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Ruffner Family Association

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RUFFNER ROOTS & RAMBLINGS

Volume 3, Issue #1

March 2000

JOIN US IN THE RUFFNER CENSUS!



By now most of you have received the Genealogy Survey from the Ruffner Family Association. The Publications Committee which is collecting information to publish a genealogy of our family painstakingly developed this form. I urge you to do as much as you can to complete the survey and then return it to the committee member who sent it to you. If you have not received a form, contact the appropriate committee member listed on the form accompanying this newsletter.

Some of you know that in 1966, over 35 years ago, my mother Olive Ruffner and her friend Doris Ruffner gathered as much information as they could to publish a first edition genealogy. They subsequently added to it in a second volume in 1969, the first volume resulting in many new contacts. I recall hearing my mother patiently typing these entries.

Technology has brought us to a new era. The committee will take the material you furnish about your family and enter it into computers, using popular genealogy software, from which it will be published. Not only will your information allow us to update what is in the earlier editions, but it will also provide a greater number of new entries.

Our Ruffner family reunions have brought together so many previously unknown cousins and added so many new contacts that the committee is happily overwhelmed. The growing internet is also aiding our publishing effort, with family web sites proliferating and genealogy software available for downloading for home use. Members of our committee have made genealogy their hobby and are eager to publish the book.

We want to include you, your children and your family history in the Ruffner Genealogy, and look forward to hearing from you.



Cordially,

Fred

Frederick Gale Ruffner, Jr.
Chair, Publications Committee

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—AND MUCH MORE

A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

SAM McNEELY



As I sit here at my computer with ten inches of snow still on the ground I have time to ponder my move from the sunny south to the Shenandoah Valley. Actually, I have never had second thoughts of our relocation to this area. I often wonder if part of the things that we enjoy about living here are a legacy from our ancestors. Betty and I have been so graciously received by the community and hardly a week goes by that I don't meet more wonderful people who chose this area to get away from the hustle and bustle of larger metropolitan areas.

Since our last communication our daughter, Kimberly, and her husband Gene have blessed us with a new granddaughter, Aileen Lee Fulcher. They chose to name her after my mother, Aileen Lee (Ruffner) McNeely. It is quite an honor for us, considering my mother died five months prior to Kimberly being born. The wonders of the Internet allow

us the luxury of watching our grandchildren grow as well as permitting us to communicate regularly with our children. Considering the struggles our ancestors had just existing daily, it is remarkable what has transpired in the two hundred and sixty years since the Ruffners first came to the valley.

I am sure that most everyone has received the Genealogy Survey that will assist in updating our family genealogy. This is a tremendous undertaking by the Publications Committee and one not to be taken lightly. The time spent by us will no doubt prove to be a valuable tool to future generations. A couple of examples may help you to appreciate what can transpire because of our efforts. As a result of our work to date, I found that there are at least three "cousins" that live in the southern California area within easy driving distance of each other, and none of them knew this fact until we began this project. Also, we have come to know "Cousin" Harry Smiley and his wife Gale who lived within walking distance of Betty and me when we resided in South Carolina. Please complete your survey and return it to your team leader as soon as possible. Also, if you know of others who need a copy of the survey, please let your team leader know.

Many of us are planning to attend the Booker T. Washington family reunion in the Roanoke, Virginia area the weekend of June 24th, 2000. In addition, our family association Board of Directors and Publications Committee are planning to meet here in Luray beginning on June 26th, 2000. If you have issues you would like for your board to consider, please contact one of them listed in your newsletter. Better yet, you are invited to come join us at these meetings and present your issue in person. Any member who wishes to join us for this occasion will be welcomed to attend.

Just a reminder, membership dues for the year 2000 are now due. The task of updating our genealogy will be costly and your contributions will be more than welcome by your association.

Back to the Valley Reunion 2001 Update

Work is continuing on planning our family reunion scheduled for June 14-17, 2001 in Luray, Virginia. On Thursday, the 14th, the Board of Directors will meet and a genealogy workshop will be scheduled. The Page County Library will be open that night for those who want to perform research. Registration for the reunion will be held on Friday, the 15th. Friday evening, we will have activities at the Ruffner House. Saturday morning and afternoon will consist of tours of historic sites of the region. In addition, special events will be scheduled for the youth on Saturday. We will finish Saturday with the traditional banquet. Sunday, the 17th, we will have church services and conclude the day and reunion with a family picnic and family auction.

SAM

Booker T. Washington Family Reunion June 23-25, 2000



Booker T. Washington

Descendants and friends will gather in Roanoke, Virginia, June 23-25, to honor Booker T. Washington. Born, a slave, in 1856 in Hales Ford Virginia, he rose to become one of America's greatest educators. At the end of the Civil War, his family joined his stepfather in Malden, West Virginia. There, he became a servant in the home of General Lewis and Viola Ruffner. He recalls the Ruffners and his days in Malden in his stirring autobiography, *Up From Slavery*. He died in 1915, a relatively young man, who left a legacy of hope and determination to those who followed. The great Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, which he developed from two small buildings, stands as a monument to his lifelong pursuit of equal rights and education for African-Americans.

The 3-day event will include a visit to The Booker T. Washington National Monument and an evening vigil at the cabin where he was born.

Many Ruffner Family members plan to attend. The registration fees are \$95 for adults and children over 12 and over; \$60 for children ages 4-11. Registration fees cover most meals and all activities. For further registration information, contact: Edith Charles, 168 Audobon Ave., Mt. Vernon, NY 10552, (914) 667-4954.

Accommodations are available at the headquarters hotel for the reunion: The Clarion Hotel at the Roanoke Airport, (540) 362-4500 or Fax: (540) 362-4506.

Editor's Note: Check out the following web address to view *Up From Slavery*—metalab.unc.edu/docsouth/washington/washing.html

QUERIES

Seeking family ancestry of Sally (Ruffner) Potter (some sources give her name as Sarah), birthdate unknown, d.1895-6 of Bright's Disease; m.1889 Frederick Eugene Potter, b.1864, d.1950? They had 3 children: Lucy Mae b.1890, d.1970, m.1910 to C. B. Ellicott; Robert Henry (Rob) b.1892, d.1960, m. Pauline Carter; Mary Ethel (Ethel) b.1894, d.1966, m.1915 Earl Ellicott. Sally had one brother (known of), Frank Ruffner and he had at least one child, Frank, Jr. - probably 2 or 3 others. Frank Ruffner lived in Occaquan, VA and his family stayed in Washington, DC. Two of Sally's children, Lucy and Rob, were raised by an aunt (name unknown) in Luray, VA. Rob also stayed with his grandfather in Independent Hill, VA or Orlando, VA. **Please respond to Janet Brownell Enriquez, POB 432, Hay Springs, NE 69347** or email: jbe@haysprings.net. In contacting the seeker, please let them know where you saw their query and enclose a SASE.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS Ruffner Family Association Samuel H. McNeely, President Luray, Virginia

Jack Childers Fenwick Island, DE
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Ruffner Roots & Ramblings is published by

The Ruffner Family Association

Chartered and incorporated in 1999 to maintain a society of members who will research and preserve their common heritage through the collection of historical artifacts and documents that form the basis for knowledge and appreciation of the historical role played by the Ruffner descendants and their collateral lines in the settlement of the

American Frontier.

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EMMA LEE LEWIS AND 'THE BRICK'

BY JOSEPH W. RUFFNER

with significant contributions and inspiration from:

Emma Lee Lewis, Marlane Crockett Carr, Evadna Bartlett—*Daily Mail* Reporter,
and the *Charleston Daily Mail*

In mid-December, I received a nice little note from Emma Lee Lewis with a clipping of a newspaper article. Emma Lee is a very considerate friend and member of the Ruffner Family Association. Her note indicated her concern that the whole Ruffner Family be made aware of the existence of a landmark house in her hometown of Eleanor, West Virginia.

In the note, she writes from Eleanor: "*There is a house here called the Joseph Ruffner House, the Red House and other names. Many wonder how old the house is - some say built in 1840 - then would have been built when we were called Virginia.*" She further states: "*Hope that sometime in the future you include this house in the Ruffner History.*"

Dear Ruffner Family friend - Emma Lee Lewis, consider it done; at least partially so! We are truly indebted to you for taking the time to pass along your comments and the printed articles [I've actually received 2 article clippings—this article is based on the first]. Your information opens yet another intriguing arena for exploratory research into the Ruffner Family's history.

The newspaper article titled; '*Historic Putnam house to reprise role as administrative building*', was written by Evadna Bartlett, Putnam Reporter for the *Charleston Daily Mail*, and was printed in the November 19, 1999, issue of the *Daily Mail*. It emphasizes the return of the house to a role of community service. We are grateful to Ms. Bartlett for her reporting efforts in first making this information available to the public by way of her article and, also, to her and the *Charleston Daily Mail* for allowing us to use the information. She and the *Daily Mail* are deserving of our appreciation and recognition. Some information from Ms. Bartlett's *Charleston Daily Mail* article of Friday, November 19, 1999, is quoted here:

Eleanor—A Putnam County town has taken a step forward in its plan to move back in time. Eleanor has purchased the Red House, a pre-Civil War home that housed federal administrative offices during the decade Eleanor was an experimental homestead community for families hit hard by the Depression. Officials plan to eventually move town hall from its current offices just across W.Va. 62 into the imposing 1840s-era, red brick house,.....

A historic marker in front of the Red House declares it was built by Joseph Ruffner in 1840 on land originally granted to George Washington in 1773. Eleanor Councilwoman Marlane Crockett Carr suspects the house may be even older, although she hasn't found documentation. Her family was among the homesteaders who settled in the community, first known as Red House Farms and later renamed in honor of Eleanor Roosevelt, who helped set up homestead communities and visited the Putnam site. Just 4 years old when her family was selected to participate in the project, Carr said the red brick house contrasted dramatically with the basic, two-bedroom houses the 150 homesteaders erected.

"It was the beautiful thing in a drab, drab life we were experiencing," she said. "Everything was alike and that was such a beautiful building." To a small girl that was a mansion.....

But the building was never the Red House to homesteaders, she said. It was "The Brick".

Since the time of its depression-era federal use, the house has been privately owned and used. Now with its purchase by the town of Eleanor, it will undergo some renovation and modification before becoming the town

(continued on page 5)

hall. The initial plan is for the town hall offices to occupy one wing and the rest of the house will be for public use. The Eleanor town mayor, John Harris, mentions in another article having a town museum as a part of the public portion of the building.

Just from what we've learned so far, we see once more evidence of the Ruffner legacy and its influence within the community and at least some of the lives it has touched. The included statements, and others not included herein, from Marlane Crockett Carr about her lifelong observation of the house and the impressions it made on her as a young girl speak directly to this. She is not only a member of one of the first 150 families selected for the homestead project, she is also a former 4th-grade student of Emma Lee Lewis. Thanks to Emma's concern and initiative, we now have this information and a new Family friend.

In communicating with Marlane, I have found her to be a wealth of knowledge about the house, the Eleanor area, and the various families who lived in the area. To this day, she remains a great admirer of the house and an advocate of its influence upon their community. Emma's note had introduced Marlane in the following manner; *"I have a younger friend here interested in history of the Ruffner house...."* To my way of thinking, Marlane is not merely interested—she is passionate about this house!

I believe, even in my presently diminished mental capacity, there is some question as to the accuracy of a 'Joseph' being the builder and the date of the construction. As with a lot of our Family's past, these items need more research. Marlane has been, and continues, searching for the documentation of the actual builder and the date of construction.

We would all be appreciative if someone in the geographic area convenient to Eleanor would decide to look into the documentation of this Ruffner site. Marlane has stated her eager willingness to be of whatever assistance she is able.

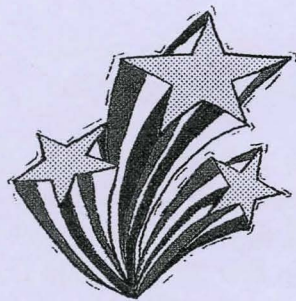
Before I close, let me say how thankful we are to have heard from Emma Lee and to have been introduced to Marlane. We welcome Marlane as a new friend of the Ruffner Family and I look forward to meeting her and Emma Lee sometime in the future. The whole Family remains grateful for the continuing friendship of her teacher—Emma Lee Lewis. So now you know the connection between Emma Lee Lewis and "The Brick".



An exterior view of "The Brick" and the State of West Virginia historical marker.

The town of Eleanor will be observing its 65th Anniversary on June 23-25. See the next page for details.

EVADNA BARTLETT/DAILY MAIL



**ELEANOR's
65th ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION
June 23—25, 2000**

The town of Eleanor, WV, just a short distance west of their state capital, Charleston on highway 62, will spend the weekend of June 23—25 celebrating the 65th Anniversary of the founding of their town. And...

You're Invited!! The Ruffner Family has received a personal and open invitation for each of us to attend. They would like to have a good number there representing our Family's connections to this area and taking part in their Celebration. We also would like this to happen. Hopefully, We will see You in Eleanor!

Much interest and enthusiasm has been generated by the town's acquisition of and preservation plans for the Ruffner House. An example of this is to be found in their request for a copy of the Ruffner Quilt pattern. The ladies of the community expressed their desire to make a quilt from this pattern. The finished quilt will hang in the Ruffner House. They have the pattern already. So now, they can begin their project.

The Celebration's final plans and exact times of events are not yet precise. Listed for your benefit are the dates and known activities.

Friday, June 23rd - Kick-off Dinner - Activities and Music at the Town Park. (Dinner tickets will be available to the public.)

Saturday, June 24th - Town Parade - Activities and Music at the Park - Open-House Tours of the Ruffner House (locally known as 'The Brick').

Sunday, June 25th - Church Services - Activities and Music at the Park - Open-House Tours of the Ruffner House.

Mark your calendar—drive on over—introduce yourself—then enjoy visiting and celebrating with the friendly folks of this small community. I think you will be glad you did. See you in Eleanor!

More specific information can be obtained closer to the time of the Celebration weekend. The Town Council members spearheading the Celebration are:

Marlane Carr - (304) 586-2409
Marilyn Jones - (304) 586-9706
William Reed - (304) 586-9173

**THE GSPC WILL
CELEBRATE ITS
10TH ANNIVERSARY
April 28-30**

The Genealogical Society of Page County, Virginia, celebrates its 10th Anniversary, 28-30 April 2000 in Luray, Virginia.

On the 28th of April you are invited to research at the Page County Courthouse and the Page Public Library.

On Saturday morning, the 29th of April, the following lectures are scheduled: "Chancery Records and Virginia's Manuscript Collections" by Barbara Vines Little, M.Ed.; "Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor" by Robert Moore, II; and "The Skeltons-from Page County, Virginia, to the World" by Earl F. Skelton, Ph.D., C.G.

In the afternoon, four local landmarks and churches will be visited.

On the evening of the 29th, attend the Anniversary Banquet with Charles Ballard, author of *Assessing Slavery in Page and Rockingham Counties, Virginia*.

On Sunday the 30th of April, attend a non-denominational church service at the Mauck Meeting House and tour Calendine, the home of sculptor Herbert Barbee.

Cost: \$45 for members; \$55 for non-members. Walking tour of Luray \$5.00. For more information, please contact:

Teresa Kelley
5359 Macwood Dr.
Dale City, VA 22193
(703) 670-5381
takelley@erols.com or

visit GSPC's website at:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~vagspc/pcgs.htm>

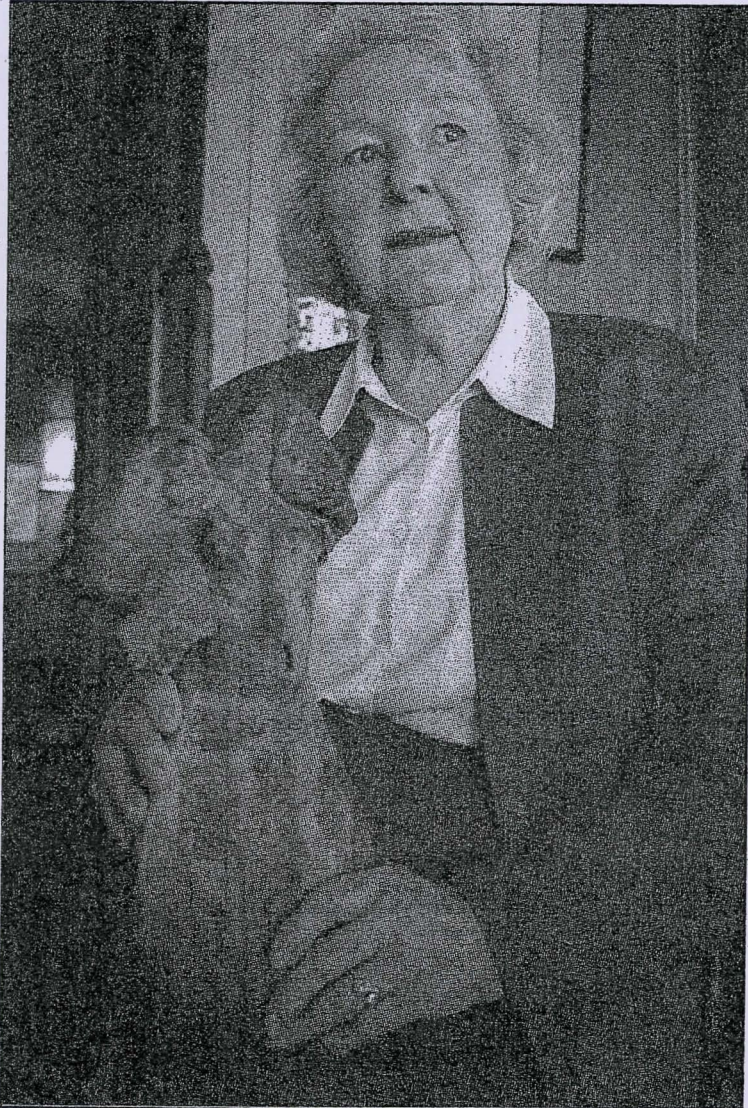
RUFFNERS IN THE NEWS—

From the Daily Courier, Prescott, AZ - Wednesday, May 26, 1999 ~

Elks Theater honors its savior

Historic preservation and arts award touches, surprises Elisabeth Ruffner

(Excerpts from an article by Sandy Moss, Reporter for The Daily Courier)



Courier/Reb Densmore

Prescott preservationist Elisabeth Ruffner holds the first Elks Theater Award for Historic Preservation and the Arts at her home.

Prescott preservationist **Elisabeth Ruffner**, who played a key role in saving the historic Elks Theater in the early 1980s, received the first "Elks Theater Award for Historic Preservation and the Arts" during a special ceremony for a Mother's Day benefit May 9, at the theater.

"She has mentored scores of people who had caught her vision of historic preservation over the past 30 years and has helped to create a vital arts scene and to preserve our open spaces for generations to come," said Gail Mangham, acting artistic director for the Prescott College Elks Theater. "Without her work in helping to save the theater, we certainly wouldn't be sitting here today," Mangham said.

The award itself, a carving of a mother holding an infant, was the work of Don Routson who carved it from the heart of an alligator juniper tree.

"This award embodies your spirit and the spirit of the day, an image that speaks to the strength and vulnerability that is yours..." Mangham told Ruffner, "and most assuredly the strength and vulnerability of the grande dame of Prescott, the Elks Theater."

The honor touched and surprised Ruffner. "It's a great honor, really, because of this theater having so much connection to my family," Ruffner said, "And it could've been lost, it could have become offices. I'm glad I could think of a way to save it, though others did the actual saving," she added.

In 1982, when the Elks Theater was for sale and it was questionable if it would remain a theater, Ruffner contacted the Arizona Community Foundation, which in turn found private charity foundations in Prescott which bought the theater and donated it to the foundation.

Elisabeth "Bette" (Friedrich) Ruffner is the widow of Lester Ward "Budge" Ruffner (desc Benjamin) who, with his cousin George of Inola, OK, began the Ruffner Family Reunions in 1991, at Mason, IL which culminated in the formation of the Ruffner Family Association. As Bette wrote to RR&R, "we thank you and all concerned for making my husband's idea such an outstanding, growing reality for all of us."

On behalf of the Ruffner Family Association and RR&R, we thank you Bette for your outstanding work in historic preservation and for the association. Our heartfelt congratulations for the prestigious and well deserved honors you received. *(Editor & Staff, RR&R)*

Trekking thru OH, WV, and VA

(My trip to the Ruffner Family Reunion and beyond ~ June 1999)

By Joseph Wilson Ruffner

The time for me to attend the Ruffner Family Association's Biennial Reunion at Lancaster, OH, in June 1999, was rapidly approaching. I found myself amazed such an event was happening. What was more amazing, after a lifetime of wondering about the relations from this side of my heritage and how the various ancestral sites would look, I would experience them myself. I was actually going to be there to meet the related people and see some of the sites settled and inhabited by my Ruffner ancestors. It was not so much a surprise for I had known about the Association for over two years. I found some information about it shortly before their 1997 Reunion in Luray, VA. After discovering the Association, I corresponded with a good many of the members and became involved in some of the Association's projects.

My sister, Sydney, and I had often speculated and spoken about what a trip of this sort would be like and what interesting prospects it held. I can't begin to describe her mental vision, but it couldn't be too dissimilar from my own. The only things we had to base our imaginings on were the same limited bits of family history, which we had grown up knowing. These were a scattered lot of family stories and events, some from times past and others more recent. A few of these were completely unrelated to what we knew about our branch of this family. We knew very little about how these persons or events related to us. But, they all ignited the same reaction. "Who, or what, is this? Wouldn't it be nice to know more?" They might not have been so important on a national scale, but to us they held a certain fascination. Now I would have the opportunity to apply a brush of color to some of the pictures of my imagination.

I planned to spend about 10 to 12 days traveling; visiting friends in Ohio and attending the Reunion at Lancaster. From there I would be off to Charleston, WV, then Lexington and Luray, VA. These latter three being places I knew about from my scant, but growing, knowledge of the family's history. I had never been in Ohio, nor West Virginia, nor to the Northern part of the Shenandoah Valley. The prospect of seeing and feeling them for the first time conjured up visions of what it had possibly been like for my ancestors as they trekked to new lands in their journey through history. Now I was faced with a similar trek into the unknown. During this trip, I frequently was reminded of the similarities of our experiences. I will include some of the images which came to me at the appropriate places in this narrative. And so, I begin.

June 1, 1999—On June 1, I left Huntsville and traveled to Murfreesboro, TN, to spend the evening and night with my son, Jody, and daughter-in-law, Amy..... I planned to arise early the next morning and resume my driving. My son was to wake me about 5:00, when he got up to go to work.

June 2—3, 1999—As I happened to wake about 3:30, much before them, I quietly left. This helped me bypass the morning traffic around Nashville, it being so early. But, shortly after entering Kentucky, my luck changed. There were soon heavy clouds everywhere and strong, gusty winds. The rain came down with a force and I had to make several cautious stops. I had a timetable of sorts, but mainly I wanted to survive. The time I had envisioned it to take to get to Louisville and then across Kentucky grew by about 2 hours because of the storms. Finally, I reached Covington and drove onto the bridge crossing the Ohio River into Cincinnati. Here, I faced another big challenge. How to change lanes and access the correct exit ramp while in the midst of a bridge high above the Ohio River. I was busily checking the signs and my mirrors to make the lane changes. Suddenly, I was reminded that Emanuel had to cross the river with his Conestoga wagon filled with not only his household goods, but his family as well. My traffic perils were certainly no worse than his facing some floating debris or swollen waters. Thankfully, we both survived our own crossings of the Ohio. I had finally made it to the great Northwest Territory. Very shortly, after passing through the environs of Cincinnati, I found the land being used for farming much as I had imagined it would be. Large expansive farms with hardly a ripple in their topography. It was not long until I found myself at the turnoff point to go to my friend's home in Greenfield, OH. Within less than a mile after exiting the interstate, much to my surprise, the land began rolling with small dips and swells. This didn't fit my imagined picture. I thought it would remain much the same as that I was just traveling through. The short distance to Greenfield was covered at a leisurely pace so I could drive and look at the same time. Passing the little country baseball fields mown from a field of grass with their chicken wire backstops, spotting the small country crossroads stores, and reading the sometimes crude signs along the roadside kept me fascinated. The stores reminded me of the many times I had been in just such a store as a youth. I was also reminded of the times when I had mown grass in a similar field so I could play ball.

Greenfield was like the vision you see, if you've ever thought of how a small rural town would look. I easily found my way to the door of the Wagner's home. My knock was quickly answered and I was received with much warmth. I spent two wonderful days visiting and renewing our acquaintance with all the family members.

June 4, 1999—On the morning of June 4, I left Greenfield and got underway toward Lancaster. It was a continuation of the rolling scenery and made for a very pleasant early morning drive. I was soon passing the markers denoting the homeplace of General William Tecumseh Sherman. I was thankful my attention had to be focused on the road and traffic, that way I didn't have to invent an excuse for ignoring this historic site. In downtown Lancaster, I inquired at the Visitor's Bureau about the location of the motel. Their

(continued on page 9)

Trekking thru OH, WV, and VA (continued from page 8)

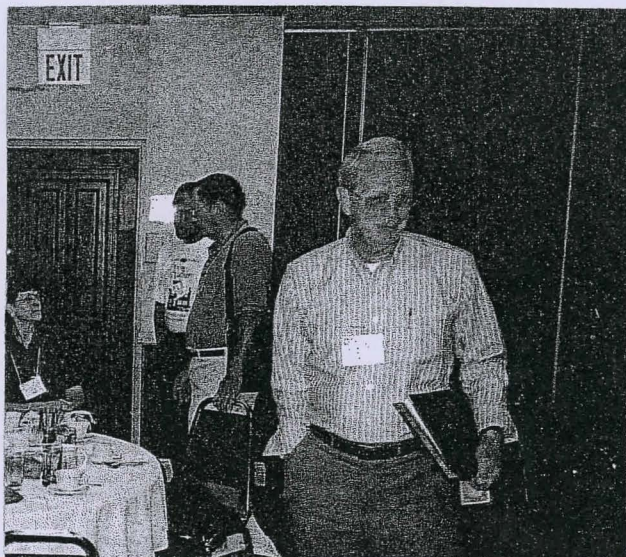
directions soon had me at the motel desk checking in for my Reunion stay. I inquired as to whether they were still serving breakfast in the restaurant. Since they were, I decided to eat before going to my room and unloading the car. As the hostess showed me to my seating, I overheard someone saying something about, "Uncle Lester sold his land..." I knew immediately, I was in the company of some other Ruffners for the first time in my life. I took my seat and smugly enjoyed a few minutes of eavesdropping. These persons were seated in two groups at adjacent tables. They took no notice of the stranger seated at the table behind and across the aisle from them. Their conversations were going back and forth from table to table. I didn't understand much about what they were saying, since I don't have an Uncle Lester; my uncles' names were Tom and Bill. As I looked around, I spotted a couple of persons I recognized from either pictures I'd seen or descriptions I'd heard. I continued to sit and observe for a short time, just enjoying the feeling the moment brought and awaiting an opportunity to speak without interrupting. My moment came. The one person to whom I could accurately give a name arose to speak to the waitress. As he was returning to his table our eyes met. I spoke first, "How are you, Bob?" As he hesitantly stood with a questioning look, I arose and offered my hand. He replied, "I'm fine, do I know who you are?" To this I said, "I'll give you a hint, I'm having grits." He knew immediately, he was standing in front of someone with whom he had corresponded for over two years by phone and e-mail, but never met. He says he really felt as though he knew me when he first saw me. I don't know if he really did or not, but then again maybe he's psychic. The others, besides Bob Sheets, I remember from the introductions at this first ever meeting were: Virginia Riggs, George Ruffner and Gary Ruffner. I moved across to Bob and Virginia's table and we continued the conversations. Others came and went as we ate together and new introductions were made. I won't attempt to name those I met in the next few minutes, as I would surely get them wrong or leave out someone. It was a most pleasant way to begin the momentous experience for me. How wonderful!

The preciseness of what followed what from this point on is sometimes vague at best. Meeting some of the relatives I had been communicating with, and even more whom I had no previous knowledge of, was an exciting time. In fact, the time went too swiftly right past us without so much as an apology for not allowing a prolonged moment for quiet conversation.

By the time I had lunch, there began a whirlwind of activities. The displays being set up, meeting kinfolks, registration opening, meeting kinfolks, Cemetery Committee meeting, meeting kinfolks. All this time after arriving at the motel in Lancaster, I was wishing my sister, Anne, and her son, Tim, would get here soon. I was concerned about their being on the road and, besides, they were missing some of the fun. Shortly before evening's Opening Reception, I found out they were already there. I had missed their checking in while in the Committee meeting. When I spotted them, they were engaged in conversation with some kinfolks. I knew then they were in for a grand ole time and would feel the same as I, right at home. We have talked since and we both agree, this experience 'twas marvelous!

Joe's Trek continues in the next issue of RR&R.

The Author—



Joseph Wilson "Joe" Ruffner (desc. Joseph), Huntsville, Alabama, was born in Bessemer, AL to Lewis Ruffner and Rachel Elizabeth Wilson. He has one brother and four sisters. His three children (by former wife, Emily Elizabeth Greene) are: Marion Alexandria Ruffner, Melissa Anne Ruffner and Joseph Wilson Ruffner, Jr. (see page 15 of this issue for the latest edition to Joe's family).

Since joining the Ruffner Family Association in 1997, Joe has become a highly valued member, both in voice and deed. He currently serves as a member of the Executive Board, the Cemetery Restoration Committee, the Publications Committee and the Editorial Board of Ruffner Roots & Ramblings. He essentially designed and created the Ruffner Genealogy Survey forms you recently received and is the team captain for that research on Joseph's branch of the family. As you can see, from this issue of the newsletter, he is also a very talented writer.

Joe's remembrances as he treks through Ohio, West Virginia and Virginia will continue as a serialization in the next 3 or 4 issues of this newsletter. I know you will enjoy Joe's enthusiastic and oft-times humorous account of his visit to the land of his ancestors as much as I did. (*The Editor*)

History of the Ruffner Family of Kanawha

by Charles Hedrick from *The Charleston Gazette*, 1884 (5th in a series)

Sketches of Daniel, Catherine and Col. Charles Ruffner

DANIEL RUFFNER was the fifth son of Joseph. He was tall and of great muscular power and physical endurance. No man was better known or more respected throughout the County of Kanawha. Imbued with an extraordinary fund of common sense, which was methodized by much reading and close observation and thorough investigation of all practical subjects, he was emphatically a man of his own head, and what is aptly called a long-headed man in business transactions, rarely erring in his judgment of men and affairs.

Though never a member of any church organization, he was in his personal conduct and bearing, and in his intercourse with his neighbors, uniformly kind and charitable. Always polite and gentlemanly; his rule was that it cost nothing to be polite to everybody. That that quality should be assiduously cultivated; being like proverbial honesty, the best policy. His politeness, however, was natural. Obliging and accommodating to all his neighbors and they esteemed and respected him accordingly. He was firm and stern in his enmities, but considerate and forbearing, and not given to rash resentments.

His chief business in the first forty years of his adult life was cultivating his splendid farm just above Charleston, and on which he resided many years. He planted and beautified his lands with the choicest fruit trees and shrubbery. Cultivated the ground according to the best methods then known, both for beauty and productiveness. He had a great many evergreens on his place, and among them many cedars which all grew in the form of perfect cones without any pruning or other care; so it was often remarked that he might stick a tree anywhere in his grounds, and it would grow up in any way or any shape he wanted it. Nature seemed to aid his good taste in everything connected with his farm and its cultivation.

On the upper part of his farm he built a salt furnace, which he sometimes ran or operated himself, and at other times by lessees. This property brought him considerable revenue. Rarely did he every make a mistake in business or fail in anything he undertook. But what seems remarkable in a man of his breadth and activity of mind, he had no taste for public employments; nor did his ambition covet public honors. Unsought he received from the Governor of the state the appointment of Justice of the Peace in the year 1809, and was invested by operation of law, with the office of High Sheriff when he held the oldest commission as a Justice.

While he lived on his farm he accumulated a large estate. On the 9th of May, 1841, he lost his wife, who was some ten years his senior. She was a Miss Elizabeth Painter, of Shenandoah County, Virginia. Was born 27 January, 1769. They were married in the year 1799, in his 20th year. And to use his own words, she was a most excellent wife and mother, and a faithful Christian. His children then all grown had left him and were in business for themselves and self supporting.

Being thus alone, he concluded to marry again, and did so in 1844. His second wife was Elizabeth Singleton, a widow, and daughter of Samuel D. Honeyman, one of Charleston's earliest citizens. Of course his children opposed his second marriage at the age of 65. Nevertheless he did no injustice to either of them, but gave his large farm and other lands and some other property, in equal proportions, to them, making them all independent. After his second marriage he lived for a while in Charleston and then removed to Cincinnati, where he purchased considerable real estate with a portion of his fortune that remained to him after giving what he gave to his children as already stated. From Cincinnati he removed to a farm he owned in Fairfield County, Ohio. This was in 1850.

In a pond on this farm a much loved son of the second marriage, named Walter, was accidentally drowned. This home became intolerable to him after this sad event, and shortly after it he returned to Kanawha where he purchased for a residence the house lately occupied by the family of the late George Jeffries on Capitol Street. In 1858 he purchased a farm two miles south of Newport, Kentucky, to which he removed with his family. During the war he found himself so much annoyed by the troubles incident to the hostilities that he removed with his family to his old residence in Cincinnati, where he remained until the end of the contest, when he returned to Kentucky; and died there on July 31, 1865, in the 86th year of his age. He is buried in Evergreen Cemetery, back of Newport.

By his first wife, Daniel Ruffner had seven children born in the following order, viz: Catherine, 24 September 1799; Charles, 24 February, 1801; Joel, 11 December, 1802; Augustus, 15 June, 1805; James and Andrew L., (twins) 27 December, 1810, and Elizabeth, 5 July, 1810.

Editor's Note: Daniel had five children by his second wife, Elizabeth Honeyman Singleton. Walter, 24 November, 1844; Daniel, 1 February, 1847; Joseph, 29 October, 1848; Virginia, 30 June, 1851, and William St John Elliott, 23 March, 1854.

CATHERINE RUFFNER—The oldest child of Daniel Ruffner, married a cousin, David C. Ruffner, of Ohio. They lived in Fairfield County, Ohio, where she died October 20th, 1849.

(continued on page 11)

HISTORY OF THE RUFFNER FAMILY OF KANAWHA *(continued from page 10)*

COL. CHARLES RUFFNER, the oldest son of Daniel, was very tall and muscular, and possessed an iron constitution. Though of strong will, unflinching courage and fair intelligence, he seemed to be purposeless in all his aims and methods, and frittered away his opportunities, which were many, of being a useful and wealthy man. The nimrod of the family, he wasted a large part of his early years, and many of the years of his

continued on page 11)

prime and even of his old age, in pursuing the bear, the deer and other game, which were formerly abundant in the neighboring mountains. Indeed, he enjoyed the pleasures of the chase more than any other species of amusement. Unfortunately, he was too fond of his cups and wasted too much of his time and substance in riotous living. He was popular in the county, however, and well known in it and adjoining counties. In the year 1857 or 1858, he was elected to the Legislature of Virginia, and served one session. At one time he

operated a salt furnace on his father's property above Charleston, was successful and made some money, but his generous nature exhausted it as fast as he made it. Afterwards he was chosen salt inspector (an office that paid well) by the salt makers, and served in that capacity for a number of years.

Colonel Charles was married twice. First to Miss Ann Hedrick, of Botetourt County, Virginia. His wife died November 6th 1852. Two or three years after her death he married Miss Elizabeth Wilson, a daughter of Dr. Wilson, a celebrated physician of Kanawha. By his first wife he had two children. Mary, the elder, married Charles Rolf, of Cabell County, West Virginia. Rolf is dead and his widow not resides in Huntington, Cabell County. The other child is Lucius, who went to California when quite young—was never married. He returned recently and is living in Kanawha.

The fruits of Col. Charles' last marriage were several children. A son, who died in his youth in 1871. The others are daughters, married and living in Cabell County. His second wife died before his death, which occurred two or three years ago in Cabell County, at the home of one of his daughters.

AMENDE HONORABLE

It is said that Old Homer, author of the Iliad and the Odyssey, sometimes slept, or at least nodded, while engaged on his immortal work; so the humble writer of these pages has found that he was once at least a napping or a nodding while engaged on this, his ephemeral work; or that the printer was—but no matter. The writer stated in his sketch of the late General Lewis Ruffner, that the General left surviving him, four of the children of his first wife—two sons and two daughters. And thought he had stated their names and what became of them, and where they now reside. But on looking over that sketch as printed, he finds that such information was omitted. This omission was certainly not intentional on the part of the writer, and he now takes pleasure in making reparation as follows:

Lewis Ruffner, Jr., one of the four, was engaged for some time in the sale of salt in St. Louis, where he married. Was afterwards in the same business in Evansville, Indiana. Removing thence to Kanawha, he manufactured salt for several years and otherwise managed the property of his father, as trustee. He is now in active business in Nashville, Tennessee, where he resides with his family. **Sallie**, the oldest daughter, married Dr. Smith, of Kentucky. She is now a widow and resides in Missouri. **Julia** married Samuel Gwynn, then of Louisville, Kentucky, but they now reside in Brooklyn, New York, where he is in business as a cotton broker. **Joel S.** resides in Malden, Kanawha County. He married a Miss Stanley.



HOLLY GROVE MANSION, Charleston, WV

"The house that Daniel built" as it appeared in 1995 during the Ruffner Family Reunion (see page 12).

(Series continues in next issue)

HOLLY GROVE MANSION

Daniel Ruffner built his home in 1815, on the site of his parents' homestead. The topography of the land at that time was much different than today. A portion of the lawn sloped down to the James River to a boat landing on the river bank. The house was the focal point of a vast plantation that included a great log barn, a granary, blacksmith shop, loom and weaving house, smokehouse, and other buildings. There were gardens of vegetables and flowers and, in the distance, orchards, fields of grain and pasture for cattle and horses. North of the house, there were extensive vineyards with a keeper's house and nearby, a wooded area known as Ruffner Grove—a spot for picnic parties, speech-making and public gatherings.

The house was originally a square two-storied structure built of large, heavy brick made in England. The walls are eighteen inches thick. The kitchen was housed in a separate brick building. Virtually all the interior woodwork was destroyed by a fire in 1832, but repairs were quickly made. An interesting stairway at the end of the entrance hall extends to the third floor of the house.

In the custom of the time, Daniel made the numerous bedrooms in his house available to travelers. Holly Grove's location on a stagecoach route made it ideal for overnight visitors. Family tradition records numerous people of prominence being entertained at the property including Daniel Boone, Henry Clay, Samuel Houston, John Audubon and in October, 1832, Andrew Jackson, President of the United States.

In later years, when Daniel distributed some of his property to the children of his first marriage, "Holly Grove" was given to his son, James. He and his wife, Martha Morton of Kentucky, lived there for many years.

In 1859 or 1860, James sold the house to his cousin, Silas R. Ruffner, son of Tobias Ruffner. Silas occupied the house for a longer period than Daniel or James.

Silas and his wife, Eliza Hadassah, had no children, and the house, after the death of his wife, became the property of a niece, Mary Ruffner. Mary later married Augustus McClung of Greenbrier County thus ending the connection of the Ruffner name with the house.

The house went through various ownerships through the years and was finally purchased in 1902, by James H. Nash. He made numerous alterations to the house including raising the roof to make the attic suitable for habitation, reduction of the dining room and an indoor kitchen. The front portico of the house was replaced by a circular entrance porch with white columns extending above the second floor.

Today, the house, a treasured landmark of Charleston, is headquarters for the West Virginia Commission on Aging. It is located at 1712 Kanawha Boulevard, next door to the Governor's mansion. A large portion of the land that once surrounded the beautiful old home is now occupied by the State Capitol and other government buildings. ■

Edith W. Johnson Gives Denver Talk

~by Robert N. Sheets

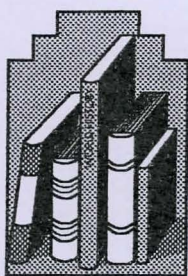
This past November, RFA member and granddaughter of Booker T. Washington, Edith Washington Johnson was in Denver, Colorado, spending Thanksgiving with her family. On the 27th she gave a talk and slide presentation to the Black Genealogy Search Group at the Ford-Warren Branch of the Denver Public Library. The BGSF was founded in 1982 by our RFA Board member Shirley Ann Sheets. Those in attendance were treated to some of the engaging details in the life of Booker T. Washington which she and her sister Margaret Clifford had presented to our Reunion last June in Lancaster, Ohio. Her slide show in Denver provided a historical background on her parents and siblings as well as the impact her grandfather had on the development of educational opportunities and the founding of Tuskegee Institute in 1881. She presented historical articles and correspondence between Washington and other famous black leaders of his time. One, George Washington Carver, was Edith's godfather.

Edith, daughter of Washington's youngest son, is retired from 36 years at her alma mater, Central State University where she served as Associate Dean of Students, Director of Admissions, Financial Aid and Coordinator of Counseling. She also told the Denver group of the historical connection between Dr. Washington and the Ruffner family; a connection to be celebrated next June in Roanoke, Virginia during the Washington Family Reunion. (See related article in this issue.)

Edith, who makes her home in Wilberforce, Ohio was visiting her two sons and their families: Eric & Nhi Hughes, their daughter My Linh; Ernest & Myrna Hughes; and Edith's niece Marguerite Johnson. Eric is with U.S. West, Ernest & Myrna work for the City of Denver and Marguerite is Director of the Rose Foundation in Denver. Shirley Ann, who arranged for Edith's lecture, says, "We all have a wonderful treat in store when we join with this beautiful family in honoring the relationship between our ancestors, Booker T. Washington with Viola and Lewis Ruffner. It will be a landmark event in the history of both our families. ■

*Friendship is the highest degree
of perfection in society.*

~Montaigne



BOOK REVIEW

All Hell Needs Is Water

by Budge Ruffner

Elisabeth and Melissa Ruffner have published a 1999 Edition of their husband and father's book, originally published in 1972. It includes the full manuscript of the original edition plus three stories which Budge had chosen for the first edition.

A wonderful book that will give you the feeling you are in the same room with the author as he relates folk history passed on by his father and grandfather; stories he actually lived and tales he jotted down during his travels. Although most of us never had the pleasure of meeting Budge Ruffner, by his own admission he loved to talk. He must have also been a good listener because these vignettes, so classically written, reveal little known historical facts and humorous recollections from the Arizona territory and the old West. A "must read" especially for those Ruffner Family members whose families never ventured farther than the Mississippi. This is the real Ruffner "Western Connection."

About the Author—Lester Ward "Budge" Ruffner (desc. Benjamin) was born in Prescott, AZ on March 17, 1918. His pioneer family arrived in the Arizona territory in 1867. His parents were Mary Ethelyn (Ward) Ruffner, the area's first public school music teacher, and Lester Lee Ruffner, who operated the Ruffner Funeral Home. He attended Loyola University in Los Angeles and graduated from the Cincinnati College of Embalming in 1939, before joining the family business. In August of 1940, he married Elisabeth "Bette" Friedrich of Cincinnati, OH. A prolific writer, he penned stories of the southwest published in the *Prescott Courier*, *Arizona Highways* magazine and many others. With his daughter, Melissa, he co-authored the *Arizona Territorial Sampler: Food and Lifestyles of a Frontier*, now in its 3rd edition. His outstanding list of community and state services would fill another column of this newsletter. Budge departed this life on May 14, 1996, leaving a treasury of western lore to this and following generations. He was a man who took the time to "jot it down."

Elisabeth and Melissa will be happy to fill orders for Ruffner Family members at the reduced price of \$15 each plus \$3 for shipping. Send your orders to or contact Elisabeth Ruffner at:

Ruffner-Cibola, Inc.
1403 Barranca Drive
Prescott, AZ 86305
Phone (602) 445-5644

Elisabeth and Melissa will autograph a personal inscription on request.

RUFFNER FAMILY WEB SITE IS ONLINE



Dan Ruffner (desc Joseph), son of Ernest H. and Rose Mary Ruffner, has purchased and designed a web site for the Ruffner Family. The site includes historical photos, family bible pages and a guest book. You can visit the site at:

<http://www.ruffnerfamily.org/>

Dan welcomes your comments and suggestions. You can do this by visiting the web site and signing in as a guest or contact Dan via e-mail at ruffned1@westat.com.

The Ruffner Family Association expresses appreciation to Dan for bringing us into the 21st Century.

New

From the Lancaster
Eagle-Gazette
October 19, 1999

Delores & Richard Troup (desc. Emanuel) have provided historical memorabilia items related to the village of Pleasantville, OH and a case in which to display them at the Municipal Building in Pleasantville. The donation of funds by the Troups has paved the way for this project to be carried out by the local historical society.

Congratulations to the Troups!

THOUGHTS ON GENEALOGY

- ~Genealogy: Tracing yourself back to better people.
- ~I trace my family history so I will know who to blame.
- ~Can a first cousin, once removed, return?
- ~Searching for lost relatives? Win the lottery!
- ~Do I even WANT ancestors?
- ~Genealogy: Where you confuse the dead and irritate the living.
- ~Every family tree has some sap on it.
- ~Friends come and go, but relatives tend to accumulate.
- ~Genealogists never die, they just lose their roots.
- ~Genealogy: A haystack full of needles. It's the threads I need.
- ~Heredity: Everyone believes in it until their children act like fools.
- ~I think my family tree is a few branches short of full bloom.
- ~Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards.
- ~Theory of relativity: If you go back far enough, we're all related.

Thanks to Cousin Jane Lucas (desc. Peter, Jr.) for these "gems of wisdom"

REMINDER

Page County Heritage Association Dues are now due. Membership is \$5.00 per year or lifetime membership is \$100.00. Send your dues to: Page County Heritage Association P.O. Box 627 Luray, VA 22835

The Association has some great programs scheduled this year. Don't miss out on them!

Ruffner Cookbooks and Patches

Copies of the Ruffner Family Cookbook and Coat of Arms patches are still available for sale. The cookbook contains a collection of recipes from Ruffner cousins across the country. The patches are a 3-1/4 x 4-1/4 replica of the Ruffner coat of arms. The patches are suitable to be ironed or stitched on a favorite blazer, jacket or shirt.

Costs: (includes postage)

Cookbooks	\$10.00
Patches	\$5.00

Send your check made payable to:

Roberta Kirwin
7700 Revenge Road, SW
Lancaster, OH 43130



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FAMILY NEWS



BIRTHS

Mary Elizabeth Ruffner (desc. Joseph) born on November 29, 1999, at 3:44 P.M. at the Middle Tennessee Medical Center, Murfreesboro, TN, weighing in at 7 lbs. and 3 oz., and 20 inches long.

Parents: **Joseph Wilson Ruffner, Jr.**

& **Amy (Goins) Ruffner**

Grandfather: **Joseph Wilson Ruffner, Sr.**

Aileen Lee Fulcher (desc. Joseph) born on December 13, 1999, at University Hospital, Augusta, GA.

Parents: **Robert & Kimberly (McNeely) Fulcher**

Grandparents: **Sam & Betty McNeely, Luray, VA**

Congratulations to the parents and grandparents and a hearty welcome to Mary Elizabeth and Aileen Lee as the newest Ruffner Family members.



*Family Congratulations
go out to ~*

Norman & Marilyn (Letourneau) Ruffner of Steilacoom, Washington who celebrated 50 caring, sharing years on December 3, 1999.

Norman (desc. Emanuel) & Marilyn are the parents of 10 children and 9 grandchildren; who raised a glass to toast their thoughtful parents for being their role models, teachers, friends, and heroes.

In Memoriam



Eugene C. Ruffner (desc. Benjamin) of Richmond, Virginia, passed away Wednesday, January 12, 2000. He was the beloved husband of Virginia C. Ruffner. He is also survived by two nieces and four nephews. Eugene was a self-employed investor. He was interred at Westhampton Memorial Park.

Eugene was the son of John Thomas Ruffner and Grace Irma (Warriner) Ruffner; grandson of John Henry Ruffner and Mary Scott Brooks; great grandson of Reuben Ruffner and Nancy Compton and the gr-gr grandson of Benjamin Ruffner and Elizabeth Heistand.

Eugene was preceded in death by his parents; one brother, John and three sisters—Virginia, Thelma and Margaret Evelyn.

F. Earl Oatney (desc. Emanuel), 72, of Lancaster, OH passed away Friday, November 19, 1999, at Fairfield Medical Center.

He was a well known Lancaster businessman, having owned and operated F. Earl Oatney Insurance Agency State Farm for many years. He was a U.S. Army veteran of Korea and a member of the American Legion. Earl was a member of the Masonic Lodge and the First United Methodist Church of Lancaster.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Norma Oatney; son, Keith Oatney of Lancaster; daughter and son-in-law, Susan and Curtis Pooler of Machias, ME; 5 grandchildren; sister, Miriam Lineberger of Lancaster; brother and sister-in-law, Dale and Connie Oatney.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bernard and Ethel Spitler Oatney. Earl was descended from Emanuel through Jacob/Jacob II/Caleb Abraham/Xema Florence (his grandmother).

Earl was interred at Hampson Cemetery in Pleasantville, OH. The Lancaster Veteran Burial Detail conducted grave side rites.



The Editor's Desk

Whew! This has been a big issue to put together. I am so grateful and pleased for all the input coming into the RR&R headquarters. Special thanks go out to Joe Ruffner, Emma Lee Lewis, Marlane Crockett Carr, Evadna Bartlett, the GSPC, Elisabeth Ruffner, Bob Sheets, Dan Ruffner, Roberta Kirwin, Jane Lucas and Julia Penny.

Looks like the Ruffners will have a busy Spring and Summer this year with all the doings in Virginia and West Virginia. Hope you'll be able to attend one of these events. The gracious invitations received from the Booker T. Washington family and our friends in Eleanor, WV are greatly appreciated.

The Genealogical Society of Page County 10th anniversary celebration in April should also be an interesting affair. If you haven't seen it, GSPC has a new newsletter, *Mountain Memories*. Our congratulations to our friends at GSPC on the occasion of their 10th anniversary and their new publication.

Don't forget to pay your 2000 dues. Our membership year runs from January 1—December 31. And, please complete and send in your genealogy survey.

As always, sincere thanks for reading RR&R and for supporting the Ruffner Family Association.

Love,
Cousin Joan

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Due to all the activities in June, the deadline for the next issue of RR&R will be extended to July 15, 2000. Therefore, the revised schedule of deadline dates and publication dates for the remainder of the year is as follows:

Summer Issue DL July 15/Pub Aug 15
 Fall Issue DL Sept 15/Pub Oct 15
 Winter Issue DL Nov 15/Pub Dec 15

Please keep the news coming. We value your input and look forward to hearing from all.



*At this glad time of year when earth blossoms anew
 We're sending three wishes, especially for you.
 May each minute of Easter be as lovely as spring
 And as happy and gay as the robins that sing.
 May the joys of the season be with you each hour
 As tulips and daffodils burst into flower,
 And may sunshine and blue skies enrich every day
 And bring lots of happiness always - - your way!*

**Happy Easter to the Ruffner Family & Friends
 from the Ruffner Family Association & the staff of RR&R**