



THE BURKETT FAMILY



A Quarterly Publication

Special Points of Interest -

- New Printer!
- New Software!
- New Paper!
- New Look!

Inside this issue:

◆ Alabama Photos	2
◆ Tennessee Earthquake	3
◆ Goldthwaite Reunion	4
◆ Central Texas Frontier	4
◆ A Look Back - Sid Huggins	6
◆ Elephant Hanging	8
◆ Tennessee Importance	10
◆ George Washington Burkett	17
◆ Katie Lee Burkett Grubbs	17
◆ Historians Corner	18
 Coming Soon!	
◆ The Burkett Legend	

Huntsville, Alabama Reunion – June 17



What a Cake! What a Reunion!

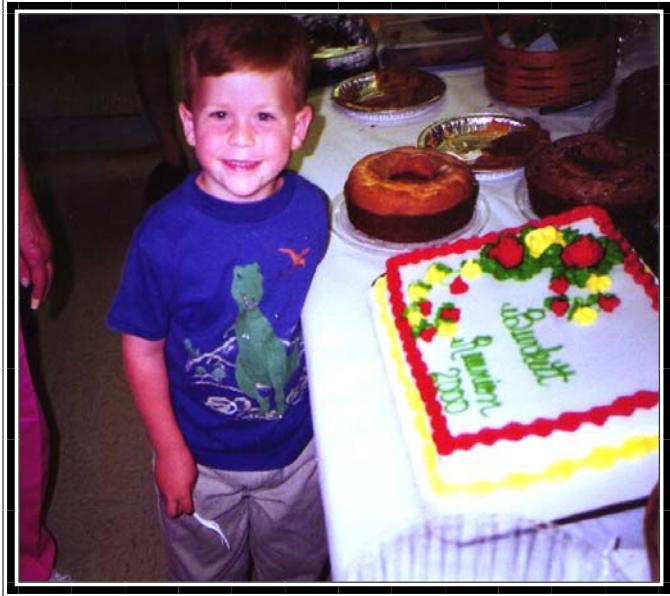
The above cake was brought by David and Della Frey and, as you can see, added a lot of color and good taste to the food table.

With the assistance of Debbie and Dale Howard, the reunion was again held at the Meridianville, Alabama Church of Christ where we enjoyed those excellent kitchen facilities of stoves, including microwave; an icemaker with large tubs to hold the ice; plenty of tables and chairs; and the gym which was used by some of the children for playing games. There is plenty of paved parking and folks could pull right up to the door to unload things. And although we enjoyed our previous reunions at the outdoor parks, we really appreciate being indoors with the excellent air conditioning. Also, being indoors this year saved the reunion because it rained just after we ate and I think we would have been forced to "run for it" had we been outdoors. So we again say thanks to Debbie and Dale Howard and to the Meridianville Church of Christ of which they are members.

And when it comes to food — I think we had it all! We had pork, beef, and chicken; all types of vegetables including several varieties of potatoes and dumplings; many types of bread; and desserts that some family members were later overheard saying they would almost kill for! We also had a variety of drinks including sweetened and unsweetened tea plus many types of soft drinks. With all of that food laid out, it didn't take long for everybody to get in line when Audy Majors said, "Okay, folks, let's eat!" I think it's safe to say that Burketts love to eat.

Before we get to the door prize drawing, let me tell you about the cake shown above. First of all, it was much larger than the picture indicates so David had to keep walking when he came in with it and headed straight for a table to set it down. I grabbed my camera and headed over to get a picture of it before somebody decided to cut into it. However, by the time I got there, somebody was ahead of me with a fork and was getting ready to cut into until I stopped him by

saying, "Wait a minute!" He looked up at me and said, "Well, it's my cake!" Who was it? Look at the picture below. It was Travis Andrew Frey, son of David and Della who had brought the cake! Look closely and you will see the fork in his right hand. But he was a gentleman and he waited.



Again this year we had some great door prizes beginning with those great baskets made by Verdi Andrews. Audy Majors called on Verdi and some of our young relatives to help him with the drawing as shown below.



That's Audy on the right and Verdi on the left with their young helpers. Each person had signed the register when they came in and each had been assigned a number. Numbers were then placed into the large basket and drawn for each prize.

The Burkett Family

Original Historian

StellaB 'Nita' Jackson Jaynes

October 8, 1907 - June 18, 1996



We wish to acknowledge the contributions made by StellaB 'Nita' Jackson Jaynes in compiling the initial data about our family. Without her efforts much of the information we have would probably never have been located. However, the impetus to continue her work began with a suggestion in 1992 by Gentry J.B. Burkett to have a family reunion in Huntsville, Alabama which was carried out by the efforts of Audy Majors. Over the years, Audy has continued his efforts toward the location and preservation of family information and artifacts.

CURRENT HISTORIAN AND EDITOR

Marvin Oliver Webb

ALABAMA REUNION MANAGER

Audy Majors

For information, write to:

The Burkett Family

c/o Oliver Webb

15439 Lakeshore Villas Drive # 77

Tampa, FL 33613-1326

By phone 813/961-1679

By FAX 813/961-1679

By Email hickeywebb@aol.com

This is a private and non-profit publication by the Burkett Family for the sole use of Burkett Family members and relatives. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited by other than Burkett Family members without written permission.

Again this year, Verdi and Kathleen Andrews brought several of those great baskets which Verdi makes. Those who won baskets were:

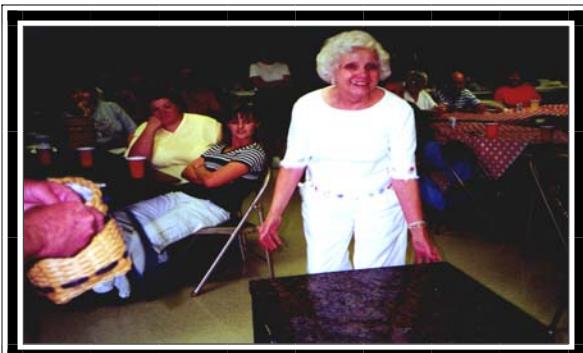
Betty Stephens
 Tina Askins
 Melissa Phillips
 Johnny Carroll
 Buddy Burkett
 Danny Banks
 Martha Waldrup
 Susan Campbell
 Courtney Askins
 Beth Phillips
 Page Ann Banks

The winner of the large basket with the Burkett Reunion on it was Carolyn Carroll shown below. Looking on from the left is husband Bobby Carroll.

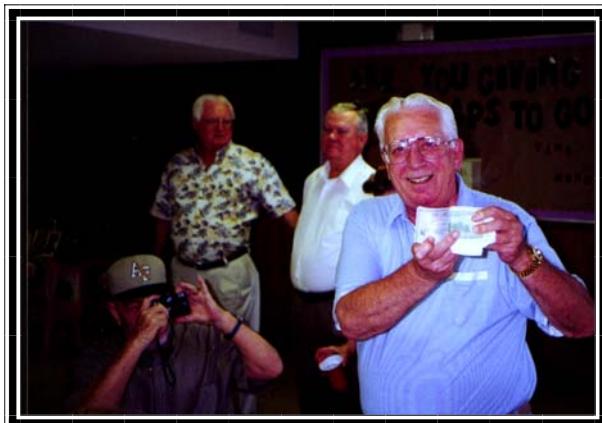


Bobby Carroll donated a brick from the fireplace of Henry Burkett's old house in Tennessee. Bobby had cleaned the brick, covered it with a protective coating and applied an identification tag on it. This prize was won by Nancy Roberson. Bobby also donated two bird feeders which were won by Melissa Phillips and Jennifer Burkett; a bird house which was won by Randy Phillips; and napkin and utensil holders built by Bobby and painted by wife Carolyn which were won by David Askins and Andrew Askins.

The final door prize was a wrought iron table with a marble top donated by Earl Burkett who owns New Market (Alabama) Iron Works. It was won by Carlos Patterson. Shown below is wife Loretta Patterson accepting it.



And I got a big surprise! In the last issue of our Newsletter I made a comment about wanting a color printer. Well, several of my cousins got together *behind my back* and came up with contributions for me to buy one. If you can't tell what I am holding in the picture below, I'll tell you. ***It's money!*** And that's how this issue is printed in color where possible. All I can say to those of you who contributed is "Thank you very much." I also used a portion of the funds to upgrade the software I use.



All in all, a great time and so much fun seeing everybody. Some who normally attend were unable to be there this year. ***We missed you!*** Be sure to make it next year. Also as usual, the time passes too fast to spend as much time as you would like with everybody.

Thanks to everyone who prepared the delicious food and I will be looking forward to seeing you all again next year. ■

The Tennessee Earthquake ! -

Did you know the Tennessee earthquake was placed among the major earthquakes of the world! It took place in 1811 in what is now Lake County located in the northwest corner of Tennessee. A series of earthquakes began with the first great shock on December 16, 1811 and continued for many months. On the night of February 6, 1812 and extending into the hours after midnight the earth opened up and churning waters formed a great lake. Though designated on some early maps as Line or Wood Lake, it soon took its name from the lost Reelfoot River.

These earthquakes received little publicity at the time because the area was sparsely populated but scientific literature place the shocks among the major earthquakes surpassing the better known shocks in California. The area had been affected by prior quakes as supported by geologic evidence, Indian traditions and other written records.

English naturalist, John Bradbury was on the river in 1811 and left a graphic account beginning with December 16 and continuing for several days. Andrew Jackson recorded on February 8, 1812 that walls were cracked and chimneys thrown down in Nashville.

The land under the lake remained in the hands of the original land owners until the early 1900's when it was transferred to the West Tennessee Land Company. ■

The Goldthwaite Texas Reunion -

WHEN — September 9, 2000
 WHERE — Goldthwaite Bank Community Ctr.
 REGISTRATION — 8:30 AM — 10:30 AM
 OPENING REMARKS — 10:30 AM
 LUNCH — 12:15 PM — 1:45 PM
 ADJOURN — 5:30 PM

If you haven't made your plans, do so now! ■

Happy Birthday, Juanelle!! -

On August 27 Juanelle Burkett Curtis celebrated her **80th** birthday! Hope you had a good one, Juanelle! Juanelle is the daughter of Edgar Lorenza Burkett and Evelyn Barton Burkett; a granddaughter of Joseph Lafayette Burkett; a great granddaughter of Jacob Lorenza Burkett; and a 2nd great granddaughter of Henry Burkett. She lives in Goliad, Texas. See you at the reunion, Juanelle. ■

How To Clean A Gravestone -

Many of us visit cemeteries and find markers which are in need of cleaning. Most of the time we arrive unprepared to clean them and leave with a feeling that we should have done something. Here is a list of things you can prepare and take with you just in case you need to clean one.

Soft-bristle brush — metallic brushes are too harsh
Small, soft, slanted paintbrush — to clean lettering
At least one large sponge —
Water — You may want to bring a small spray bottle of water for gently cleaning dirt and debris from the stone. The spray bottle should contain **only** water and **not** detergent or chemicals.
Towel or old rags — To kneel on or clean polished granite stones.
Hand Cleaner —
Cutting Tool — Hand-held grass clippers for trimming grass and/or weeds close to the stones.
Pencil and Notepad — To record information . ■

Central Texas Frontier -

You will recall that Mary 'Polly' Epley was the wife of Henry Burkett and that several of the Epleys moved to Texas when Jacob Lorenza Burkett moved out there. One of the Epley's was George who had a son, William Daniel Epley. William Daniel had a son Lorenzo who this article is about. It came from an interview with Lorenzo who, at the time, was a resident of a Rising Star area nursing home. The interview was conducted by Lash Lashbrook, a staff writer for the Brownwood Bulletin and was published Sunday, September 7, 1977 in the Brownwood Bulletin. Now here is the article.

There remains a diminishing number of senior citizens whose life has spanned the years before the invention of the automobile and airplanes, and whose memories go far back before rocketships and men on the moon.

One such person is Lorenzo L. (Pa) Epley, a resident of a Rising Star area nursing home, who was born May 25, 1880 near Sweetwater in Nolen County. To place Pa, as he is affectionately called by relatives and friends, in his proper niche in history, he was three years old when the University of Texas was established in Austin and when the Fence Cutting War was in full swing. And he was 11 years old when James Stephen Hogg was the first native Texan to become governor.

Daniel, Pa's father, first settled in Missouri then later moved out into the Williams Ranch area, near Mullin and Goldthwaite, in what was known as the western frontier.

Daniel married Elizabeth Miller and the couple moved to Nolen County where Pa was born. The small family later returned to the Williams Ranch area in what was then Brown and later Mills County. Incidentally, in 1882, Williams Ranch was reportedly in contention with Waco, Tyler, Lampasas, Albany and five other communities as a possible site for the University of Texas, to be established the following year in Austin.

About this time, Williams Ranch and the surrounding area became a sort of haven for lawbreakers and other characters with unsavory reputations, including the notorious gunman John Wesley Hardin, who said the town was safe for them because many lawmen felt "the ranch" was outside their jurisdiction.

As expected, disagreements between the "old settlers" of the area and the testy "newcomers" gave way to mob action and resulted in the formation of two factions — the Honest Man's Club, made up of old timers (and reportedly tied to the Ku Klux Klan), on one side and the Trigger Mountain Mob, named for Trigger Mountain near Mullin and was made up of the new arrivals.

However, it wasn't the Indians who gave the Epleys problems; it was the lawless, renegade white men who plagued many of the settlers by plundering for a living instead of turning to honest work.

As the white settlers pressed into Indian Territory, the government opened up land for settlement with homesteads granted by runs and a lottery.

A run comprised a line of settlers, and often land grabbers and opportunists, on horseback, muleback, aboard wagons and even some afoot who, at a given signal, struck out across the countryside to lay claim to a piece of land. The first run took place (in Oklahoma) in April 1889 and the most famous of the runs, the Cherokee Outlet, was made in 1893. It was into this setting that Pa Epley and his parents came by wagon.

For a couple of years, the Epleys tried to work the land along Wildhorse Creek that runs between present day Marlowe (Oklahoma) and Davis (Oklahoma). But finally,

thieves made off with their mules and Daniel decided it was time to move back to Texas. He told Elizabeth and the children to pack their belongings once again. In the meantime, he walked for several miles where the thieves had hidden the mules and retrieved the animals. They returned to Mills County, this time to settle in the Duren community.

One of Pa's brothers, Joe, stayed in Oklahoma and eventually took title to 160 acres of land that in later years brought in 13 wells during the Oklahoma oil boom.

In 1885, the Santa Fe Railroad by-passed Williams Ranch in connecting Brownwood, Zephyr, Mullin, and Goldthwaite, a move that spelled the beginning of the end of the small community.

When Pa was about 11 years old, according to his son, Earl, "the mob" reportedly hung a man by the name of Ace Brown and Pa's father, Daniel, knew a little too much about the event. Members of the mob gave him until sundown the next day to get out of the area. Not being one to mince words, especially at such a positive request, Daniel picked up his belongings during the night and by sunup he and his small family were on their way north.

So it was that in 1891, Pa went north of the Red River by horse and wagon into Indian Territory; into the land that had been home to "the five civilized tribes" - the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole—and also by some that weren't so friendly, the Comanche, Osage and other Plains Indians.

In Mills County, Pa met and married Alice Fisher. They were wed in a ceremony that took place on the steps of the county courthouse in December 1900. Ma and Pa moved southeast to Jarrell, north of Austin, in Williamson County, to care for one of Pa's aunts who was ill and bedridden. Until his aunt, Nancy Joy, passed away, Pa and Ma Epley tended the cattle and the land. While they were there they had two sons, one who died at birth and Earl, born to them in 1914. For their devotion, Mrs. Joy willed them \$1,600, a sizeable amount in those days. The couple moved back to Mills County and used the money to purchase land near Mullin which is now known as the George Fletcher place. When they sold their land about a year later, they received in the deal a steel dust stud horse they took north with them to the community of May, where they purchased a parcel of land near Ma's folks, the Fishers.

Pa started raising a new breed of horse that didn't have a name then, but has since become known as quarter-horses.

Ma and Pa both worked the land riding the pastures of the rough canyon land, checking their fence lines and tending the many ranch chores as well as working the soil.

The couple became friends of many young people of the May community and often would entertain them at the ranch where Ma would cook up some of her special dishes, especially for her grandchildren, Herman and Bill of the

May community and Mrs. Adrian Beck who now lives in the Early community.

During the bad drought of 1917-1918, Pa went to work at an oil field at Brownwood to make enough money to feed his family and pay his bills. Every Monday he came to Brownwood by wagon, worked through the week and went back to May on weekends. Meanwhile, Ma worked the land even to the point of clearing out the fields of dead oak stumps by burning them off with hot coals. Once the land was cleared she ploughed it with a four-horse team and laid in a crop of wheat that yielded a bumper crop the following year when prices were up to about \$3 a bushel. The profit Ma and Pa made just about paid up the land.

After almost six decades of working the land, ill health forced Ma and Pa to give up the tasks they knew so well and turn the ranch over to their son, Earl. The Epleys moved to the Twilite Acres Nursing Home where Mrs. Epley passed away three years ago.

Pa is still quite active and enjoys visits from his son, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who are now four in number, and is also entertained at the ranch near May where he spent so many of his years.

Pa loves music and often his son, Earl, and a few other fiddlers get together for an impromptu fiddle fest to entertain Pa and other residents of the nursing home.

In the words of Opal Featherston, whose father, John Dan Chesser, was Mills County district clerk for 16 years and did all Daniel Epley's notary work, "Lorenzo and Alice Epley have left a great heritage to all the generations of relatives who will . . . pass on their contributions of hard work and lived by the old pioneers of the land that had to endure hardships, droughts, Indian raids and mob violence on all the frontiers of our good land." ■



Pa's father, Daniel Epley (year unknown)

The Summer of 1900 -

Here are some tidbits as to what life was like in 1900.

The average life expectancy was 47.

Only 14% of the homes had a bathtub.

Only 8% of the homes had a telephone.

A 3-minute call from Denver to New York cost \$11.

(The average wage was 22 cents per hour.)

There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads. The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 miles per hour.

Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa, and Tennessee were more heavily populated than California.

More than 95% of all births took place at home.

Sugar cost 4 cents a pound. Eggs were 14 cents a dozen. Coffee cost 15 cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month and used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

The 5 leading causes of death were: 1. Pneumonia and influenza 2. TB 3. Diarrhea 4. Heart disease and 5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars. Arizona, Oklahoma, and New Mexico hadn't been admitted to the Union. One in 10 U.S. adults couldn't read or write.

Only 6% of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at corner drugstores. According to one pharmacist, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and the bowels, and, in fact, is a perfect guardian of health."

18% of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic. ■

A Look Back at Dr. Clyde G. "Sid" Huggins -

In keeping with my objective of attempting to "flesh out" our relatives, and using information provided primarily by Bob Preston Burkett, Jr., I am including this article to portray some of what life was like for Sid and other college students in the 1940's.

Sid has been engaged in our family history search for many years and knew and corresponded with Stella B Jackson Jaynes for many years prior to her death. He has contributed much information and documents to our collection. He has visited relatives in Missouri and attended family reunions in Alabama and in Texas. Today, Sid lives in Covington, Louisiana with his wife, Evelyn.

In the 1940's, he attended what was then Middle Tennessee State College in Murfreesboro, Tennessee along with the three Burkett brothers I have previously written about — Bill, Bob Preston, Sr., and Wilburn. Sid was instrumental, along with Bob Preston Burkett, Jr., in getting Bill Burkett elected into the Hall of Fame at

Middle Tennessee State College for his football achievements. (See Volume 4 1996)

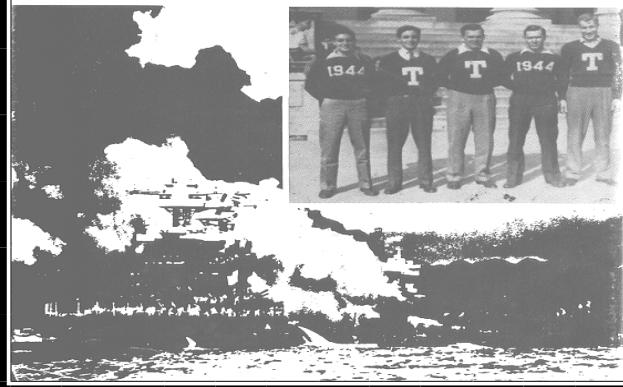
Sid is a son of Charles T. Huggins and Mattie Elizabeth Murphy Huggins; a grandson of Isaac Newton Huggins and Nancy Ann Burkett; a great grandson of John Burkett and Paulina Markum; and a second great grandson of Henry Burkett (Sr.) and Mary 'Polly' Epley Burkett.

Bob Preston Burkett, Jr. loaned me two books — *The 1943 Midlander* and *The Raider Forties* by Joe Nunley. This article is based on those books.



This photo of Sid was taken from *The 1943 Midlander*, the yearbook of Middle Tennessee State College..

THE RAIDER FORTIES JOE E. NUNLEY



Front cover of *The Raider Forties*. The first 2 young men in the above are from left to right — Wilburn Burkett and Bill Burkett.

From the inside cover of *The Raider Forties* -

"*The Raider Forties* is a true account of what the 1940s meant to a group of young men coming of age in Tennessee just prior to America's entry into the conflagration of World War II.

It was a great time to be alive and young, a time when lifelong friendships and memories were formed. We relive the high drama of football games won and lost, dormitory life, teacher confrontations, trumpet playing, hilarious high jinks, first loves.

The unclouded joy of the first chapters, by contrast, makes the meaning of war far more shocking and vivid than any conventional 'war' novel could. War changes or ends the lives of people we have come to know and care about — Bill Neeley, redhead member of the glee club, and **Bill Burkett**, football star and yearbook editor, don't come back.

The Raider Forties is not a mournful search for lost youth; it celebrates the past and the present, leaving the reader with a sense of optimism about our young men and therefore America's future."

And now some excerpts from *The Raider Forties* —

"In January an ice storm hits central Tennessee. It begins in the afternoon with a mixture of snow and rain. Whicher's (a fellow student) Model T becomes a mechanized sled as it steams around the circle from the gym to the boulevard. Boys and girls hang on to the rear bumper and **Sid Huggins** ties on a sled. Whicher picks up momentum down the boulevard ... hits the reverse pedal. Everyone cartwheels except **Sid**. *He ricochets off a tree*. The stuff falls all night."

"Old Folks" Deere and Greer Wiggins return to their dormitory room at noon. Each bed is turned upside down. The dresser drawers are emptied in the middle of the floor and the dressers are placed on the beds. On the window sill is a note. 'The Green Hornet has been here.' Curses, threats, clean up. We laugh but not too much. The next day **Sid Huggins** returns to a similar scene. Then Maury and Mouse find their room upset with Mouse's side in complete disarray. Who is the Green Hornet? The next week it continues. On the second floor, Dynamite and I lock our door and tell the janitor to loan his passkey to no one. We go to Rutledge Hall. We return at 10:05 P.M. What a mess! The Green Hornet has walked the outside ledge to our window and struck again. Days pass. The rampage continues. Some of the same rooms are revisited. Mouse sets a trap. He hides under a pile of dirty clothes in the closet. His roommate comes in and calmly stacks the Mouse side of the room. He writes the usual note and leaves. The Green Hornet has been identified. It is Maury

Smartt. Mouse passes the word and when Maury returns, his side of the room is vacant; no bed, no dresser, no pictures, no chair, and no clothes. Everything is in a heap on the ground outside the window. Stuck on the wall with chewing gum is a note saying, 'To hell with the Green Hornet'."

"The Moffitt House, located across the boulevard from the football field, houses some ordinary citizens and the overflow of freshman ballplayers. It is a three-story brick residence of 1890 vintage with a small cook's house at the back. About fifteen boys live in the house, and **Burkett (Bill)**, Bain, Bostick, and Phillips live out back. Behind the house and facing a street live Mr. And Mrs. Alton Hancock. They rent one side of their house, three rooms, to college boys. Don and I move in there. Ashton Wood from Normandy and Mark Goodman from Brick Church take another room. Two sophomores, Bob Thompson and Clyde White, are already there. One bathroom accommodates the entire house. For us four freshmen, it is our first experience at living in a house with an indoor bathroom. We enjoy it too much — too much for the sophomores. After much provocation at our prolonged stays in the bathroom and the narrow avoidance of open conflict, they offer us candy as peace offering. We take it. *It is spiked with Ex-Lax.*"

The above represents some of the funnier events but then the news trickles in and the war began to take its toll.

"Orbrey Moore is flying in the South Pacific."

"A newspaper reports that a marine officer returning from the front on Guadalcanal kills two pigs. He jeeps them into a ravine and sends word for all Tennesseans to come to his barbecue. He is from Lawrenceville — He is the indomitable 'Ugg' McCrory."

"'Ugg' McCrory is killed on Iwo Jima."

"Bill Neely has been killed in North Africa."

"It's the 6th of June. Eldridge Tipps, the towhead from Skinnum, dies on the beach. A short while later Norman Lane, tending to the business of the wounded, is killed by machine-gun fire. Shrapnel kills Paul Osteen, and Bob Sarvis, after evacuating the crew from his crippled bomber, rides it to his death in the channel. In the hedgerows near Brest, France, **Sgt. William Burkett**, leading an infantry squad as he had led another squad against Memphis State, is killed by a sniper." (Williams grave is in the National Cemetery on Gallatin Road in Nashville.)

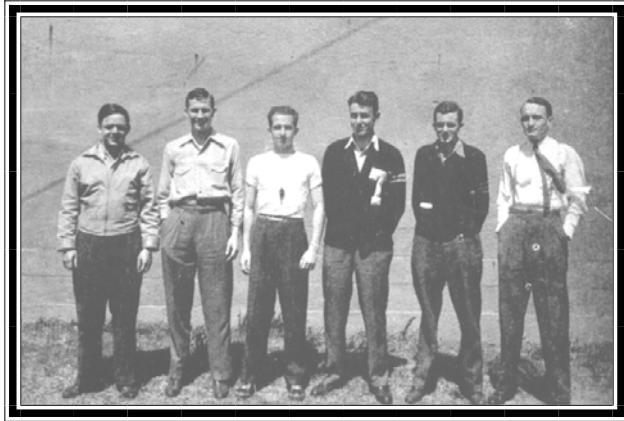
"On Guam, Roger Smith, a marine platoon leader, in front of his men, in close fighting with rifles and grenades, recklessly and fearlessly drives a wedge into the Japanese line and is killed in the process."

Sid became a marine fighter pilot; Wilburn Burkett rode PT boats in the Pacific; and Bob Preston Burkett, Sr. became a Naval Pilot.

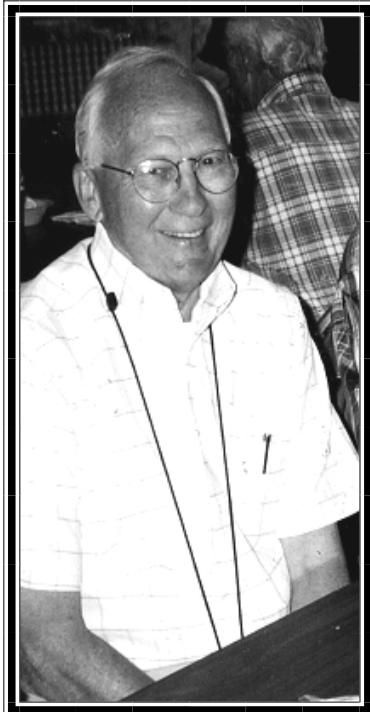
And so it went. From the lighthearted fun at college to the sadness and tragedy of war.

Sid continued his education after the war getting his Ph D degree and going on to a distinguished career in University Administration. Most recently he became president of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Society.

Below is another picture from his college days. That's Sid second from the left.



This is Sid at the 1999 Alabama Reunion.



Thanks, Sid — for all your help. ■

Classified Bloopers (actual ads) -

Large dog for sale, eats anything, fond of children

Stock up and Save! Limit one

Illiterate? Write today for free help. ■

Hanging of the Elephant -

Unicoi County is located in Eastern Tennessee. On September 12, 1916, when the circus was playing in Kingsport, Mary, the elephant, killed her trainer. Authorities decided to dispose of the elephant. But the available guns were inadequate. They requested that the railroad hang the elephant with the large derrick normally used to clear train wrecks. Mary was brought to the railroad yards and hanged with a chain. ■

Watson/Coppinger Reunion -

In Volume 1 this year, I published an announcement about the Watson/Coppinger reunion scheduled for July 8 in McMinnville, Tennessee. Audy Majors drove up from Huntsville, Alabama to attend and told me it went very well and was enjoyed by everyone.

But sadly, I received a message July 28 from Wanda Bryant, a daughter of Glen Coppinger and Martha Watson Coppinger, telling me her father had died July 27.

In 1997, Glen and Martha were among some who showed up at the Huntsville, Alabama reunion and took us all by surprise! But what a pleasant surprise it was!

Then in Volume 2 1998, I reported on the 50th Anniversary party given Glen and Martha by their children. Glen and Martha were married September 11, 1948 in Rossville, Georgia and had seven (7) children. Martha is a daughter of James Ernest Watson and Elizabeth Belle Brady; a granddaughter of Joanna Burkett and Ezekial Watson; and a great granddaughter of Jobe Burkett and Rebecca Caroline Rigsby Burkett.

Glen Coppinger
Born July 4, 1923
In
Warren County, Tennessee
Died July 27, 2000
In Muscatine, Iowa

Closing In On Henry Burkett, Sr. -

In Volume 1 of this year, I wrote about additional information we had learned about Henry Burkett. I will be the first to admit that we have learned more about our family than I thought possible when I started. But it continues to accumulate bit by bit as more family members work on it.

I prepared a chart summarizing the basic family data such as their children and their spouses, and grandchildren. Although we have identified all of their children we still have some gaps in our information which we continue to work on.

I have been asked to include that chart for the benefit of those who do not have computers and it is shown on the next page.

Go to Burkfam1.pub for this page

Tennessee and its Importance-

Tennessee is an extremely important part of the Burkett family history since it not only is the earliest known and documented geographic location for Henry Burkett but is also the birthplace for all of the children of Henry and Mary 'Polly' Burkett.

To summarize some of what has previously been written, Tennessee became a state in 1796 after having been a part of The Southwest Territory and then a part of western North Carolina.

Restless settlers always seemed to be just ahead of the governments ability to adapt and led to frequent confrontations between the settlers and government thereby forcing the government to adapt to the settlers movements. During one period, the settlers were pressing North Carolina officials for protection and organization to the extent that North Carolina ceded the lands to the federal government. As the population continued to increase, this brought about a movement for statehood which became a reality in 1796. North Carolina had retained the right to award land grants which increased the movement westward.

Some counties had already become established prior to Tennessee becoming a state in 1796. Beginning with Washington County which was established in 1777, Sullivan followed in 1779 with Davidson and Greene following in 1783. Greene County is where our family history picks up as we know it today. Although family legend says our Burkets were in North Carolina before coming to Tennessee, we do not have any official documents proving that. We do have documents proving the Epleys were in North Carolina and documents later show both Burkets and Epleys in Greene County so it would seem logical that the Burkets and Epleys came into Tennessee together. However, logic does not constitute proof so we have to keep searching.

We do have Henry's War of 1812 records which show he enlisted in Rogersville, Hawkins County, Tennessee in 1813. Various sources indicate Henry was born in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Henry himself, in these War of 1812 documents, states he was born in Tennessee and, also by his own statement, he was born about 1794 before Tennessee became a state.

Documents we do have are the Wedding Bond and Wedding License for Henry and Mary Epley showing they were married in Greene County, Tennessee in 1819. These have been previously published.

So how did the Epleys and Burkets come to Greene County? Were they awarded land grants by North Carolina? We don't know at this time. What we do know is that the settlement known as Greene County began in 1778. *Around 1790, a large number of Friends (Quakers) began to come into Greene county from Pennsylvania and North Carolina although a number of that faith had come several years earlier.* (Bold and italics added for emphasis.) [NOTE: This emphasis added because son James Burkett in his response to an Arkansas Historical Commission Sur-

vey of Civil War Veterans stated his father, Henry Burkett, had been born in Guilford County, NC. But even though this contradicts Henry himself who says he was born in Tennessee, it would seem to indicate the family at some point in time must have been in Guilford County, NC for James to have any recollection about it.] The significance of Guilford County, if indeed there is any, is that the early settlers included *many Quakers and Greene County, TN, as previously stated, was settled by a large number of Quakers.*

Does this insinuate that our Burkets were Quakers? Not at all. But they could have been acquainted with some of the Quakers and heard about Greene County from them.

The soil of Greene County was generally fertile, with the exception of the extreme southern part, and even in that section the lands were found to be well adapted to tobacco culture. The richest farming lands occupy the northern portion of the county and the bottom of the "Chucky River." The minerals embrace almost every variety found in East Tennessee, with the exception of coal. Iron is especially abundant in many places and has been worked with success. (*With Henry also being a blacksmith, could there be any connection with an abundance of iron?*)

Given this importance of Tennessee to our family, I have prepared a series of maps showing what Tennessee looked like during each of the census years beginning in 1790 and continuing on to 1900. These maps are shown on the following pages with various notes of explanation about the formation of the state and the various counties. (*As I have requested in previous issues, please bear with me about publishing so much detailed information it begins to look like the Bible 'begats'. However, many of our relatives are doing detailed searches and these maps showing the county formation and the status of census records may be of assistance to them.*)

Since the trail stops in Greene County, it would seem obvious that the place to work on finding out more about Henry would be in Greene County. And since Henry states he was born in Tennessee before it was a state quite possibly means he was born in a location which later became Tennessee such as Washington, Sullivan or Greene County. However, if you will look at the map notes pertaining to the census records, you will see the records *most important to us were completely lost for the entire state for 1790, 1800, and 1810 and for the eastern counties for 1820!* These are the very years so important to us and leaves us without a valuable source.

Since it is known the Epleys were in Rowan County, NC and vicinity, we can search those census records for clues since the Burkets could have been nearby. We can also search land grants by North Carolina to see if either the Epleys or Burkets received any land grants in Tennessee.

Frankly, our hope has to be that we can locate some land records — bought/sold/rented — voting records, or other legal documents. However, I doubt that Henry owned any land himself since he got out of the army in 1818 and married Mary Epley in 1819. (*continued on page 17*)

(continued from page 10)

In searching for information, it frequently is necessary to simply ask questions. For example, after his 5 years of service in the army from 1813 to 1818, why did Henry wind up in Tennessee? Although not sure if he arrived in Tennessee in 1818 or 1819, we are aware he was there in August 1819 when he and Mary were married. But could he have returned to North Carolina in 1818 and then moved to Tennessee. It seems that's entirely possible. We just don't know. But given that he enlisted in Tennessee would lead you to think he was living in Tennessee in 1813 or else he would have enlisted in North Carolina. Placing yourself in his position, it seems you would go someplace only because you had lived there prior to enlisting and/or because you still had relatives and/or loved ones there. I tend to believe it was because he had relatives and/or loved ones there.

That's where we stand right now as regards learning who Henry's parents/siblings were. Only luck in searching the records of Tennessee and North Carolina can provide an answer. Since Greene County still has the Wedding Bond and Wedding License of 1819 in their files, it is entirely possible they have maintained other records as diligently and that we will be able to learn something by searching these other files such as land records, tax records, court records, etc. It's just a crying shame that the very census records which could possibly have answered a lot of questions have been lost forever.

The search continues! ■

Wanted: Guest Columns -

Do you have a story about a favorite relative that you would like to see in the Newsletter? Or a favorite or funny event revolving around our family? I would like to have more of you contributing to our Newsletter. I believe there are a lot of untold stories maybe because you think you're not a writer. Well, you don't have to be a professional writer. Just tell your story in your own words and I'll help if you wish or we'll publish it exactly as you write it.

If you don't have a story of your own but would like to see an article on a particular ancestor or event, just drop me a line.

But your contributions are wanted and I feel they will add a lot to our Newsletter and to our family history. So get busy and let me hear from you. ■

Mystery of the 1840 Census -

Although we are not absolutely positive, we believe Henry and family were in Tennessee in 1840 along with several Epleys. However, a search of those records fails to turn up any of the Burketts or Epleys — unless I have overlooked something. Gina Burkett Hyche has also been

looking and likewise cannot find any. If anybody out there has some information which will help solve this mystery, then let us hear from you. ■

George Washington Burkett of Burlingame, Kansas —

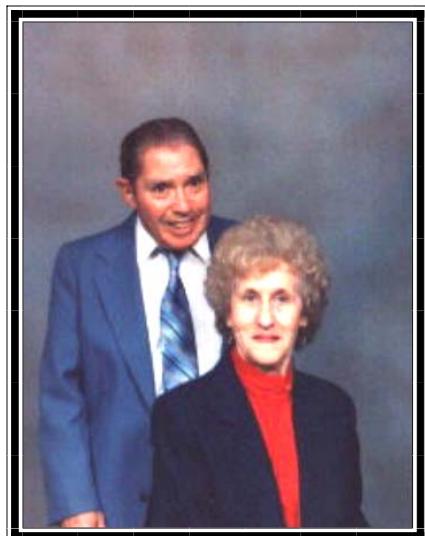
Utter dejection! That's how Audy Majors and I felt when we left Burlingame, Kansas after our visit in 1999. But what a turn-around! I now have 107 names of descendants and spouses, etc under George Washington Burkett!

I am comfortable that we have identified all of the children of George Washington Burkett and Lucinda Derryberry Burkett and we are on the road to identifying and possibly locating more of their descendants.

This has been accomplished with the help of folks like Connie Gibbar of Perryville, Missouri who is a relative of Martha Washington Burkett who was the wife of Samuel Walter Burkett; Arlene Briggs Peters of Topeka, Kansas who is a granddaughter of Mettie Burkett Wells and a great granddaughter of George Washington Burkett; and Arlene Burkett Ramskill of Attica, Ohio. As I wrote in the last issue, Arlene is a great granddaughter of Henry Burkett (Sr.). I received a letter dated August 16 from Arlene and she tells me they have now copied the photo's they have so all she has to do is cut them apart and mail them. I'm looking forward to getting them and will then include them next issue.

Now here is a photo sent me by Connie Gibbar.

Richard Burkett and his wife, Dorothy. They celebrated their 50th anniversary in September 1996 in Topeka, Kansas. Richard is a son of Samuel Walter Burkett and Martha Washington Burkett. Dorothy told me they lost all of their photo's in the 1951 flood. ■



Katie Lee Burkett Grubbs -

Katie Lee was a daughter of James Henry Burkett. She had one sister, Iru, and two brothers, Omar and Joseph Washington.

In some of her writings, StellaB spoke of and praised the family research done by Katie. However, I have never

seen any of it and feel it should be interesting because StellaB talked about it covering our ancestors from Germany.

From family sources I already knew Katie had died in El Paso on July 22, 1949. I wrote the County Clerk of El Paso county and secured a copy of Katie Lee's death certificate. The death certificate shows she died at the age of 57 years, 11 months and 8 days. However, the death certificate shows she was not buried in El Paso but was removed to Albuquerque, New Mexico July 23, 1949, the day after she died which leads me to believe this had been arranged in advance. The information for her death certificate was provided by her brother, Omar, and indicates her husband, Carl Grubbs, had already died. She is listed as having been a Naturopathic Physician.

The information I had about Katie indicated she and her husband, Carl Grubbs, had no children so I was hoping to find relatives in Albuquerque who might have those family records StellaB had mentioned. Since the death certificate listed the funeral home in El Paso, I called to see if they could dig back through their records and tell me anything more. They were very helpful and called back to tell me she had been cremated but could give me no further information other than what was on the death certificate. They are mailing me a copy of their file.

I'll continue my search and follow up in the next issue. ■

The Historian's Corner -

Oliver Webb



The time passes so fast! It hardly seems possible that another year has passed and I have already been to the Alabama reunion and I'm now getting ready to leave for the Texas reunion. I told a friend of mine that I thought you were supposed to slow down when you retired and his response was, "No, don't you know you pick up speed when you're going downhill!"

I hope you like the "new" look of our Newsletter but, if you have any suggestions, don't hesitate to let me hear from you. I still have a "learning curve" on handling color photo's but bear with me and I'll get better!

I have now been contacted by a young Tennessee

relative who lives in Washington and who goes over to the archives. His name is Randy Wood and he has promised to look up anything he can so that might turn out to be a big help. Since most of the "easy" research has been done and the Tennessee census records are missing, I'm afraid it's going to be a struggle from here on in to learn more about Henry Burkett (Sr.).

Audy and I plan to go to Clyde, Texas again this year on Sunday following the reunion in Goldthwaite. There we will meet with Tommy Bentley who, along with a Boy Scout troop, was responsible for cleaning up the family cemetery where James Henry Burkett and his wife are buried. Tommy is not a Burkett but is descended from James Henry's wife, Samantha Victoria McAdams, who was married to a Nolley who died and she then married James Henry. However, Tommy tells me he has some Burkett info and photo's which he will share with us.

After Clyde, we plan to stop in Baird where George Washington Burkett is buried and then in Putnam where Iru Jackson is buried. I'll have the information on our trip in the next issue.

On Friday before the Goldthwaite reunion, Audy and I will be meeting with some Epley descendants at the Redbud Inn in Goldthwaite. You will recall that some of the Epleys and Burketts went to Texas together and seemed to always stay in touch with each other. Even though these Epley descendants may not have any Burkett information, the Texas life styles and experiences were very similar. They will also have information on the Williams family.

That's about it for this time. Let me hear from you. ■

THIS SPACE LEFT BLANK