



THE BURKETT FAMILY



A Quarterly Publication

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The Goldthwaite, Texas Reunion — Sept. 8, 2001

My cousin Audy Majors and I arrived in Goldthwaite Friday afternoon and, as we have done for the preceding three (3) years, checked in at the Redbud Inn. This Motel is conveniently located only a few short blocks from the Mills County State Bank where the reunion is held. (For those who may be planning to attend next year for the first time and stay overnight, make your reservations early — it's bird hunting season and you may not get a room unless you make your reservation a few weeks ahead of time.) Not long after we checked in, we received a surprise visit from Juanelle Burkett Curtis who came from her home in Goliad, Texas. Since she was unable to attend last year, we were especially happy to see her.

Saturday morning we drove over to Oliver's restaurant for breakfast which we have also done each year. We placed our order and, as I began to sip my coffee, I looked up at a lady who had entered and who stood looking at me. I then became aware of some men who had followed her into the restaurant. She said, "I'm a Burkett." I looked at the men and recognized Tom Cooper so I knew this must be his mother, Callie Ree Jackson Cooper. The four (4) of them were Callie Ree, her husband George, Tom, and his brother, Austin. We had never met any of the family except Tom who was at the reunion last year so it was a very pleasant surprise for Audy and myself to meet them. Mrs. Cooper is a daughter of Anna Louisa Burkett Jackson and William Arwine Jackson; a granddaughter of Joseph Lafayette Burkett; a great granddaughter of Jacob Lorenza Burkett; and a 2nd great granddaughter of Henry Burkett, Sr. Mr. and Mrs. Cooper live in Albuquerque, New Mexico as does their son, Austin. Tom lives in McKinney, Texas. They sat at a table next to our booth so we were able to have some conversation after they placed their order. Audy and I finished our breakfast first so we told them we would meet them at the Bank. Audy and I then stopped at the Motel and picked up some things for the reunion and headed on down to the Bank.

Upon arriving at the Bank, we found Doye and Bob Fannin were already there as was Juanelle Curtis. Audy had brought along several baskets made for him by Verdie Andrews who also makes those donated and given away at the Huntsville, Alabama reunion. Audy explained to Doye these were to be given away as door prizes. I had brought three (3) high resolution copies of the Daniel Epley, Sr. family photo which would also be given away. I had selected this photo because it included Burkett, Epley, and Williams family members.

Folks soon started arriving and greeting each other plus setting up the food. A first-time attendee was Diana Burkett Kimberly, the oldest daughter of Joe Burkett, III of Fredericksburg, Texas. Diana lives in Kerrville and is a granddaughter of the late Joe Burkett, Jr.; a great granddaughter of Joe Burkett, Sr.; a 2nd great granddaughter of James Henry Burkett; a 3rd great granddaughter of Jacob Lorenza Burkett; and a 4th great granddaughter of Henry Burkett, Sr. She brought her children Emilie, Michael, and Maggie. Her father, Joe Burkett, III, had planned to also attend but was called away on business at the last minute. I had been talking with Joe and he had planned for some months to attend and was really looking forward to it so it was a big disappointment for him that

he didn't make it. I had been looking forward to meeting him in person because he has done so much in getting our web site established.

A notable absence was Burkett Massey of Waco, Texas. Burkett has attended each year but health problems prevented him coming this year and we missed him. Burkett, we hope your health has improved and we look forward to seeing you next year.

I know some of you are getting tired of hearing me say this but the food was absolutely delicious. As I have said before, "Burkett's really know how to cook!" Thanks to all who spent hours preparing those wonderful dishes! If the other folks are like Audy and myself, they never eat more than a sandwich Saturday night.

After we finished eating — and that took quite a while since we had to sample all the desserts — Audy announced the drawing for door prizes and selected the children of Diana Burkett Kimberly to draw the numbers out of one of the baskets. I had prepared a list of numbers and we cut them up with scissors, folded them, placed them in a basket, and mixed them up. We had numbered each person in the registration book so when a number was selected and called out, I would look at the book to see whose name corresponded to the number. Audy held the basket up high so the children had to reach up and could not see the numbers. One of the baskets was much larger than the others and had a sign woven into it designating it as "Burkett Reunion." You'll see a picture of that basket on the next page along with some other pictures. It was the first basket given away. Before I tell you who won it, let me go back to when Audy and I arrived at the Bank and he brought the baskets inside. When Doye saw the big basket, she said, "I want to win that one!" You guessed it — her number was drawn from the basket by Emilie Kimberly and Doye won it! (I have spoken by phone with Doye since the reunion and she told me she is using the basket for her knitting materials and really loves it!) After the door prize drawing, I looked around the room and everybody seemed to be looking over and talking about the prizes and the winners seemed very happy. This made it all worthwhile to Audy for having brought them.

All too soon, the hours passed and it became time for everybody to start leaving. As has happened at every reunion I have attended, I was left with the feeling that I did not get to spend enough time with many of our relatives. But Audy and I both feel it's well worth the many hours of driving from Huntsville, Alabama to Goldthwaite and back for the few hours we do get to spend with our Texas relatives.

Upon leaving the Bank, Audy and I followed the Cooper family out to a nursing home to visit Archie Hodges. Archie married Gladys Burkett and they were the parents of Helen Hodges Mayr who did so much work on accumulating information and pictures about the family. However, when we arrived at the nursing home, we found that Archie's daughter, Nelda Ruth, had picked

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.

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him up and they gone somewhere but the folks didn't know where so we didn't get to see him.

And now it's time for some of those pictures I mentioned.



Above is Doye Burkett Fanning proudly showing off the Reunion basket she won. Notice the stars of Texas on the basket as well as "Burkett Reunion."



This is Diana Burkett Kimberly and her three (3) children. That's Emilie with the pigtail and her back to the camera; Michael next to his mother and Maggie (Margaret Ann) next to Michael.



From right to left: Margie LaJuana Goodwin Ivy of

Mullin, Texas; Beatrice Ethridge, also of Mullin; and in the background (red blouse), Leta Mae Durst of Mason, Texas. Audy took this picture but I'm not sure he realized he had three (3) families involved. Margie LaJuana is a Burkett descendant; Beatrice is an Epley Descendant; and Leta Mae is a Williams descendant!!



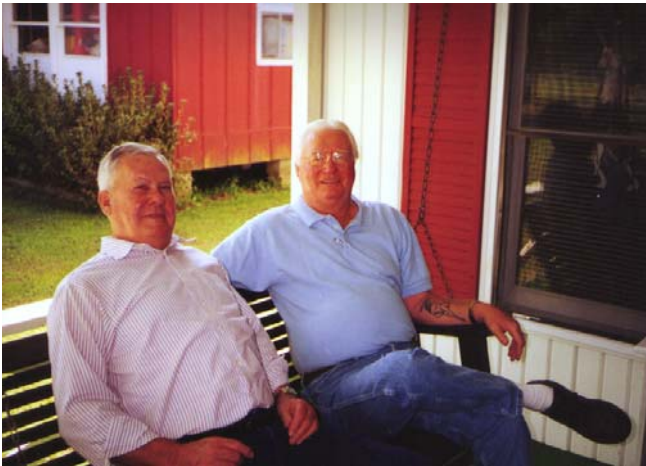
That's me with my back to the camera and across the table is Callie Ree Jackson Cooper and one of her sons, Austin. Next to my right elbow is a photo album belonging to LaJuana Ivy. When I looked through it I found many photo's I had not seen and therefore had never published. Some of these are of a reunion in 1955! I'll publish those in a separate article later in this issue.



That's Juanelle Burkett Curtis on the left and George Cooper on the right. When Juanelle left, they were driving on back to Goliad where she lives which is a pretty long drive. Hope you weren't too tired when you got home, Juanelle!

Much has been said about the basket making skill of Verdie Andrews, husband of Kathleen Majors Andrews. As pointed out, Verdie made these baskets which were door prizes as he has done for years at

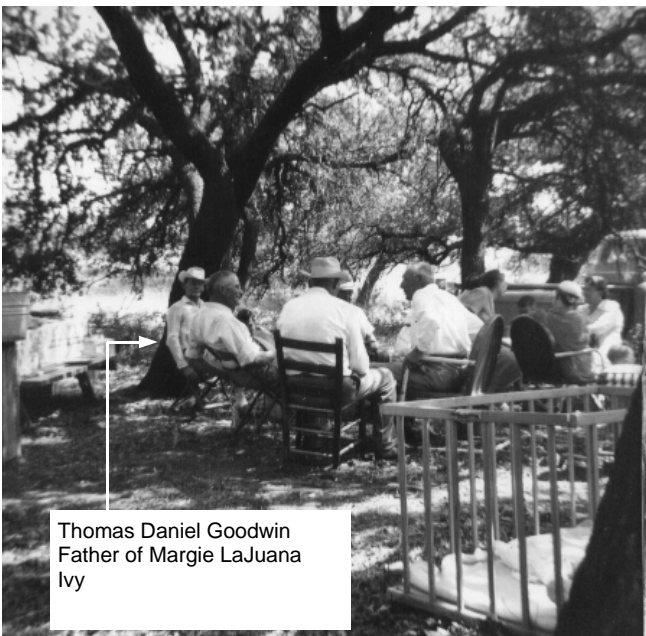
the Huntsville, Alabama reunion so I decided it was time to include a better picture of him. Thanks, Verdie. Your craftsmanship will be around and appreciated for many years.



That's Verdie on the left with brother-in-law Carthell Roberson who is married to Nancy Majors. This was made at the home of Carthell and Nancy after Audy and I returned from Goldthwaite. Nancy prepared and fed several of us a Huge meal and we were out on the front porch relaxing. Whew! What a meal! Thanks, cousin Nancy. (I love her fried okra!) ■

A Texas Reunion In 1955 -

When I was at the Goldthwaite reunion, LaJuana Goodwin Ivy showed me a photo album she had put together. It contained many pictures I had not seen so I asked her to loan it to me and, as she has done many times before, she readily consented. In going



Thomas Daniel Goodwin
Father of Margie LaJuana
Ivy

through those pictures, I found several dated in 1955 and which were obviously a reunion. Now here they are below with as many folks identified as possible. If any of you see someone who is not identified, or improperly identified, and you know who they are, please let me know. LaJuana, sister Berylene, and others identified as many as they could and it is believed the reunion was at Browns Creek near Mullin.



Facing the camera above is Verna Bess Burkett Collins, daughter of George Newton Burkett.



We were unable to identify any of the above.



Another picture of folks we could not identify but it looks to me like they had a pretty nice setup for a reunion and came to stay for several hours.



Seated next to the tree and looking at the camera is James Floyd Burkett, son of Floyd Burkett. Over to the left, by drawing an arrow I have drawn attention to what appears to be a large water container equipped with a spigot. The man in the hat is unidentified.



The arrow above points to Jacob "Jake" Burkett, a son of Edgar Lorenza Burkett. Another comment about their selection of the location for the reunion is that it appears they had a nice shady area based on this picture. In reviewing these pictures you will also note they brought plenty of chairs, boxes, etc. to sit on so that's another reason I think it was an almost all-day meeting.



Number 1 above is Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin. Next to her, number 2, is her daughter Berylene Goodwin Beck. Number 3 in the background is Thomas Daniel Goodwin, husband of Mae Delle Burkett and father of Berylene. Number 4 is Danny Beck, son of Berylene number 2, and grandson of Mae Delle and Thomas Daniel Goodwin.



L to R - Merle and John Burkett; Thomas Daniel Goodwin and Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin; Edgar Burkett; the next couple is unidentified but came to the reunion every year and are thought to be friends but not relatives; the last couple on the right is Clementine Elizabeth Burkett and George Burkett.



The same as the preceding picture without the non-relative. L to R - John Burkett; Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin; Edgar Burkett; George Burkett



L to R - John Burkett; Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin; Edgar Burkett; this looks like the man in the picture above this one who is not a relative but probably a close friend of the Burketts; and George on the right end.



Number 1 is Berylene and Don Beck; number 2 is Della Lou Geeslin and number 3 is her husband Don; Number 4 is Verna Bess Burkett Collins; number 5 is Jacob 'Jake' Burkett and wife Vivian Rose; number 6 is James Burkett and wife Billie. The arrow points to a man in a hat who we missed at first. We think this is possibly Jim Collins, husband of Verna Bess # 4.

Now here are some photo's which I have not published before.



L to R - StellaB Jackson Jaynes and Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin. It is believed this is a house built by Joseph Lafayette Burkett but it is not known at this time if it was a Jackson house or a Burkett house. The date of the photo is unknown.



Anybody know anything about this house?



Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin holding the painting of Joseph Lafayette Burkett and wife Adela Catherine Pyeatt Burkett. I have previously published a copy of this oil painting. Date is unknown.



Floyd Burkett on the left and son James on the right. James wife Billie Jean is holding their baby, Jamie and that is Marla Gerald (Box) standing next to James. Marla is the daughter of Wanda Zell Burkett Gerald and Stoddard Gerald. Wanda Zell was a daughter of Floyd so Marla is a granddaughter of Floyd.



Above is Lorrie Curtis Brooker and husband Bob with their two sons. Lorrie is the daughter of Juanelle Burkett Curtis and the granddaughter of Edgar Burkett. The oldest son, in front, is Layton and the youngest son is Sterling. This was a very small photo and became slightly blurred when I enlarged it. Photo was made in 1995



Another photo of Layton on the left and Sterling on the right. Date is unknown.



Above is Keith Couch, son of Karen Kardash Couch and Bobby Joe Couch; grandson of Stella Mae Massey Kardash and Nicholas Kardash. His name was printed in gold which doesn't scan too good.



This is Stella Mae Massey who later married Nicholas Kardash. She became the grandmother of Keith Couch shown in the picture above this one.



Adela Catherine Pyeatt Burkett, wife of Joseph Lafayette Burkett, feeding her chickens. This is an old picture and the dark colored chickens don't show up too well. Date is unknown.



L to R - Floyd Burkett; George Burkett; Jack Burkett (son of Lee Burkett); Edgar Burkett; Jacob 'Jake' Burkett (son of Edgar Burkett); and Lee Burkett.



Sisters Mae Delle and Birdie Burkett in the swing.



Sisters Mae Delle, Gladys, Stella Mae and Birdie



Above Birdie Burkett Chambers and husband Willis Harrison Grigsby Chambers. Date is unknown.



Above is a later picture of Birdie Leona Burkett Chambers.



Another picture of Birdie and husband in their backyard. Date of this picture is also unknown.



To the right is her husband, Willis Harrison Grigsby Chambers.

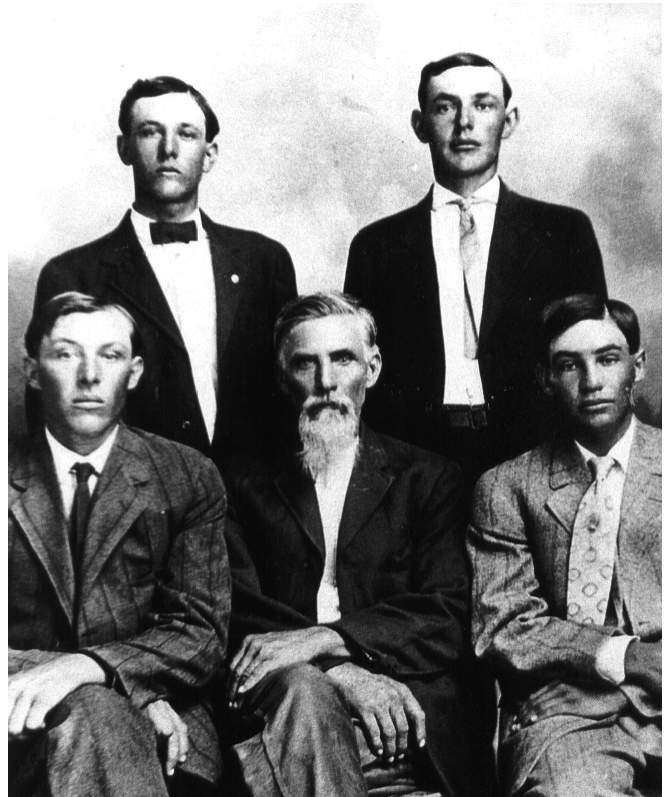


Joe Charles Hodges, son of Gladys Burkett Hodges and Archie Hodges. Photo about 1937.



This is a waterwheel built by a Pyeatt family member in Washington County, Arkansas. Joseph Lafayette

Burkett's wife was Adela Catherine Pyeatt Burkett so it was one of her family members who built it.



I don't recall publishing this photo of Joseph Lafayette Burkett and his sons. Seated L to R is George, Joseph, and Lee. Standing L to R is Floyd and Edgar. Date is unknown.

As already stated, all of the above pictures came from the collection of LaJuana Goodwin Ivy and I want to thank her for sharing them with us. It was interesting to see they were having reunions as far back as 1955 and probably farther than that based on the way they set up tables, etc. ■

Comparing 1901 to 2001—

The following was provided by Wes Parker of Fresno, California. Thanks, Wes.

The contrasts of what was in 1901 as opposed to what it is in 2001 are awesome! Below are some facts about 1901. Read on.

The average life expectancy in the U. S. was 47.

Only 14% of the homes had a bathtub.

Only 8% had a telephone. A three minute call from Denver to New York City cost eleven dollars at a time

when coffee cost fifteen cents a pound, sugar was four cents a pound and eggs were fourteen cents a dozen.

There were only 8,000 cars in the US and 144 miles of paved road. The maximum speed limit was 10 mph.

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

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

Insulin and antibiotics hadn't been discovered.

One in ten US 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.

Coca Cola contained cocaine instead of caffeine. ■

Name Origin: Burkhardt, Burkett-

The following was taken from an article written and published on the internet by a John Burkett in November 2000.

Seligenstadt (Germany) is a place of great language change through the centuries. When a family name of that town is studied, a number of words must come into consideration but usually a derivation can be localized. Burkard is a significant, easily traceable word and not as doubtful as some others.

In old Gothic, BURG is found as BOURGS. It is equivalent to the Latin CASTELLUM, an elevated fortification. *Hard* in German signified STRONG, hence the name BURGHARD equals a strong elevated fortification. The newest study on the significance of names by Brechenmacker gives the name Burkard as coming direct from Burghard. It emerges first as a personal name of the Bishop of Aosta in 593 A.D., in 681 A.D. a Bishop of Wurzburg, Burghard (742 - 753 A.D.) acted as a general in the armies of Charlemagne, a duke of Thuringen, duke of the Germans, an archbishop of Lyons.

In the church and civil records at Seligenstadt, the name is spelled BURKHARD. Through the years, however, for reasons personal and otherwise, the name appears in a variety of spellings both in Germany and in America. It is not uncommon to see persons from the same lineal descent differ in the spelling of their name. Among the more widely seen

forms of spelling are Burkhard, Burkhardt, Burckhard, Burgard, Burkitt, Burkett and Burket. The latter two spellings were used frequently in news items that appeared in Johnstown Pennsylvania papers during the eighties.

The writer (John Burkett) is in possession of a letter written in 1936 by Joseph Burkard. In a sort of humorous way, it lets us know there has been disagreement over the spelling of the name in the past. While serving in the United States Navy at the turn of the century, he crossed the Atlantic twenty times. On one of those trips, Joseph visited the ancestral town and looked up the family records. In his letter he says in part. "When I was in Seligenstadt, I found that our name was spelled Burkard. After our family came to America and learned to talk English someone added the T making the name Burkardt. Of late some of the Frauenschaft has inserted an H so now the spelling has changed to read BURKHARDT." (*I have no idea what Frauenschaft means.*)

It would be useless to labor the point on the spelling of any family name. Time, place, personal reasons, as well as those beyond one's control, all can very easily enter into a situation and bring about change. The same may readily happen to a name. For that reason, if for no other, I think it well to accept each spelling as it is given to us. (End of article)

Has the above article accomplished anything about our family name of Burkett? Probably not. But it does give us some clues as to what the name might have been before it became Burkett. ■

**If you get to thinkin' that
you're a person of
influence, try orderin'
someone else's dog around.**

James Burkett - 8th Child of Henry and Mary 'Polly' Burkett -

In September of 1999, Audy Majors and I went through Arkansas on the way back to Huntsville, Alabama from the Goldthwaite, Texas reunion. We stopped in Russellville, Arkansas to visit David T. Bunton, a non-Burkett relative. David is a Gilley descendant and James Burkett married Mary Ann Gilley. David had uncovered some information about James Burkett and had gotten in touch with me via the internet offering to share what he had learned. This was detailed in Volume 4, 1999 of the Newsletter.



In September of this year, David Bunton again communicated with me regarding additional information about James. What David found were obituaries for James and one of his daughters, Clementine. With reference to the above map, James was living in Yellville, Marion County, Arkansas at the time of his death. He was buried in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery six miles south of Yellville. The above arrow points to Marion County and the circle shows Yellville. Two articles were published in the Yellville newspaper, *The Mountain Echo*.

THE MOUNTAIN ECHO — YELLVILLE, ARKANSAS

June 2, 1916 - On Thursday evening of last week "Uncle Jim" Burkett, one of Marion County's oldest citizens, after a lingering illness, died at his home in this city. He leaves two daughters, Mrs. Lee Carson and Clemantine (sic), also two sons, one of whom resides in this county, the other one in California. The remains were laid to rest Friday in Pleasant Ridge cemetery in the presence of a large number of sorrowing relatives and friends.

THE MOUNTAIN ECHO - YELLVILLE, ARKANSAS

June 23, 1916 - Uncle James Burkett was born in Wilson County, Tennessee in 1836; died May 25, 1916, age 80 years, 4 months and 8 days. In 1857 he was married to Miss Mary GILLEY, to which union were born seven children, five of whom still survive. When the call of the southern states for volunteers was issued he freely gave his services and for four

years he fought bravely for the Confederate cause. Uncle Jim came to Arkansas in 1870 where he remained until his death. When quite a young man he professed faith in Christ and lived a consistent Christian the remainder of his life. He was a great sufferer for many months prior to his death, but in the midst of it all he ever maintained an unflinching trust in God. His funeral services were conducted at Pleasant Ridge cemetery by Rev. T. L. Wilson, pastor of the Congregational Methodist church of which he was a member. (end of newspaper article.)

As has happened so often during our research, newly located information, while answering some questions, brings up others. In the above article, it states he had seven children. However, in his response to questions in the Arkansas History Commission survey conducted in 1912, he only listed six children; Sarah, J(acob) F., Cordelia (Delia), Clemantine, Nancy Tennessee, and Robert L. Also in that survey, he listed his birth date as January 17, 1830. In the newspaper article above, it stated he was born in Tennessee in 1836 and his age at death as 80 years, 4 months and 8 days. Backing that up leads to a birth date of January 17, 1836 and not 1830 so he perhaps made a typographical error. Still further, he states he was born in Jacks Burror (sic) in Warren County, Tennessee. The only Jacksboro which can be found in Tennessee is over near Knoxville in Campbell County. His brothers, Jacob

Lorenza and George Washington, were born in 1830 and 1834 respectively and are documented as having been born in Warren County so he could be correct about being born in Warren County, but not in Jacks Burror. Interestingly, in the Arkansas Historical Survey, he lists a Joseph Perriman (sic) as one of his school teachers. One of his sisters, Malinda, married a Joseph Perryman so they could be one and the same. ■

James Burkett continued -

In searching around on the Marion County, Arkansas internet site for information about James Burkett, I discovered a book about Marion County, Arkansas and began to read excerpts from it. I found it extremely interesting but imagine my surprise when I found "Uncle Jim" Burkett's name in it! I have decided to include portions of the book because I think you will also find it interesting. However, before doing so, let me give credit to the publishers. The paragraph below is what appears on the web site.

The title is "History of Marion County Arkansas" by Earl Berry. Published 1977 by the Marion County History committee 1977 by Marion County Historical Association. This book is out of print and, at this time, there are no plans to have it reprinted. Mr. Lyle Wood (the noted Marion Co Historian) and the Marion County Historical Association have graciously permitted parts of this book to be posted here to help all Marion County, AR researchers. **This book is still under copyright of the Marion County Historical Association and may not be used for any purpose other than your own personal research. It may not be reproduced nor placed on any web page nor used by anyone or any entity for any type of "for profit" endeavor.**

What impressed me most about this book was the amount of detail describing the lifestyles and living conditions of folks in those days. I have read books and articles about early settlers in Tennessee, Alabama and Texas but none which had the detail of this book. This will be a lengthy article and that's why — the amount of detail. We need to understand not only how they made their living but also how they lived. Some of the things described here will not necessarily apply to our Tennessee ancestors just as our Tennessee ancestors probably had some life styles which differed from these in this book. But the basics of surviving are the same and I believe you will gain a deeper understanding of our ancestors and the toughness of their lives compared to now.

Before beginning, let me point out that I have condensed and/or edited portions to meet space requirements in this issue. If you can't wait, go to page 17 where Uncle Jim Burkett is mentioned..

Chapter Six

Folkways, Folklore, Home Remedies and Superstitions

By Z. B. Smith and Mrs. Ray Blankenship

The early homes were made of logs in what was then known as the P-Plan, the P standing for pen or one long room. Some homes were 2-P, some 3 and 4-P or a four-room house with a dog trot or open hall between. Each house had a loft that was reached by a ladder from the main room and this loft served as an extra bedroom and a place to store herbs, dried fruits and vegetables for the winter. The floors were puncheon of split and hand-hewn boards pegged closely together. The roofs were of hand-riven boards; the windows were closed with wooden shutters and the doors were of heavy oak with inside bolts for safety. The latch-string hung on the outside most of the time.

After some land had been cleared, it was soon producing such crops as were available and, though life was simple, the homes were comfortable and pleasant. The added color of harvested pumpkins, squash, beans, peas, peppers, onions, and Indian corn strung about from the rafters and pushed against the wall made it most enjoyable. The woods yielded many kinds of food. Besides the meat obtained from wild animals, fowl and fish, there was honey from bee-trees, wild fruits, berries, and nuts, all for the gathering. Bear oil was an important commodity as it was used for seasoning, for light in candles or wick lamps, for oiling wagon wheels and rifles, patches, and as a hair dressing. Also, it sold for a dollar a gallon down-river when the pioneers sold their furs and hides.

There was always at least one large fireplace in each house that served as the cooking and heating unit. Around it the family gathered at the close of the day to talk and, often before bedtime, to raise their voices in song and ended with Bible reading and prayer. Often someone brought out the fiddle and banjo for dancing. Each family was a unit and furnished everything needed for its survival. Only on special occasions did the community meet for a cause which included a death, a birthing, a house-raising, corn husking, quilting bee, dance, and, later, camp meetings that often were held as long as a month at a time. These were usually held when the crops were "laid by" before the harvest began.

The skins of deer, buffalo, cows and horses were carefully saved for moccasins, shoes, leggings, and coats. This made the shoe cobbler an important man because he made his rounds at least once a year. Each community had a tanning vat or two and there was always some man who was an expert at this trade called in to do the work.

Each scrap of cloth was saved for quilts and they were lovingly pieced to add beauty as well as warmth to the household. The women and girls spent many hours with wool and flax, carding, spinning, and weaving it into cloth for the families needs. Beautiful spreads and table covers were made, the dye produced in dye pots before the fireplace where only indigo was bought ready for use. The other ingredients were brought in from the woods and fields and mixed by hand. Walnut, hickory and red oak bark were used in these dyes as was certain rock that had copperas in it and salt to set the color.

The blacksmiths made their own coal, sending out the boys to the pine groves for pine knots. These were stacked in piles and covered with dirt and set afire. They burned without smoking about ten days before the charcoal was ready to use. The blacksmith shop was a favorite place of men and boys to gather and talk. Many useful items besides wagon wheels, horse shoes, ox shoes, and nails were made. Nearby was a livery barn where travelers put their tired horses for the night or boarded them out for awhile, if they were visiting.

The earliest way of threshing wheat was by hand and corn was ground by the crude pestle and mortar that stood on each homestead.

Every neighborhood had its "yarb" doctor, a woman who was also a midwife and claimed to have the "second sight." Her home was always hung with sweet smelling herbs, seeds or bark of trees; roots and shrubs stood about in jars and cans to add a pungent odor. The most commonly-used of these included calamus root, senna, May-apple, Jerusalem oak, Virginia Snake root, burdock root, prickly pear, sarsaparilla, yellow puccoon, rattlesnake master, yellow dock, ginseng, sumac, mullin, spic-wood, wahoo, wild plum, wild cherry, slippery elm to give a few shrubs. While the herbs were well-known to all of the pioneers, many learned from the Indians also. Some of these are: lavender, caraway, thyme, rosemary, coriander, sage, dill, rue, sweet basil, wormwood, horseradish, golden seal, horse mint, penny roil, sweet fennel, anise root, catnip, peppermint, spearmint, sassafras, Indian turnips and skunk cabbage.

In the old days when doctors were few and the sick were cared for at home by relatives and neighbors, it was essential that home remedies be used and good nursing care given. Drafts were

avoided like the plague. Bad odors were eliminated by placing saucers of sliced onions about the room or by burning brown paper. Sulphur was burned in the fireplace or in the house to kill germs, if the house was empty. Tannin from the bark and roots of white oak, wild cherry and willow were used as astringents and curative teas. Cordials from blackberries were used for diarrhea, as was apple juice and nutmeg tea. Tesanes, used for Summer Complaint, was made from the common carelessweed, and jimsonweed was used for bluing in the weekly wash.

Sulphur and molasses were eaten in the spring to purify the blood and gallons of tea made from sassafras were drunk for that purpose. Boiled poke leaves was a good source of iron and the roots were boiled and the solution used in bathwater as a cure for the 'seven-year' itch. A strong solution of lye soap was used against head lice, along with combing the hair over a paper or cloth using a fine-toothed comb. Kerosene (coal oil) was used in case the other failed. Bear grease and polecat grease were used for the croup; mutton tallow was used for chapped lips and skin; goose grease was good for sore muscles; axle grease was used for cuts, as was soot from chimneys.

Commonly-used patent medicines were: powdered aniferbin, a cure-all; calomel tablets, black draught, senna-leaf tea, Lydia E. Pinkham compound (a baby in every bottle), SSS iron tonic, Epsom salts, turpentine, camphor, castor oil, chill tonic, quinine, white and red linaments, and croton oil. Each household had its own remedies and handed them down to its children.

For broken bones, the pioneers made a plaster of red clay and vinegar. Sassafras tea was used to thin the blood in the springtime, as many old timers were thoroughly convinced that their summer's health would be poor without the blood thinner. There was an onion poultice for bad colds and congestion. It consisted of wheat bran, vinegar, and chopped onion all cooked together until thick and hot. It was then placed in a cloth bag while still very warm and placed on the patients throat and chest. A mixture of sugar and turpentine was used for cuts and lumbago. For a summer complaint, sometimes a tea from a wild plant known as the dollar vine was made to drink. If a person was bitten by a rabid dog, some member of the family would travel for miles to visit a friend who possessed the "mad" stone taken from a deer. This was placed on the bite and was supposed to draw out the poison.

Many today who claim to be free from superstitions through their religion, education and knowledge of science are, nevertheless, its victims. Fortune-telling is supported by thousands, and spiritualism has the human mind in bondage, as it

pretends to communicate with the departed soul and control the occult forces of the universe. Many of these signs and omens of evil were handed down to us from our forefathers. Our folklore is filled with portents and warnings against adversity and even now we heed them. The strongest of us dread going alone near a graveyard, especially at the midnight hour when ghosts are supposed to walk. Who likes to begin a journey or start an important job on Friday or be number thirteen at a dinner party? There is that unmistakable and undefinable dread that possesses the soul and demands its tribute like a king if we must be alone with the dead or dying. We still consider the numbers seven and thirteen as unlucky. We listen to and pass on innumerable tales of ghosts walking about the countryside and keeping lonely vigils in haunted houses. Some of these include the tale of the old Negro cook who, each evening at a certain time, dropped her pan of dishes and fell dead in the old Cochran house, as she did on that fateful day during the Civil War. We have been told of the tapping noises heard each night in the old Cook house where Captain Cook was murdered during the Great rebellion. Also, we heard about the blood in the old hotel at Buffalo City that could be heard dripping each day at noon on the stairway where a Confederate soldier was killed. The doors could not be locked. No matter how they were locked and barred, they always swung open. Bill Pierce told of the man he knew who worked on the railroad and always carried a lantern with him. After he died, the light from the lantern could be seen on the tracks moving along by itself. There was another haunted house invaded by lighted candles that entered through a window and danced over the flames in the fireplace. The family could also hear chopping at the woodpile which always ceased when people approached.

The weaving of baskets for storage from willow, buckbush, oak and hickory withes was, no doubt, learned from the Indians. (*withe = a slender flexible branch or twig*). Iron wood, leather wood and bear grass (*Yucca*) were used as tie-ropes to hang things to dry, such as deer meat (Jerky), various kinds of foods, or to tie wool and hides in bundles. Gourds were grown profusely for storing staples and for dippers. Barrels, kegs, and chests were made from split white oak and cedar for storage of household goods long before more-finished furniture was made. The hinges and other parts were of leather or withes of bark soaked in water, then dried. The needle arts we cherish so much today were learned as grandmothers, mothers and daughters spent long winter days closed inside small wilderness cabins. The clucking of their loom, the whirring of the spinning wheel and the scrapping of the cards was

their only entertainment as they used every scrap and thread for something useful. The young girls learned on the creative samplers often working in family histories, maxims and bits of prose and poetry.

Sorghum making was always a late summer job for the pioneers. Every farmer planted a field of his favorite sorghum cane in the spring and cultivated it all summer. When the cane began to mature, indicated by the cane beads becoming heavy and taking on bright colors, the real work began — the fodder or blades were stripped from the stalks; the heads were cut and piled to be used as grain for the stock and chickens; the cane stalks were cut and put on the wagon to be hauled to the mill usually located near a spring, and stacked there ready to be fed through the rollers which ground out the cane juice into a huge barrel. This juice, after being strained, was put into the “pan” or evaporator on a homemade furnace fired with wood from the huge stock put there long before the cane was hauled to the mill. After the pan was filled with juice, the heat from the fire underneath caused the juice to boil, and, as it boiled, the skimmings rose to the top and two men along the pan — one near the back and one near the front — were kept busy taking the skimmings off and pouring them into the “skimming hole.” The skimming hole, to the uninitiated in sorghum making, often became a source of fun to the old hands. The hole would be slightly covered over the top with cane pummies and the uninitiated would step into this hole of hot, slimy, thick, greenish liquid over his shoe tops. (*Just a guess but pummies are thought to be cane stalks after they have been run through the rollers and pummeled.*) This experience took the fun out of visiting the sorghum mill. The pummey pile was a favorite wrestling and scuffling place for the boys at night during sorghum making. After the skimming, stirring, and testing, the finished product was put into pails and sealed or many families put their sorghum into barrels. Sorghum was for many families a substitute for sugar. Often, at the end of the sorghum making season, the last batch of juice was cooked until it was candy and the community met at the mill at night for a “candy pulling.”

Life was somewhat dull in these days and the work was hard, but a feeling of good will, hospitality prevailed. If a farmer became ill during crop time, the neighbors came in and cultivated the crop until he was able to work or, if illness continued, gather the crop. If illness occurred in winter, neighbors saw that there was wood supplied. Since there were no hospitals in those days, neighbors took turns sitting up at nights and giving medicine to the sick. If a death occurred in the community, the women prepared food and carried it to the family of the deceased. Neighbors prepared the body for burial

since there were no funeral homes and sat up with the corpse. The casket was usually made by someone in the community.

Walking was the style for transportation. Mr. Ed Jones, John Pendleton, John Blair and George Slagle were all good walkers. Uncle Mike Wolf was a great walker who liked to talk as he walked. He would say, "There are three things I like to talk about - Baptists, Masons and Democrats." On his rounds, he had certain places he enjoyed visiting and people got to expecting him ever-so-often. He never took off his hat to talk or eat - and only the last thing at night before sleep. Then he'd say, "Well, seems like it's moderated some, ain't it, but might as well throw another wagon sheet over my feet, just in case."

Uncle Wiley Doshier kept pins stuck all over the front of his coat, in case he needed one some time. Mr. William Thomson, an oldtimer of 96, had his picture taken at the county fair one year. He always rode an ox. J. R. Hamilton had several oxen and had made wheels for his cart out of large logs. **Uncle Jim Burkett made ox yokes. As he worked, he always "cussed" or prayed.** (Emphasis added)

Favorite "snide" expressions of their native wit and wisdom follows: When someone takes the last biscuit off the dinner plate, another was sure to quip, "It will be a fair day tomorrow." Seeing a neighbor pass without stopping to "pass the time of day" was certain to bring the remark that "he must be in a burnt hurry" or "he must be going to a fire" or "he needs to make fewer tracks and more to the mile if he's going to get where he's going before dark." In case of small accidents or need for encouragement, the sayings were: No use crying over spilt milk; it's long road that has no turning; just wait and see which way the cat jumps; just wait 'til the shoutin' is over and they gather up the song books. If some character professed religion out of hand, the folks would say: he's just hollerin' down the rain barrel; he's just layin' out with the dry cattle; or he's just antigoggin' around, spittin' ambeer and a-drinkin' branch water. Other sayings were: They're small potatoes and few in a hill at that; All duck and no dinner; He ought to either fish or cut bait; He'll sure pour water on your wheel; He needs to quit farming and go to work; He makes more corn than ever goes to the mill; He was just meanderin' and stepping around like a lost goose or a ruptured duck; Wheee! This here is pure quill (referring to a good moonshine or white lighting); Shucks, now, I don't chew my tobaccker but once; once burnt, twice shy; Oh it's Katy bar the door for me; You can just wait 'til the cows come home-'til hell freezes over-or 'til St. Peter blows his horn.

Comparison sayings are familiar to all hillfolk such as: It was as if he had two thumbs and four left feet; It was as easy as pouring sand down a rabbits hole; It

was as easy as fallin' off a log backwards; He looked like a hog with a side saddle or a cow that had eaten cabbage, stems and all; I'm as dry as a gourd, as skinny as a rail, as thin as a splinter, as light as a feather, as high as a kite, as poor as Job's turkey, as poor as a churchmouse, too big for his britches, too lazy to spit off himself, too slow to catch the itch; I'd sooner be in hell with my back broke; as soon get me a tin bill and pick manure with the chickens; he stuck out like a sore thumb; he was blinkin' like a toad in a hail storm; he's next to nothing; he'll be lucky if he comes in last; he squeaked like a new saddle; he is lower than a snake's belly; he's so ugly that he has to slip up on the dipper after dark to get a drink of water. All of these favorite expressions were spoken in fun but never with true malice of neighbors and friends nor "furriners", especially.

It was said, "A man's work begins and ends with the sun but woman's work is never done," but in pioneer days the whole family worked to provide the necessities of life and each season had its quota of tasks. We gather and cherish antiques because they speak with nostalgia of our ancestors. They spent long tedious hours making, by firelight on long winter evenings, everything they possessed — the candles that lighted the bare cabins, the soap along with the sand that cleaned and scoured; the tools they used, the clothes they wore, the food they ate, saving the surplus for the days when the ground would not yield its harvest. Little, if anything, was store "bought'n" when this country was new, but life was good and the people were carefree and happy as they worked and sang together. (End of book article)

Speaking for myself, I learned quite a bit from this. And even where I had a pretty good idea about something, the detail helped me understand it better. But bear oil for hair dressing? I never thought about that! And how about the plaster for broken bones made out of red clay and vinegar? As for boiled poke leaves being used in bathwater to cure the 'seven-year' itch, I know my Grannie didn't know about that or she would have used it on me because I had the seven-year itch and have written about it before. I enjoyed a good laugh about some of the comparison sayings in the paragraph above. Some of my favorites: Too lazy to spit off himself (Now THAT'S lazy!) He was blinkin' like a toad in a hail storm. He'll be lucky if he comes in last. Too slow to catch the itch. And my favorite — He's so ugly that he has to slip up on the dipper after dark to get a drink of water.

Finally, there it was. Our relative, 'Uncle Jim' Burkett who, as he worked, either "cussed" or prayed. Not sure I exactly understand that but the use of quotation marks makes me think it was not real cussing but more like, "Gosh darn it!" ■

Our Ancestors -

To escape religious and/or government persecution, they came to this new land they had heard about. They wanted to live with their children in a place without fear. They wanted to practice the religion of their choice, own land, and enjoy freedom to do as they pleased.

They endured the hardship of the journey. Upon arrival, they endured the hardship of learning a new language and new ways of making a living. They and their children moved many times searching for a place where they could realize their dreams. They were industrious and worked hard. At times, it was a tough life but they persevered. And they, along with their children and subsequent generations, realized the dreams they had about coming to a new land. One of those dreams was to live in peace and to quietly go about their daily lives enjoying the freedom they had come to cherish.

Combining the above with the tragic events of September 11, 2001, I offer the following picture without further comment.



God Bless the USA

The Family Book -

During the past couple of months I have taken time to work more on the hard cover book about our family. Although a long way from completion, I have developed ideas about the format and acquired information as to how to prepare the book for printing. So I have made some progress toward my goal of preparing and publishing this book.

However, I know that I am still lacking information and pictures from many of you. As I have said before, I would like to include as many pictures as possible and would definitely like to have as much up-to-date information as I can gather. I again ask you to please take a few minutes of your time to look around and see if there are pictures you can provide or information which you feel has not been provided.

If an error or omission occurs in the Newsletter, I can always correct an error or insert an omission in the next issue. But that can't happen with a hard cover book. Once it goes to the printer, that's it. It would be a shame to let the book reach the printer minus some important information you could have submitted. Through the cooperation and help of many relatives I feel we have enough information to complete a pretty good book about the family. But to me, "pretty good" isn't good enough. I want to prepare a book that can be handed down with pride from one generation to the next and to the next and so on. I can only do that if you help by providing photo's and information. No matter how good the book may look, it will only be as good as the information inside. Please help. ■

A Tip for Computer Owners -

The Epson color printer which I use to print this Newsletter was getting expensive as far as the ink cartridges were concerned. I bought some ink and refilled my cartridges which helped some but required a great deal of time and patience. Now I have discovered a source for much cheaper cartridges. Let me give you examples. I was paying \$19.95 for a black cartridge. I now pay \$8.95. I was paying \$29.95 for a color cartridge. I now pay \$10.95. Quite a difference! I found a web site offering NEW cartridges at those prices so tried it out. I have now ordered twice and am completely satisfied. This is printed using those cartridges and they are new, not remanufactured, cartridges.

If interested, go to www.allyoucanink.com and check it out according to your printer. I know the Epson and Cannon cartridges are new so get online and check what they have for your printer. You may also be able to save some money. I know you probably don't use as much ink as I do but try it. ■

I Missed These! -

Don't ask how I did it but I missed printing the two pictures below when I was printing those pictures from LaJuana's album. Anyway, here they are.



L to R seated in front - Anna Louisa Burkett Jackson, George Burkett, Edgar Burkett and Floyd Burkett
L to R standing - Lee Burkett, Mae Delle Burkett Goodwin, and John Ivy Burkett. Date is unknown.



L to R - sisters Mae Delle Burkett and Gladys Burkett

Life's Unanswered Questions -

Why is it that rain drops but snow falls?
Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?

John Almon Carroll

Born May 30, 1930

Died November 22, 2001



My Cousin, John Almon —
by Oliver Webb

Don't ask me why but I always called him by both names, John Almon. And so did almost all of his first cousins. He was the son of Quincey Everett Carroll and Leva Joanne Burkett Carroll. So it wasn't to distinguish him from his father that we called him by both names. We just did.

He served in the Alabama Air National Guard and retired after 25 years of service. He was married to Bettye Joyce Carroll for 36 years. John Almon was always interested in our family and attended every reunion and made special trips in between. The above picture was clipped from a picture of cousins who went to the cemetery at the Church of Christ in Oak Grove, Tennessee on Decoration day, May 16, 1993. We visited the grave of our great grandmother, Rebecca Caroline Rigsby Burkett.

One of my favorite stories about him was one he told on himself. He visited one of his Huntsville, Alabama cousins, Herbert Majors, almost every summer. One summer, he and Herbert were playing next to a cornfield. It was noontime and they decided to cook their lunch of corn from that cornfield. Well, John Almon was hungry and decided the corn was done so he ate it. But it wasn't done. His Aunt Ova and Grannie Burkett had to take care of him because by the time he got home he was sick! I don't think he enjoyed being sick but he enjoyed telling that story on himself.

To the right is John Almon, that's him in the hat, with sister Louise Carroll Smith and brother Bobby Carroll.

He was buried November 26 with a military funeral which included a 21-gun salute. He would have appreciated that. I will miss his sense of humor. ■



The Historian's Corner

- Oliver Webb



As I write this, we are still in the process of moving the Burkett Family web site. As I mentioned before, Joe Burkett, III who has been instrumental in getting this done, is in the middle of his busy hunting schedule. He is a Professional Hunter and takes folks not only to locations in the States to hunt but also to Alaska and Africa. We have located a new Host site which is familiar with the software Joe and I both use. This will not only make it easier for me to make changes and additions but will require less time for me to do so. I am looking forward to making this change because I can then provide more timely information to those who have access to the internet. Also, we will be accessible to those seeking a connection with Burketts and make it easier for them to determine if there is a connection with our Burketts. With more and more folks buying computers and getting on the internet, it is expected to turn up some more relatives we currently do not know about.

Another change I have already made is in my telephone setup. Over the past few years there have been times when a relative has called asking about something. During some of those calls I have dropped the phone while trying to hold it under my ear and type on the computer keyboard at the same time. Cumbersome to say the least! Now I have installed a cordless phone with a headset which frees up my hands for the keyboard. By being cordless I can also get up and move around searching for papers, pictures, etc. they might be asking about. In addition, I have installed another telephone line and have connected my computer to it for accessing the internet. This allows me to talk on my main number and look at the internet sites at the same time. There have been times when I had to tell someone I would have to call them back since I couldn't talk to them and get on the internet at the same time. This can prove to be a real time saver. Plus there have been times when someone was trying to call me and I would be on the internet and all they could get was a busy signal.

Another convenience of having an additional line is to be able to get on the internet and talk with technical assistance folks. This will be especially convenient as we make the move to the new Host site since I will be going through a learning curve with that new site. They have some small software packages which will be available and which I can include in our web site. A Guest Book will be one of these features which I can then include. Those of you who have visited the current web site have already noticed the Guest Book did not work. There are some other features I haven't learned about yet which will also help in monitoring the number of visitors to our site.

Still another change I made was to add Caller ID. Over 2 years ago, a local pediatric clinic published their own telephone directory — they had several Doctors and departments. But they didn't proof-read it too well because they published my number as theirs! This brought on many, many calls from worried mothers with sick babies and was taking a lot of my time. So I had to start using an answering machine I already owned to screen my calls which meant telling relatives and friends to announce something like, "Hey, if you're there, pick up." Well, this was an inconvenience to them and to me because I would have to stop and listen to each call and they would have to listen to my recorded message before speaking. Now, with Caller ID, I can simply look at the phone to determine who's calling and answer by the second or third ring if it is a friend or relative. I still have an answering machine set to answer after the 4th ring in case I'm not here. (One of the side benefits of the answering machine was I found I didn't have to listen to all those sale pitches!)

Even though I have only had the cordless phone and headset 2 weeks and the additional line one week, I have already found that these changes in my telephone setup are making my life much easier and more productive.

One final comment about the Marion County, Arkansas book. On page 16 of this issue, the details of making sorghum molasses are outlined. In reading about the rollers through which the cane stalks were run, I thought back on James Henry Burkett's recollection about his grandfather, Henry Burkett, Sr., who came to visit them before his (Jame's) father, Jacob Lorenza Burkett, moved the family to Texas. James recalled that his grandfather held his fork between the thumb and palm of his hand since he had lost the fingers of his left hand in the "roolers" (sic) of a sorghum mill. ■

Happy Holidays to All!