



ROOTDIGGER

2nd Quarter: April - June 2015

The Rootdigger is a publication of the Marion County Genealogical Society, a division of the non-profit Historic Ocala Preservation Society. Annual membership fee is \$15.00.

PRESS RELEASE

12 January 2015

By Florida State Genealogical Society

Ocala, Florida — The Florida State Genealogical Society (FSGS) wishes to congratulate Claudette Sapp Stephens on successfully establishing nine new descendants for Florida Pioneer Matilda A. Renfroe. Matilda A. Renfroe was married to John Neil in Jefferson County, Florida in 1832 and married again, for a second time, to John Sapp about 1850 in Columbia County, Florida. Matilda was the mother of seven children; five boys and two girls. A complete biographical sketch will be published in the FSGS bi-annual publication *The Florida Genealogist*.

The newly established descendants of Pioneer Matilda A. Renfroe are:

Claudette Sapp Stephens
Jackson Dale Michaud
Kelley Stephens Colbert
Abby Marie Swinderman
Tracey Stephens Swinderman

Molly Rebekah Michaud
Jody Stephens Michaud
John Brandon Colbert
Annie Rosalie Swinderman

The FSGS Pioneer Descendant Program is open to all individuals and families who can prove descent from 1) an ancestor who lived in Florida prior to statehood on 3 March 1845; or, 2) an ancestor who lived in a current Florida county prior to county formation; or, 3) was living in Florida between 3 March 1845 and 31 December 1900. The program also offers a Memorial certificate and Researcher certificate.

Visit the Pioneer page of our website at www.flsgs.org for more information.

Amy Crabill Lay

(L-R) Annie Swinderman,
Tracey Swinderman,
Kelley Colbert,
Claudette Sapp Stephens,
Amy Crabill Lay FSGS.

Photograph courtesy of Judy Wright



2nd Quarter 2015

Inside this issue:

<i>Matilda A. Renfroe Florida Pioneer</i>	2
<i>My Quest to obtain a Florida Pioneer De-</i>	4
<i>Unusual Words for Family Relationships</i>	5
<i>Tombstones For Genealogists</i>	6
<i>Remember their Service Arch Andrew Shealy Pvt. US Army WWII</i>	7
<i>Marriages 1844-1900</i>	8
<i>The Miracle Baby</i>	9



Matilda Renfroe—Florida Pioneer

Claudette Sapp Stephens

Matilda A. “Matilly” Renfroe was the first daughter born to Enoch and Winifred (Howard) Renfroe about 1815 in Georgia. I located the Enoch Renfroe family in the 1820 census of Washington County, Georgia.

Sometime between 1820 and 1830 the family moved to Florida Territory, where they are listed in the 1830 census in Jefferson County, Florida Territory.

In 1832 Matilda Renfroe, age 17, married her first husband, John Neal. Eight years later she and John Neal show up on the 1840 census living in Jefferson County, Florida Territory. By then they have three sons, Roan, Obediah and Clinton.

That is the last record of John. His absence is left to speculation. Perhaps he was killed in the Indian Wars, death due to illness, or maybe he abandoned his family.

The 1850 Columbia (formerly Jefferson) County census finds Matilda Renfroe Neal and her three sons living next to her brother, Joel Renfroe and their widowed mother, Winifred Howard Renfroe. Matilda's sons are ages 15, 14 and 10. On the same census living nearby, is John Sapp living in the household of John and Mary Dryden, relatives of the Renfroes.

Fast forward to the 1860 census of New River County, Florida. We find Matilda married to John Sapp. With them are their children; Enoch, Bartley, Reubin, Susan Sapp and Clinton Neal, Matilda's youngest son by her first marriage. Immediately next door is Matilda's oldest child Roan Neal and his wife, Jane.

The 1860 agriculture census of New River County, Florida lists John Sapp residing on 40 acres. Next to this property is Roan Neal living on 40 acres. Around the area are many other Sapp and Renfroe families.

John Sapp and Matilda had selected their homestead and were busy working the land. I choose to picture them as a content, hardworking family and enjoying their many relatives as neighbors. John had his three sons and a step son to share the farm work, the hunting and fishing. Matilda had her pretty little girl. I'm sure they were proud of all their children.

Life was good. But, the life John and Matilda had envisioned was soon to be cut short.

(Continued on page 3)

Continued from Page 2

WAR WAS DECLARED!!

John Sapp, at age 39, enlisted with the Confederacy on May 20, 1863. He registered at Lake City, Florida, in Company E, 6th Regiment, Florida Infantry, which soon changed to Company E, 9th Regiment, Florida Infantry, also known as Finegan's Brigade. He was a Provost Marshall Guard.

This regiment fought at the Battle of Olustee, Lake City, Florida, and Cold Mountain, Petersburg, Virginia among other battles. On August 21st, 1864, at the "Battle of The Weldon Railroad" in Petersburg, Virginia, John Sapp was wounded. He died the next day; he was 40 years old.

Matilda, once again, found herself a woman alone, with much responsibility, with four children ages 13, 11, 9 and 3 still at home.

Matilda's three sons with John Neal also served in the Confederacy. Roan survived the war, but Obediah and Clinton were killed in action with the Florida Cavalry circa 1862.

One blow after another for Matilda. Her heart was surely broken. The plans she and John had for themselves and their children were lost. But, she had four children at home depending on her. Her strength and courage prevailed.

Courage was learned at an early age. Growing up in Florida Territory was not easy. A wild country, teeming with dangerous animals, much less, the Indian Wars were occurring.

She was a humble lady, but with her tenacity she saw her remaining children thrive. Enoch, Bartley, Reubin, Susan and Roan all eventually married and had many children of their own.

Family tradition says Matilda died in 1910 at age 98, presumably in or near Bradford County (successor to Jefferson, Columbia and New River). I, personally, have no record of that. We're still searching for any additional information on Matilda, my great grandmother, A REAL FLORIDA PIONEER!

Children of Matilda A. Renfroe and John C. Neil

Clinton 1833 –

Roan 1835 –

Obediah 1836 – 1862

Children of Matilda A. Renfroe and John Sapp

Enoch H. Sapp 1851 –

Bartley Evans Sapp 1853 – 1910

Reubin L. Sapp 1855 – 1941

Susan Elizabeth Matilda Temperance Sapp 1857 – 1938

9th Florida Infantry

The 9th Florida Infantry Regiment was organized June 1864 and placed in the Florida Brigade under the command of General Finegan, in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

In the last year of war the Florida Brigade fought at Cold Harbor in June 1864 and in the Petersburg Siege from June to April 1865 where they saw action in several battles and skirmishes.

Battles & Engagements

Olustee, FL - Feb. 20, 1864

Battle of Cold Harbor, June 1864

Petersburg Siege April-June

Reames Station - Aug. 1864

Weldon Railroad, VA - Aug. 1864

Hatcher's Run, VA - Feb. 1865

High Bridge VA - Apr. 1865

Appomattox, VA - Apr. 1865



My Quest to obtain a Florida Pioneer Descendant Certificate

Claudette Sapp Stephens

My quest to obtain a Florida Pioneer Descendant Certificate (FPDC) began when I read an article printed in a genealogical magazine explaining the Florida Pioneer Descendant Certificate. The Florida State Genealogical Society (FSGS) awards "Florida Pioneer Descendant" certificates to people who can document their lineage from an ancestor who resided in Florida when it became a state on March 3, 1845.

My "Pioneers" lived in a unique time, in Territorial Florida. Carving a homestead and farm from wilderness in an area inhabited by dangerous wild animals; surviving the Indian Wars. I think these strong determined people deserve to be remembered.

At the time, I was busy compiling documentation on my great grandfathers, who served in the Confederacy. I saved that article, and put the FPDC on hold. After the United Daughters of the Confederacy approved my last great grandfather, I then began the FPDC challenge.

I started with the marriage record of Matilda Renfroe and her first husband, John Neal. The document was dated 1832, Jefferson County, Florida Territory. The proofs were falling into place after much research and the copy machine was working overtime.

The program has several pages of very definite instructions. Just to name a few; Rules of Evidence, Specific Instructions for Preparing the Documents, a list of Items Considered as Proof, and a list of Items Not Accepted. I referred to my saved article many times during the process.

Preparing the forms exactly as required, and compiling all the proofs, I proudly mailed off my 120 pages. Months later, regretfully, I received word that many corrections and more proof was needed.

There was a problem connecting my Grandfather Bartley Sapp to his parents. Bartley has no birth certificate, no death certificate and no headstone. (Florida passed a state law mandating death registration in 1899; however, records before 1917 are spotty.) The 1860 census listing was another roadblock; Matilda and John and their children were all listed, but the census didn't list relationships.

When I submitted my corrected application, I added the two death certificates for Bartley's younger siblings. Both certificates show John Sapp as

(Continued on page 5)

Continued from Page 4

their father and Matilda Renfroe as their mother. That too, was not enough to connect Bartley to his parents.

After much searching, I found an old letter that showed promise. The letter was from Aunt Opal, Dad's sister, dated 1968. She had written to answer my questions about their family. She wrote about her father, Bartley, giving dates of his birth and death, mentioned Bartley's two siblings, giving some details about them that agreed with information on their DCs. I was told by my FSGS contact that old letters were not accepted. I did not interpret the rules that way and proceeded with my plan.

The year was running out. I quickly copied her letter including the postmarked envelope. I mailed the committee a copy of Aunt Opal's letter tying Bartley to his siblings, the death certificates of his siblings listing their parents as John Sapp and Matilda Renfroe, the 1860 census naming each individual in the Sapp family in New River County, Florida, and my argument-explanation. I included a copy of rule, highlighting the pertinent parts, and my full page argument-explanation. I hoped that was enough to convince the "committee" that Bartley was, indeed, the son of Matilda Renfroe Sapp.

The week before Christmas, I received a call from my contact. "Merry Christmas! Your application has been accepted!"

I had started in January 2014.

Through this process my children and grandchildren have gotten to know their ancestors, not only their names, but about their life. They are very proud of the family history and it has stimulated their interest in genealogy.

Unusual Words for Family Relationships

Are you having trouble accurately describing your family relationships?

Here are some seldom used words to describe some family relationships. Most are derived from Old English.

AVUNCLE or EAM – Your mother's brother, maternal uncle;

MODRIGE - Your mother's sister, maternal aunt

FÆDRA - Your father's brother, paternal uncle

FADU – Your father's sister, paternal aunt

BROTHER-UTERINE - Your half-brother from the same mother.

BROTHER CONSANGUINE - Your half-brother from the same father.

BROTHER-GERMAN - Full brother, sharing both parents.

PATRUEL - Paternal cousin, child of your paternal aunt or uncle, OR the child of your brother

CONSOBRINUS - Maternal cousin, child of your maternal aunt or uncle,

DOUBLE COUSIN - Sharing all four grandparents; occurs when a pair of sisters marries a pair of brothers

NIBLINGS - gender-neutral for nieces and nephews

MACHETONIM - Your child's in-laws; parents of your child's spouse



Tombstones For Genealogists

By Margaret Sasser

McFall Cemetery, which is located in the town of McFall in Gentry County, Missouri is home to some of the most unusual tombstones. Three graves of the Elam family are topped with tombstones that includes a photo of the person on the front of the tombstone and a family tree on the back.

The family trees which are engraved on the roughly 3 foot by 6 foot granite stones sports a 5 generation family tree which includes details of the person including date and place of birth, date and place of marriage, date and place of death.

Find a grave links:

[John Mack Elam](#)

[Dorothy Mae Elam](#)

[George Emerson Elam](#)

The three graves which sport the tombstones belong to:

John Mack Elam (1943-2008, US Army Vietnam, Bronze Star)

Dorothy Mae Elam (1951-2008, Women's Army Corps)

George Emerson Elam (1908-2006)

Additional photo of the graves may be viewed on find a grave.



Photo on left: Dorothy Mae Elam

Photo on right: John Mack Elam

Photos courtesy of Cheryl Lang, Darlington, Missouri



REMEMBER THEIR SERVICE



By Lisa Holt

Arch Andrew Shealy—Private US Army, WWII

On Saturday March 28, 2015 Arch Andrew Shealy was presented a long overdue POW medal in a presentation at the Veterans Memorial Park in Ocala.

Arch was born 22 September 1919 in the community of Zuber, an unincorporated area 12 miles north of Ocala. He was the fourth of six children born to George Nuby Shealy (1884-1928) and Dora Beatrice Smith (1886-1969). George and Dora were married on 27 December 1909 in Marion County.

Preceded by brothers George Nuby Jr. (1910-2010) and Benjamin Franklin “B. F.” (1913-2013) and sister Lula Alice (1917-1917), Arch grew up in Ocala along with younger brothers Bertram Russell “Bert” (1921 - 2012) and Reuel Basford (1924-). Brothers George and B.F. married sisters Katie Wilma (1914-2004) and Mattie Louise Buhl (1912-2003). George and Wilma were married in Marion County 7 October 1933 and B. F. and Louise were married 9 January 1937, also in Marion County. Bert married Theresa Beatrice Coburn (1919-2000) on 17 January 1942 and Reuel married Evelyn Marie Odom (1926- 2002) on 24 September 1944, both in Marion County as well.

Serving with a howitzer gun crew in 1943, Arch and other members of his crew were set upon by General Rommel. Following his 1943 capture in Tunisia he spent time in POW Stalags VIIA, IIB and IIIA outside of Berlin. After being held for about 27 months “I dropped down to about 90 pounds from about 138,” Shealy said.

After returning home Arch married Frances Louise “Boots” Lyles (1922-1997) on 4 July 1945 in Marion County and the couple had four children Carolyn Shealy Freligh, Diane Shealy Hickerson, Debbie Shealy Stinson and Arch Shealy Jr.

“I was honored by my family and treated well by sympathetic friends when I got home,” Arch Shealy stated, but he indicated he was “quiet” about his experience.

Arch Shealy was presented the POW Medal, Good Conduct Medal, African Campaign Medal, Victory in World War II Medal and a lapel pin known as a “Ruptured Duck,” signifying honorable military service. As is the case with many, true heroes are often humble.



*Arch Andrew Shealy on left
with an unknown friend*



Marriages 1844-1900

The following is a portion of an indexed list of marriage licenses from the Marion County Marriage Books A, B, and C (1844-1900) and Alachua County Marriage Book 1 (1837-1845). The list is organized alphabetically by the grooms' name. A copy of the original records can be obtained by contacting the Clerk of Court of either Alachua or Marion County.

Groom Name	Bride Name	Date Married	Note	Book & Page
Ashford, Ben	Sheaford, Dosa	10 Apr 1897		2-237
Ashford, Hilliard	Johnson, Emma	22 Mar 1893		1-460
Ashford, Isaac	Pinkney, Kate	6 Feb 1892		1-366
Ashley, Joseph	Harris, Lottie	25 Dec 1900		2-594
Ashwood, Frazier	Shanon, Susana	5 May 1894		1-575
Ashwood, Hilliard	Tanner, Martha	9 Apr 1899		2-432
Ashwood, Hilyard	Walker, Florence	25 Nov 1880		D-595
Asia, Arthur	Shelton, Zenie	25 Dec 1888		1-107
Asia, Charles	Robinson, Francis	15 Sep 1895		2-113
Asia, Primus	Johnson, Lizzie	20 Dec 1891		1-348
Asia, Prinus	Mason, Martha	9 May 1889		1-140
Asia, Simeon	Conney, Ginnette	4 Mar 1867		C-187
Astrum, Joseph	McNabb, Julia E.	3 Nov 1889		1-171
Atkins, Alex	Gibbins, Mattie	20 Sep 1893		1-505
Atkins, Alexander	Moore, Leah	30 Dec 1897		2-312
Atkins, Charlie	Livingston, Emma	18 Apr 1888	(1)	1-062
Atkinson, Camden	Owens, Anna T.	29 Aug 1860		B-157
Atkinson, J. Lee	Ferguson, S. E.	6 Dec 1867		C-210
Atwatee, Hull A	Park, Laura K.	25 Nov 1888		1-095
Atwater, Daniel	Waters, Sarah	29 Mar 1840	(300)	1-019
Ault, Richard	Crosby, Harriet	27 Oct 1846		A-025
Aultman, R. C.	Gates, M. A.	25 Dec 1879		D-421
Austin, Chapell	Austin, Esther	26 Aug 1866		C-055
Austin, Chappell	Mention, Isabella	2 Jan 1879		D-354
Austin, Chappell	Frazier, Louise	2 Feb 1888		1-046
Austin, Ed	Wilson, Rebecca	6 May 1897	(1)	2-248
Austin, H. W.	Smith, Laura J.	28 Dec 1882		D-621
Austin, James	Kirk, Josephine	1 Jan 1885		E-012
Austin, John Lindsay	Kellogg, Jean	31 Dec 1890		1-272
Austin, Mac	Lawson, Caty	1 Sep 1866		C-057

Notes:

(1): The date shown as marriage date is the date the marriage license was issued. No marriage date or minister certification was recorded. It is not known if these people were actually married.

(49): Groom given name may be Levy or Leroy.

(300): Alachua County marriage record

The Miracle Baby

By Brenda Moore Leukhardt

[Editorial note: A couple of years ago we had a speaker who talked to us about how to be a better ancestor. By sharing her story, Brenda has left a precious legacy for her descendants for innumerable generations to come, and a special treasure for her son. It's a story of faith and love. She posted it originally on Facebook on her son's birthday. His reply is at the end.

Brenda Moore Leukhardt is my husband's third cousin. Though we have never met in person, we have been friends for several years via email and Facebook, exchanging genealogy research and sharing the joys of grandmotherhood. She and her husband Mike live in Georgia. They have three children, and are "Brenma and Pop" to eleven grandchildren. The article and photo are reprinted with permission. – Judy Wright, President]

As a young teenager, I suffered gynecological problems, surgeries and the terrible news that I would never give birth to children. When Mike and I met and talked of marriage, I told him about my surgeries. He comforted me and said, "We are in this together!" But, due to faith and blessings, miraculously, Mike and I had two beautiful children (only a year apart) – however, that's a wonderful story for another time. Meanwhile...

I was scheduled for my fourth gynecological surgery – this would be the final one: a complete hysterectomy. I was told by the medical community, that I had been very "fortunate" to have had two children – a girl and a boy, my miracle babies. Once the surgery was completed I would feel much better – they said.

The thought of losing the ability to bear children was an emotional roller coaster. It saddened me to realize that part of my life was ending, but I was very grateful for my blessed little family. Sometimes during the days and weeks prior to my surgery I had the feeling come over me that I was to have another baby. I talked to my husband and my doctors. "There is one more," I lamented. "I hear him crying and calling me during the night." I was reassured by the doctors that this was a common feeling, especially in woman as young as I was.

We scheduled the surgery for a spring day. My two little ones were cared for by church friends and family. With a heavy heart I headed to the hospital and the extended stay away from my children.

Despite much prayer and pleading, my emotions were tender and troubled because I kept hearing a little voice saying, "Please wait for me."

My doctor came in to see me just before I was wheeled into the operating room. "I can't do this," I told my doctor. "There is another child for me. I know it, I feel it, and he is calling out to me. I won't do this." The doctor sat down beside my bed, held my hand and quietly reminded me of the health struggles over the last eight years, the other three surgeries, the babies at home, and told me to be grateful.

Then the doctor made a deal with me – but no promises. He said, "I will leave what I can, but in one year you will have to undergo this surgery again."

The outcome – 1/10 of the only ovary, one fallopian tube, and the womb remained. He said the ovary was about the size of the end of a fingernail tip.

About one year later, I was sitting in the Washington DC temple when I realized I was going to have another baby. I told my husband about this feeling in such a spiritual place. He consoled me. When we returned home, I made an appointment for a doctor's check-up. Many times over the years I had told the doctor I thought I was pregnant, only to be disappointed. This time I was proved to be the one who made the correct diagnosis.

After three pregnancy tests (they were done a little differently back then), my doctor returned to my room and said, "You want to give me your due date because, my sweet girl, you are very pregnant."

On Friday the 13th, a few minutes after midnight, my baby boy, Andrew Kimball, was born.

The next morning my doctor came to my room. His first question to me, "Do you hear any more babies calling you? Because if you do we will not schedule the surgery until next year."

Continued on Page 10



**Marion County
Genealogical Society**

2nd Quarter: April –
June 2015

President: Judy Wright
Vice President: Arnold Davis
Secretary: Barbara Jones
Treasurer: Richard Heckman
Past President: Patti Hunt
Rootdigger Editor: Margaret Sasser
Field Trips: Jim Neate
Surname Database: Peggy Jones
Research: Lisa Holt
Cemetery Project: Arnold Davis
Obituary Daily Times: Richard Heckman
Library Volunteers: Bettie DeBary
Webmaster: Judy Wright
Voice Mail: (352) 897-0840
Email: mariongenealogy@gmail.com

The Rootdigger
MCGS
P. O. Box 1206
Ocala, FL 34478-1206

Place mailing address label here

We're on the web:
Mariongenealogy.tripod.com



Brenda Moore Leukhardt with her son Andy

Mission Statement

The Marion County Genealogical Society is dedicated to creating and promoting an interest in genealogy, focusing on research in Marion County, Florida, and in supporting members in their research.

The Rootdigger is indexed in the Periodical Source Index (PERSI).

Continued from Page 9

I waited a few months and realized my little family was finally complete.

I had the final surgery when Andy was four months old.

Happy Birthday Andy Leukhardt.

Andy: Thank you for listening. Thank you for waiting. I know you still hear me when my spirit calls out to you. I am so blessed to be your child. And generations to come have you to thank and look back on as an honored ancestor and the architect of a great legacy.