beautiful plantation. They bought it in 1754. Neighbors of James Thomas in 1808 are Thomas Rowe, Richard March, George and Aaron Belvin, Anthony Smith, and Beverley Hall.

## *My Ride Down Memory Lane in Guinea*

This plantation of James Thomas will be divided and sold many times by our present day in 1990, but to clear our twentieth-century minds, this plantation stretches all the way from the Severn River to Brown's Bay and through the Frank Hogge property. This will take in the Severn Post Office and general store, the Thomas Cemetery, the John Thomas property, Bunny Hunter, George, Jim, Robert, and Finny Thomas' land. All of the Brown's Bay Road and the road adjacent to it.

11 Let us pass on down the road and pass the future Severn School, my alma mater, and head on to lower Guinea. The land is low and somewhat marshy, and we see a few small houses here and there, a cow tied to a stake, and a man plowing his garden.

As we move on and come to a bend in the road, we can see the beginning of a plantation, a few Negroes here and there working. This is the Warner Hogg plantation which will become very prosperous in just a few years.

12 To you in the 1990's, you will see Maryus Post Office, Murtie's Corner in Horsepoint, and a couple stores. The Baptist Chapel will rise, and it will be gone by the 90's. The people of this area are watermen and farmers in 1808 and will be in 1992, although the younger generation will take jobs at the Naval Weapons Station, Fort Eustis and Fort Monroe, Cheatham Annex, the Newport News Shipyard, and other places of employment. Some will become professional managers, musicians, lawyers, and ministers, and even a highly respected county government leader. The seafood that was so plentiful in 1808 and for many years thereafter will be diminished as a business by 1992.

13 As we move on around the circle, we see Jenkins Neck to the left, across the Beaver Dam Marsh. The Bonnywell farm covers many acres. Well kept homes dot the area, and this is a prosperous community. The future will bring at least three cemeteries and many beautiful homes, well kept. Familiar names like West, Jenkins, Green, Haywood, and Bonnaville, will cover that area. As we pass the Beaver Dam, we see the property of Lewis Hogge who will in the future produce many fine offspring.

To the left, we see the Perrin Farm, hundreds of acres, and it runs from Jenkins Neck to the Bethlehem Church. Many slaves work this large plantation owned by John Perrin. The Perrin farm will, in the future, be sold and divided into many homesteads. The land that once the slaves plowed and hoed will yield private homes of beauty and worth. Mr. Perrin's summer home still stands, but I guess that is a little later than the turn of the nineteenth century.

We must head back, but first my friend and I will stop under a shade tree and have a bite to eat. We can let Maude graze while we open our dinner buckets of biscuits, fat back, and a bottle of molasses. I am thirsty - we must look for a pump somewhere! As we finish our meal and move on, my friend said, "So, this is Guinea. I like what I see." And, I comment, "So do I. Guinea is not thickly settled now - but some day in the future, it will be. We are a proud people, proud of Guinea, and proud to be called Guineamen!"

I take my friend up the road to his home, and then I go back to my home in Guinea.

# Searching for Cemeteries in Guinea

by Harry Jordan

In 1994, when I decided to document the cemeteries of Gloucester, I was somewhat concerned about the possibility of meeting opposition from landowners where family graves were located. People may object to someone nosing around their property in search of gravestones. To add to the problem was not knowing exactly where the graves were located, thereby causing me to roam across other people's property lines. However, all this consternation was generally short-lived, particularly in the area of Guinea where I documented fifteen different burial sites. Everyone I met was very helpful and lent assistance whenever they could. An example of this extreme cooperativeness was demonstrated by the Reverend Paul Brown, a native of Guinea. He offered what he had already accomplished in documenting cemeteries in the area. His input made any effort on my part much easier.

In one of the cemeteries in the area, I came across a gravesite with a tremendous head stone. The story goes that the family did not find a stone to their liking in this area. Therefore, they had a stone sent in by ship. When it arrived the ship could not get close enough to shore to unload the stone. Consequently the stone was offloaded to a smaller boat; taken to shore and unloaded at the burial site by a large group of men.

At another cemetery, I encountered a rather strange sight. The cemetery was being maintained in perfect condition. Although there is nothing strange about this, what I saw still surprised me. Since the gravesites were in the yard of a home, a picnic table was sitting on one of the graves. In addition, a child's playset, of swing and slide, was over another grave. I must hasten to say that there was absolutely no evidence of any vandalism or destruction of any of the graves. It can be concluded that the people living near this cemetery still respected its presence.

I was told that at one of the cemeteries, there were burials on top of burials. I have no way of proving or disproving this but since this word came from older people, I tend to believe it. Since the cemetery was located at a central location and was relatively small, such burials could easily occur through the years.

Although I did not see the gravesites on the Big Island, I was told by inhabitants, who had recently moved to the mainland, that very high tides had severely deteriorated the markers of graves on the island. However, the survivors were very cooperative in giving me what information they had.

Alas, as happens once in a while, I was truly saddened when I found a cemetery that had been severely vandalized. Some of the graves had been opened, and in at least one case, some remains had been removed from its coffin. Thank goodness this does not happen very often.

In contrast to this site, a cemetery nearby had grown up to the extent that I could not reach it. Thanks to Reverend Brown I included in my book what he had uncovered about the cemetery. Subsequently, one of the descendants of persons buried there decided to clean up the site. He not only had the site cleaned, but also had stones installed over those which had none and then made the entire site an area of meditation. Additionally, he

## Searching for Cemeteries in Guinea

indicated that he was going to try to get the vandalized site nearby repaired.

I am sure that each and every cemetery in the area has a story of its own. I am just sorry that I could not get more of them. In addition, there must be other gravesites that I did not locate and document. Nevertheless, I can say that almost all the cemeteries and gravesites showed that they were being given the respect and reverence due the departed. Families and friends were making sure that they were not, in fact, being forgotten and that they were as much a part of history as any person.

### A Gloucester Landmark

#### Gray's Drug Store



*photo by Roger C. Davis*

#### Stillwaters on Main

different restaurants.

Stillwaters on Main was opened February 25, 1999 by Melanie and Joel Blice. Joel is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and earned his certification as a Certified Executive Chef in 1990. Melanie graduated from Baltimore International Culinary College 10 years ago and has had her hands in professional kitchens ever since!

\* History of Building from the back of a Stillwaters on Main menu. This information was graciously provided by Dr. Turner Gray, retired pediatrician and son of Dr. Stanley Gray, the late Dr. Loran V. "Happy" Morgan who practiced pharmacy in Gloucester for over 50 years, Harvey Morgan, Bill Morman, and others who remember Gray's Drug Store from their youth.

#### Building History\*

This building was built in 1923 by Jack Teagle. It was one of two pharmacies in the Gloucester Court House area (Morgan's Drug Store was originally located directly across the street). This pharmacy was owned by Zachary Taylor Gray, a member of the House of Delegates. Mr. Gray's vision was to have his son, Stanley Taylor Gray, practice pharmacy in Gloucester upon his graduation from the School of Pharmacy at the Medical College of Virginia. William Leach was the pharmacist at Gray's Drug Store until Stanley graduated in 1924. Soon after Dr. Gray began his practice, the building was expanded in order to accommodate his bustling business. During prohibition, Dr. Gray's pharmacy was the only business allowed to dispense alcohol. All alcohol was stored in the basement under lock and key, and dispensed by prescription only.

For the first 50 years the second floor of this building was utilized for a variety of businesses as well as apartments. Dr. John Wiatt and later Dr. Marchant practiced dentistry here. Dr. Salaski practiced optometry, and rumor has it that there was a beauty shop upstairs. The office of Soil Conservation Service for the U.S. Department of Agriculture was also located upstairs as well as two different insurance agencies.

The basement housed a barbershop run by Dick Bridges with a stairwell entrance on the east side of the building.

Dr. Stanley Gray retired on December 31, 1979 and the building was soon sold. Until January 1999, 6553 Main Street has been occupied on the main floor by four

# Churches of Guinea

by L. Roane Hunt

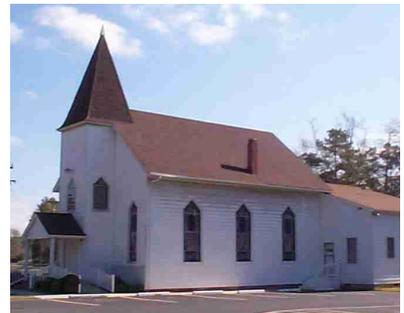
During the colonial era under British rule, the Anglican Church was by law the church designated for Guinea, the neck of land tucked in the southeastern corner of Abingdon Parish, Gloucester County, Virginia. The first two churches to locate on the “Guinea Neck” following the great “War of Independence” are still the most prominent churches there today. The Bethlehem Methodist Church began in 1789, and the Union Baptist Church began in 1801. During their long and illustrative histories, they have fostered the beginnings of other churches of their respective denominations in the surrounding communities of lower Gloucester County. After the Civil War, the First Morning Star Baptist Church was formed from the Afro -American members of Union Baptist Church, and it has continued to prosper near Bena post office. In 1899, the Achilles Friends Church was established as a result of the missionary efforts of the Ohio Evangelical Friends. Later, additional church ministries in the form of missions, chapels, and independent churches served the Guinea community. Six church buildings are presented in the composite figure with photographs take on a sunny morning in late March of this year, 2002.



**Bethlehem United Methodist Church  
Bena**



**Union Baptist Church  
Achilles**



**First Morning Star Baptist Church  
Bena**



**Achilles Friends Church  
Achilles**



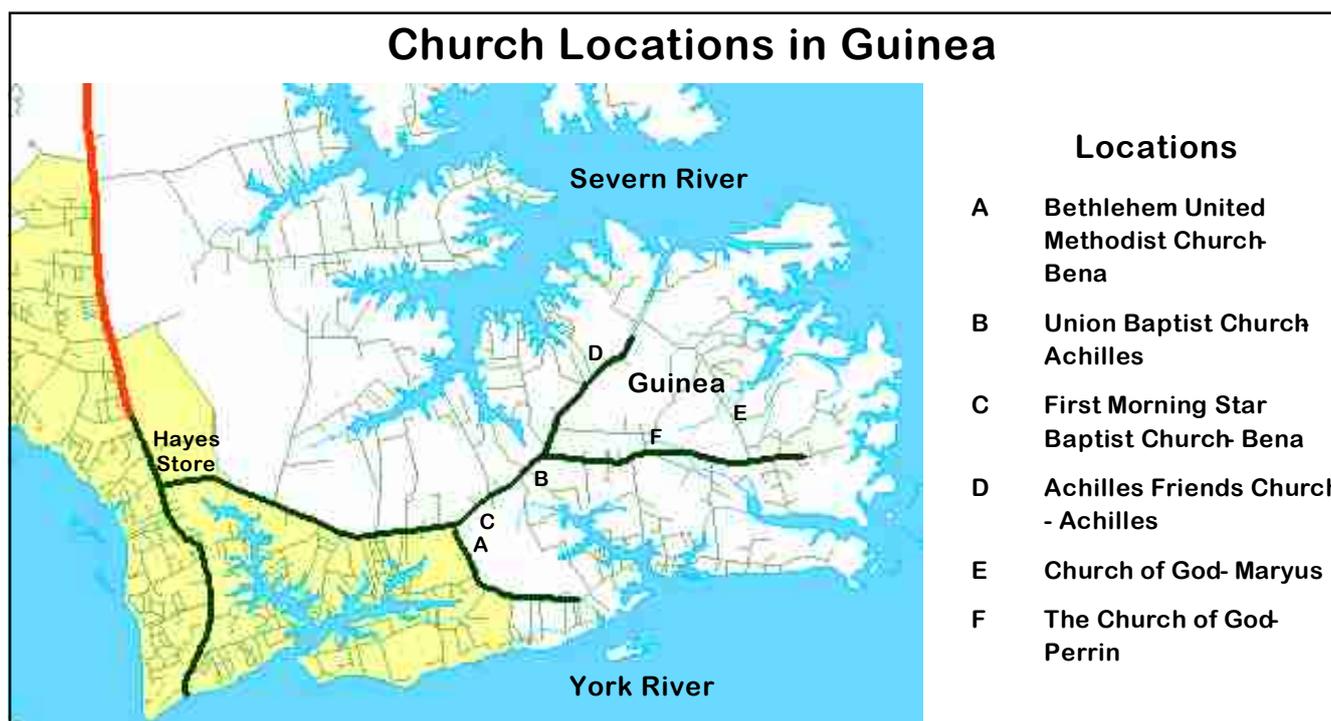
**Church of God  
Maryus**



**The Church of God  
Perrin**

## Churches of Guinea

The purpose of this article is to give an overview of the churches that served Guinea and sustained their ministries to the present. There is a definite inter-relationship in the history of Guinea community and the history of the Guinea churches. Each has affected the other, and the life and accomplishments cannot be separated in describing the moral character of this distinctly defined community. The history of Guinea churches is typical of most other communities of the USA, and the Bethlehem and Union churches are typical of the best of their respective denominations. Also, typical in the Guinea community was the church movement where the Afro-Americans started their separate churches and other independent church groups branched from the major denominations. The viability and survival of each vindicate the cause that produced them. Their buildings are memorials to those that worked to launch them and those that sustained them.



### The Colonial Church

During the colonial era the only legal church was the Anglican Church of England, and Gloucester County was divided into four parishes: Abingdon, Ware, Petsworth, and Kingston. Soon after the Revolutionary War, Kingston Parish became the separate county of Mathews. Although the churches of the Virginia Colony were officially under the authority of the Church of England and attached to the English government of the Virginia Colony, the actual religious convictions and church loyalty of the various settlers was tempered by the fact that many had come to the Virginia Colony to escape the dictates of the Church and the extreme difficulties to survive often took priority over the strict laws of England and the Church. A further evidence of this independent spirit was that three of the four parish churches of Gloucester survived the war or were able to reorganize as the Episcopal Church following the War. This stands in contrast to many parishes where the colonial church was so closely tied to the colonial government that they were considered part of the enemy and did not survive.

Typical Virginia parishes established central locations for their meeting houses, but they also used other meeting places located for the convenience of their people. It is

## *Churches of Guinea*

reasonable to assume that some worship services would have been held in the southern end of the Abingdon Parish and possibly within the Guinea community at places established by the church or in private chapels. (No such locations have been documented to the knowledge of the author.) There is no way to characterize the typical spiritual attitude of the colonial parishioner, but the strongest statement of personal dedication to biblical Christianity known to the author was that of John Page of Rosewell in his message to his son, Matthew, in the preface to a book given him. <sup>1</sup>

I herewith present you a New Year's Gift, wherein you may observe the excellency of Scripture learning, which I desire you may read, mark, and learn, that you may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which God hath given you in the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ. You will, in this little book, see what you are by nature, born in sin, having in you an original pravity, indisposition to good, and proneness to evil. There is also taught you that Christ, by his death, vanquished death, as himself saith, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Therefore endeavor that Christ's death may become effectual to your soul, that you may rise from the death of sin to righteousness of life. Keep yourself from sin, and pray that you may live an heavenly conversation on earth; that after death eternal glory may be your portion. Set not lightly by my gift, but esteem those fatherly instructions above earthly riches. Consider the dignity of your soul and let no time slip whereby you may, with God's assistance, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. I pray God bless you, and give his blessing to what I have written for your everlasting happiness, which is the prayer of

Your truly loving father.

John Page <sup>1</sup>

It is important to remember that during this colonial era, the church provided an important function for the colonial government. The official sacraments of the church and the registry that recorded these events furnished the government with the vital statistics of the citizens that they governed. Also, the church provided a network for a line of communication down to the citizens and an opportunity for citizen discipline. Church movements of a rebellious nature were significant in that period leading up to the Revolutionary War. The Methodist movement in Virginia, as in England, strained some rules and regulations of the Church, but it was consistently faithful to remain within the Church evidenced by their loyal support of the Church of England as their only legitimate provider of the Church sacraments. John Wesley did not consent to a separate Methodist Church for America until after the Church of England was removed and no legitimate source of its sacraments were available. The Methodist worked for greater personal holiness within the Church, and the main church regulation that they violated was that their preachers crossed parish lines without permission from church authorities to preach their message. Also, prior to the War, Baptist had established a church in the Kingston parish; and they extended their influence beyond their parish and county and held illegal meetings throughout eastern Virginia.

The American Revolutionary War and the subsequent establishment of the United States of America was definitely one of the greatest events of all history. Eventually, all of the changes that happened were proven to be positive, including the establishment of free religious expression and the dis-establishment of a state religion. In a recent issue of the

## *Churches of Guinea*

journal published by Virginia Historical Society, there is a very good article entitled, “ *The Spiritual Fruits of Revolution - Disestablishment and the Rise of the Virginia Baptists.*”<sup>2</sup> (A similar article could be written about Virginia Methodist for this same time period.) This article presented the historical facts that showed the uniting of the Baptist leadership and the tremendous growth of that movement throughout Virginia. Also, the article explained this success of Baptist upon their political decisions taking advantage of various opportunities. The author accepts this analysis as at least an important factor in explaining these events. However, he would prefer to understand the new church establishment that came to Guinea and all of Virginia as filling a great spiritual vacuum created with the declaration of freedom and the departure of the state -church institution. It is very difficult to imagine all the various emotions felt by the individuals involved. This is where it is dangerous to take a few testimonials and declare them typical of all.

### Methodist

Bethlehem United Methodist Church was established in 1789 as John Wesley, who supported the King of England against the American Revolutionary War, assisted in the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the USA. To satisfy the principle of Apostolic Succession, the first two bishops of the new church, Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke, were ceremonially designated by John Wesley to perform the sacraments and the episcopacy of the new church. Because the basic beliefs and the sacraments of the new church were so similar to that of the colonial church, members were easily assimilated into the new Methodist Episcopal Church. Bethlehem church was located at the southern end of the Methodist circuit that covered all of Gloucester, lower King and Queen County and Mathews County. The church building was located at Bena, which was accessible to Guinea and all of southern Gloucester County.

Bethlehem met at private homes until a meeting house was built in 1829. Earliest Church Trustees were William Leavit, Lewis Hall, Richard Corbin, William R. Stephens, Warner Enos, John Hughes, William Hogg, Robert Thurston, and Edward Gayle. As part of the episcopacy administration, ministers were assigned to the circuits for short terms of a few years at a time. Therefore, ministers rotated frequently and they generally did not establish permanent residency in the community. Earliest ministers included T. J. Baytop (1849-1850), Lemuel Reed (1852, father of Walter Reed), G. M. Robertson (1863), John Tucker (1864), W. G. Hammond (1866), J. L. Shipley (1867), Edward M. Peterson (1868 -1869), J. C. Martin (1870), Oscar Littleton (1874 -1876).<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note the high regard for these men, in that some of the more unusual surnames were given to children of some of the church members. One notable example was J. Hammond Robins, Jr., who actually became a Baptist minister and served in Gloucester.



**Bethlehem Methodist Church  
Bena, Virginia**

## *Churches of Guinea*

Bethlehem built their new church building in 1870 and gave the old building to the newly established church for the freed slaves after the Civil War. By 1890, Bethlehem had two Sunday School locations and occasional preaching services at Gloucester Point and in Robins Neck. Eventually, these became the Bethany and Oak Grove Churches. About 1930, Oak Grove was discontinued, and its members were added to the Bethany Church, which flourished in the more populated Gloucester Point area. The next closest Methodist church was established in the modern era at Ordinary as the Susanna Wesley United Methodist Church.<sup>3</sup> The establishment of these other churches left the Bethlehem Church as the Methodist Church for the citizens of Guinea.

### Baptist

The Baptist church formed without establishing any new doctrines that were not delineated by the Thirty-nine Articles of Faith of the colonial church, except those doctrines associated with sacrament and the administration of the church affairs. One of the primary emphases of the Baptist church was the outlawing of a state church, and that was vindicated by the war and in the establishment of a new and unique nation. Therefore, those willing to give up the infant baptism and the episcopacy rule of the church could readily adapt to that previously dissenting group of Baptist.

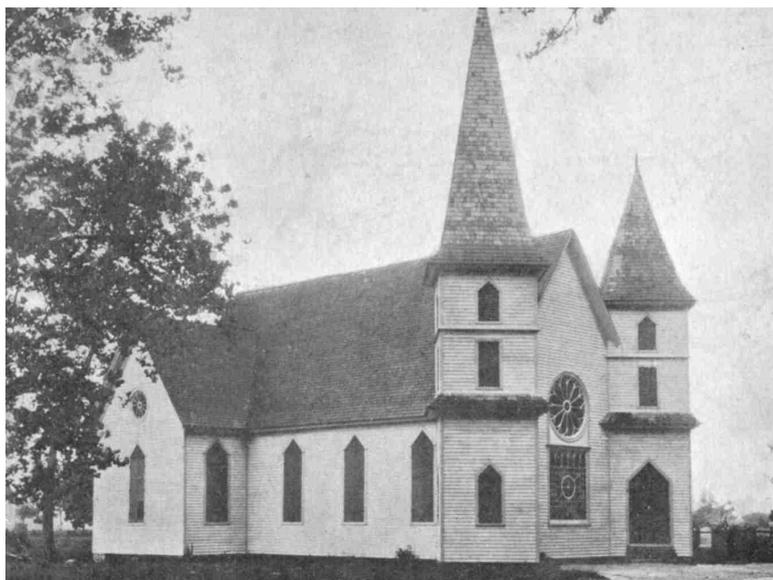
Iverson Lewis, a prosperous gentleman of King and Queen County near the Exol Swamp, was a pious Anglican who was converted to the Baptist position. He was a grandson of Abraham Iveson who served as vestryman in the Ware Parish in 1704. About 1772, Mr. Lewis was involved in starting the first Baptist churches in his county and in the adjoining county of Middlesex. He then convinced his cousins of the prominent Hudgins family of the Kingston parish to establish the Kingston (Mathews) Baptist Church in 1775. Later about 1790 he worked with Robert Hudgins to start the old Petsworth Baptist Church that used the deserted meeting house of the colonial church. This church disbanded in about 1852 and the members joined the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Lewis Peyton Little states in his book the following: "When Ivison Lewis first preached in the lower end of Gloucester County, in that part which is sometimes called 'Guinea,' we are told that: 'He met with violent opposition from individuals; but treating them with levity and meekness he soon made many of them as friends as they had been hostile.' (Semple's History, 1810, p. 128.)" Semple's History also states that in 1801 the Abingdon Church was constituted; this was the Union Baptist Church at Achilles.<sup>4</sup>

In the Baptist tradition, many of the pastors that served Union Church and the Guinea community were native to Gloucester or settled in Gloucester for a lifetime dedicated to the betterment of the entire county. In the early 1800s, Elder Henry Mouring, a Gloucester native, served as pastor for many years, and his children married other Guinea natives and continued to serve as leaders in the Union Church. Elder William E. Wiatt, who grew up in the central part of Gloucester, came as pastor of Union about 1854. He began as a schoolteacher, and eventually served as Gloucester's first superintendent of schools and as county surveyor while he served as pastor of most Baptist churches of the county. When the Civil War began, he and most of the other men of the church enlisted in the 26<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry at Gloucester Point. He was elected chaplain and served throughout the war in that position. His wife died during the war, and he married Nannie Heywood, a member of Union Church. Another schoolteacher and Baptist pastor, R. A. Folkes, came to Union in 1890, and he contributed greatly to the church and to the education of the Guinea community. Later he continued his service to Gloucester, serving as county surveyor and superintendent of schools.<sup>5</sup>

## *Churches of Guinea*

Who were the members of Union? The published cemetery records indicate that there are 276 graves at the church cemetery. Counting the graves by surname provides the following count: Rowe, 36; Hogge, 33; Thomas, 28; Shackelford, 21; Jenkins, 19; and West, 19. The missing Guinea surnames were probably non-Baptist. <sup>6</sup>

During the first half of the twentieth century, Union Baptist Church was greatly blessed by God and experienced great growth and advancement. They became known as the largest rural Baptist church in the state, and Pastor Deibert reported in 1939 that over half of



**Union Baptist Church  
Achilles, Virginia**

the residents of Guinea were members of the church. Union kept in step with modern trends and methods of ministry that were so successful throughout their denomination that were experiencing unprecedented growth and expansion. The numbers of people active in their service and educational programs would make our modern Gloucester churches envious. During these years, as well as the previous, many of the church members answered the call to ministry beyond the Guinea community serving as missionaries and pastors. This includes Cornelia Thornton who volunteered to serve as a military nurse in the WWI and was honored as the first casualty of that dedicated group. <sup>5</sup>

In more recent years, Union Church joined the association of Baptist churches of the Lower Peninsula. Two Union pastors, David C. Anderson (1945) and George M. Kissinger (1949), came to Union from the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, IL. <sup>5</sup> They made solid spiritual contributions to the church and built upon the good foundation that existed there. When Pastor Anderson and Kissinger left Union, they took additional leadership positions in the Peninsula Baptist Association and contributed greatly to the spiritual and social programs of the entire association during latter half of the twentieth century.

### **Separate and Independent Church Ministries**

The end of the Civil War brought major changes to the Guinea churches. Previously, the Afro-Americans, slaves or free, were included within the churches under the leadership of the white membership. After the declaration of freedom for all, the Baptist Association instructed the local churches to grant a release of the Afro-American members when they showed the ability to administer their own churches. Although each Baptist church was autonomous, this was done in Guinea and all of Virginia. The guidance and oversight of the Union Church for the new Afro-American church was consistent with Baptist tradition in fostering new churches. Prior to the war, the number Afro-American members of Union Church was substantially more than the white membership. These would have come from the regions beyond the strict Guinea boundaries, which included only that land inhabited by watermen. Generally, the slave owner list did not include the watermen of Guinea.

## Churches of Guinea

Therefore, the First Morning Star Baptist Church of Bena was constituted in 1868 although they had met together in the Union Baptist Church building as early as the summer of 1865. The first pastor was Rev. William Thomas, a native of York County, and he ministered from 1868 to 1903. The second pastor, Rev. Fauntleroy, was minister in 1904. He was also a carpenter, and in 1904, he was instrumental in erection of a new building located adjacent to the original building donated by the Methodist in 1870. In 1993, the family of James Tonkins, Jr., donated funds toward a college scholarship fund. Mr. Tonkins was the principal of the Bena Elementary School for Afro-Americans located next of the church. (See monument inscription in right inset.) <sup>7</sup>

ERECTED BY THE  
RAPPAHANNOCK  
UNION BAPTIST  
SUNDAY SCHOOL  
CONVENTION  
IN MEMORY OF  
J. L. TONKINS  
SECRETARY AND TEACHER  
DECEMBER 25, 1850  
FEBRUARY 22, 1899  
HOME AT LAST  
IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES  
WHO WERE ONCE BURIED IN  
CAPTAIN TOOTER'S CEMETERY

The Achilles Friends Church was established in 1899 as a result of the missionary efforts of the Ohio Evangelical. They were associated with numerous Friends churches throughout Tidewater Virginia that were the results of revival campaigns near the close of the nineteenth century. They emphasized an interpretation of John Wesley's teaching on a second work of perfecting grace. Their story was presented in an earlier issue of FTS, Vol. 3, No. 1, June 1999, pp. 24-29. They built their church on the Severn River side of the Guinea circle. The church cemetery includes a good representation of Guinea surnames.

Additional Christian ministries were established around the Guinea circle. The St. Andrews Mission was sponsored by the Abingdon and Ware Episcopal Churches from 1937 to 1952. Two women workers lived on the second floor of the mission and ministered to the children and their parents of the community. The mission chapel was known as the Chapel at Maryus, and other church groups were allowed to use the chapel for their activities. During this period, other ministers held tent meetings in the area and later constructed buildings for their services. The two Church of God buildings at Maryus and Perrin resulted from these efforts. Leaders of these churches included Andrew C. Williams, James F. and Martha Smith, M. Healy and Alice Jenkins, Johnny Heywood, and Walter Kellum. These smaller churches ministered in the heart of Guinea, while the major denominational churches ministered to the larger Guinea Neck and beyond. Overall the churches serving Guinea have shown themselves to be the "salt of the earth" as ascribed by Scripture. <sup>8</sup>

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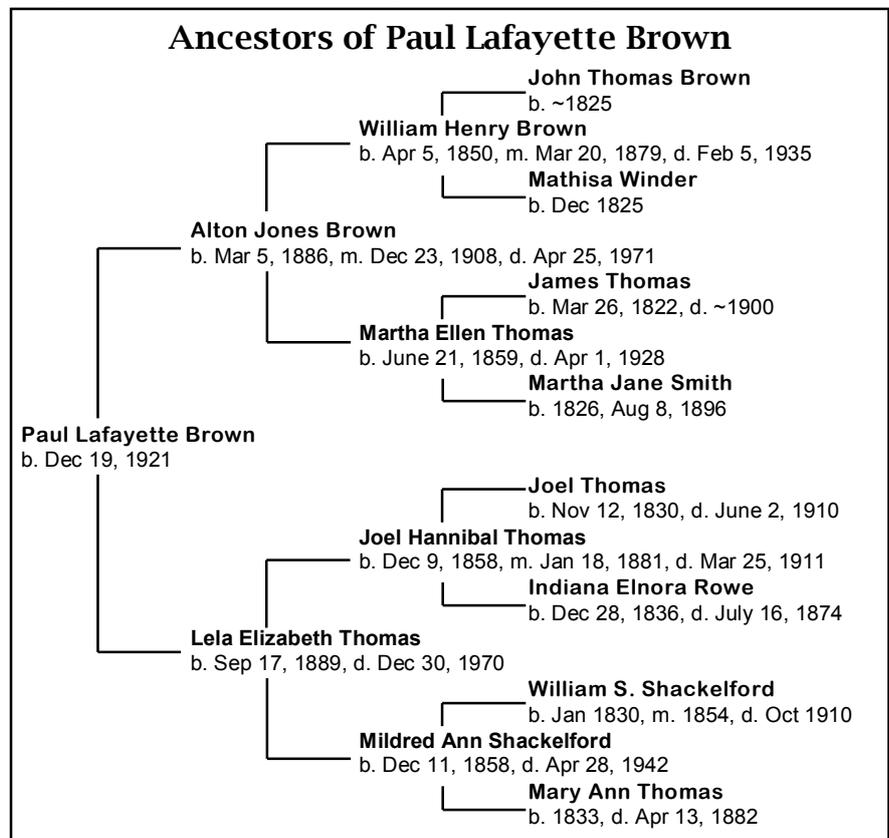
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- 2 "The Spiritual Fruits of Revolution - Disestablishment and the Rise of the Virginia Baptists." The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography Volume 109, Number 2, 2001. Virginia Historical Society.
- 3 The History of Bethlehem United Methodist Church, Bena, VA. 19??.
- 4 Little, Lewis Peyton: Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia . p. 453. J. P. Bell Co., Inc., Lynchburg, Va., 1938.
- 5 The History of Union Baptist Church, Achilles, Va., 1976.
- 6 Jordan, Harry R.: Cemeteries of Lower Gloucester, VA.
- 7 130th Anniversary Celebration of First Morning Star Baptist Church, Bena, Va, July 12, 1998. Provided by Mrs. Evelyn S. Wright..
- 8 Researched by Nan Belvin McCumber for Guinea Heritage Scrap Book.

# Guinea Tidbits

by Paul Lafayette Brown

1. The Guinea Road was black -topped in the 1930s.
2. The electric line came to Guinea in the 1930s.
3. The Achilles High School & Elementary School was dedicated on November 14 , 1924.
4. Sterling Rowe, Jesse Thomas, and William Shackelford, my grandparents, were all merchants.
5. Elmer Robins and Bob Rowe were barbers at Achilles in the 1930s, and haircuts were 25 cents each.
6. Bena Post Office was named for a lady.
7. Mama used to buy kale from Mrs. Fanny Smith for 15 cents a mess
8. My third Great-Grandfather Aaron Belvin fought in the Battle of Brandywine in the Revolutionary War. His mother had four other sons serving at the same time, Robert, Lewis, George, and William.
9. The Severn Wharf Road at Achilles was built in 1860.
10. The Achilles Friends Church was built in 1900, and Mr. Wash Smith was one of the carpenters.
11. Route 1103 was widened and given to the State of Virginia by my Papa, Alton J. Brown, Sr. on July 22, 1936.
12. Achilles Post Office was named for Achilles Rowe, my cousin.
13. Garnett Rowe used to make caskets at Achilles and was once undertaker for Guinea.
14. I used to mow the Union Church Cemetery lawn with a push mower.
15. Decatur Belvin's boat, the "Alice & Annie" was built in Papa's yard.
16. The Sioux Tribe of the Order of Red Men #9 was organized in 1905 at Achilles.
17. The slaves Dick Green and Coleman Bell were owned by Warner Hogge and William Robins,



## *Guinea Tidbits*

respectively.

18. Aunt Bunchie Thomas wore her shoes on the opposite foot every other day to keep them from wearing out quickly.
19. All of Mama and Papa's children were born at Grandma Thomas' in the bedroom downstairs, except Ann and I, who were born at Perrin.
20. Mr. Bob Rowe sold homemade ice cream door-to-door - you took your bowl to the gate and bought the amount wanted.
21. There have been four schools at Achilles.
22. Percy Robins sold beef door-to-door from his truck.
23. My Uncle Willie Brown died of pneumonia in France while serving in World War I and is buried there.
24. Two of the oldest houses in Guinea are Ralph Rowe's house (known to us as the Ira Brown house) and Levi Thomas' house (known to us as the Little Eddie King place).
25. The first person buried at the Union Church Cemetery was Ralph Rowe, the child of Bannister & Missouri Rowe.
26. In 1870, the family of John Thomas set aside land to be used for the Thomas Cemetery of Severn, as a burying ground for family and other Guinea residents.
27. The Chapel at Maryus was a branch of Union Baptist Church. It was founded in 1895. The land for the chapel was given by Mr. Thomas Hogge. It was closed about 1930 when transportation to the Union became easier.
28. Miss Alice J. Thornton and her brother Meaux Thornton were the first teachers at Achilles School.
29. Wilbur Templeman opened his barber shop at Bena after graduating from Barber School in 1948.
30. When the electric line came to Guinea in the 1930s, Grandma Thomas had her grandson Buster to wire her house. Each room and porch had a pull chain in the center. The day the electricity was connected, I went to the store and didn't get home until almost dark. Grandma had the old oil lamp lit in the kitchen. I asked her why she didn't pull the chain and turn the lights on. She said, "I wanted you to be the first to turn it on." I did, and the whole kitchen lit up. We were so proud to have electricity. Grandma called it, "Lectic."
31. Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States when Union Baptist Church was formed.
32. Uncle Ben Rowe bought 550 acres of land in 1880 for \$2,400. The land extended from Banister Rowe's of Sedgy Creek to Jenkins Neck.
33. Severn Post Office used to be at Hammond Robins' Corner.
34. In the Gloucester Court records of May 1860, the following stores in Guinea were given licenses to sell ardent spirits: Warner Hogg, Edward H. Rowe, Sterling Rowe, John F. Rowe, and Jesse Thomas. Sometime later, Grandpa William Shackelford sold whiskey at Severn.
35. In 1782, G-grandpa Aaron Belvin owned 47 acres of land, 2 slaves, 3 horses, and 8 cattle.
36. I find in the Gloucester Court Records of 1835, mention of Guinea as a location of the store of Joel Hayes who was given license to sell ardent spirits.
37. The year the Bethlehem United Methodist Church of Bena was formed, George Washington was President of the United States.

## William McKinley Smith Waterman and Carver of Ducks

By Beth Maxwell\*

William McKinley Smith (born April 4, 1897 and died June 10, 1986), was a son of Elias Smith and Rebecca Lee Smith. He was born, raised, and lived his entire life in Naxera, located in Robins Neck, Gloucester County, Virginia. His only brother, Johnny, died at a young age of blood poisoning.

On Christmas Day, 1920, McKinley married Carrie Pearl West, daughter of Jack and Carrie Elizabeth West, of Guinea. Together they had seventeen children, thirteen of whom lived to maturity.

McKinley was a waterman and a veteran of World War I. In his favorite boat, "Shamrock," a 43' deadrise, he plied the local waters for clams, crabs, fish, and oysters, to provide for his large family.

McKinley was an avid duck carver. His decoys can be found all over the world - in professional offices in Gloucester County as well as in private collections in states all across America, and overseas in places such as Vietnam. Though he often would carve seagulls and songbirds for relatives, he is most widely known for his duck decoys.

He preferred using balsam wood for his carvings, which have numbered into the hundreds. When he could find it, he would use buttonball, also known as buttonwood.

Earlier this year (2002), Ducks Unlimited chose one of his ducks as a prize in a fund-raising raffle. Locally, Mrs. Elsie Dame has perhaps one of the finest collections of Mr. Smith's work.

According to his family, McKinley's greatest joys in life were hunting, fishing, and raising his family. He never had a driver's license; he depended upon the waterways for travel. After Mr. Burke's store at Selden closed, he would take his boat to Maryus to go shopping for groceries and supplies at Roland Shackelford's store, an hour's boat-ride from his home.

He was a quiet man, and he left behind a lasting legacy for his children, most of whom still live in Gloucester County. They all have worked on the river, just as their father did.

William McKinley Smith and Carrie Pearl West Smith were laid to rest in Oak Grove Cemetery, located near the Selden Store in Robins Neck. His contributions to the crafts of Guinea will be long remembered.

\* *From conversations with Susie Smith Miller and Adelaide Dutton Smith*

## Bronze Star for Heroism Awarded to Alfred V. Belvin

by L. Roane Hunt

On December 20, 1944, Alfred V. Belvin, MM3c(T), saved his ship by means of what the navy officially termed “a weird contraption.” He was the son of Horace G. Belvin and Mary Ellen Davis of Gloucester. His paternal grandparents were Decator Lee Belvin and Harriett Susan Shackelford, and his maternal grandparents were Isaac L. Davis and Susie Jane West. He grew up along the York River where his father did maintenance work on the refrigeration equipment for the Yorktown Ice & Storage Co. As a youngster he experimented with deepwater diving in a homemade helmet contrived of whatever was at hand. He turned this experience to good account during the war to save his ship. His recommendation for the BRONZE STAR MEDAL described his action with the following statements:



1. On 20 December 1944, while proceeding from Kossol Passage, Palau Islands , the U.S.S. BOULDER VICTORY (AK-227) sustained damage the result of an underwater explosion. The ship was loaded with approximately 7000 tons of ammunition cargo, approximately 2400 tons of which were in number three hold, where the explosion occurred.
2. It was necessary to determine the extent of the damage as soon as possible, although there were no qualified divers in the area. On the day following the explosion, BELVIN, Alfred Vernon, MM3c(T), V-6, USNR(SV), improvised a diving helmet, entirely on his own initiative. The plans and specifications, design, and manufacture were completed by him without any assistance or suggestions. The diving helmet was made of a five gallon can, bronze strips, lead solder, a 1/2-inch oxygen hose, and a bicycle pump. Upon completion of the helmet, BELVIN, Alfred Vernon, volunteered, without orders, to investigate the nature and extent of the damage. This act was out of the usual run of duty.
3. In the opinion of the Commanding Officer, the performance of duty by the subject named man is deserving of special commendation for the exceptional initiative, judgment, and courage shown in accomplishing this important and somewhat hazardous task. The task was particularly arduous and disagreeable due to the presence of a six -inch thickness of fuel oil on the water.
4. The subject named man is considered worthy of advancement to MM1c(T) for his meritorious service. He is fully qualified in all respects to fill the higher rate.

Following his exploratory dive, Alfred was credited to have “contrived additional ‘weird contraptions’ of like material, which were worn by other men who repaired the ships damage.”

Alfred Belvin was a quiet, friendly man that was most comfortable standing in the background, but he demonstrated the ability to step forward to meet the usual challenge at sea, typical to the “Guinea Waterman Heritage.”

## Smith R. Carmine and William P. Oliver

By Sylvia Lane Oliver Rowe

In keeping with the theme for our Journal, "Fields of Guinea," I would like to mention that many of Gloucester's illustrious and colorful Guineamen had their origins from the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Many families visited "by boat" from the "shore" to Gloucester and vice-versa. Some of these names you will recognize as Marshall, West, Bonnaville (Bonniwell), Kellum, Jenkins (Ever heard the tale of " Jenkin's Ear?"), White, Cox, and Carmine who is my ancestor on my mother's side.

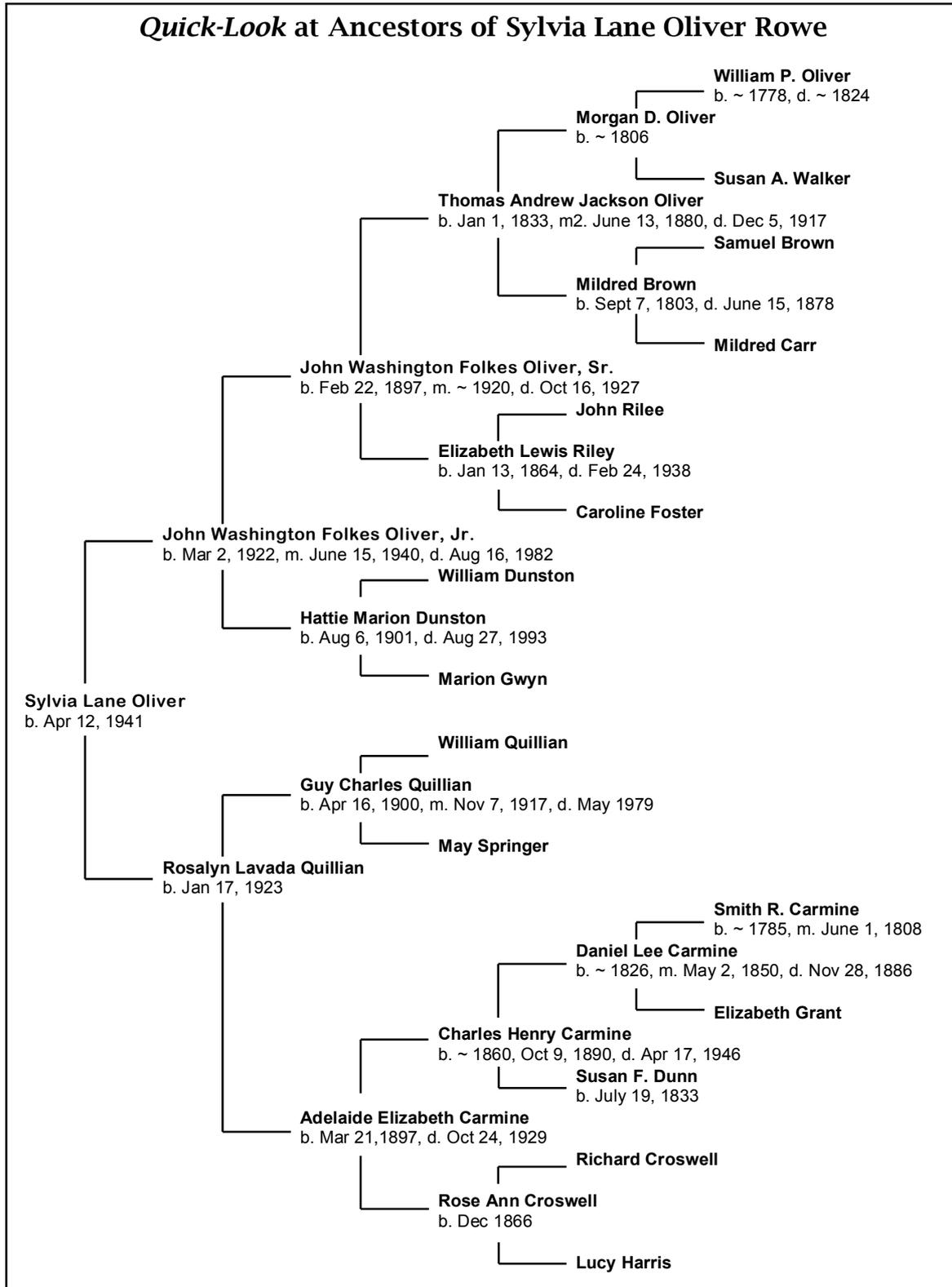
The earliest mention of a Carmine in Virginia comes from the "Muster and Pay Rolls of the War of the Revolution, 1775-1783" which indicate that a claim was settled with one Jeremiah Carmine for service during the entire war. Another directory at the Library of Congress indicates that Jeremiah was born in the 1740's.

The most colorful of my ancestors may have been a pirate! Donald Shomette's book, Pirates on the Chesapeake, printed in 1985 described Smith and a cohort as "Picaroons: Smith Carmine and Zorababel Maddox infested the region in 1777" (near Watt's Island). The story goes that Captain Alexander Gordon ran his ship aground near the Pocomoke River and were descended upon by two locally known "Tory Villains," Smith Carmine and Zorababel Maddox. They helped themselves to a hoghead of molasses and ten barrels of salt, and they continued their villainery until 1781. It was said that Zorababel was caught, but Smith knew the tides and currents better so when close to capture he hid his boat in a cove and waited for the tide to drift him across an island to freedom. That's probably why I am here today to tell the tale! Avast! Ye Maties! A true American!

The next mention of Carmine in Virginia comes from the 1787 Census of Virginia document that was compiled by the state of Virginia using tax records of the time. This was necessitated by the fact that the original U. S. Census of 1790 was destroyed by fire during the War of 1812, and what remained was missing about half the Virginia counties including Northampton and Accomac. The 1787 version include John Carmine of Accomac and William Carmine of Northampton. The 1810 Virginia Census listed one Carmine: Smith Carmine of Accomac. Then, The 1820 Virginia Census lists James, John, and William Carmine of Accomac and a William Carmine in Northampton.

Although the Eastern Shore of Virginia have all their records from the time the county was formed, it is very difficult to "connect" in making a straight line of descendancy. What I do know for sure is that Smith R. Carmine of Onancock purchased this now very valuable piece of real estate from Solomon Foxwell who also came to Gloucester from the Accomac. When the island changed hands it was called Foxwell's Island; it then became Carmine's Island and remains so today. The island is located at the head of Timberneck Creek on the York River almost directly across from Cheatham Annex.

It appears that the Olivers were in the county from its conception (1652), however, due to "burned records" direct lines from my third-great-grandfather to them has not been fruitful and will probably always be a "brick wall." My Oliver line from my father, John Folkes Oliver, also has Carmine's Island connections. It seems that his great -grandfather, Morgan D. Oliver, lived on the island when his oldest son, Washington Jefferson Henry Oliver was born. Morgan's father, William P. Oliver, owned about 15 acres in Piney Swamp



(Ordinary) and when he died he bequeathed it to Morgan and his brother, William P. Oliver. Morgan sold his share in the property and in 1861 William's son, Augustine, eventually sold the parcel to Anthony T. Dixon, a merchant.

***Detailed-Look at Ancestors of Sylvia Lane Oliver Rowe***

DESCENDANTS OF SMITH R. CARMINE AND ELIZABETH GRANT

First Generation:

1. SMITH R.<sup>1</sup> CARMINE was probably born about 1785 in Onancock, Accomac, VA; the Gloucester Personal Property Tax Book lists him as deceased in 1843. He married ELIZABETH GRANT, daughter of JOHN GRANT, was born in Accomac, VA, and was deceased before 1840. They were married on June 1, 1808 in Accomac.

Children of SMITH CARMINE and ELIZABETH GRANT are:

- i. NANCY ANN CARMINE, b. Abt. 1809, Accomac, VA.
- ii. NANCY L. "ANN" CARMINE, b. Abt. 1812.
- iii. SARAH "SALLY" CARMINE, b. Abt. 1819.
- iv. ELIZABETH CARMINE, b. Abt. 1823; d. September 25, 1889.
- v. DANIEL LEE<sup>2</sup> CARMINE, b. Abt. 1826, Carmines Island, Wicomico, VA; d. November 28, 1886, Wicomico, Va.
- vi. JAMES MITCHELL CARMINE, b. Abt. 1832, Gloucester Co, VA; d. Aft. June 01, 1900.
- vii. SMITH CARMINE, d. Bef. 1850.

Second Generation:

2. DANIEL LEE<sup>2</sup> CARMINE (*SMITH R.1*) was born Abt. 1826 in Carmines Island, Wicomico, VA, and died November 28, 1886 in Wicomico, Va.. He married SUSAN F. DUNN May 02, 1850 in Gloucester, VA. She was born July 19, 1833 in Mathews, VA, and died Aft. September 07, 1903 in Gloucester, Va.

Daniel served in the Civil War as attested to a plea for a widow's pension by Susan on 7 Sept 1903. She stated the attending physician of D. L. Carmines at his death was Dr. Willie T. Seawell who was now dead. Also, that Daniel died of "congestive chill." Witnesses were J. M Carmines and Wm. Hogg who served with him in the Civil War. Signed: Capt. Wm. Teagle, 1st. Lieut. John Hall, 2nd. Lt. Zach. Dews.

Children of DANIEL CARMINE and SUSAN DUNN are:

- i. SARAH ELIZABETH CARMINE, b. Abt. 1851.
- ii. ADELAIDE CARMINE, b. Abt. 1853.
- iii. INDIANA CARMINE, b. 1853; d. March 17, 1853
- iv. LEMUEL JAMES CARMINE, b. Abt. 1857.
- v. CHARLES HENRY<sup>3</sup> CARMINE, b. Abt. 1860, Gloucester, VA; d. April 17, 1947, Eastern Shore, VA.
- vi. SMITH R. CARMINE, b. Abt. 1861; d. September 1865, Gloucester, VA.
- vii. ROXANNA A. "CANDY" CARMINE, b. January 1865; d. Abt. 1919, Gloucester, VA.
- viii. JOHN EDWARD GRANT CARMINE, b. October 08, 1868; d. May 06, 1923, Gloucester, Va.
- ix. IDA LEE CARMINE, b. 1871; d. 1970
- x. WALTER LEE CARMINE, b. October 1879

*Smith R. Carmine and William P. Oliver*

Third Generation:

3. CHARLES HENRY<sup>3</sup> CARMINE (*DANIEL LEE<sup>2</sup>, SMITH R.1*) was born Abt. 1860 in Gloucester Co, VA, and died April 17, 1947 in Eastern Shore, Va. He married ROSA ANN CROSWELL October 09, 1890 in F. H. Hall, Gloucester, VA, daughter of RICHARD CROSWELL and LUCY HARRIS. She was born December 1866 in Gloucester, VA.

Children of CHARLES CARMINE and ROSA CROSWELL are:

- i. RICHARD SIDNEY<sup>4</sup> CARMINE, b. February 1892.
- ii. ROSALIE CARMINE, b. Abt. 1893, Gloucester, Va.
- iii. POWELL HORACE CARMINE, b. January 11, 1895; d. December 23, 1952
- iv. ADELAIDE ELIZABETH<sup>4</sup> CARMINE, b. March 21, 1897, Wicomico, Va.; d. October 24, 1929, Blue Ridge Sanatorium, Charlottesville, Va.
- v. CHARLES HENRY CARMINE, JR., b. April 25, 1900; d. November 12, 1986, Gloucester, Va.

Fourth Generation:

4. ADELAIDE ELIZABETH<sup>4</sup> CARMINE (*CHARLES HENRY<sup>3</sup>, DANIEL LEE<sup>2</sup>, SMITH R.1*) was born March 21, 1897 in Wicomico, VA., and died on October 24, 1929 in Blue Ridge Sanatorium, Charlottesville, VA. She married GUY CHARLES QUILLIAN November 07, 1917 in R. A. Folkes, Gloucester, VA, son of WILLIAM QUILLIAN and MAY SPRINGER. He was born April 16, 1900 in Dalton, GA, and died May 1979 in Gloucester, VA.

Children of ADELAIDE CARMINE and GUY QUILLIAN are:

- i. CHARLES LAKE<sup>5</sup> QUILLIAN, b. March 11, 1919; d. November 21, 2000, TX.
- ii. ROSALYN LAVADA<sup>5</sup> QUILLIAN, b. January 17, 1923, Lanexa, VA..
- iii. SYLVIA MAY QUILLIAN, b. Abt. 1925.
- iv. ANNIE LOU QUILLIAN, b. Abt. 1927.
- v. MINNIE JEWEL QUILLIAN, b. April 17, 1928, Wicomico, Gloucester, VA.

Fifth Generation:

5. ROSALYN LAVADA<sup>5</sup> QUILLIAN (*ADELAIDE ELIZABETH<sup>4</sup> CARMINE, CHARLES HENRY<sup>3</sup>, DANIEL LEE<sup>2</sup>, SMITH R.1*) was born January 17, 1923 in Lanexa, VA.. She married JOHN FOLKES OLIVER, JR. June 15, 1940 in Gloucester, VA, son of JOHN WASHINGTON FOLKES OLIVER and HATTIE MARION DUNSTON. He was born March 02, 1922, and died August 16, 1982 . "John F." served in the United States Navy in 1944. He said he got in line to join the Army and came out in the Navy, however, a back injury during basic training shortened that career. His career line then followed that of his father's, carpenter.

Children of ROSALYN QUILLIAN and JOHN OLIVER are:

- i. SYLVIA LANE<sup>6</sup> OLIVER, b. April 12, 1941, Wicomico, VA.
- ii. JOHN BEVERLEY OLIVER
- iii. JEAN CARMEN OLIVER
- iv. GRANVILLE LEE OLIVER
- v. CHARLES FOLKES OLIVER
- vi. CRYSTAL LAVADA OLIVER.

*Smith R. Carmine and William P. Oliver*

Sixth Generation:

6. SYLVIA LANE<sup>6</sup> OLIVER (*ROSALYN LAVADA<sup>5</sup> QUILLIAN, ADELAIDE ELIZABETH<sup>4</sup> CARMINE, CHARLES HENRY<sup>3</sup>, DANIEL LEE<sup>2</sup>, SMITH R.<sup>1</sup>*) was born April 12, 1941 in Wicomico, VA. She married LINWOOD FRANKLIN ROWE, SR. June 18, 1960 in Beech Grove Baptist Church, Coke, VA, son of SAMUEL F. ROWE and LADY VIRGINIA WEST. He was born April 07, 1939 in Broad Marsh, Glass, Gloucester, VA.

Children of SYLVIA OLIVER and LINWOOD ROWE are:

- i. TINA LYNN ROWE
- ii. JEAN DESIREE ROWE,
- iii. LINWOOD FRANKLIN ROWE II

And the Seventh Generation consists of my seven grandchildren, Jessica and Rebecca Backes (children of Tina and John Backes); Sarah, Leilah, and Adam Bennajma (children of Jean and Khalid Bennajma); April and Kenneth Rowe (children of Linwood, II and Donna), the "jewels in my crown."

DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM P. OLIVER AND SUSAN A. WALKER

First Generation:

1. WILLIAM P.<sup>1</sup> OLIVER was born Abt. 1778, and died Abt. 1824. He married SUSAN A. WALKER.

Children of WILLIAM OLIVER and SUSAN WALKER are:

- i. WILLIAM POWELL OLIVER, b. Abt. 1804; d. 1836.
- ii. MORGAN D.<sup>2</sup> OLIVER, b. Abt. 1806; d. Bet. 1842 - 1844, Gloucester, Va.
- iii. THOMAS SAMPSON OLIVER, b. Abt. 1812; d. May 18, 1858, Gloucester, Va.
- iv. MARIA JANE OLIVER, b. Abt. 1818; d. Abt. 1880, Gloucester, Va.
- v. JAMES OLIVER, b. Abt. 1820.
- vi. JOHN OLIVER, b. Abt. 1820.

Second Generation:

2. MORGAN D.<sup>2</sup> OLIVER (*WILLIAM P.<sup>1</sup>*) was born Abt. 1806, and died Bet. 1842 - 1844 in Gloucester, VA. He married MILDRED BROWN Abt. 1828, daughter of SAMUEL BROWN and MILDRED CARR. She was born September 07, 1803 in King and Queen, Va, and died June 15, 1878 in Coke, VA. After Morgan's death, Mildred married Regault Oliver, born about 1810. He died of smallpox in New York on June 15, 1854.

Children of MORGAN OLIVER and MILDRED BROWN are:

- i. WASHINGTON JEFFERSON HENRY OLIVER, b. December 13, 1829, Carmine's Island, Wicomico, Gloucester, VA; d. June 05, 1895, Coke, Gloucester, VA.
- ii. THOMAS ANDREW JACKSON<sup>3</sup> OLIVER, b. January 01, 1833, "Hickory Fork", White Marsh, Gloucester, VA; d. December 05, 1917, Coke, Gloucester, VA.
- iii. MORGAN D. OLIVER, JR., b. July 25, 1836; d. Bef. 1850.
- iv. ROBERT OLIVER, b. 1840; d. Bef. 1850.
- v. WILLIAM HANNESON OLIVER, b. 1842; d. Bef. 1850.

*Smith R. Carmine and William P. Oliver*

Children of REGAULT OLIVER AND MILDRED BROWN are:

- i. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN OLIVER, b. February 20, 1845
- ii. JAMES W. OLIVER, b. ca 1848

Third Generation:

3. THOMAS ANDREW JACKSON<sup>3</sup> OLIVER (*MORGAN D.2, WILLIAM P.1*) was born January 01, 1833 at "Hickory Fork," White Marsh, Gloucester, VA, and died December 05, 1917 in Beech Grove Cemetery, Coke, Gloucester, VA. He married (1) MARY ISABELLA J. LEWIS June 11, 1867, daughter of JOHN LEWIS. She was born 1846 in Baltimore, MD. Although this first marriage, to borrow a phrase from my cousin, Frank Emerson, was one those "times that try men's souls" and ended in divorce in 1871; his second marriage seems to have made up for it. He married (2) ELIZABETH LEWIS RILEY June 13, 1880 in W. E. Wiatt, Gloucester, VA, daughter of JOHN RILEE and CAROLINE FOSTER. She was born January 13, 1864 in Gloucester, VA, and died February 24, 1938 in Coke, Gloucester, Va.

Children of THOMAS OLIVER and MARY LEWIS are:

- i. JAMES THOMAS OLIVER, b. April 05, 1868; d. May 05, 1868.
- ii. ANNIE BELL OLIVER, b. April 05, 1869; d. June 03, 1869.

Children of THOMAS OLIVER and ELIZABETH RILEY are:

- iii. WILLIAM HENRY FRANKLIN OLIVER, b. October 22, 1881; d. October 29, 1926, Coke, Gloucester, VA; m. MINNIE LEE EMERSON, July 12, 1903, Gloucester County, VA; b. October 1881; d. 1968, Coke, Gloucester, Va.
- iv. MARY ELIZABETH OLIVER, b. October 16, 1883; d. December 01, 1972, Gloucester, VA.
- v. SAMUEL JACKSON OLIVER, b. November 22, 1885, Coke, Gloucester, VA; d. February 26, 1963, White Marsh, VA.
- vi. CAROLINE ZIPPORAH OLIVER, b. October 19, 1887; d. 1984.
- vii. HERBERT TAYLOR OLIVER, b. August 01, 1890; d. July 29, 1891.
- viii. REBECCA TAYLOR OLIVER, b. May 29, 1892, Cedar Bush Creek, Gloucester, VA; d. August 22, 1984, Gloucester, VA.
- ix. EDITH ELNORA OLIVER, b. February 16, 1895; d. October 15, 1992, Gloucester, VA.
- x. JOHN WASHINGTON FOLKES<sup>4</sup> OLIVER, b. February 22, 1897, Buxton Hospital, Hampton, VA; d. October 16, 1927, Gloucester, VA.
- xi. LAWRENCE PULLER OLIVER, b. December 20, 1899; d. April 03, 1966, Coke, Gloucester, VA.
- xii. ROLAND HILL OLIVER, b. August 11, 1902; d. August 28, 1988.

Fourth Generation:

4. JOHN WASHINGTON FOLKES<sup>4</sup> OLIVER (*THOMAS ANDREW JACKSON<sup>3</sup>, MORGAN D.2, WILLIAM P.1*) was born February 22, 1897 in Buxton Hospital, Hampton, VA, and died October 16, 1927 Gloucester, VA. He married HATTIE MARION DUNSTON Abt. 1920 in Baltimore, MD, daughter of WILLIAM DUNSTON and MARION GWYN. She was born August 06, 1901, and died August 27, 1993 in Gloucester, VA.

*Smith R. Carmine and William P. Oliver*

Child of JOHN OLIVER and HATTIE DUNSTON is:

- i. JOHN WASHINGTON FOLKES 5 OLIVER, JR., b. March 02, 1922; d. August 16, 1982, in Coke, Gloucester, VA.

**Thomas Andrew Jackson Oliver**

Thomas Andrew Jackson Oliver began transporting oysters to Baltimore in 1864. Later he established a country store at the end of Cedar Bush Road, which was situated on the York River, and offered a deep channel for river commerce which was then transported by him to Baltimore, Maryland, in exchange for stock to be sold in the store. From his ledgers we might say the store was more of a trading post as items such as sugar, salt, firewood, rope, baking powder, and twine were often paid for by exchanging items such as clams, oysters, cow, peas, chickens, sheep, eggs, beans, etc.

He was a member of Providence Baptist church where he served as a deacon for some fifty years. Being a "God fearing man," in keeping with his faith, after moving to Coke he donated the land upon which Beech Grove Baptist Church stands today. He was instrumental in building the church, which started with nine members, and soon developed to seventy-five members. Although the "Oliver Burial Grounds" are on Mr. John Allen's farm in Coke, most of my ancestors have been interred at Beech Grove. He lived his religion, as attested to in his obituary: "His crowning virtue was his charity. His ear and pocket -book were always open to the needy." May the soul of Thomas Andrew Jackson Oliver rest in peace in his Gloucester soil.



**Thomas Oliver & Elizabeth Riley**

## **Gloucester County Records on Microfilm**

In the previous issue of the FTS, we began printing portions of the Gloucester death records available on microfilm from the Library of Virginia. The second installment was not ready for this issue, but should be continued in next issue.

The good news is that our Clerk of Courts, Ann Gentry, has requested and the Library of Virginia has agreed to furnish copies of Gloucester records on microfilm for local use. These records consist of additional Gloucester Death Records for 1853 -1865 and 1890-1895 and Land Records from about 1770 -1825. The microfilm will be housed in the Gloucester Public Library, hopefully, in their new facilities. We appreciate these efforts to better serve Gloucester researchers.

# The Thruston Family and the Tombstone Mystery

by David A. Brown and Thane H. Harpole\*

Finding it was a complete surprise. And by all accounts, it was found in a truly archaeological way- stumbled across by one of the many visitors to the site. To be specific, it was found by a young Daisy Scout. Thane Harpole was giving a tour of the Fairfield manor house ruins, guiding the young group of soon -to-be-Girl Scout adventurers through the maze of moss and grass covered ruins. For most people it's nearly impossible to stop from looking down at the ground, fascinated by the three hundred years of history lying dormant beneath their feet. So, it was no surprise to hear one of them declare while looking near the foundation of the house that she had found something. These unexpected finds often relate to a broken nail or fragment of melted window glass lying on the surface; but in this case, the young girl saw letters spelling the word "died."

In archaeology, seldom are artifacts more exciting than when they contain words. Dated wine bottle seals, coins, inscribed pots - these are all at the top of an archaeologist's wish list. And so it was with great excitement that Thane called me over, reminding me to get my trowel, a paintbrush, and most importantly, our digital camera. Within seconds the entire surface of the item was revealed. Directly in front of us was the tombstone of Emanuel J. Thruston, Jr., by far one of the most surprising artifacts we have yet seen.

I can assure you that a find of this magnitude does not take place very often. And when it did, it was but fifteen minutes before a volunteer lab night at the Rosewell Visitor Center. With the support of the Rosewell Foundation, once a week we invite people who are interested in learning more about archaeology to the visitor center to help us wash, sort, and identify the many artifacts found during our excavations. This evening would be no different. We quickly photographed and then covered over the tombstone before running back to the lab to get ready for our volunteers.

That night, and during the following two months, we carefully gathered what we knew about the man and his tombstone, combing primary and secondary sources at libraries and over the internet, asking friends and fellow researchers if they could help us answer our many questions. In fact, we were looking for a way to tell more people about our important find. To the rescue came the Gloucester Genealogical Society.

And so we set off on a search for Emanuel J. Thruston Jr. On the stone was carved a wealth of information: the gentleman's full name, the date of his death, and the company and regiment he served in during the Civil War. And true to form for archaeology, this



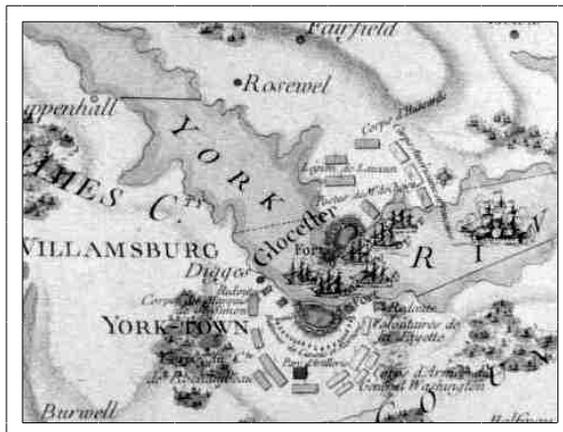
**Thane Harpole cleans the tombstone of Emanuel J. Thruston, Jr., at "Fairfield" archaeological site**

## *The Thruston Family and the Tombstone Mystery*

information prompted more questions than answers. Who was this man? How was he associated with Fairfield? Was he buried within the thick rubble beneath the stone? Some of these mysteries were easily solved. Others would take more time, research, and a great deal of luck to answer.

### The Thruston Family of Fairfield

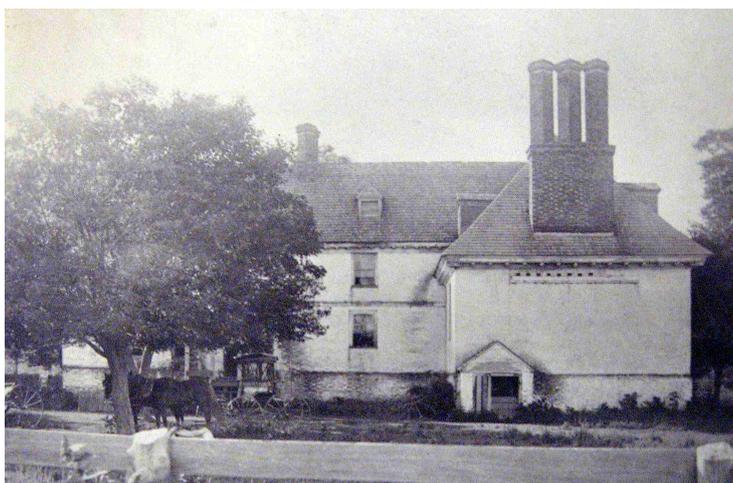
The Thruston family's first connection with Fairfield plantation was established through the sale of 500 acres and the manor house to Emanuel J. Thruston, Jr.'s grandfather, Colonel Robert Thruston, on June 4, 1787, for £1500 (See original Plat Reference, Robert Reade Thruston papers and *Records of Colonial Gloucester County*, p. 62). Robert was born on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1759 in Gloucester County. His father, John, was a well-established merchant in Gloucester Town who also owned a number of plantations near Gloucester Point and in Guinea. Robert likely moved to Fairfield with his wife, Frances Simmons Jones (b. 1759, d. 1818) soon after their purchase of the property. Together they had three children: John Thruston (b. 1787 in Gloucester Co.; m1. Mary Buckner; m2. Malvina Doswell in 1827; d. July 13, 1828), Ann Simmons Thruston (d. 1824), and Emanuel Jones Thruston, Sr.



**Berthier Map c.1781**

When Colonel Robert Thruston died in 1826 in Gloucester County, he left his property to his eldest son John, who at that time was 39 and may have still been married to Mary Buckner. John's only child by her was John Franklin Thruston who would inherit Fairfield at the death of his father in 1828. Unfortunately, John Franklin did not live long. On July 8, 1844, a letter from William Booth Taliaferro (of Bellville) written to George Harrison Burwell, a descendant of the Fairfield Burwells, describes the condition of the house and grounds.

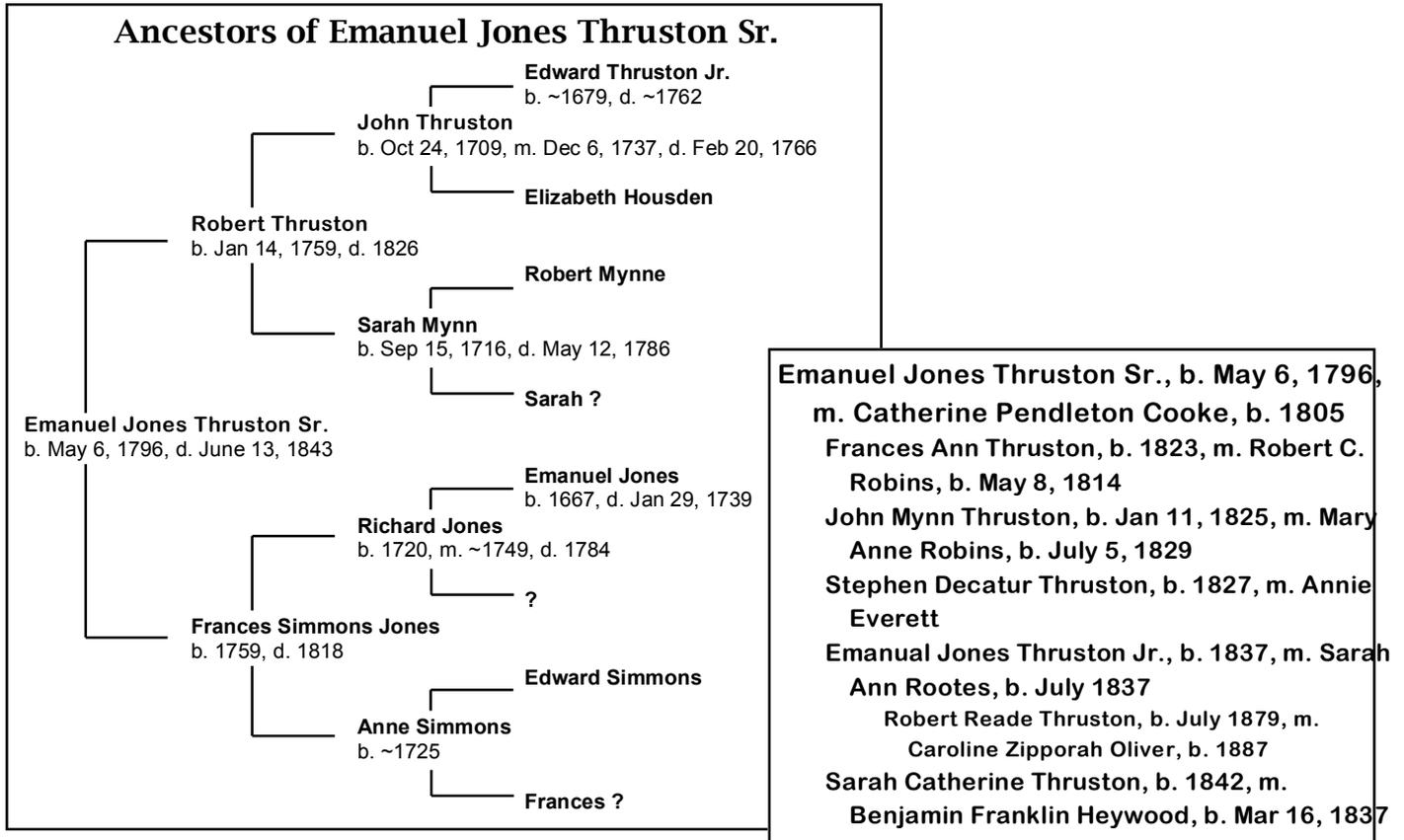
“The house as well as the plantation has undergone much change since you last saw it owing to the system of renting which has been adopted since the death of Mr. [John] Thruston about 10 years ago. It belonged after his death to his son [John Franklin Thruston] who died a year ago and the property then went into the possession of Dr. Clopton who took in right of his wife who still continues to rent the estate. It is melancholy indeed to see in this part of the country the seats of the oldest and most



**“Fairfield” on Carters Creek, built by Lewis Burwell II in 1694, purchased by Robert Thruston in 1787**

honourable families thus going to decay; places that were the pride and glory of families for more than a century adorned with all that magnificence or luxury could suggest now desolate and deserted or tenanted by those whose poverty or

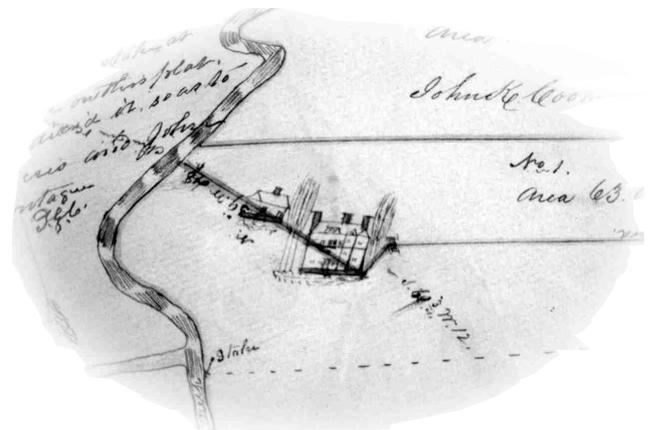
*The Thruston Family and the Tombstone Mystery*



taste leads them to mutilate and destroy for the mere sake of gain. This is the case with Carter’s Creek in a great degree, the very yard has been ploughed almost to the door; the house with little beside the wainscoting for ornament or furniture within; and the grave yard without a wall, or enclosure of any kind, to distinguish it from the cultivated field; or to protect the graves of the dead from the intrusion of cattle.” (*Burwell: Kith and Kin of the Emigrant*, p. 4)

Not only does this entry help explain the inheritance of the estate, especially as the land tax records refer to it only as “Col. Robert Thruston’s Estate,” but it also gives us a quick glance into how the property was being treated. By this time, John Thruston’s brother Emanuel had moved to Millwood, a house about one mile north, that may have been built by the Burwells in 1752 (Ann Thruston Scott, Personal Communication, 2002). The Thrustons continued to live at Millwood into the twentieth century.

On August 10, 1847, Robert Thruston’s estate (792.5 acres, including the Fairfield/Carter’s Creek house) was divided amongst his children and their heirs; the house was divided along a “line passing through the said passage” into the “Southwest wing of the house and the passage of the Wing, and one half of the kitchen” along with 200 acres to John Thruston’s widow, Malvina D. Clopton. The remainder of the house and kitchen went to John Mynn Thruston, son of Emanuel J. Thruston, Sr., along with 63 acres (*Plat in*



**1847 Fairfield Plat**

## The Thruston Family and the Tombstone Mystery

*Gloucester County Surveyor's Book*). The Thruston's sold the largely reunited 792.5-acre parcel to William A. Leavitt by 1850.

### The Thruston Family of Millwood

Emanuel Jones Thruston, Sr. was probably born at Fairfield on May 6, 1796 (Thruston Family Tree). He married Catherine Pendleton Cooke (b. 1805) on January 13, 1820, and appears in Gloucester County census for 1840. He may have moved to Millwood when he turned 21 in 1817 or immediately after he married. Catherine is listed as living in Gloucester County during the census of 1850 and 1860. Together they had five children, all of whom were likely born at Millwood, including Emanuel Jones Thruston, Jr. Their other children included Frances Ann Thruston (b. 1823; in Gloucester Co. in 1850, 1860, and 1870, John Mynn Thruston (b. January 11, 1825; in Gloucester Co. in 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880; d. 29 Mar 1883 in Gloucester Co.; buried in Newington Church), Stephen Decatur Thruston (b. 1827 in Gloucester Co.; d. 1907 in NC), and Sarah Catherine Thruston (b. 1842; at Gloucester Co. in 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880). Emanuel Senior died on June 13, 1843.

### Emanuel Jones Thruston, Jr.

Emanuel Jones Thruston Jr. was born at Millwood in 1837. He was recorded in the census for Gloucester County from 1860 to 1880. On February 28, 1872, he married Sarah Ann Rootes, daughter of Edmund Jacqueline Rootes and Emily Robins. Sarah Ann Rootes, born in July 1837, was recorded in the census for Gloucester County from 1860 to 1900. Together they had only one child, Robert Reade Thruston. Emanuel Jones Thruston died on January 19th, 1883 in Gloucester County leaving all of his land and possessions to his wife, who died in 1907 (*Gloucester County Will Book, A, p. 134*).

The Civil War memorial grave stone of Emanuel J. Thruston indicates that he served with Company A of the 5th Virginia Cavalry, the Gloucester Light Dragoons. This was an old militia unit under Captain John W. Puller and attached to the 26th Virginia Infantry at Gloucester Point in 1861. They maintained an outpost in Guinea. On June 25, 1862, they were assigned to the reorganized 5th Virginia Cavalry. When Puller was promoted to Major, Junius B. Browne was promoted and assigned Captain of Company A. Both officers were Gloucester natives. A related story entitled, *Supplies for Company A, 5th Virginia Cavalry*, Family Tree Searcher, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 17-23, includes the account debt charged to Emanuel J. Thruston.

### Descendants of Emanuel J. Thruston Jr.

Robert Reade Thruston, born in July 1879 in Gloucester County, lived at Millwood through at least the mid-1930s. He married Caroline Zipporah Oliver (daughter of Thomas Andrew Jackson Oliver and Elizabeth Lewis Rilee), who was born in 1887. Together they had eight children. Emily Lewis Thruston was born in 1910 in Gloucester County and at the age of 91 is living in Richmond. Her younger sister, Sarah Rootes Thruston, was born in 1911 and died in 1993. The oldest male child was Robert Reade Thruston Jr., who was born in 1914 in Gloucester County but has since passed away.

<p><b>Robert Reade Thruston, b. July 1879, m. Caroline Zipporah Oliver, b. 1887</b> Emily Lewis Thruston, b. 1910, m. Clay Llewellyn Sarah Rootes Thruston, b. 1911, m. Richard Holland Robert Reade Thruston Jr., b. 1914, m. Beatrice Rowe Jacquelin Foster Thruston, b. 1918 Virginia Thruston Giles Thruston Ann Thruston, m. Mr. Scott Stephen Franklin Thruston</p>
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## *The Thruston Family and the Tombstone Mystery*

Jacquelin Foster Thruston, born in 1918, and Stephen Franklin Thruston, the youngest child, have passed on. The other two sisters and one brother still survive, including Virginia Thruston, Giles Thruston, and Ann Thruston Scott. (Mrs. Scott has eagerly offered to share information from her father's papers that are in her possession, portions of which are archived with the Kentucky Historical Society at the Filson Club in Louisville.) Robert Reade Thruston Sr. died in 1948, but his wife Caroline lived until 1984.

### The Cemetery at Fairfield Plantation

On October 23, 1911, Sally Nelson Robins wrote in the Richmond -Times Dispatch:

"Bishop Meade wrote more than fifty years ago [that] one tomb at least, that of Martha Lear Burwell, was so broken that only a part of it could be found. There seems never to have been but eight tombs, and these were situated at one end of the family graveyard, which contains many trees, and is overgrown with bushes and briars. Four of the slabs had been broken, two of them having only fragments left, and of all the massive supports only one corner, and a part of one side were in their original position. Several side and end pieces had been carried away to various parts of the county (these were promptly and willingly given up by the persons who were using them for doorsteps), and it was evident that at some time an attempt had been made to enter at least one grave. Many of the parts of the tombs, and even a whole top slab were buried in the ground. ...Every piece of stone and many bricks were removed to Abingdon church yard, and it is gratifying to state that not one was broken in handling, though some were very heavy." (Richmond Times -Dispatch, 23 OCT 1911)

This became the fate of many colonial cemeteries in Gloucester and throughout Virginia during the early to mid-twentieth century. Overgrown and vandalized, their tombs were rescued by people like Sally Nelson Robins who sought the refuge of a local parish church to protect these symbols of Virginia's past. Emanuel J. Thruston, Jr., may have followed his ancestors to their unmarked cemetery beside the Burwells, but his memorial stone did not complete the journey, leading us on an exciting trail of discovery.

### Acknowledgements

The authors thank the following people for their assistance in researching and writing this article. The Daisy Scouts and Brownies of Troop 1212 and 4018, and Amy McCoy and Sara Troxel, troop leaders, deserve thanks for finding the tombstone. Mike Pierce, a Gloucester High School intern with the Fairfield Foundation and Anthony Smith, further added to the story, revealing Emanuel J. Thruston's connections to nearby Millwood. Robert Harper, local historian, shared his knowledge concerning memorial markers and their prevalence in Virginia during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Lastly, we thank L. Roane Hunt and the Gloucester Genealogical Society for inviting us to submit an article for inclusion in this publication.

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[http://www.rootsweb.com/~vaglouce/glou\\_rec2.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~vaglouce/glou_rec2.html)

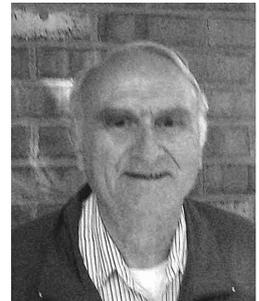


Col. John Page of Virginia (1627- 1691)

## High Tech Genealogy Statistical Applications to DNA Analysis

by Wray Page

It has been said that tracing one's ancestry has been greatly facilitated by three developments since WW II — the copier, the computer, and the understanding of DNA. Regarding the third -- the most recent — several microbiologists have begun using the structure of DNA to connect individuals with their distant cousins. One of the better known molecular genealogists is Dr. Scott Woodward, a professor of molecular biology at Brigham Young University, who developed the DNA technique. Another is Dr. Bryan Sykes, MA, PhD, DSc, professor of Human Genetics at Oxford University in England and Chairman of Oxford Ancestors, the university's DNA laboratory for the study of human genetics.



Wray Page

### At a dead end?

George W. Page of Bryans Road, MD, had traced his Page family line back through Branford, Connecticut, in the 1600s to County Kent, England; but he too came to a dead end. Meanwhile he, like many others, has speculated that he may likely be related to the descendants of Col. John Page (1627 -1692) of Virginia, son of Francis Page of Bedfont, County Middlesex, which county is contiguous to Kent.

With the advent of DNA testing, George Page anticipated his answer. He investigated several firms working in this field and contracted with Oxford Ancestors to initiate an international "Page Surname" DNA test program. George invited and urged all men whom

## High Tech Genealogy

he knew surnamed Page to participate — about 50 altogether. Among those solicited this spring, as expected, were several confirmed descendants of the progenitor Col. John Page (1627-1692). A broader purpose of the surname testing was to ascertain the relationship, if any, among the numerous gentlemen currently named Page and, as Donald W. Page of Titusville, FL, has been attempting, to group into a manageable number of families the multitude of individuals currently named Page.

### X and Y chromosomes

Chromosomes are packets of DNA contained within the nucleus of cells of the human body. Most chromosomes come in pairs, with one inherited from the mother and the other from the father.

Regarding sex-determination of babies, in layman's over simplified language, women have only X chromosomes; men have both X and Y chromosomes, statistically in equal quantities. For conception, the man contributes either an X or a Y chromosome. If an X, the embryo remains female and becomes a girl with initially two X chromosomes; if a Y, the embryo becomes (from the sex-determining gene on the Y chromosome) a boy with one X and one Y chromosome. The fascinating aspect is that, although the X chromosome changes somewhat from generation to generation, the Y chromosome normally remains constant for thousands of years, except for rare mutations (from the Latin. Word *mutare*, meaning "to change").

### Basis for the technique

One of the several techniques used by both Dr. Woodward and Dr. Sykes takes advantage of the high stability of the sex -determinating gene on the Y chromosome. And as stated above, only males have Y chromosomes, which they inherit from their fathers. Without these Y chromosomes, all babies would be girls.

### The Y chromosome test

The discovery of the relative immutability of the Y chromosome has given geneticists the fingerprinting capability for processing only a minute sample of a man's DNA to ascertain his individual identifying genetic code or, as the laboratory at Oxford Ancestors designates the technique, "Y-Line coding." Explained in simple terms, Y-Line coding records the number of repeats at 10 specific marking points where the number (quantity) of DNA repeats changes in magnitude. (The changes take place, not in genes, but in what is termed "junk DNA," the term for the long stretches of DNA which lie between genes.) The changes have absolutely no effect on any biological functions.

The repeating sequences vary in magnitude from about 09 to about 26, resulting in an illustrative Y-Line code such as: 12-12-13-24-10-17-14-10-16-11, with each number showing the frequency of the repeats at a specific marking point.

### **Fictitious Examples of Y-Line Coding**

Marker	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
Illustrative Y-Line	12	12	13	24	10	17	14	10	16	11
Col. John Page of Virginia (3)	11	16	17	20	13	14	10	17	22	10
Michael Page of England (1)	11	16	17	20	13	14	11	17	22	10
John Page of Massachusetts (4)	11	16	17	20	13	14	10	15	22	10

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Theoretically all men having identical Y-Line genetic codes have a common paternal ancestor (CPA). Therefore males having identical genetic codes and a CPA are closely related, such as brothers, cousins, or direct descendants, for example. And if they have a CPA, they will also have the same surname, such as Nelson or Page, unless along the line there was one or more instances of adoptions, name changes, or other non -paternities.

For a prepaid fee, Oxford Ancestors will provide DNA testing for any man and provide him a certificate for his individual and confidential “Y -Line Code.”

### Many were called, but fewer chose

Among the many potential participants for George W. Page’s “Page Surname Test Project,” the initially expressed interest was substantial. When the time came for participation, there was a marked decline. Some objected to the cost (\$150 for the quantity package rate). Some knew their documented genealogy and wished to leave well enough alone, saying: “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” A few desired to reconsider, and others remained inactive. To date only 28 have participated.

### Positions of Col. John Page descendants

The preceding paragraph applies equally here. Furthermore this family line is well documented and has an established, published, and accepted genealogy. So why jeopardize the situation?

Nevertheless three descendants volunteered, they feeling that this family’s genealogy was secure; that DNA testing and the like were not going away, were the waves of the future; that there was an obligation to help others to satisfy their concerns; that several should participate to establish a solid benchmark, against which anyone wishing, could make a comparison. This need for such a benchmark, like Greenwich mean time, was apparent as, from the numerous members of the Page -Nelson Society, both confirmed and unconfirmed descendants of Col. John Page were invited and urged to participate.

### How far back?

Although the family line of progenitor Col. John Page can be traced back through his father Francis (1594-1678) in England, it is necessary to skip to the fourth generation in America of this family in order to have multiple male lines from two or more traceable brothers for DNA comparison - to Mann Page II (1720-1780) of the Rosewell branch of the Page family and his brother John Page (1725-1774) of the North End branch. (There was only one known surviving son in generations prior to Mann Page II, and currently no male progeny still named Page are known to exist from Robert Page (ca 1728 - 1768) of the Broadneck branch of the family.)

<b>Col. John Page, b. 1627, m. Alice Lukin, b. 1625</b>
<b>Matthew Page, b. 1659, m. Mary Mann, b. 1670</b>
<b>Mann Page I, b. 1891, m. Judith Carter, b. 1695</b>
<b>Mann Page II, b. 1720, m. Alice Grymes, b. 1723 [Rosewell Branch]</b>
<b>Carter Page, b. 1723, died young</b>
<b>John Page, b. 1725, m. Jane Byrd, b. 1729 [North End Branch]</b>
<b>Matthew Page, b. 1727, died young</b>
<b>Robert Page, b. ca 1728, m. Sarah Walker [Broadneck Branch]</b>

### Results - Col. John Page descendants

The DNA specimens were forwarded to Oxford Ancestors during March - May 2001. Apparently results from all but one were received in July 2001. For whatever unexplained reason, Oxford Ancestors did not accept the test specimen submitted by one descendant of

the North End branch. The gentleman concerned resubmitted and received his testing results later. For the other two verified descendants of Col. John Page — one from the Rosewell branch of the family and the other from the North End branch — the personal and confidential Y-Line codes matched exactly. That is: the two series, each consisting of 10 two-digit numbers in prescribed sequence, are identical in magnitude and in the same sequence, thereby showing nearly 100 percent probability of a CPA. When testing results were finally received by the third documented descendant of the Col. John Page line, there was another complete match, thereby further confirming mutual descent from a CPA and close kinship among the three.

#### Results - Other tested 23 surnamed Page

There was no match to indicate a recognized relationship between the Col. John Page line and any unconfirmed descendent of him who is also a member of the Page -Nelson Society (including Honorary Member George W. Page).

With one exception, the Y-Line Code for Michael Page (previously unknown to the Page-Nelson Society) in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, England, is identical to those of the three tested verified Pages from the Col. John Page line. For one marking in Michael's Y-Line Code, he has an 11; the three Col. John Page descendants each have a 10 in the corresponding position. That result shows that there could be a distant CPA, with one mutation in the intervening generations in one of the two lines during the 400 plus years since the probable CPA, thereby indicating the likelihood of a close family relationship between the two lines.

NOTE: For simplicity, the foregoing explanation omitted any discussion of mutations. However they do occur occasionally. Statistically there is a 0.2 percent probability for one mutation per marking per generation; or 2 percent in any one of the 10 markings in any one generation in each of the two lines; or 4 percent per generation in the two lines. In the above example, a CPA could have lived around year 1600 at the latest — could have lived about year 1400, for example; we don't know exactly when. If year 1600, for instance, 4 percent x 4 centuries x 4 generations per century = 64 percent probability for one mutation. If year 1400 for the CPA, the probability jumps to a 96 percent probability for one mutation.

One single mutation — in either the early Col. John Page line or in Michael's early line — is the minimum variation possible, as the difference is measured by a total of only one digit.

In summary, the Y-Line codes for the Col. John Page line and for Michael Page indicate a likely early CPA (in England). (Representatives of the Page -Nelson Society and Michael Page are communicating.)

Among the other 21 outsiders tested, there are four confirmed descendants of a John Page who immigrated ca 1635 to Haverhill, MA. These four descendants match among themselves and differ from the markings of the Col. John Page descendants in only one of the marking, but there by two digits. With respect to these two lines, there is the probability that they too could have a CPA. If so, in one of the two relevant lines over the 400 plus years, there could have been two single digit mutations in the same marking. This is possible, but unlikely. More probable is one double jump mutation as they, although less common than single variations, are moderately common and much more frequent than two single jump mutations. So there is also the probability of a CPA between the Col. John Page line and descendants of John Page of Haverhill, MA. However, because of the two digit spread here rather than a single digit spread, as in the preceding comparison, the

## High Tech Genealogy

likelihood is of an earlier CPA here (thereby indicating more distant kinship between the two lines) than of the CPA in the prior comparison.

When comparing the coding of John Page of Haverhill, MA, to that of Michael Page, there is a variance of one digit in one marking and of two in another (the latter being the same two as the difference between the Haverhill line and Col. John Page's line). A distant CPA seems possible, but of a lower probability, as illustrated below.

A comparison among the Y-Line codes for the family lines of Col. John Page, Michael Page, and John Page of Haverhill, MA, shows matches in # 8 of the 10 markers and the following array for:

	<u>Marker #7</u>	<u>Marker #8</u>
Col. John Page line	10	17
Michael Page	11	17
John Page of Haverhill, MA	10	15

This analysis shows, as stated above, a moderate probability of a CPA for the Col. John Page descendants and Michael Page; a slightly lower probability for a CPA for the Col. John Page line and the descendants of John Page of Haverhill, MA; and a still lower probability for a CPA between Michael Page and the descendants of John Page of Haverhill, MA.

Nevertheless, from basic logic, if the Col. John Page line and Michael Page have a CPA (#1) and if the Col. John Page line and descendants of John Page of Haverhill have a CPA (#2), must not Michael Page and the descendants of John Page of Haverhill also have a CPA (#3)? The answer is yes. And if so, the likelihood is that Col. John Page and Michael Page have the more recent CPA(#1) and the closer kinship; and that an earlier CPA(#2) is the most recent CPA for not only the Col. John Page line and the John Page of Haverhill line, but also for all three lines; and therefore CPA(#2) and CPA(#3) are one and the same.

For enhanced confirmation of the foregoing relationships, further testing might be desirable as only Michael Page has been tested in his line.

Of the remaining 17 men tested, 11 are from four other known but separate Page families, with each member matching within his own family, but showing no relationship to other Pages tested.

The other six men tested show no patterns of relationships to any other surnamed Pages tested.

### Conclusion

Applying statistical probabilities, Y-Line coding currently provides a basis for establishing the relationship - if any - among males with common surnames.

From a realistic point of view, Y-Line coding can:

- Confirm some family relationships;
- Show a high probability for others family relationships;
- Disprove any relationship among many families; and
- Show a high probability for no relationship among others. ❖

## Gloucester Militia Fines, 1851-1853

*Contributed by  
Dr. John S. Hopewell  
Richmond, VA*

*Editor's Note: In the nineteenth century, the adult white males of each county, unless excused, were members of the Virginia Militia. The papers of the Auditor of Public Accounts located in the Library of Virginia contain many documents that deal with the financial transactions of the Militia such as some pay records, equipment purchases and fines for minor infractions of rules. Among the files for the Gloucester County Militia appear three lists of fines for 1851, 1852 and 1853. They were encountered recently by Dr. Hopewell, a native of Gloucester, who is an archivist in local records at the Library. The following list is a compilation of the three separate lists with duplications removed. The original variant spellings have been preserved, but the specific fines, ranging from fifty cents to three dollars, have been omitted. They were assessed for a variety of reasons, usually for being absent from monthly musters.*

*In addition, appended to this list is the list of Militia exemptions for 1853. E. B. S. Cary, clerk of the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment, signed each list of fines and the list of exemptions, attesting to their accuracy. Sheriff Jasper C. Rowe also signed them signifying that he had received them. Researchers may compare all these names with the Census of 1850, recently published.*

Robert Anderson	Richard O. Allard	L. Atkins
Geo. W. Adams	Thomas B. Armistead	R. A. Barron
Churchill Bohannon	Wm. Bonywell/Boneywell	J. W. Backhouse
James F. Barron	Edwd. Brushwood	Geo. Y. Booth
Thos. Brown (of Cary)	John Brown (of Cary)	Thos. Belvin
John R. Bryan	John Belvin	James Brown
Robert Brown	Geo. Bonywell/Boneywell <sup>1</sup>	Lewis Brown
A. B. Balfour	James Belvin	Chas. Bohannon
John Belote	Robinson Bridges	George Booker, Sr.
N. Batchelder	Francis Brooking	Wm. G. Bowden
Geo. W. Booker	John Brown	James C. Baytop
Wm. A. Brown	Mark Brookes	Samuel Bland, Jr.
Sterling Belvin	John A. Bristow	Cary Bristow
John W. Backhouse	Junius B. Browne	Samuel P. Byrd
George W. Brushwood	John W. Brooking	R. C. Coleman
Thomas Corr	James Crosswell	Jerome B. Clements
John S. Cropper	Pompey W. Campbell	John W. Crosswell
Robert Cake	Marcellus Cochen	Isaac Crosswell
Hezekiah Crosswell	Robert Coates	James B. Cooke
Charles Collier	Benjn. S. Cluverius	Thomas Collier
John Clair	W. T. Cooke	Robert Crew

*Gloucester Militia Fines, 1851-1853*

B. B. Dutton  
Richard Dutton  
Thomas Dunston  
Alexander Dutton  
Wm. B. Enos  
Wm. F. Eastwood  
Benjamin Freeman  
Caleb Fletcher  
W. A. S. Fary  
George Foxwell  
Thomas Graves  
Wm. P. Graves  
Albert Groom  
Robert Hardy  
John N. Hall  
Wm. Haynes  
Wm. R. Hogg  
John L. Hibble  
John H. Hughes  
Wm. Hogg, Jr.  
Vincent Hogg  
Thos. Hogg (of Jas.)  
John W. Harriss  
John M. Hall  
Thomas Hall  
Philimon Holt  
Wm. Henderson  
Jacob Jenkins  
James Jenkins  
Jas. Jenkins (of Read)  
John R. Johnston  
Willoby Jordan  
Edmund Jenkins  
Wm. Kemp  
Oswald S. Kemp  
Overton J. Kemp  
Richd. M. Lee  
Wm. J. Lewis  
Thos. B. Loffman  
Wm. T. Mouring  
John Morey  
John Minor  
Wm. McLane  
John U. Moore  
Wm. Nuttall  
Geo. Owens

A. T. Dixon  
John W. Dutton  
John H. Darnell  
James Deal  
John Edwards  
John W. Fredericks  
John Fosque  
E. T. Field  
Charles C. Field  
Thos. W. Field  
Wm. Griffin  
George Green  
John Hall (of Wm.)  
H. L. Hagner/Haynes [?] <sup>2</sup>  
John D. Hall  
Edward Harper  
Thos. H. Hughes  
Henry Howard  
Armistead Hall  
Stephen Hogg  
Geo. L. Hunley  
John Harriss  
James Hogg  
Richard Hall  
Charles Harper  
Levi Heywood  
Armistead Jenkins  
Baylor Jenkins  
Vincent Jenkins  
Edward Jenkins  
Wm. Jenkins (of Harwood)  
Zadock Johnson/Johnston  
Wm. R. Jones  
Wm. Keyse  
James Kiningham  
Wm. F. Leavit  
Wm. P. R. Leigh  
Wm. R. Leavit  
John Luck  
Jno. W. Minor, Sr.  
Wm. T. Minor  
Wm. Magee  
Willoby Mason  
Henry M. Moore  
Thos. Oliver  
Andrew P. Oliver

P. H. Dutton  
Charles Duval  
John L. Douglass  
John A. Dudley  
Lewis B. F. Enos  
Gideon Fary  
John L. Fox  
P. H. Fitzhugh  
Robert Fary  
John Green (of Geo.)  
Wm. Games  
John L. Groom  
John Heywood  
Wm. H. Hogg  
Thomas Harris  
Wm. Hogg  
Robert Heywood  
Benjamin Hogg  
Cary Hall  
Allen Hogg  
John W. Harvey  
Thomas C. Heywood  
Lewis Hogg  
Wm. Hudson  
Isaac Hudgins  
Wm. Heywood  
Mitchum Jenkins  
Wm. Jenkins (of Armstd.)  
Thos. E. Johnson/Johnston  
Stephen Jenkins (of Armstd.)  
James Jenkins (of Jas.)  
Ro. B. Jones  
Nice Keely  
Wyndham Kemp  
P. A. Kemp  
John W. Leavit  
Edward Leavit  
Wm. Lawson  
John Lawson  
Ro. A. Massey  
Robt D. Miller  
Charles Mather  
John W. Minor, Jr.  
Benjn. F. Newcomb  
Washington Oliver  
Wm. H. Oliver

*Gloucester Militia Fines, 1851-1853*

Augustine P. Oliver	Richard Pippin	John W. Puller
John Pierce/Pearce	Henry Proctor	John Pratt
Wm. N. Purcell	Thomas M. Pearce	Horace Purcell
Richd. J. Prince	Richd. L. Padgett	Wm. F. Presson
Vernon Palmer	Joseph Padgett	James W. Rowe (of Ben)
Robert C. Robins	Joel Robins (son of Jesse)	Ralph Rowe
Zack Rowe (of Jno.)	Richd. B. Roberts	John Robins (son of John)
Thomas Ransone	Samuel Rowe	Silas Ransone
Wm. A. Rowe	John Rowe (of Sterling)	Zack Rowe (of Zack)
Wm. Rowe	Leroy Rowe	John Rowe
Wm. S. Roane	Edwd. H. Rowe	Archer Shackelford
John Smith	Stephen Smith	Edward Sears
Simon H. Stubblefield	Robt. H Stubblefield	Jno. T. Seawell
M. B. Seawell	J. R. J. Stubblefield	W. M. Stubbs
Geo. B. Slaughter	L. S. Stubbs	Jno. W. Shackelford
Richard B. Stevens	James Smith	Hezekiah Stoakes/Stokes
Wm. Smith (of Kit)	Sterling Smith	John Sparrow
Joseph Shackelford	Jno. Smith (of James)	Michael Smith
Jno. Shackelford	Jno. A. Stubblefield	Peyton Smith
Fayette Sinclair	Anthony Smith	Thomas Smith
Jno. Seawell, Jr.	Henry Smith	Wm. T. Smither
John Stubblefield	John Smither	Franklin Shackelford
Edward Stubbs	George W. Smith	Henry Shackelford
Thos. Savage	Wm. Smith	Ward E. Stubblefield
Jno. M. Stubblefield	Jno. H. P. Seawell	Eml. J. Stubblefield
Robert C. Selden	P. E. Tabb	Edwd. Thruston
Benjn. P. Thrift	Edward Tabb	Wm. B. Taliaferro
Jno. P. Taliaferro	Wm. Tomblinson	F. L. Taylor
A. G. Templeman	Thomas Taylor	Kendal Townsend
Joel Thomas	James Williams	Saml. Williams
Wm. West (of Jas.)	Jas. West (of Jas.)	Chas. West (of Kit)
Frank West	Thomas Williams	John Walker
Edward Williams	Christopher A. Williams	Wm. H. Williams
Joseph West (of Kit)	Cary West (son of Kit)	Christopher West (of Amb.)
John West	James West (of Ambrose)	Jesse Williams
Ambrose West	Wm. West	Thomas Walker
Howard West	Wm. Wallace	Christopher West (of Kit)
James West	Turner West	Robert West
Henry West	Jno. T. Wilson	Edward Wood
Wm. F. Wright	John Wilkins	Uriah Wroten
Wm. J. Waller	Benjamin Woodland	John Woodland
John Woodley	John M. West	Richard Walker
John White	Thos. J. Wise	Charles Yeatman

*Gloucester Militia Fines, 1851-1853*

**Militia Exemptions for 1853**

*The following is a list of persons who have paid to the Sheriff of Gloucester County the amount required [\$0.75] by the Act of Assembly to exempt them from Militia duty for the year 1853, to wit:*

Daniel Carmine  
Wyndham Kemp  
Geo. Walker  
John White  
Edwd. A. Leavit  
James Brown  
R. A. Barron  
Levi P. Corr  
Thos. C. Graves  
Wm. E. Games  
Benj. Major  
P. P. Newcomb  
Ro. L. Rowe

Michael Carmine  
Jno. T. Seawell  
Wm. H. White  
Christopher Williams  
Robt. Wilkins  
Edwd. T. Field  
Wm. F. Newcomb  
Roland Oliver  
Jno. Harris  
H. M. Moore  
Jerome B. Kemp  
Richd. Robins

James C. Graves  
Jno. Smither  
James Heywood  
James Jenkins  
Jno. S. Rowe  
Wm. T. Minor  
W. W. Nelson  
Thos. Dudley  
Wm. Haynes  
James Williams  
Thos. J. Hughes  
Edwd. Pippin

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References:

1. The names of both George and William Bonywell/Boneywell are distinctly written, although they may be idiosyncratic spelling or pronunciation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century name Bonnaville.
2. This name is very clearly spelled "Hagner" on one sheet, but appears to be the more familiar "Haynes" on another.

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Gloucester Genealogical Society web site:  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~vaggsv/vaggsv>

and try these other sites  
PeopleSpot --personalities in history  
<http://www.peoplespot.com>  
under related spots, click-genealogy Spot

Historical Biographies  
<http://www.s9.com/biography>

Family Search  
<http://www.familysearch.org>

# Judge John Munford Gregory

By Jeannie Stokes Howe

Most of the Virginia Gregorys are believed to be descended from Gregor or Gregorius, the third son of Alpin, King of the Scots in the eighth century and from Gregory the Great, King of the Scots from 877 to 890. From existing records, it appears that the Gregorys were among the first settlers in Virginia.

John Gregory, listed as a tithable in Charles City County in 1666, was probably the father or grandfather of the John Gregory of Charles City, Virginia whose sons, John Gregory, Jr. and William Gregory, were officers in the Revolutionary War. (John, Jr. was a Lieutenant and William a Captain of the 6th Virginia Regiment.) John Gregory, Jr. was killed in action on the Jersey line at a place called Quibbletown on 27 Aug 1776, and left two sons: Richmond Gregory and John Munford Gregory. This John M. Gregory married Letitia Graves and had a son, John Munford Gregory, who was born 8 July 1804, became a judge and served as Governor of Virginia in 1842. (re: "Gregorys of Virginia," American Clan Gregor, Washington D. C., 8 Oct 1909, p. 4)

Judge John Munford Gregory of James City County, was a member of the Council of State, three of whom completed the balance of Gov. Thomas Walker Gilmer's term. (Gilmer came to office in March 1840 and resigned a year later when the legislature declined to back him in an extradition controversy with New York.) As acting governors, however, none of the three occupied the Governor's mansion. With the end of Gregory's acting governorship, the legislature began electing governors to serve from January to January instead of to March. (re: "Virginia's Executive Mansion" by William Seale, p. 40)

## Mural tablet in Gloucester County Court House

