

Mrs. John Williams, President

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"THE PINK CARNATIONS"

Along about 1911 or 1912, a group of young ladies of Valdosta formed themselves a Club, The Pink Carnations. These lovely girls in the picture here are, left to right: Wynell Varnedoe (Mrs. J. B. Copeland), Sannie Blackburn (Mrs. Man Turner), Clyde Thomas (Mrs. Fred Pendleton), Charlie Jones (Mrs. Jim Bessant), and Lillian Roberts (Mrs. George Patterson). The picture is taken at the Jones home on East Central Avenue, and may

have been taken by Euna Roberts (Mrs. Karl Hoyer). Aunt Clyde (Clyde Thomas Pendleton) has loaned LCHS this picture for this Newsletter. She told me that she and her friends just made up the name of their group just for fun and they had such good times together. A year or so before this picture Aunt Clyde attended Brenau College with roommates Lillian Roberts, Mary Converse, and Euna Roberts. Spend the night parties, sometimes five in a bed, and it was all such fun. The most fun was when Aunt Clyde and her friends dressed up in her brothers' clothes, pants and all. With her for the funtimes were girls like Mary Bondurant, Alva McKey, Alma Roberts, Stella Roberts and many more. Back to The Pink Carnations, Aunt Clyde said, "Look at that hair, we really thought we were something." I still think she is something. When I was a very small child I stayed with her and Uncle Fred once. She said I stayed so long that I began to call her "Mer." Boy, did we have fun playing the piano all day.... "Always" and things like that. I asked Aunt Clyde to tell me something about the early days of the Carnegie library. She lived close to it. Her family's home was at 710 West Hill Avenue. She had married in 1913 and remembered going to the new Carnegie Library building several times in the early part to Bible studies held by the Baptist Church. (The following story is from another source.)

#### MR. J. J. AND THE EXCAVATION

(A footnote to the Newsletter of January 25, 1977, pertaining to the erection of the Carnegie Library, now the home of the Lowndes County Historical Society.)

According to the minutes of the City Council of Valdosta a resolution was passed on October 12, 1911, to establish a public library to be under the management of a Board of trustees. Further mention is made of the Library in a resolution approved by the Council on October 12, 1912. This states that "in as much as the City had already bought a lot for the Library and had already organized a Board of Trustees to accept the \$15,000 with which the building should be erected" the Council moved also to maintain the Library.

The first task toward the erection of the Library was the excavation of the building site. In early 1913, Mayor John T. Roberts asked Mr. J. J. Joyner to assume this responsibility. Mr. J. J., as he was widely-known, was well known throughout South Georgia for



his farming interests, livestock, and extensive shipping of farm products. His specialties were watermelons and canteloupes. Many friends in Valdosta were made happy by gifts of these fruits from Mr. J. J. Coming out to their front door they would know immediately who had placed the luscious watermelons and canteloupes on the front porch.

In the days just before the building of the Library on West Central Avenue, Mr. J. J. released some of his farm labor and with his mules and scrapers excavated and leveled the ground at the building site. He was the overseer and saw that the excavated dirt was hauled nearby to fill in a low place on West Hill Avenue known as "Sandy Bottom."

Mayor Roberts remarked that he had asked Mr. J. J. to do the excavating because he knew that it would be done in record time and in a most satisfactory manner.

Mr. J. J., elected to the City Council on February 16, 1918, had a large livestock area downtown (directly behind what is now C. C. Varnedoe & Co.) on what is now part of the Downtown Valdosta Parking Lot. On trips to Mexico and Texas, Mr. J. J. purchased his horses and mules and shipped them to Valdosta.

In the Pictorial History of last year on page 42, and which is also featured in the old Tarr and McMurtry Geography, Mr. J. J. is shown in his buggy with his favorite horse, Snowball, as he was supervising the baling of hay by moonlight as rain was imminent.

Hazel Joyner Durrenberger told me that Snowball was the smartest horse in town, at least that is what the children thought. Mr. J. J. would ask Snowball questions and Snowball would either shake his head "yes" or "no." The Joyner children and their friends were amazed and delighted at Snowball's intelligence. The secret was that Mr. J. J. knew just where to scratch Snowball's neck to get the "yes" and "no" answers.

Today the Lowndes County Historical Society will enjoy the fruits of the first labor on this site, supervised by Mr. J. J. Joyner.

### SOMEONE MORE FAMOUS THAN I, Part 3

Last Christmas at a party I visited at length with Lamar and Laura Helen Newbern. I steered the conversation to family ancestors and they told me some very interesting things. In February of this year I have just been to visit with Laura Helen, formerly a Downs of Thomaston, Georgia, who showed me family papers and genealogical charts.

In one of her many family lines Laura Helen goes back to a Major John Washington, 1632-1660, of Virginia who married Mary Flood Blunt Ford (also "fford") in Surry County, Virginia. John Washington was a first cousin of the John Washington who was great grandfather of George Washington. Mary Flood came to America with her father John Flood in 1610. She married R. Blunt and Charles Ford before marrying John Washington. The granddaughter of John, Elizabeth Washington married Sampson Lanier, an ancestor of Sidney Lanier, Georgia poet and musician. The Lanier name began in France as Lanyer. John Lanyer I was a musician in the court in France and a Huguenot who fled France. He died in 1572. His son John II born before 1572 and died in 1616 in England was a musician in Queen Elizabeth I's court. The Lanyers came to America and after many mixups in mail offices in Virginia the name became Lenoir (also Lanoir) and later Lanier. The Lanier family is said to be a true Huguenot family. General William Lenoir of the Revolutionary War is an ancestor of this line. A maternal grandmother in Laura Helen's Lanier ancestry was of the Galliardello family who were musicians in the court of King Henry VIII and his three successors. There are several interesting stories involving the Downs-Saxon line. One is when a Downs man and several Saxon men were captured by Tories, they were put in a ring and Tories were to choose which one they wanted for themselves. About third to choose was an ex-slave who had recently fled from one of these Saxon men on his best horse and joined the Tories. The ex-slave chose his former master, and probably saved his life. The Robert E. Lee family crosses Laura Helen's family lines twice. Also, her mother's Barwick family lines go back to the Key or Kea family.

More about the Downs -- Sir Henry Downs of London was sent to Scotland on a mission and there he met and fell in love with Lady Jane Douglas. The information states that he was merely a knight and not a baronet and her family objected to her marrying beneath herself, so the couple eloped to America causing her name to be erased from her family line. Whether Henry Downs was royalty or not, he made his mark in life and was considered to be of the Blue-blood of America. From both her parents' lines, Laura Helen is a member of Knights of the



of the Garter, descendents of King Edward III, the founder; and she is a member of The National Society Magna Charta Dames (descendents of the signers of the Magna Charta).

Laura Helen gave the Society a genealogical sketch of the Wilcox family, "The Early Wilcox Record." This family is a line of Lamar Newbern. From a book, Ivy Mills, I learned that the Wilcox family came from England to America in 1718. The Wilcoxes first lived in Ivy Mills, Pennsylvania where there were many paper mills, the first of their kind in America before modern machinery, the original hand-made paper mills. Thomas Willcox erected a paper mill in Ivy Mills in 1722. A descendent, John Wilcox, was a Revolutionary soldier from North Carolina, and it was his descendents who came to Georgia, settling in Douglas and other parts of the Wiregrass area. Lamar has a Kimbrough line that we are going to report on at a later date. I only skimmed the surface with the Downs-Newbern families. I enjoyed the genealogical trip, and perhaps later we can have a continuation. (Note: Wilcox is also spelled Willcox.)

Otis and Maxine Sanders gave me some information about their family lines. Maxine's Coleman family came from England in the 1700s. Her great grandfather was born in Fayetteville, North Carolina in a log cabin about 18 x 25 feet. Maxine and some of her family visited this cabin in 1951, and it was in perfect condition. The land and cabin were being sold then. She wishes now that they had bought the log cabin and moved it. A Hutchins family of Maxine's had a castle in Ireland. The castle was vacant for many years, but no one ever claimed it. They would not have been able to leave the country with money if they had claimed it and sold it, so was never acquired by anyone. When Maxine's Coleman family came from England they were on a ship with many other passengers bound for the New World. A man died on board ship, but the passengers did not want it known. They crammed the dead man into a barrel of Irish whiskey, and continued to drink from the barrel. Later, the man was buried in North Carolina. The story does not end here. When Clara Martin Varnedoe, Otis' secretary, visited relatives in North Carolina several years ago, they wandered through an old cemetery. Martin told the Santers of a strange tombstone with a story on it of this man who had died on board ship and his body crammed in a barrel of Irish whiskey so his death would not be discovered . . . Same story, same man -- buried in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Otis Sanders's family lines are Talbert, Rush, Reynolds, Kilcrease, Burress. Otis's great grandmother Elizabeth Ann Kilcrease married her cousin, James Talbert. Their daughter married Joseph Reynolds, whose grandfather, William Lewis Reynolds was also the grandfather of R. J. Reynolds of tobacco fame. The first Reynolds of this line can be traced back to 1530, County Kent, a Christopher Reynolds. His grandson Christopher came to Isle of Wight, Virginia. The Talbert line goes back to a Jennens family whose fortune in England was left for family members to claim. No one claimed it and again they would not have been able to take money out of England. Five Sanders relatives fought in the Revolutionary War: Joseph Talbert, David Rush, William Reynolds, John Kilcrease, and John Burress. Otis is descended from a Jacob Rush of Philadelphia, a brother of the physician of George Washington, Dr. Benjamin Rush. Otis is also descended from Lord Talbert, Lord of Shrewsbury, the name made famous in Henry IV by Shakespeare. David Rush is recorded as marrying Magaretta Rosena Adolph who was born in Bavaria in 1764. Otis showed me a copy of a family tree and pointed out that presently all that was known of his father's grandfather, John Henry Sanders, was that he taught school in Plum Branch, South Carolina. A Sanders relative is working on more information, and perhaps we can record it at a later date.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT -- The Heritage "100" dinner was a huge success. If you missed it, we are sorry. Come next time. Many made donations who did not attend the dinner. As you know this is our way of enjoying each other as well as contributing to the operation and preservation of the Museum. We sincerely thank each of you for your continued support and hope that the Museum will be a place for all to be proud of and enjoy. Mayor Gil Harbin presented the Bicentennial flag that the city had. Moving Day is set for April 1st -- 8:00 am. No fooling, trucks, men, ladies and whoever will be on hand to help at 1110 N. Patterson St. and at the New Museum 305 West Central Avenue. April 28th will be the next monthly meeting. My term as President is half over and there is still so much to be done. Won't you come help us? Just ask and we will find a job for you. Bring your interested friends to see our new place, and if you have something to add to our collections, please bring it. Plan for our Annual Tour -- this year to Monticello, Florida on May 14th. More about this later. See you at the monthly meeting -- till then, (signed) Natalie Williams.