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### Ruffner Roots and Ramblings, Vol. 3, Issue 3

Ruffner Family Association

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# RUFFNER ROOTS & RAMBLINGS

Volume 3, Issue #3

December 2000

## Christmas Musings



Twass the week before Christmas  
and all through my abode  
Were boxes and shopping bags  
by the truck load.

I had just settled down to  
begin the big wrap  
When out on my porch  
I heard a tap, tap.

I ran to the door and  
looked all around.  
Thank goodness, a full mailbox  
was all that I found.

I gathered it up, spread it  
out on the floor.  
There were cards & letters,  
bills & ads by the score.

A large brown envelope  
caught my attention.  
It didn't seem to contain  
items previously mentioned.

I opened it up and  
what did appear,  
The Ruffner R&R -  
last issue - this year.

I felt rather guilty putting  
aside my chores,  
But set about getting  
myself off all fours.

I sat eagerly down with  
newsletter in hand  
To read the latest about  
the Ruffner clan.

A message from President Sam  
and a new "Where is it" quiz.  
Joe Ruffner was still trekking.  
Not there yet? Gee whiz!

Stories of people from the  
past were there to view.  
Booker T. & Sheriff George  
to name just two.

A new feature had started, "Know  
your Board" was its name.  
To finish the Website was  
an RFA aim.

Enclosed was a bill for my  
2001 dues.  
Guess I'll forget about  
buying new shoes.

Lo and behold, time for  
the next reunion is near.  
It's scheduled for June 14-17  
in the very next year.

I resolved to attend and  
travel by car.  
After all, Luray, VA can't  
be that far.

I'd ask the Good Lord to give  
us good weather,  
But what matters most is we'll  
all be together.

I hope all of you - your kith  
and your kin  
Will be in the Valley when  
the festivities begin.

Until then, I exclaim with  
enthusiasm and elation -  
**MERRY CHRISTMAS &  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
from the  
**RUFFNER FAMILY ASSOCIATION**





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### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement is made  
that the Ruffner Family  
Association has returned  
to its ancestral roots.

Effective immediately, our  
official address is:

**Ruffner Family  
Association  
PO BOX #351  
LURAY, VA 22835**

Please make note of it. All present and  
future dues invoices will carry this address.

Bob Sheets, our organizing chair, who has  
served as our treasurer since the inception  
of the association, has resigned and  
Nancy Lee (Ruffner) Shifflett of Luray, VA  
will be serving as the interim treasurer  
until the 2001 Reunion.

## A Message From the Association President Sam McNeely

Fall is definitely one of the prettiest times of the year here in the valley of our ancestors. At the time of my writing, the annual Heritage Festival has just concluded and was a rousing success again. It is a vivid reminder of what our ancestors endured to make their life more enjoyable. Many of our Ruffner "cousins" and their families play an integral part in the festival each year.

Work continues on the planning of our 2001 family reunion to be held here in June. The headquarters will be The Days Inn of Luray, which was The Ramada Inn for the 1997 reunion. Early indications are that we will have the largest attendance of any previous gathering. **A separate mailing with more details about the 2001 Reunion is being prepared. It will be in the mail to you this month.** Please respond at your earliest opportunity.

Hardly a month goes by that we don't have family members come to Luray to explore their ancestry. This is one of the more enjoyable aspects of living here and representing our Association. It is delightful to tour the area and show them the many sights that represent the presence of the Ruffner family in the Page Valley.

As we approach the holiday season, we all need to pause and give thanks for the many blessings that have been bestowed upon us as a family and as American citizens. As I get to know more and more of our family, I am so very thankful for people like "Budge" Ruffner, George & Gary Ruffner, and Bob & Shirley Ann Sheets for having the foresight to begin our Association and bring so many of us together over such a short period of time.

Lastly, let me once again encourage those who have not submitted their family survey to do so. If you are intimidated by the size of the forms, I suggest you fill in the pertinent information that will at least connect you to our ancestors through one of the children of Peter and Mary. It is important that the basic information is included in the next edition of the Ruffner history book so that future generations will be able to also explore their ancestors.

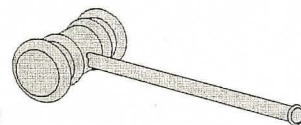
Betty and I send to each and everyone of you, our warmest regards for the happiest of holidays. ■

### RFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ACTIONS

The Board, at its June 26-27, 2000 meeting in Luray, VA, discussed and unanimously approved the following measures:

1. It was reported that contributions had been received from Ruffner family members after presentation of a \$1,120.00 check to the Booker T. Washington Scholarship Fund in June of this year. It was approved by the Board that these additional funds and any future contributions from RFA members to the BTW Scholarship Fund be held in the RFA general account. A representative of the Ruffner Family Association will present a check in the total amount of these reserved funds to the representatives of the BTW Family Association at their next reunion scheduled for Malden, WV in 2002.

2. Gary Ruffner, who created the Ruffner Family Association golf shirt, was appointed Sales & Merchandising Coordinator. All income above the cost to the person who creates a fund raising project, must be remitted to Gary. Any items sold by the RFA at their reunions or to any RFA member must be "purpose related" in accordance with non-profit status, e.g., not for the personal benefit of any individual. Gary, in turn, will distribute the profits from these projects to RFA historical undertakings such as Cemetery Restoration.





## Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor:

I address these comments to my fellow Ruffner Family members and ask you to publish them at your earliest convenience.

"To all my Ruffner cousins,

In the current issue of the RR&R newsletter, as well as in past and future issues, there are any number of articles, or announcements, which appeal to our family members for their response. As we each read these appeals, we can't simply say, 'I wonder who is going to do that?'

Our Association is still in its infancy. Although it has attained a measure of mature strength, it needs support to continue its growth. Since we each derive some benefit from our affiliation with the RFA and its activities, we should support it to the degree we are able. Its organization and administration needs a personal commitment from a number of members. It also needs every individual's commitment to support the work which goes into producing those benefits we receive. It is very easy to think, or say, 'Isn't that an interesting article about...?', but for just a moment, think about what we get from the RFA—our benefits. They don't just suddenly appear out of the morning mist hanging over the Hawksbill Creek! Take a look at the envelope your newsletter came in. Did you help with the printing and postage costs by paying your dues? Did you complete and return your Survey forms? Have you told your Ruffner relatives about the RFA? These are some small ways by which each of us can support the RFA. Just find one way you can help!

I do not suggest everyone be a candidate for RFA president, although that would be nice. I am saying, however, whenever you are able, respond to these appeals. Pay your dues. Help a Reunion planning committee. Send in a newsletter article. Tell us the latest family news. Serve on a committee. Be an office candidate or submit your name to serve on the board. Help a relative complete a Survey.

Once this vast work load—the organization, administration and the various activities—is spread to a larger number of capable hands, we can all reclaim a little informality without sacrificing the quality of any RFA endeavor. Then, let's all sit back and enjoy the Reunion, and all the other times we get to spend together. Let's bask in the pleasure of meeting and knowing one another, or find a quiet moment for conversation. By the way, did you ever see my granddaughter's pictures?

With my warmest personal regards to each reader,  
Joseph W. Ruffner

P.S. Look again through these RR&R pages to see which appeal calls out to you!"

*No person was ever honored for what he received.  
Honor has been the reward for what he gave.  
~Calvin Coolidge*

## THE RUFFNER FAMILY REUNION JUNE 14-17, 2000 LURAY, VA



- ✓ Ruffner Family exhibits
- ✓ Visit with your Ruffner kin
- ✓ Self-guided tours of Luray
- ✓ Special events for the kids
- ✓ Biennial Ruffner banquet
- ✓ Ruffner Family picnic  
and more

You will receive Reunion information and a registration form shortly after receiving this newsletter. We hope it will be a topic of discussion at your holiday family gatherings and you'll decide to join us for a nationwide celebration of our shared family heritage.

### Ruffner Roots & Ramblings is published by

*The Ruffner Family Association*  
PO Box #351  
Luray, VA 22835

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 the settlement of the

American Frontier.

Editor: **Joan Ruffner Reid**

120 Rita Court  
Columbus, OH 43213  
(614) 237-8264

Email: [Jokereid@aol.com](mailto:Jokereid@aol.com)

Fax: (614) 237-8264 (call first)

Contributing Editor:

**Robert Newman Sheets**



## Portraits from the Past

**John E. Ruffner** (desc. Emanuel), the son of John A. and Mary (Rhoads) Ruffner, was born June 8, 1833, in Licking County, Ohio. His father, the son of Emanuel & Magdalene (Grove) Ruffner and a teamster during the War of 1812, was born on March 3, 1785, in Page County, VA. His mother was born in February of 1790 in Page County, VA. After their marriage on May 7, 1816, his parents settled in Union Township, Licking County, OH about 1818 on a farm of 320 acres. The farm land was mainly forest, but he cleared it for cultivation and built many substantial buildings. Their first dwelling was a log cabin which was later replaced with a more modern home. They had one child in addition to John E., David (1819-1888).

His father (John A.) died on September 8, 1863, at the age of 78, and his mother (Mary) on April 20, 1847, at the age of 57. They are both buried in the Licking Baptist Cemetery, Licking County, OH.

**John E.** was educated in farming under the supervision of his father. When not busy with work, he attended a district school—a characteristic pioneer structure with slab benches and other primitive furnishings. After leaving his school work behind, he began his life long work on the old home farm located on the Newark Road, eight miles south of Newark. Beside general farming, he raised various stock, particularly cattle and sheep. He conducted a large buying and shipping business in this line.

In 1862, he married **Amanda Dennis**, born June 14, 1831, in Fauquier County, VA. She was the daughter of James & Frances (Kendall) Dennis, who settled in Licking County, OH around the year 1835. Amanda had seven siblings: Julia (m. Brady Bosman), Joel, Patrick, Octavia (m. Miles Joseph), Rhoda, Fidelity (m. William Frush) and Wilson.

**John E. & Amanda** had two children: Ella, born May 30, 1864, and Charles, born December 1, 1865. Ella married Dudley Taylor. They had one child: Beulah (Lula) who married a Mr. Ford. Charles married Caroline Hand on November 6, 1888. They had three children: Burrell, born October 6, 1891, (m. Ethel Eysson); Mabel, born March 21, 1894, (m. A. P. Kochendorfer), and Mary, born 1901 (m. Arthur Harter). Charles managed the family farm and resided on it with his wife and children.

**John E.** was a staunch Democrat and a member of the Licking Baptist Church. He served as treasurer of the church for over 30 years. He was a man of high ideals and held a position of respect in his community. He died on October 27, 1913, at the age of 70, and his wife, Amanda on April 10, 1910, at the age of 69. They are both buried at the Licking Baptist Cemetery in Licking County, Ohio.

Sources: *History of Licking County* and *Peter Ruffner & His Descendants* (1966), Doris (Laver) Ruffner and Olive (Taylor) Ruffner.



**John E. Ruffner**



**Amanda (Dennis) Ruffner**

### IT WAS A COLD, COLD WINTER—



from the Journal of Dr. James Putney (desc. Joseph, 1816-1876)

"1852 Tuesday morning January the 20<sup>th</sup> was the coldest weather I believe I ever felt. I had known the thermometer, come 20 years since, in Charleston the mercury to stand at 18° below zero, but by Col. Dickinson's thermometer this morning it stood at 20° below and at Henry Wood's at 21° below and as reported, at Charleston as low as 22° Far. So far this has been a remarkably cold winter, a great deal of snow fell and now covers the ground. The river has closed with ice twice this season and is at present covered with ice 8 inches thick.

Kanawha Salines, January 24<sup>th</sup> 1852."

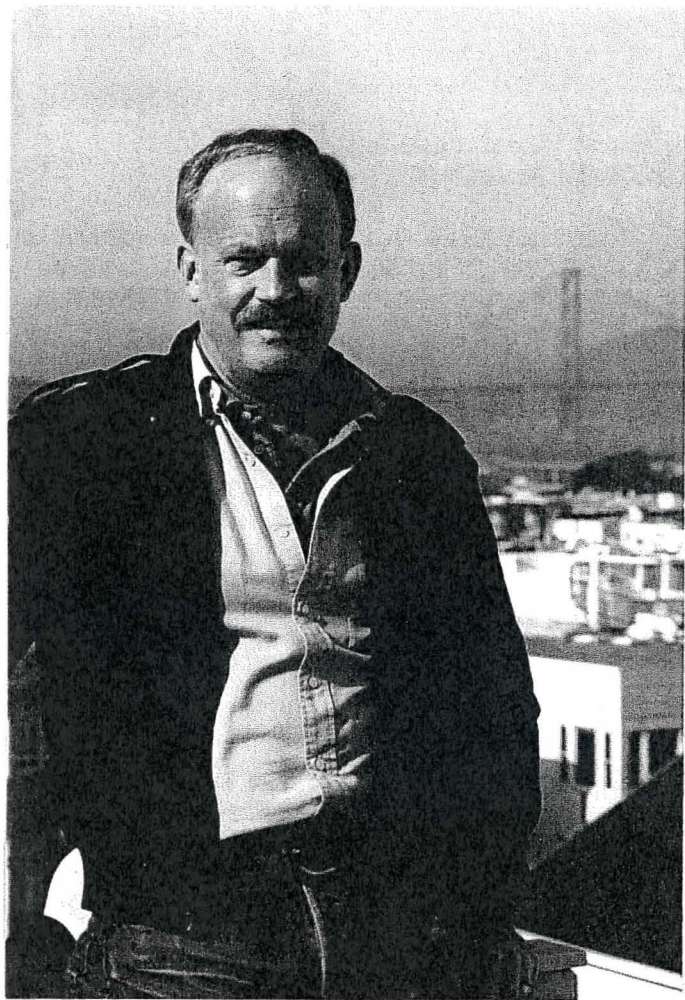
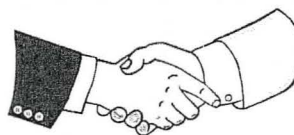
(Courtesy of Ruth Shepherd, Charleston, WV from the collection of Minnie Putney Stanley—James Putney's niece)



## Knowing Your Board of Directors

### Robert Newman "Bob" Sheets of Denver, Colorado

(First in a series of profiles to acquaint RFA members with the individuals entrusted to lead their family organization.)



**Bob Sheets, San Francisco, 1980**

Our Organizing Chairman and current Board Member of the Ruffner Family Association came to this position with lots of experience in genealogy and family history. Bob and his sister Shirley Ann were founders of the Newman Family Society in 1975 in order to collect and preserve the historical papers of Robert Newman. He is the Boston Patriot who carried the two Lanterns up the Steeple of the Old North Church for Paul Revere on April 18, 1775. Bob is the author of the first biography on his great great grandfather, published in 1975, Robert Newman His Life And Letters. In 1975, he carried the lanterns in the re-enactment of the famous Lantern Service at Old North during the opening ceremonies of the Bicentennial with President Ford. Under Bob and Shirley's leadership, the Newman Family Society has sponsored historical and educational ceremonies having to do with Robert Newman and the American Revolution. In 1986, Bob gave the Annual Patriot's Day Address from the pulpit of the old North Church. The Newman Society maintains in Denver, their offices, historical archives and the Library of Robert Newman.

Bob was born December 13, 1934, in Denver, CO, to Newman (1906-1960) and Shirley (deSpain) Sheets (1909-1989). His mother is the link to the Ruffner Family through Benjamin I. He attended the University of Colorado and holds a 1961 BA degree in History, Sociology and Art from the University of Denver. He is a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity. He served in the Marine Corps and was long associated with the Explorer Scouts program in Idaho, Texas and Colorado. He taught history, art, literature and drama in the public schools of Sherman, TX, Denver, and Colorado Springs, CO. He directed the Sherman Little Theater and the Colorado Springs Choral Society. He was the first president of the Pikes Peak Arts Council and was a coordinator for a Title III Arts & Humanities Federal program for six school districts in Colorado.

In 1967, he was appointed by Gov. John Love as the first Executive Director of the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities, a position he held until 1980. In 1972, he was elected the first National Chairman of all the State Arts Councils in America with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. He served with the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C. as a member of the National Music Panel and the Federal-State Grants Panel. He served on the Board of Directors of the Associated Councils for the Arts in New York City. Was the first president of the Western States Arts Foundation, a board member of the Colorado Art Educators Association and Dean of the first National YWCA Arts & Humanities Institute in Aspen, Colorado. He served on the Board of the Colorado State Historical Society and was one of the founders of Historic Denver, Inc. In 1980, he was living in San Francisco as an Arts Consultant, working in California, Washington, DC, Hawaii and American Samoa.

Bob is writing the biography of his great (6) grandfather, the Rev. George Burroughs, (1652-1692) who was falsely accused and hanged on Gallows Hill during the Salem Witch Trials. In 1992, on the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Trials, Bob and the Newman Society sponsored a four day Memorial to the Martyrs of Salem with ceremonies and monuments honoring Burroughs and his great grandson, Robert Newman.

Bob was first aware of his Ruffner history when, as a teen, he discussed the Booker T. Washington autobiography, Up From Slavery with his great grandmother Alma (Ruffner) Rigg (1860-1966). (She is Virginia Rigg's mother.) Bob says, "I was very honored to serve as the organizing chairman of the Ruffner Family Association and I regard the relationships I have made over the past seven years with my many Ruffner Cousins as some of the most profound I have ever known. This extended family has become a prime motivation in my life. The research into the history of our ancestors has presented me with a new respect for their courage, determination and faith, which is their lasting legacy for all of us. It is a thrill to see that it lives on in each new cousin I am honored to know for the first time." ■



## BTW'S ALABAMA RUFFNERS

(Joe Ruffner's remarks at the Booker T. Washington Reunion in Roanoke, Virginia, Saturday, June 24, 2000)



I'm sure most of us know the story of Booker T., Viola and 'General' Lewis Ruffner. If you don't, you should.

No introductory remarks are necessary about Booker T. Each of us certainly knows who he was. The 'General' and Viola Ruffner were the couple in whose household Booker T. secured a job and worked in the years just prior to his going to Hampton Institute.

From this early time into the first few years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Viola and Booker T. retained their friendship and correspondence for about 30 to 40 years. Upon the death of Viola in 1903, Booker T. lost his correspondent and longtime friend. The death of Booker T. in 1915, brought an end to the Washington and Ruffner relationship for nearly a full century.

In June of 1999, at the Ruffner Family Reunion in Lancaster, Ohio, the attendance of Edith Washington Johnson and Margaret Washington Clifford brought a revival to the long dormant relationship between our families. However, one hundred years before this recent revival, probably up to the time of his death; Booker T. had, in addition to Viola, at least one other Ruffner family he kept tabs on.

The brief story I'll relate has been proudly handed down within that Ruffner family, but few people from the Washington or Ruffner families have heard it. The tale goes like this: During that time, a century ago, Booker T. would have occasions when he would travel from Tuskegee up to Birmingham, Alabama, to speak at some function necessitated by his ongoing fund raising obligations. As Principal of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, fund raising was one of his major responsibilities. On some of his Birmingham visits, he would call that other Ruffner family to inquire about family members. Sometimes he would extend his personal invitation for the family members to attend the function where he was to speak. It is not known how many of these occasions happened, or what took place at them. But, according to the family story, his invitations were accepted on more than one occasion and there would be several Ruffner family members in attendance at the function.

The story goes on to say—After he arose and acknowledged his own introduction, as a part of his opening remarks, he would turn to face and point out the attending Ruffner family members. In his acknowledgment of them, he would warmly say: "I have my white people here with me tonight."

That is the end of the story, as it is told. BUT, the story leads to several questions:

- Who were these other Ruffners; the objects of his calls, the attendees in his audiences?
- Why did Booker T. make his calls, issue his invitations, and why did he choose to use these warm words in acknowledging their presence?

The answers are more of the coincidences which seem to be part of the Washington-Ruffner legacy. I'll give you a few statements of fact and brief explanatory remarks to answer these questions.

The other Ruffners were Lewis West Ruffner and his wife, Mary Beals Ruffner. Lewis West was born to Lewis Ruffner, Jr. and Virginia Louisa West at Evansville, IN, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, 1869. He was a grandson of the 'General'.

Shortly after the Malden riot incident in which the 'General' was seriously injured, Lewis, Jr. brought his young family back to Malden to manage the business interests of his father, the 'General'. Some accounts give this date as 1873. Booker T. told of witnessing the riot while he still resided at Malden. In one instance, he mentions residing there until 1878. So Booker T.'s connection to this other Ruffner family probably began and happened in this fashion:

Lewis West was a mere lad of 4 years of age when his father brought him back to Malden in 1873. Booker T. was also a resident there at the time. Even though the time was short before Booker T. would leave Malden—it is believed, Booker T. most likely knew Lewis West from this earlier period at Malden, from 1873 to 1878, and on through the following years.

Why believe, or even presume, this long acquaintance? Because it would take a great stretch of the imagination to think Booker T. would not have known the children AND grandchildren of his benefactors and friends, 'General' Lewis and Viola Ruffner. Lewis West would certainly have been one of them. A shorter span of time than the 5 years would have made little difference. If they were both at Malden at the same time, and all indications are they were, it probably happened in this way.

So now you know. In the latter days of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and on into the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup>, there was at least one other Washington-Ruffner relationship. Whether Booker T. and Lewis West actually had a long acquaintance does not really matter, although it makes an interesting supposition.

What does matter and has always mattered to that other Ruffner family, is: There did exist a personal relationship between an older man and a young man who represented a family of long acquaintance. The older man was busily making his messages of education and human improvement heard around the world. But, he still took time to inquire about the family of his long acquaintance and invite them to be guests in his audiences. The young man, who had gone to Birmingham to seek his prospects, was merely raising his young family. But, he and his wife did not let the times, nor circumstances, keep them from accepting the invitations or attending and listening to the older man's speeches.

*(continued on page 7)*



**BTW's Alabama Ruffners (continued from page 6)**

This very brief account has been handed down through the family of Lewis West & Mary Beals Ruffner ever since. Lewis West and Mary were the objects of Booker T.'s calls inquiring about the family. They, as a young couple, were the attendees in Booker T.'s Birmingham audiences. And, Lewis West and Mary were the objects of Booker T.'s warm possessive words of acknowledgment—"I have my white people here with me tonight."

The descendants of that Ruffner family do not think the brevity of their story in any way diminishes the warm sentiments with which that long ago relationship has been regarded—remembered—and recounted all these years since. That is the story of Booker T. and that other Ruffner family—his Alabama Ruffners.

Before I relinquish the podium, let me say 'thank you' for this opportunity and the revival of this relationship. We will each grow, collectively and individually, because of it. And in remembering the interest, concern and friendship Booker T. showed that Ruffner family—on behalf of Lewis West and Mary, let me say 'thank you'.

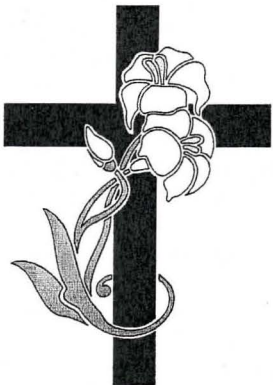
For the children, grandchildren, and all the other descendants of Lewis West and Mary, who grew up knowing and retelling this little story, I stand here this morning to say on their behalf, as surely I may—being privileged to be 1 of the 10 grandchildren of Lewis West and Mary Beals Ruffner—our thanks for the lessons of humanity's better aspects, which the stories about the Washington & Ruffner relationships taught us. ■

**WHAT IS IT? WHERE IS IT?**

Do you know of a Ruffner namesake—have a photo and history? Please send to Ruffner Roots & Ramblings, 120 Rita Court, Columbus, OH 43213. All photos will be returned.

—See page 15 for the answer.

*From the Ruffner Library Collection.*

***In Memoriam***

**Mary Debus Knauff**, age 92, beloved wife of the late Robert Wesley Knauff, passed away on Wednesday, August 9, 2000, in Cincinnati, OH. She left two daughters, Louisa Knauff Allen of Cincinnati, OH; Barbara Knauff Rodes of Garret Park, MD, and one son, Dr. Frederic Knauff of West Hartford, CT. She was the proud grandmother of Marcie Allen, Robert and Cyndi Allen, Andrew Allen, Libby and Tom Gibbons, Lindsay Rodes and Chris Marks, Peter and Alison Rodes, Toby Rodes, Betsy Knauff and Marie Ahearn, Breck Knauff and Wesley Knauff. She also left ten great grandchildren. She was the aunt of Dr. John Barnacle, Denver, CO, Mary B. Healy, Sonoma, CA and Nancy B. Sydlow, Denver, CO. A memorial service was held August 19, 2000, at the Christ Church Cathedral Chapel in Cincinnati. Memorial contributions may be made to the Planned Parenthood of Cincinnati or the Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Mary, a descendant of Joseph, was the daughter of Louis K. and Violet (Ruffner) DeBus; the granddaughter of Ernest Howard and Mary (Watson) Ruffner, and the great-granddaughter of Lewis and Viola Ruffner.





### Progress Report—

#### Updated Edition of Peter Ruffner and His Descendants

At the June 2000 meeting of the Board of Directors and Publications Committee, the updated edition of the Ruffner history book was discussed at length. Fred Ruffner, Chair of the Publications Committee reviewed tentative production ideas, noting that the new book would probably consist of two volumes and 1,000 pages. The Publications Committee is studying the possibility of publishing two versions of the update, deluxe and general. A title for the book(s) will be submitted for consideration and approval at the 2001 Reunion in Luray, VA. It was unanimously agreed by the RFA Board and Publications Committee that the new edition would be dedicated to Doris Laver Ruffner and Olive Taylor Ruffner, who compiled the original 1966 edition and the 1969 supplement. Publication team coordinators are still busily engaged in compiling information from the submitted genealogy surveys. **If you have not sent in your survey, please complete and send it in as soon as possible.** Ultimately, the Publications Committee will determine that all sources of information have been exhausted and set about standardizing a layout for the book(s). Following

are comments from the Branch Captains regarding their progress and research into the family history of Peter & Mary (Steinman) Ruffner's children: Joseph, Benjamin, Peter, Jr., Reuben, Elizabeth Stover and Emanuel.

### THE SEARCH FOR JOSEPH'S DESCENDANTS—

The continuing effort to find and identify the living descendants of Ann Heistand and Joseph Ruffner has been very rewarding and a little exasperating. Ann and Joseph had seven children who lived to adulthood, married and had families of their own. The search for descendants representing these children's alliances has led to a number of connections for which I had little or no knowledge. But, each newly found connection offers its own generations of family lines for which we need to identify contacts and then gather more information.

To illustrate, just a few days ago, I received a letter responding to an inquiry I had made. The letter's writer is from a different family branch than me, but she did include a copy of a 1988 letter she had received from a missing line of Joseph's branch. I say "missing" because the 1988 letter contained a brief listing of the author's direct lineage—a family line I had never seen before: Joseph > Tobias > Isaac > Samuel Tobias, etc. Additionally, the letter included a listing of the children of Isaac and his wife, Mary Coffman. Other mentions in the letter give us hints and clues which might be followed to find some of the present descendants.

As with this single example, almost every correspondence we receive gives us some new information and a suggestion or two of new avenues to search. The accumulation of this new information is slowly taking us toward our goal of updating our family's genealogy and history. Even the clues and hints we find are rewarding. They give us inspiration and hope for success if we just look harder and further. I shouldn't have to tell you this is also frustrating. Which of us would want to wait for such a task to be completed? Not me, I would like to know the family's complete genealogy and history right now! Yesterday would have been even better!

"Are we there, yet?" No! And as with our children's universal question, we've still got a long way to go. It would have been much easier if Joseph had just one child, who had one child, who had one child, etc. Then I would be able to say, "Here I am," and I'd be done. But, this didn't happen! So rather than my simple statement, I have a couple of questions "Where the heck are all my lost cousins? Don't you know, I'm trying to find you?"

For all descendants of the Joseph line, as well as each of the others, please take a few moments to contact your Branch Captain to make absolutely sure they have the contact information for each and every one of your known Ruffner relatives. Also, remind those relatives, and yourselves, to complete and return the Survey forms as quickly as possible. Everyone, pitch in! Let's get this task accomplished!

Joseph W. Ruffner, 11511 Jade Lane, Huntsville, AL 35803

Phone: (256) 882-6645 / Email: [jruffner@bellsouth.net](mailto:jruffner@bellsouth.net)

### REPORT FROM CLUB BENJAMIN—

"There's A Long, Long Trial A Winding" and it leads to the publication of the second edition of the *Peter & Mary Ruffner Books*. We hope that all the descendants of their son Benjamin (1742-1806) will be well represented, once it goes to print. In the 1966 & 69 editions, Grandfather Benjamin's descendants only appear on forty pages out of the total 543. We think we can do better this next time. They trace only the offspring of Benjamin II, Martin and Reuben. This is only three out of the thirteen children born to Benjamin at his homestead still standing in Luray, Virginia. Where are the others?

We are hearing from new cousins every day and the excitement is building for the June Reunion as well as our Ruffner National Survey. So, again I am appealing to you and your cousins to get your forms in and soon. We want to honor the memory of our ancestors in the Benjamin line by having the most complete record possible. My brother Bob says, "We can't let those 'Salt Diggers' from the Kanawha Valley beat us out in the number of cousins on the family record!" If you are having questions or any problems with the forms, please contact us. Also, if you have not received a form, please let us know.

I am pleased to announce that Gary Ruffner of Mason, Illinois has agreed to chair the Benjamin Descendants Search while I complete some other projects here in Colorado. He will be maintaining the Benjamin Ruffner Data Base on his computer there in the Heartland. He can be reached at: **GARY RUFFNER, 3500 NORTH 825<sup>TH</sup> STREET, MASON, IL 62443, PHONE (618) 238-4120 OR Email: [gjruff@accessus.net](mailto:gjruff@accessus.net).**

For the many new connections we have made in the Martin Ruffner line, we say, "Welcome aboard" and we are looking forward to sharing the joy and affection we have all experienced in our Ruffner Family Association. With best wishes to you all for a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year with your loved ones.

Shirley Ann Sheets, 1675 South Steele Street, Denver, CO 80210

Email: [Shirsheets@aol.com](mailto:Shirsheets@aol.com)



**PETER, JR. PROGENY SOUGHT—**

Peter Ruffner, Jr. was born December 13, 1746; the fourth child of Peter and Mary (Steinman) Ruffner. He married Elizabeth Burner and they had 11 children: Isaac, Elizabeth, Jonas, Joshua, Christina, Esther, Mary, Nancy, John, Barbara and Catherine. Peter, Jr. resided on the homestead willed to him by his father until his death on May 20, 1811.

Peter, Jr. and Elizabeth's first son, Isaac, is known as the "Father of Luray" having given 10 acres for the purpose of the town which was established in 1812, by the Virginia General Assembly.

I am an 8<sup>th</sup> generation descendant of Peter, Sr. Most of my family have remained in the Luray area. My forefathers settled on the banks of the Shenandoah River and were farmers until the 1950s. Although quite a few of Peter, Jr's descendants still reside in this area, many no doubt moved on to other areas of the country. We are hoping to hear from those descendants to complete the history of the Peter, Jr. branch of the Ruffner family.

Our plans for the 2001 Ruffner Family Reunion in Luray include introduction of the collateral lines of the Ruffner lineage including the Longs, Burners, Abbotts, Kauffmans, Stricklers, Kiblers and many, many others. Several descendants of these families joined by marriage to the Ruffners reside today in our beautiful valley.

**Nancy Lee (Ruffner) Shifflett, 917 West Main Street, Luray, VA 22835**

**Phone: (540) 743-6709 / Email: [pyramid@shentel.net](mailto:pyramid@shentel.net)**

**LOOKING FOR REUBEN'S RELATIVES—**

During the two or three years I have taken on further research into the family of Reuben RUFFNER and his wife Catherine DAGER, I have some success, but there are many gaps which are difficult to fill in because certain persons whose names appear in the line do not respond to my queries. I am very sorry about that, because it seems important to gather every one into the family fold in respect to him, whether or not they really want to know about the rest of us.

Reuben and his small family left Luray, VA and relocated in Lincoln County, KY in the late 1780s. He died there in 1822, leaving children who had married into other Kentucky families who lived nearby. As usual, many of them relocated again with their families.

Barbara married (1) Henry LITER, Jr. and (2) John SULER (SHULER?). She died in Bourbon Co., KY, but I have no further data on her.

Henry married Elizabeth SIDNER, d/o Martin and Margaret (EDDLEMAN) SIDNOR. Henry took his family to Montgomery Co., IN and had 6 children. Some descendants are still living in Montgomery Co., IN but have not responded to my queries. Some of them (children of his grandson Charles) have graciously filled in all the data on their families in Indiana, Michigan, Massachusetts, Mississippi and Texas. I have been unable to gather data on the portion of the family which moved to Tacoma/Seattle and ran a newspaper there. Later descendants of theirs went to New York and California.

Nancy married Adam SPOONAMORE, s/o Philip and Magdalena (JORG) SPOONAMORE. Adam died untimely, leaving Nancy with 8 children and expecting another, which she named Adam, b. ca. 1823. Most of this family remained in Kentucky. The other children were: Sarah who married William MERRYMAN; John who married Elizabeth MILLER; David who married Mary Ann SARTAIN; Mary Ann who married John PENDLETON; Nancy who married James PENDLETON; Samuel who married Elizabeth Ann PEPPLES; Eliza who married Elias Smith; and George Green who married Elizabeth ANDERSON. Young Adam married Sarah Jane HARNES.

Elizabeth married Reuben OHLER (OEHLER?). This family has been difficult to track down. So is her brother Emanuel who married Mary OHLER.

David married a Susan NEET in nearby Jessamine Co. as did Samuel who married Elizabeth HIGBEE.

Catherine married Conrad DUDDERAR, s/o Samuel and Elizabeth (DICKENSHEETS) DUDDERAR. DUDDERARs had been neighbors in Pennsylvania and Virginia. At least some of this family also remained in Kentucky. I have a smattering of information on this daughter of Reuben, but much more should be available, because some of that family is 'doing genealogy.' It just didn't come through to include in the new book.

Since I am no longer able to go to Kentucky and chase down appropriate 'cousins' to gather this data personally, I hereby make an appeal for any reader who has helpful leads to offer to let me know ASAP. I would very much appreciate any helpful hints—names, telephone numbers, email addresses, mail addresses, whatever.....

**Dorothea M. Russell, 401 Burwash, #120, Savoy, IL 61874**

**Phone: (217) 398-9858 / Email: [Dweise@windsorofsavoy.com](mailto:Dweise@windsorofsavoy.com)**

**ELIZABETH STOVER - COME ON OVER!**

The original two volumes of Peter Ruffner & His Descendants contain Elizabeth, her husband and eight children - that's all! With eight children, there has to be a lot of descendants. Where are they? Doris & Olive wrote in their book that they had searched in vain for years. I have no one to help me do research and my personal commitments don't leave me much time. If you're reading this and you're an Elizabeth (Ruffner) Stover descendant or know of one - please, please contact me. I know quite a few descendants, but none have made new contributions to the files I have collected to date.

**Barbara A. Burner, 7600 Arlington Ave., Raytown, MO 64138-1636**

**Phone: (816) 358-6986 / Email: [BurnerFam@aol.com](mailto:BurnerFam@aol.com)**

**THERE HAS TO BE MORE EMANUEL DESCENDANTS—**

Emanuel Ruffner had over 30 living grandchildren at the time of his death. Imagine the number of descendants today! Many descendants have carried on Emanuel's sense of honesty, commitment and adventure. Relatives from the New England area to the State of Washington have responded to the task of updating the first book, however many lines still have no new information. **It's not too late to send in your survey.** Use any means you like. Involve a younger generation! Hopefully, you will not encounter 6 foot long black snakes like Doris and Olive did for the first book!!!!

**Barbara A. Rowles, 188 Marks Ave., Lancaster, OH 43130**

**Phone: (740) 653-3705 / Email: [barowles@greenapple.com](mailto:barowles@greenapple.com)**





## The RFA Needs Your Participation— Positions Available!

The RFA Nominating Committee's task is to present a slate of candidates from which the Board of Directors will elect the coming term's

Officers and Directors. We, the Nominating Committee members, wish to include for the Board's review as many candidates as are willing to serve. To accomplish the Committee's tasks, we need your consideration and response.

As the RFA continues through its formative years, we see its continuing growth. We each benefit from the success and expansion of its endeavors; including this wonderful RR&R newsletter you are reading, attending one of its Reunions, and having the personal pleasure of meeting and knowing one another. But, the ability to continue this growth and expand these endeavors, or begin others, depends on involvement. Yours, mine - each member's!

The elective positions for which the Committee seeks candidates are: President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Board Directors. According to the RFA Bylaws, each of these positions is to be elected at every Board meeting to serve until the next Board meeting.

A proposal, or proposals, will be made to the next Board meeting for the present list of Offices/Officers to be expanded to include 2 or 3 Vice-Presidents. Other proposals will address the representation of each Family branch among the Directors, which are also elected positions. The intentions are: To divide the work load among a larger number of Offices/Officers, rather than the present few and to give as equal a representation to each Family branch as possible.

There are also other ways to be involved. Several RFA Committees need your assistance. The Nominating Committee will forward the name of all persons responding to this appeal to the RFA president for consideration when making Committee appointments. Presently, there are several slots vacant and more are expected in the very near future. As you see, the RFA has numerous opportunities open for you. For example, please see the WebSite article in this issue.

What should you do now? Submit your name, nominate a relative (with their permission, of course), be prepared to be elected or accept an appointment and, most of all, enjoy the experience of serving. Just tell a member of the Nominating Committee in which capacity you wish to serve. Doing so, at your earliest convenience, would be sufficiently soon enough.

The Nominating Committee members are:

Barbara Burner  
7600 Arlington Ave.  
Raytown, MO 64138  
(816) 358-6986  
Email: [BurnerFam@aol.com](mailto:BurnerFam@aol.com)

Sara Lytle  
310 Carriage Trace  
Seneca, SC 29678  
(864) 882-8656

Joe Ruffner  
11511 Jade Lane  
Huntsville, AL 35803  
(256) 882-6645  
Email: [jruffner@bellsouth.net](mailto:jruffner@bellsouth.net)

Robert Sheets  
1675 So. Steele Street  
Denver, CO 80210  
(303) 733-4935  
Email: [Rnsheets@aol.com](mailto:Rnsheets@aol.com)

## Ruffner Family Website Progresses



Progress is being made to further develop the Ruffner Family Website. In continuing the efforts described in the website proposal presented at the RFA's June Board meeting in Luray, a Committee is being formed to work on expanding the Site. We now have the agreement of K. Daniel Ruffner II, of Ohio, to serve as the Site's WebMaster, and Dan Ruffner, the Site's originator, to serve as the Operations Manager. Read the ad below for the other positions the WebSite Committee needs to fill.

A set of WebSite Guidelines are being developed to guide the Committee's selection and development of content for the Site. The Guidelines focus on a number of specific topics including: The Family's early history in America and the genealogical lineage for the first 3 or 4 generations and the Ruffner Family Association—its history, purpose and activities. The present look of the Site is not anticipated to immediately change. The Committee is still incomplete and the priority ranking of topics has not been completely decided. While the present members wait for the other Committee positions to be filled, they are reviewing and prioritizing the topics, noting the information to be included for each topic, and deciding how the display of information should look. Each of these tasks requires time and careful thought to assure the quality we desire.

An article describing the Committee's Guidelines and the WebSite's Topics, and reporting the continuing progress of this endeavor will be featured in the next issue of the RR&R newsletter. Now, read and respond to our appeal for assistance with your Ruffner Family WebSite!

### WebSite Help Wanted!

The RFA needs a few dedicated persons to help with the Ruffner Family WebSite, which Dan Ruffner initiated for RFA's use several months ago. Specifically, we're looking for 2 or more persons to assist in the area of Site content: Gathering and possibly reformatting the information to put on our WebSite. If more than 2 persons respond, it would make each person's duties easier.

**One person** will also serve as a feature columnist for the RR&R newsletter. Their column would be used to inform the RFA membership about recently posted site features and interesting websites for members to check while doing specific research. **The other person** will also serve as the monitor of the website's "Bulletin Board" and "Guest Book." They would review and answer the posted notes and inquiries, or direct them to the appropriate Family Branch Captain for followup.

Experience and talent will be accepted, but we're mainly looking for dedicated persons who have a computer, access to the Internet, and an e-mail box. If you're interested, or want further information, please contact ASAP: **K. Daniel Ruffner, II, 7534 Fallsridge Lane, West Chester, OH 45069; Phone (513) 779-0977; Email: [druffner@cinci.rr.com](mailto:druffner@cinci.rr.com)** [Email is his preferred means of contact/correspondence.]

P.S. Benefits include, but are not limited to, work at home, flexible hours, great learning experience with non-existent pay, an occasional pat on the back, and the appreciation of all your Ruffner family. Thanks for giving this RFA project your consideration! Never visited the Ruffner Family WebSite? **[www.ruffnerfamily.org](http://www.ruffnerfamily.org) Take a look!! It's your WebSite!!**



## Ruffners in the News



(Arizona) LAW DAY 2000 was observed in Prescott, AZ with a re-enactment of the 1898 hanging of train robber and murderer, Fleming "Jim" Parker by Sheriff George C. Ruffner (desc. Benjamin). During July, several performances of the Parker-Ruffner story were given at Sharlot Hall Museum. This photo and caption appeared in the July 9, 2000, Prescott (AZ) Daily Courier. George

Ruffner is the man in the vest and tall hat on the left in the picture.

(Submitted by Melissa Ruffner)

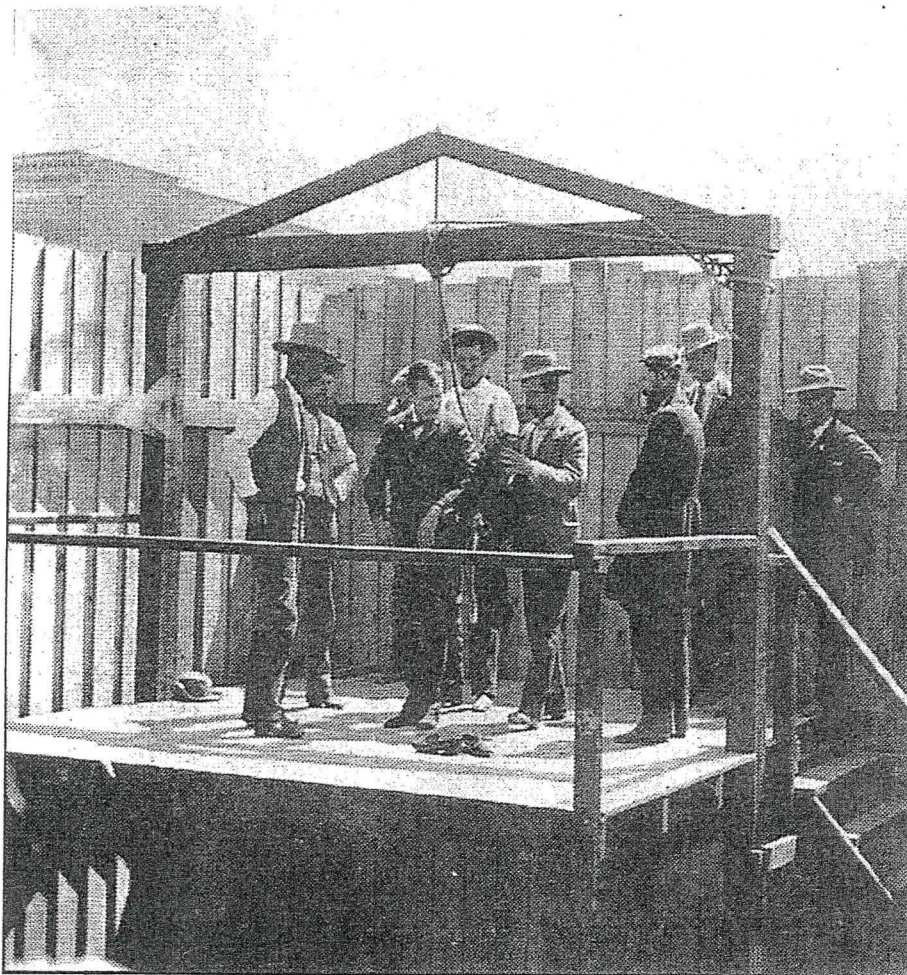


Photo courtesy Sharlot Hall Museum

Jim Parker and George Ruffner are said to have drifted around together before Ruffner became a respectable citizen of Prescott and eventually sheriff. Later Parker had been arrested for train robbery, broke out of jail, and killed a man. The final time they were together was on the gallows for Parker's hanging on June 3, 1898.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Sally [Ruffner] Spangler ..... Lorton, VA  
Jane [Munro] Webber .... Broomfield, CO

## Other Websites to check



Bill Myers (desc. Joseph) has a web-site you should check out:

<http://members.home.net/joseph-ruffner-2/index.htm>

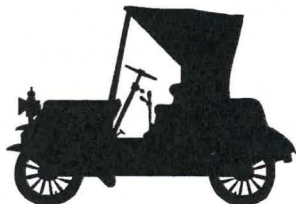
Bill's site titled "The Joseph Ruffner II Papers" contains an extensive collection of the papers of Joseph Ruffner II, his daughter Eliza, and his father Joseph Ruffner. These papers have been passed down through the Ruffner, Haskins, Shipler, Schultze and Myers families for over 200 years. They cover the period from 1771-1850.

With a great deal of information relative to Luray, VA and Charleston, WV, this is a "must visit" for all Ruffner descendants.

The Past, The Present and  
The Future are really one—  
they are today.

~Stowe





## *Trekking thru OH, WV and VA*

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

By Joseph Wilson Ruffner

(Part 3 of Joe's remembrances on his visit to the land of his ancestors)

**Lancaster, OH, June 7, 1999**—The reunion was over, except for the genealogy workshop. I had planned to attend this for most of the day, but decided to leave in mid-morning and begin the drive to Charleston, WV. I just couldn't wait to finally see the fabled land of so many family stories, the source of many vivid imaginations. It was only a couple of hours drive away and I felt like an unrestrained horse. I was rearing to go. The scenic drive across the southeastern part of Ohio continued to fascinate me. I now began comparing its character to some of the central part of Alabama with its rolling hills. My seventh grade geography class should have had a few topographical maps, instead of just those with state boundaries outlined on them. I might have even paid attention and learned something. We were never allowed to get close to the expensive globes with their wrinkled skin showing the topography of the regions of the world. As it was, this was totally new. Crossing the river and state line into West Virginia and getting onto their interstate highway soon had me in an environment that more closely resembled my previously unfounded perception. Just crossing the river and getting from the highway to the interstate access had been a beginning revelation of what to expect. Not to get ahead in the story, but I don't recall any toll booths I passed going to Charleston. I was to certainly pass several on the way from Charleston to Lexington, VA. I don't know how they get away with charging a fee to drive up and down such continuous mountains and valleys. Guess they don't have enough flat land to build a roller coaster and charge people for riding it. The drive into Charleston was most pleasant. The only drawback is it's difficult to watch the scenery and drive at the same time, especially on roads you're unfamiliar with. I was soon reading signs for the exits into downtown Charleston. I figured why not. I didn't know any more about how to get to Kanawha City to meet Sam McNeely, than I know the pope's given name. So it was off the interstate and into downtown. Luckily, I ended up facing the James River and Kanawha Turnpike. Anyway, it's the broad road running alongside the Kanawha River. I made a left turn onto the Turnpike and I very shortly spotted a familiar landmark. One I had seen in a video Sam had given me of his travels to Charleston, Malden and Luray. It was the Ruffner Memorial Park. I was going down the opposite side of the road, but I determined to turn at the first opportunity and go back. My gosh, there's Holly Grove over there on the corner. Now why the heck do they have Lincoln's statue standing in front of that gorgeous capitol building? As soon as I found a place, I crossed the median and turned around. I soon found myself getting out in front of the capitol building. The statue honors Lincoln for making West Virginia a state without Congressional action or ratification by three fourths of the other states. By now, I don't suppose Virginia wants them back. It is a beautiful spot with the large stately trees surrounding the building. I wonder if they have any family tales to tell. I stopped at Holly Grove next, again illegally parking. At the Capitol, I'd pulled in just behind a tour bus which was unloading passengers. As the driver had pulled partially up onto the sidewalk. I figured if he could, I could. It was marked "Legislature Member" or some such nonsense. There were no other vehicles parked in sight along the whole front of the Capitol. I figured they'd have a hard time getting a quorum this time of the day, so I was safe for a few minutes to take pictures, which I did. The same sign met me when I turned the corner to park and go look at Holly Grove. I decided to ignore this one also. I figured to use a variation on one of Sam's expressions if I were questioned about my parking. I would just say, "I'm a Ruffner from Alabama and can't be held mentally accountable." I got the pictures and drove to the Park down the Turnpike a short distance. In this section of the Turnpike, I found a pleasant surprise. They had painted lines marking the spaces for cars to park. No more illegal parking. Now if I could just stay between the lines.

The Park soon had its soothing effect on me. In my brief stay, I would visit that quiet place on three separate occasions. In my mind's eye, I can see the large shapely trees and hear the quiet. Even with the Turnpike traffic, the outside noises don't seem to penetrate this place. Leisurely, I moved first to look at the Kanawha Riflemen's Memorial Monument, and then discovered the sarcophagus of Joseph and Ann Heistand Ruffner. Close along side their resting place is that of Elizabeth Painter Ruffner. I now stood where my ancestors stood at the time they laid Joseph, Ann and Elizabeth in those places. The only feeling I remember having was a feeling of gratitude. Gratitude for their having made the sacrifices and contributions to help bring this family to where it is today. And, gratitude for their having helped mold this land, this nation, where we reside with all our opportunities. There I was, just minutes before, complaining about lack of a legal parking space.

I got directions to Kanawha City and soon I was checking in at the Red Roof Inn. Sam came out to meet me and we agreed to get together shortly. I would get the car unloaded and then we'd meet at his room. Betty was resting, so we started out on a tour of his boyhood stomping grounds—Malden and Charleston.

First it was to Malden. I can't recall the exact order of what we visited, so I'll just go at them without order. Sam drove into Malden and we made stops at the heart of the little town. There you find a large sign signifying it as the boyhood home of Booker T. Washington. There's also a roadside marker signifying the same information. Across the street is the Mt. Zion Church where Booker T. attended and taught Sunday School. The church grounds house a small collection of replicas of buildings from the period of Booker T. We visited the Kanawha Salines Presbyterian Church which David

*(continued on page 13)*



**Trekking thru OH, WV and VA (continued from page 12)**

Ruffner paid for and supervised the building of. All on land he had donated for that purpose. A short drive took us by the boyhood home of Sam and Jim. We found ourselves getting out of the car again at the side of the railroad tracks which run through Malden. A few steps down the tracks brought us to the Ruffner Homestead Burial place. Despite its condition, which is a far cry from neat or well kept, some of the same feelings came floating back into my mind. Here were David, Ann, Lewis and Henry. All the persons I'd known all my life, yet I'd really never known any of them and never truly would. I just knew about a few of their accomplishments and even fewer events from their lives. My perception of their lives is easily envisioned, even down to some of the daily hardships. This was another moment for quiet reflection and offering my feelings of gratitude.

Back in the car, we headed again to downtown Charleston. It was right past the Capitol and then stopping at Holly Grove. Sam didn't take the same chance parking as me. He wouldn't have a good excuse, he's not from Alabama. We walked around and took a closer look at the house's construction than I had previously done. Next we stopped at the Park. I got more pictures with Sam taking mine and me taking his. We ventured across the Turnpike and Sam took my picture standing beside one of the Ruffner roadside markers.

Returning to Kanawha City, we decided to go over to Bob Evan's for dinner after taking a few minutes to get freshened up a bit. The way everyone talked about Bob Evan's, I thought it might have been some place where they passed out an addictive medication of some sort to keep people coming back. It turned out to be a very nice place to get a wholesome inexpensive meal. Afterward, Sam took a few minutes worth of video of some of the pages from L. Ruffner, Jr.'s Bible. We talked a few minutes about his election as president of the Ruffner Family Association and other matters. It was then time to call it a night, which we did.

**June 8, 1999**—Breakfast time brought a confirmation of the arrival of the other traveling group who were to meet us at Kanawha City. Bob Sheets, Shirley Ann Sheets, Virginia Rigg, Jane Webber and Dick Armstrong had arrived after we turned in the night before. It was good to know they had arrived. Sam had arranged for a group of us to meet with a representative of the Amherst Company to discuss the condition of the Homestead Cemetery, which is presently on their company property. We had a delightful resumption of our conversation over a leisurely breakfast. Then it was off to Malden for our meeting. We were met by Ms. Dreama Woods, the Executive Secretary of their corporation. Richard Andre of Charleston soon joined the group. We discussed the situation from all angles and Ms. Woods encouraged us to develop whatever plans we wished to, pass them through her to the Corporation, and expect their fullest cooperation and help. After a walk through the coal yards to reach the burial site, we were once again moving about the place with a sense of awe, wonderment and gratitude. Upon our return to the office building, we were met on the lawn under the large shading maple trees by Mr. Charles Jones, the company president. He was emphatic in reiterating what Ms. Woods had said to us. How gracious must have been the training he received while a student at Washington and Lee University.

From the meeting, it was back to the motel and lunch with the rest of the traveling troupe. I rode back in with Richard. This gave me some time to visit with and get to know this special friend of the Ruffner Family. After lunch, it was decided to go on a driving tour of Charleston and Malden. So once again, we set out. For Sam and me, it was a repeat of the sites from the day before. Added in were Spring Hill Cemetery in Charleston where high on a hill overlooking the city and the Kanawha River, are found the final resting places of many other Ruffners and relations from the area. We did a more thorough walk around the Daniel Boone State Park, where Sam and I had also briefly stopped the previous day. Richard gave us an interesting walking/talking tour of the site, just as he did at each site we visited. The park houses the Ruffner Log Cabin and the Craik-Patton House, which had belonged to the grandfather of Gen. George S. Patton of WW II fame. Since the Spring Hill Cemetery was actually our last site in Charleston, Richard made his departure from the group. It had been a delightful treat to have his company for most of the day.

The group then headed back to Malden. We stopped at the Kanawha Salines Presbyterian Church and Shirley Ann made a call over their cell phone to the church warden, Harry Gardner. He agreed for us to come pick up a key to gain access to the church interior. On the exterior it appears as a plain, sturdily-built structure. The interior is just the opposite. It is elegant in its detail, simple but absolutely beautiful. A few moments for contemplation and it was back to the cars. We ended up once again at the Ruffner Homestead Burial site. There we spent some time straightening up, removing some debris, cutting poison ivy vines from the tree trunks, and brushing leaves off the stones.

Back at the motel, we agreed on our dinner plans. The choice of the Mexican restaurant was a good one, at least for me. Shortly after our conversations around the table and dinner, Sam, Bob and I met and talked for a while. Bob indicated, based on his own experience, where Sam's efforts as the Ruffner Family president would most be needed. We shared a few personal ideas about those aspects of the Association we were most interested in: Getting cemeteries listed and a restoration program established; getting the "Descendants..." books updated, etc. Dark-thirty came. Since we were on Eastern Daylight Time, this meant it was approaching 10 p.m., and time to turn in. ■

*In the next RR&R, Joe's trek continues with his trip to Lexington, VA.*



## Special Events for children planned at 2001 Reunion

On any family tree, children are the new growth that keeps the tree alive; the new branches that bear the fruit of future generations. They are also an important and integral part of the Ruffner Family Reunions.

At the 1999 reunion in Lancaster, Ohio, young Matthew Ruffner (desc. Emanuel), son of Michael Ruffner & Margaret Alessi of Arlington, Virginia and grandson of James & Trenna Ruffner of Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan, took part in the unveiling of the RFA monument and historical marker at the Ruffner-Friend Burial Ground. Matthew, just two years old at the time, helped Bob Sheets uncover the memorial and then stood at rapt attention as Bob delivered the family dedication [see photos below].

The 2001 Ruffner Family Reunion Committee, headed by Sam McNeely and Nancy Lee (Ruffner) Shifflett, has thoughtfully developed special activities for the children on Saturday, June 16. They are publishing a Ruffner Family history book to be given to each child in attendance. A school session, with a professional teacher, will be held at the historic Massanutten one-room schoolhouse. A picnic lunch will be held for them at the INN Lawn Park and the afternoon activities will conclude with either a trip to the Luray Caverns or a pool party at the Days Inn.



**Matthew  
Ruffner  
1999**

## Ruffner Family roots are deep in the Shenandoah Valley

Nineteen year old Peter Ruffner arrived in Philadelphia in 1732. Speaking "High Dutch," the 6'3" tall young adventurer who came from the German Region of Switzerland, soon looked to the German speaking settlement of Lancaster, PA. He lived there seven years before taking a bride, the twenty five year old Mary, daughter of Joseph Steinman. In that same year, 1739, the couple emigrated to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia to live on a land patent given as a wedding present by her father. There on the Hawksbill Creek at the Big Spring, they built their log home where their children became the first generation of Ruffners born in America. That area known now as Luray, Page County, was the first home of their eight children: Joseph, Benjamin, Catherine, Peter, Jr., Reuben, Tobias, Elizabeth and Emanuel.

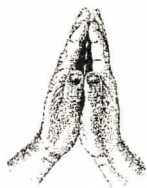
Peter, the father, died in 1778, and Mary in 1798. Little Catherine had died as a child and Tobias at the age of fifteen. They were all buried on the old Ruffner homestead. The industrious farmer Peter had planted in his children the success that comes from hard labor, a mark that those children would take with them as they in turn would begin the trek into the Northwest Territory and beyond.

At the age of 41, Reuben was the first to leave, taking his wife Catherine and children to Kentucky before 1789. At the age of 55, Joseph took his wife Ann and their children into the Kanawha Valley in 1795. Emanuel, at the age of 46, moved in 1803 to Fairfield County, Ohio with his wife Magdalene and their children. Benjamin and Peter, Jr. chose to stay on the homestead. Daughter Elizabeth married Jacob Stover and moved to Strassburg, VA. It would be the third and fourth generations that continued the move west.

The 2001 Ruffner Family Reunion will pay homage to the ancestors whose roots began, and those that remain, in the Shenandoah Valley including their collateral lines.

*(From the 1997 Ruffner Family Reunion program.)*





## In Memoriam

Urban Bailey Ruffner  
"Oogie"

(desc. Benjamin)  
November 3, 1934 ~  
November 1, 2000

Urban was the son of Clare and Geneva (Bailey) Ruffner. He is survived by three brothers: Gene (Betty), Paul (Shirley) and Jerry (Carol) Ruffner; several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Sara Joann.

Who was this man called Oogie? He got his nickname when he was around 3 years old. He loved to honk the horn on the car that made the "ooga" sound. The nickname stuck with him his entire life. In fact, most people didn't know his given name of Urban Bailey Ruffner.

Oogie had a difficult start to his life. At the age of five, his sister, Sara JoAnn, fell off the merry-go-round at school, hit her head and died from the complications of that fall. Later, he joined the Navy to serve his country during the Korean conflict. The ship he served on tested atomic bombs at Eniwetok, a deserted island in the Pacific. While in the Navy, at age 20, he received word from the Red Cross that his mother had been killed in a fire. Within an hour, his shipmates had taken up a collection and his captain had made flight arrangements for him to come home.

After the service, Oogie returned home to Mason, IL for a short time. He then moved to Anaheim, CA, where he lived until he returned to Mason in April of 1999. He didn't have a lot of contact with his family during that time. An occasional Christmas card or phone call stating, "I'm coming home in May."

Oogie was a witty, comical man who loved cigarettes, classic cars, Dr. Pepper, Roloids, Vicks cough drops and chocolate. He loved good food, especially Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. He also loved his brothers, and his many nieces and nephews. One of his ways to tell you goodbye would be to say, "say goodnight (whoever)." He was a very independent, stubborn man, which helped him to fight the cancer as long as he did. Even though Oogie was back home with us a very short time, he made us realize the importance of family.

Distance can't separate family—  
only family can separate family.

~ The above obituary was lovingly written  
and submitted by Cathy White, niece of  
Urban Bailey "Oogie" Ruffner

## What Is It? Where Is It?

(from page 7)

**WHAT:** Dr. Henry Ruffner's House

**WHERE:** Campus of Washington & Lee University

Located in Lexington, Virginia, this is the home built by Washington College for Dr. Henry Ruffner in 1842, during his presidency of the college. It is located on the campus of Washington and Lee University, across the Green from the Lee Chapel and Tomb and just east of the current President's House built by Gen. Robert E. Lee when he was president of Washington College following the end of the Civil War. Henry Ruffner, great grandson of Peter and Mary (Steinman) Ruffner was born at Mundellsville, Virginia to David and Lydia (Brumbach) Ruffner in 1790. When his grandfather Joseph took his family to the Kanawha River Valley in 1795, David, Lydia and their three children, Henry, Anne and Susan soon followed. Henry's brother Lewis was born there in 1797. Henry grew to adulthood in Malden, Virginia (now WV) where his family became famous in the salt and coal industry. Imbued with scholastics and religion, he graduated Washington College in 1813, was licensed to preach and in 1819, he organized the Presbyterian Church in Charleston and the Kanawha Salines Church in Malden. He was called to teach at Washington College in 1819, the year he also married Sarah Montgomery Lyle. They moved into a new home in Lexington which is still standing at 110 Preston Street [see photo below]. There his four children were born: Julia Elizabeth, William Henry (founder and first superintendent in 1870 of the Virginia Public School System), Ann and David Louis.

The beautiful home that is the subject of this article would be their home until he retired from the presidency in 1850 and returned to the Malden area. There he started the private school "Mount Ovis" and taught until his death in 1861. This President's house would be occupied by Gen. Lee until he built the current president's house in 1869. Stonewall Jackson was married in the Ruffner House while a teacher at the nearby Virginia Military Institute. This historic home is maintained by the University as a faculty residence and not open to the public. ■

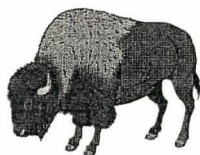


Henry Ruffner's first home in Lexington, VA, on Preston St.  
(From the Ruffner Library Collection.)



## Animals in Kanawha at time of settlement

(from the journal of Col. David Ruffner, 1767-1843)\*



Buffalo, Elk, Bear, Panther, Wild Cat, Wolf, Grey Fox, Raccoon, Possum, Pole Cat, Otter, Beaver, Mink, Muskrat, Ground Hog, Grey Squirrel, Black Squirrel, Ground Squirrel, Weasel, Mole, Girboa Mouse, Rabbit, Black Rat (ext), Norway Rat (some since the first settlement), Mouse, Red Fox (has become an inhabitant within the last few years) and the Flying Squirrel.

\*Copied by his grandson, Dr. James Putney, (1816-1876) in his own journal. (Courtesy of Ruth Shepherd, Charleston, WV from the collection of Minnie Putney Stanley - James Putney's niece.)



## Advice from Evie (RR&R's personal columnist)

Dear Evie,

*I have always wanted to have my family history traced, but I can't afford to spend a lot of money to do it. Any suggestions?*

*Adam*

Dear Adam,  
Yes! Run for public office.  
Evie

## DO YOU HAVE A QUERY?

To assist our readers who are seeking information about their ancestors, the RR&R would be happy to publish it. Please include all the information you currently have such as full names, birth dates, marriage dates, date of death, including locations to the editor at Ruffner Roots & Ramblings, 120 Rita Court, Columbus, OH 43213. Email: [Jokereid@aol.com](mailto:Jokereid@aol.com).



## The Editor's Desk

### Looking forward to 2001

Well, here we are firmly ensconced in the new millennium and we haven't been struck down by a giant asteroid. Remember how apprehensive everyone was last year at this time—all the computers were going to crash, people were hoarding canned goods in their pantries and stuffing cash in their mattresses. I know people who are still trying to get rid of some of the stuff they stashed away (except the money).

2001 promises to be a great year for the Ruffner Family Association. We have a lot to look forward to with our 6<sup>th</sup> Biennial Family Reunion in Luray, completion of the Ruffner WebSite and great strides being made on our updated history book(s).

Our deepest appreciation goes out to all who have contributed so greatly to this publication during the past year. It will continue to be a service and information source for all members of the Association, genealogical/historical societies and libraries.

If you are a member, you will find a dues invoice enclosed with this publication. Please pay your dues promptly. All labor on this publication and the other Ruffner mailings you receive is voluntary. However, we have never figured out a way to get free paper, printing, postage and photocopying services. Your dues go a long way to defray these costs and we would sincerely appreciate your support.

Our thanks to all the RR&R readers. We look forward to hearing from you in 2001.

Love,  
Cousin Joan

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*Happy New Year from the  
Board of Directors of the  
Ruffner Family Association &  
the Editorial Board of  
Ruffner Roots & Ramblings*



*See you next year!*

*Deadline for the next issue is Jan. 15, 2001.*



