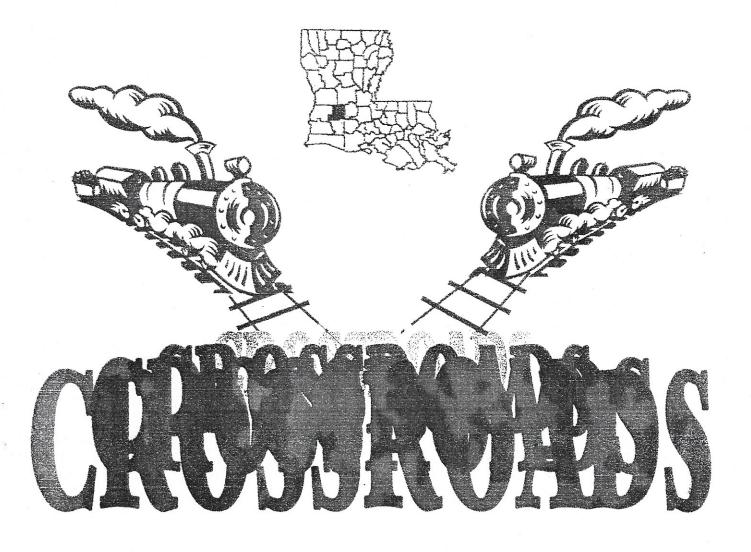
## ALLEN GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JANUARY 2008 P.O. Box 789 - KINDER, LA 70648

ISSUE NO. 225



# A Special Tribute to Former Editor Of CROSSROADS Ethel Fontenot Sacker

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Ethel reminds all to renew your membership in Allen Genealogical & Historical Society

### ETHEL SACKER HONORED BY AGHS STAFF



Ethel Sacker was honored at the December AGHS meeting. She had recently submitted her resignation as Vice President and Publishing Editor for the society to be effective January 2008. Ethel will remain an active member of the society.

Betty Sarver, President, presented Ethel with a gift from the society and complimented her on her untiring work through the years. She described Ethel as a dedicated staff member who was always eager to promote the Allen Genealogical and Historical Society any way possible. She said Ethel will be missed on the staff.

Ethel published the quarterly publication "CROSSROADS", compiled several books of cemetery inventories for Allen Parish cemeteries and worked on various other print projects for the society.

This issue of "CROSSROADS" is Ethel's last publication. Thanks Ethel!

### Allen Genealogical and Historical Society Post Office Box # 789 Kinder, Louisiana 70648

2008 Officers

President
Vice President
Vice President
Secretary/Treasurer
Publishing Editor
Assistant Publishing Editor
Reporter/Tourism Envoy

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Quida Savant

CrossRoads is published quarterly; in January, April, July, and October

Meeting are held on the \*first Tuesday of each month at 10 AM in the Genealogy Room of the Kinder Library, a branch of Allen Parish Libraries.

Membership fees are \$15.00 per calendar year for a single person, which includes an annual subscription to CrossRoads, our new publication, which is published quarterly.

Single copies and back issues are available for \$3.00 each to anyone.

Queries are free to members; \$3.00 for non-members—and will be published as space permits. Please include all necessary information, such as names, dates, places, or place references.

We encourage and welcome contributions of genealogical and historical interest for inclusion in CrossRoads; especially material pertinent to Allen Parish. The Society does not assume responsibility for accuracy of information submitted and published, nor does it assume responsibility for any copyright infringement of submitted and published material. We reserve the right to edit and/or reject material not suitable for publication.

We will accept donations of books, periodicals, and other material of Genealogical and Historical interest relating to this area. These will be placed in the Genealogy Room of the Kinder Library. We welcome memorials and honorariums.

BOOK SECTION: Books for Sale by the Society: (Prices; plus \$2.00 Postage) Rev. Paul Leeds' Congregational Ch. Records: Volume 1 \$25.00 "Marriages and Funerals" 1895-1957 Rev. Paul Leeds' Kinder Congregational Ch. Records-1893-1974 (Vol. 1, 2, 3) \$25,00ea \$25.00 Rev. Paul Leeds' Bethany (Green Oak) Ch. Records Congregational Ch. Records of Indian Village, Edna, & Emad Communities (one book) \$15.00 Congregational Ch. Records of Elton & China Communities (one book) \$15.00 Congregational Ch. Records of Iowa, LA (Rev. Leeds) (Early Ch.) \$15.00 St. Peter's Bayou Blue Indian Congregational Ch. Records (1901-1957) \$25.00 Rev. Leed (includes St. Lukes' early Ch.) Jemison Family by Ethelinda Jemison Andrus (special permission)ON HOLD \$25.00 \$ 8.00 China Cemetery, Elton, LA (Booklet-special permission) \$ 8.00 LeBlanc Cemetery, Allen Parish, LA (Booklet) Indian Village Cemetery, Kinder, LA (older Version + NEW with family history) \$15.00 Sonnier Cemetery, Allen Parish, LA (Booklet) \$ 8.00 Resthaven Cemetery, Oakdale, Allen Parish, LA (Booklet) \$8.00 Green Oak Cemetery, Kinder, Allen Parish, LA (older & latest version) \$15.00 (Special Revised & Updated Edition) \$ 6.00 Lyles Cemetery, Oberlin, Allen Parish, LA Lyles Cemetery, Barnes Creek, Reeves, LA NEW (with family history) \$15.00 Liberty Cemetery, Elton, LA (close ties to Kinder) includes newest up-dated \$15.00 version, with family information. \$10.00 Index to Surnames in all recorded Allen Parish Cemeteries \$15.00 St. Augustine Cemetery Basile, LA with short history (close ties to Kinder) \$25.00 Ancestor Charts - 5-generation charts - Allen Parish Ties NEW \$30.00 1941 Kinder High School Year Book (copy)-by order only Jessie Johnson Cemetery, Kingsfarm, Kinder, LA NEW with pictures & family history \$15.00 Nevils Cemetery with pictures of Headstone inscriptions. NEW \$12.00 \$12.00 Kingrey Cemetery (Old abandoned, Barnes Creek) Recent Pictures & history NEW

Allen Parish Genealogy Society is keeping family file folders, which contain family histories, pedigrees and family group sheets, newspaper clippings, and other items of interest. These offer an excellent source for research. Anyone interested can get further information from any Society member. The Library will stock the necessary forms, and any member will be glad to assist you.

All new members are asked to supply a five-generation Ancestor Chart, which will be kept in a file in the Genealogy Room of the Kinder Library, and plans are to compile these into a book.

A blank five-generation ancestor form is included in each issue of CrossRoads.

The Society will accept items of interest to publish in CrossRoads; copies of Land Records, Wills and Probates, Marriage Certificates, and copies of Obituaries are some suggestions.

\*

The research Department of the Library now has Rev. Heberts' CD of his Records of SW LA; CD of Confederate Civil War Veterans, Micro-film of Allen Parish WW1 Draft Registration Cards; and also has the Allen Parish 1930 Census Microfilm, plus Microfilms of older issues of Kinder newspapers.

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\*\*\*This is the first issue of CrossRoads for the NEW YEAR - 2008.

Another year has gone by and before us is a "shinny, new one with lots of promises. We wish for all Happiness, Peace, and Strength in coming days.

We hope that you will stay with us, attend meetings, and help our Society to grow and become the Best in this area. We encourage submission of articles, documents, and family history for future issues of Crossroads. Any volunteer help is appreciated (pick up a bundle of obituaries from Bill or Ethel, and cut and paste), make a family history sheet of one of your Ancestors and submit, write an article on the history of your church, school, community, land grant, or Military Veteran. Interview some one of interest and write a brief article on that interview. There are so many ways to help.

#### Welcome New Members:

1. TREME, Harold N. - PO Box #37 - Elton, LA 70532 - Phone 337-584-2533

CrossRoads goes to: Lake Charles, LA; Baton Rouge, LA; Crowley, LA

Society News:

Our Editor of many years, Ethel F. Sacker, is retiring from that position and as Vice President. She has volunteered as helper to new Editor, Fran Clemmons. Ethel has become well known as publishing editor of the quarterly, CrossRoads.

Update on Current Projects

KHS Yearbook Project still in progress. We are still in need of items for the yearbook.

Another on-going project of the Society is: Recording, Documenting, and up-dating of Allen Parish Cemeteries. The Reed Cemetery in Oberlin, and Oak Hill Cemetery near Oakdale, LA are being updated. Many people who have family buried in these cemeteries, are contributing information toward this project. We are grateful for all help. It is a valuable contribution to recording the history of our area.

All these are put into individual books and sold by the Society. Inquiries can be made at the Kinder Library.

- \*\* Still in Progress\*\*
- 1. WW1 Draft Registrations of Allen Parish \*\*Abandoned Microfilm available in Library
- 2. Ancestor Charts BOOK 1 Completed (may be purchased from Society) -\$25.00
- 3. Obituaries of Allen Parish and related areas year 2003 completed (still collecting, but progress is slow). These books will be available for research in Library.

Note change in our monthly meeting date: FIRST TUESDAY of each month. Dues now \$15.00

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#### THE FAMILY TREE

There are many roots in a family tree, and many branches. The consequences of the actions taken by our ancestors have shaped the present. What our descendants may do or accomplish is unknown. Some may fortify and bolster the family tree, while others shake it to it's very foundations or threaten to uproot it. No doubt other generations have tried the same tricks, but, in most cases, adversity only serves to strengthen it. The old tree, and the family, will somehow endure. A part of you has lived in the past lives of your ancestors. A part of you will live in the future in the lives of your descendants. You are only a link in the continuing chain of life.

From Kinfolks Sept. 2007

Looking Back - Linus Manuel's Barbershop - Oberlin

He was born in the Richard Community, between Eunice and Church Point, and lived near Eunice until he and his wife, the former Mary Bergeron, moved to Oberlin in 1926. He began his business on a corner of Main Street, and in 1927 moved across the street. Later in 1957, he changed location to the tiny shop he owned when he retired. Changing locations did not matter, his faithful customers followed him. "I've cut hair for at least four generations of one family," he said. "I've cut for the Karam family, and some of the Reeds; I can't remember them all. Being a barber, you learn what a man wants, and you cut it that way".

In early years, his work hours were irregular, he worked from early morning to three-four o'clock the next morning. "Men would hang around the saloon until it closed at midnight, then come into the barber shop for a shave or haircut. One Saturday in 1928, I shaved forty men. People don't get shaved anymore," he said. Mr. Manuel sold his business and retired in 1991. Oberlin customers missed him.

Who's Rattling In Your Family Closet? Shocks in store when researching family trees.

"The past is a Pandora's Box; once opened, there's no going back"

There is a restlessness in today's society. Community ties are looser and families more widely spread; yet we all yearn for a sense of belonging. For many, that longing is fulfilled by exploring the family history.

Genealogy has become increasingly popular as access to the internet has made mapping the family tree so much easier. But sometimes all that digging can unearth some dark and startling secrets. Illegitimate children, convicted criminals, or secret adoptions have been discovered, so it is best to be prepared. One family found out that a long-lost Uncle was really a Soviet Spy, and when found out, he had committed suicide.

Illegitimacy is one of the most common discoveries. In many ways, this should not be a surprise. In the earlier times there was a huge stigma attached to illegitimate children, so people went to great lengths to keep such births secret. There was a lot of unofficial adoptions within families, where the baby's grandparents would raise a child as their own.

One of the signs to look for is an unusual age gap in census records; such as three teenage children registered, then a newborn baby. Birth certificates are also full of clues; a child is likely to have been illegitimate if there is no father recorded or if the baby was baptized with the mother's surname. If suspicious, look closely at names – the middle name of a child may reflect the surname or Christian name of it's real father.

Family secrets safeguarded through generations are often linked to a sense of shame; all sorts of mysteries have their roots in social acceptance, or poverty. Finding out about the hardships our ancestors faced can be an incredibly emotional experience. Examples of criminal activity in a family can come as a huge shock to people who have embarked on a bit of gentle research. Local newspaper archives often contain details of trials or court reports; death certificates may show that someone died in prison. Unearthing new relatives is usually an exciting thing, but if it's a secret family never known about, it can be hard to come to terms with. Bigamy makes for a particularly shocking discovery.

Early divorce laws were strict and biased against women; it was also incredibly expensive to divorce, so people desperate to escape unhappy marriages often just left and settled quietly into a new life somewhere else. Tell-tale signs of this could be an unexplained movement within a family, or if people suddenly disappear from the records and appear in a later census as a single person.

We all have an idea of who we are that is derived from our lives, and from what we know of our ancestors; uncovering new facts about our personal heritage can challenge that sense of identity.

So when you begin your search do bear in mind that you might happen upon uncomfortable truthsBe prepared to deal with it, but don't let it put you off. Think about how they must have felt and wonder what you would di in those circumstances. It will give you and incredible connection with the past.

Taken from a British Study.

#### TRIVIA

After putting her grandchildren to bed, a grandmother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. At last she threw a towel around her head and stomped into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard the three year old say with a trembling voice, "Who was THAT?"

A Physician's Payment 130-plus years ago.

Ad found in an 1873 issue of the Meridional Newspaper that was used as wall-paper in an old house being torn down.

Times were really hard then.

"All persons indebted to me for professional services are informed that, in consequence of the scarcity of money, I am ready to receive from them in payment of their account gentle cattle and horses at the regular market prices." Signed: Dr. W. D. White

Newspaper Article – Nov. 9, 1912 - The "Hairpin", next to the "monkey wrench", is the most useful invention. Women use them to scratch their heads, button their shoes, pick their teeth, punch bugs out of cracks, run into cakes to see if they are sufficiently baked, clean their fingernails, fasten stray hair, pick out nuts, lift stove lids, clean their ears, etc.

#### **Article on History of Kinder United Methodist Church**

Included in the Ministers and members of the Methodist Church are Charles Clark Hill and Mrs. Celia Kirkpatrick.

In the 1880 Census for Keota, Iowa; Charles C. Hill is enumerated as head of household age 31, with wife Celia, age 29, son Jay age 10, daughter Jcealena age 8, daughter May A. age 6, son James E. age 3, and daughter Arta F. age 8 months.

Charles Clark Hill's parents are unknown as of this date.

Charles Clark Hill married Celia Loucetta Kirkpatrick in Iowa on April 20, 1868. She was born 1850 in Iowa, the daughter of Thomas Milligan Kirkpatrick and Celia Ison New.

In the 1900 Census for LA, Charles and Celia are living in the Hickory Flat Community, north of Kinder, La, where Charles had homesteaded land. They had moved about several times, finally locating in Louisiana in the late 1880s.. Later they sold the homestead and moved to Jennings, LA. Charles was known as an Engineer, tall, with the "appearance as of an Indian", and Celia was a music teacher in her earlier years., and most probably had an active role in the music of the Kinder Methodist Church.

After the death of Celia's father, Thomas M. Kirkpatrick, Celia's mother, Celia Ison New Kirkpatrick, moved to Louisiana to live with her daughter. She died in 1901 at the home of her daughter, and is buried in Kinder McRill Cemetery, near her daughter.

Leland Todd Sonnier submitted a five-generation Ancestor chart about this family to the Allen Genealogical & Historical Society, which appeared in an earlier issue of Crossroads, and is also included in Ancestor Charts of the Society on page 106.

The Hill family has an interesting history and were a vital part of Kinder. They owned Cafes, Service stations, Hotels, and other well known early Kinder businesses. There are many descendants still living in and around this area, including Reynolds, McRills, Hornes, LaBuffs, Johnsons, and Phelps.

As a follow-up, CrossRoads has included Family Group Sheets on this Hill and Kirkpatrick family.

Source: Looking Back at Kinder – by E. Andrus and G. Cornish Kirkpatrick Genealogy – Second Edition – 1995 (Kinder Library) US Census Records – 1880 Iowa; 1900 LA

OPER PER L	Husband: Charles Clark Hill	
	Born: June 27, 1847 Married: April 20, 1868 Died: April 2, 1928	in: Rushville, Shelby County, Indiana in: Wapello County, Iowa in: Jennings, LA
	Burial: Father:	
	Mother: Other Spouses:	
	Wife: Celia Loucetta Kirkpatrick	
	Born: June 07, 1850	in: Des Moines County, Iowa
	Died: November 21, 1928	in: Jennings, LA
	Burial:	
	Father: Thomas Milligan Kirkpatrick Mother: Celia Ison New	in the second section of the second section is a second section of the second section in the second section is a second section of the second section is a section of the second section of the section of the second section of the secti
	Other Spouses:	and a manager of the control of the second of the control of the c
	CHILDREN	
1	Name: Thomas Jay Hill	
1	Born: November 05, 1869	in: Iowa
	Died:	in: Nome, TX
М	Burial: Married:	in: Kinder, LA
	Spouse: Vina Kilbourne	m. Kingel, LA
	Married:	in:
1	Spouse: Almeda Johnson	
2	Name: Isalena Maude (Aunt Ite) Hill	4
1	Born: July 22, 1871	in: Boone County, Arkansas
F	Died: 1929	in: Shreveport, LA
-	Burial:	
1	Married: March 31, 1889 Spouse: George Barney	in: Iowa
7		
3	Name: Winifred Aramay Hill Born: August 25, 1874	in: Poone County, Advances
_	Died: December 26, 1934	in: Boone County, Arkansas
F	Burial:	ALC.
1	Married: August 02, 1903	in: Jennings, LA
	Spouse: Carroll Allen Wilkinson	
4	Name: James Elmer Hill	
	Born: April 18, 1877	in: Jefferson County, Iowa
M	Died: 1917	in:
	Burial: Married:	in:
1	Spouse: Mabel Walton	ш.
5	Name: Florence Hill	
1	Born: September 23, 1879	in: Iowa
F	Died: October 25, 1954	in: Kinder, LA (Cemetery Marker)
£	Burial:	in: Kinder McRill Cemetery, Kinder, LA
	Married: 1900	in: Jeff Davis Parish, LA? (by Rev. Paul Leeds)
4	Spouse: Edwin Elizah Reynolds	
6	Name:	
	Born: Married:	in:
	Died:	in: in:
	Burial:	in:
	Spouse:	ast.

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KINDER FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Kinder, Louisiana is located at the crossroads of Highways 190 and 165 in the southern part of Allen parish. The economy depends on rice, soybeans, timber, and many of the citizens work at the various plants in Calcasieu Parish.

About the year 1890 (the exact date unknown), a small plank school was built near the home of Charles Clark Hill, two miles north of the present site of the town. The school was lovingly referred to as "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mrs. Frank Philbrick was the teacher in this first free school in the area.

A Sunday School was organized in Mr. Hill's home, with Mr. Hill serving as Superintendent and Mrs. Hill as choir leader.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Fred Giggar brought Rev. Norton to the school and a Methodist Church was organized. Charter members were: Mr. and Mrs. Hill, May Hill, Mrs. Celia Kirkpatrick (Mrs. Hill's mother), and Mr. Tingle. They were later joined by Joe, Charles, Mrs. Tingle, Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Reynolds, Mrs. I. F. Denny, and others.

Rev. C. A. King was Presiding Elder at the time. Some of the early ones to serve as ministers were Rev. Williamson, P.A. Drown, T. C. Chaney, Burger, Thomas Wilson, and W. B. Van Valkenburg.

During the early 1900's, church services were held in various homes and in the lobby of the local hotel. Earliest record of a pastoral appointment was in 1906, when Rev. William Bennett was assigned.

In 1914, the first sanctuary was erected on Fifth Avenue on the site of the present location. This lovely old building, which had housed so many of the early residents as the location of their devotions, was destroyed by fire on November 15, 1969.

It was indeed a sad day for members and fellow townsmen alike. To keep from interrupting the regular services of the church, members gathered for worship in the educational building next door. This building had been dedicated on April 16, 1967, by the first resident Methodist Bishop in Louisiana. Rev. Leonard Cooke was the District Superintendent at the time, and Reverend Rex Squyres was the pastor.

Groundbreaking ceremonies for a new sanctuary were held on October 25, 1970. Bishop Walton, D. S. Harvey Williamson, and the pastor Reverend J. W. Matthews had charge of the services. Aid for the new building was derived from insurance, the 1000 Club, and donations from area citizens. On May 9, 1971, the first services in the new church were held. Consecration services were at 10:45 a.m. on May 30th, D. S. Harvey Williamson had the sermon. An open house was from 3:00 to 5:00 that afternoon. Dedication services were on June 9, 1974, at 4:00 p.m. The dedicatory sermon was by Bishop Finis A. Crutchfield.

The women have always enjoyed an active role in the affairs of the church. They have taught Sunday School classes, worked with the youth in Epworth League, later called MYF (Methodist Youth Fellowship), and have their own service organization. First called the Ladies Aid Society, the primary aim was to raise money for missions. This group was later known as the Women's Society for Christian Service, with the expanded idea of serving, not only missions, but also the local area. After the unification of the Methodist churches, this society became simply United Methodist Women. They meet regularly for Bible study and support the various programs of the church.

A special project of this group for a number of years has been to prepare and serve the weekly function of the Rotary Club. All profits from this venture are placed in a special fund which is used only for improvements of a permanent nature to the church and parsonage.

Today, many of the regular worshippers are descendants of the founders of our beloved church, and they are faithfully carrying on the work begun by their grandparents in the early 1890's.

## KINDER FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTERS

Rev. Norton	~1890
Cyrus King	1891-
William Bennett	1906-07
W. B. Hebert	1907-08
F. G. Watkins	1909
T. E. Webb	
R. C. McClure	
E. N. Hardin	1916-18
A. M. Mynn	1918-20
E. N. Hardin	1920-21
W. T. Stokes	1921-24
C. L. Elliott	1924-25
F. J. Ensign	1926
Luther Lyons	1926
W. B. Hebert	1926-27
J. S. Denny	1927-28
Luther Lyons	1928-29
J. J. Davis	1931-38
J. A. Knight	1938-41
R. T. Pickett	1941-42
T. S. Lipscomb	1942-47
Darwin Farquhar	1947-50
Abe Conerly	1950-53
William Sanders	1953-54
Claude O. Hall	1954-55
Raymond M. Crowfoot	1955-62
Rex Squires	1962-67
J. W. Matthew, Jr.	1967-71
C. Ed Henkel	1971-75
Lynn W. Merrill	1975-78
Dorothy McGowan	1978-79
Rex Squires	1980
Gary Van Horn	1980-84
Frank Chlastack	1984-85

# KINDER FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTERS

(continued)

Richard E. Walton	1985-86
Chris Blanchard	1986-87
Darryl A. Tate	1988-93
Charles Crews	1993-97
Aletha C. Valdez	1997-98
Louis Roos	1998-99
L. E. L. Turnbull	1999-2002
Erin Oliver	2002-04
Eddie Morgan	2004-06
Tony Moss	2006-

From "Looking Back at Kinder" By: Ethelinda Andrus & Grace Cornish

Submitted by: Sybil Thompson

#### Elmer "Smittie" Smith Says:

While living in Elton, at the age of 12, with my father's blessings, I managed to get a job as janitor at the local picture show, sweeping and dusting. My pay? Seeing all shows free, no money involved. After a few months I was promoted to pumping the player piano, playing any roll of tunes I wanted. From piano player, I was promoted to re-winder; this job required me to check all films for tears or breaks, combining single reels to three reels. When the projectionist quit, Mr. Keller, manager and owner, asked me to take the position. I knew nothing about operating a projection machine, but Mr. Keller assured me he would be around to help me. This job lasted until we moved to Kinder in May of 1923. My pay as Projectionist was \$6.00 per week, seven days per week.

When I moved to Kinder, Pop Harrington (known as Tuttle), knowing I was experienced, gave me a job as Projectionist. I stayed with this for only a short time, as I was offered a better paying job. N.J. Giles, Jessie Lee Sanders grandfather, a building contractor, was awarded a contract of tearing down the old Commercial Hotel, which had been closed. The Hotel was located in the corner where Sidney Langley's Barber Shop is located; it contained about 12 rooms, a large lobby, a dining room and kitchen. Talk about tearing the roof off of your head-that is exactly what I was doing on this job.

At the time we moved to Kinder, there was no house to be found; the owners of the hotel rented rooms to people needing a place to live. Papa rented several rooms for us to live in until a place could be found. A friend of my Mother moved from her home in with her mother, and rented her home to us. Thus, before the rains came we were safely under another roof.

Upon completion of tearing down the Hotel, Scott-Burgess Ford Co., having a team of two assembly men to put together Model T Automobiles, asked if I cared for the job. I was glad to accept. (Mr. Burgess was the grandfather of Marjorie Burgess Ashy). This job was during the year 1924. In those days, Fords did not come complete, ready to drive out as automobiles are today. We finished putting them together, ready to roll, each one having to go through close inspection. Hard to believe, but we could assemble one in a little less than an hour. The demand was great, it being a good crop year with good prices. Crops were rice, cotton, corn, cattle, hogs, poultry, melons and vegetables. Soy beans were unheard of. A Model "T" Touring car sold for about \$450.00, while a coupe sold for around \$700.00.

Following that job, Alton Baker asked if I was interested in the job of delivery boy in his grocery store. Seems everything was falling in place for me, keeping me working. My job was driving a truck, making grocery and feed deliveries in the trade area. Boy, that was right down my alley, just as any other boy. This job was between the years 1924-1925. We went to work at 6 in the morning and worked until 9:30-10 o'clock at night. What was my pay?? A measly pay today, but big in that day, \$40.00 per month. When not delivering, we all kept up the stock and cleaned the store. Everything came in sacks, barrels, and boxes. We weighed, sacked and tied everything. With the long hours of work and small pay, there was no gripe, just happy to have a job.

More later. Smittie says.

Elmer Smith born Feb. 20, 1906 Died May 30, 1990 Married Feb. 22, 1933 – Mildred Reynolds Arrival of the ACADIANS in LOUISIANA Excerpts from "A Bit of Cajun History"

The arrival of the Acadians in Louisiana can be dated from the settlement of Salvador Mouton, his nephew, Jean Diogene Mouton, and their families. They are believed to be the first to reach here in the mass migration that would eventually bring two-thirds of the survivors of the Acadian exodus to Louisiana.

Salvador's son, Jean, was founder of Lafayette. It is for him that St. John Cathedral is named. Another descendant, Alexandre Mouton, would become the state's first Acadian governor (also the first elected as a Democrat and the first to be selected by popular vote rather than chosen by the legislature). Over the years the Moutons would become both widespread and influential. One family historian counts 6,000 Moutons who still carry the family name, and another 6,000 who are married into other families.

(Other reliable sources tell me that the Mouton ancestors did not arrive in Louisiana until 1764 - a few years earlier they are listed as prisoners at Fort Edward in Nova Scotia.) [This is what Stanley LeBlanc has to say about this: 1755 arrival of the Moutons in Louisiana is a myth. The Moutons arrived in 1765. A daughter of Salvator and a daughter of Louis were baptized in New Orleans in December 1765.

The February 1765 arrivals were sent to Attakapas and Opelousas but many went to St. James later that year. Those who arrived in May 1765 and later were placed in St. James. The names mentioned in the last paragraph didn't "follow" the Moutons. Some arrived at the same time.

Jean, son of Salvador, is known as the "father of Lafayette" His son, Alexandre was the Governor.

These first Acadian settlers came to Louisiana by foot and by raft, directly from Canada, walking along the Great Lakes to the upper reaches of the Mississippi, then hiking and rafting down to Louisiana. They settled on the west bank of the Mississippi in what is today St. James Parish, near the home of Mathias Frederick, a German who was probably the first white settler of the region.

Other Acadian families followed the Moutons to St. James in the years after the dispersion: Bergeron, Saunier, LeBlanc, Bourgeois, Guilbeau, Poirier, Roy, Guidry, Cormier, Martin. Louis Pierre Arceneaux would not be far behind. We know him better by another name. He would become the Gabriel in Longfellow's epic, Evangeline. By 1770 the Acadians outnumbered everyone else. The St. James militia roster of that year lists 104 names. All but ten are Acadian.

The settlement they formed became known as St. Jacques de Cabahannocer (St. James of Cabonocey), for a church built there by a man named Jacques Cantrelle. He was not Acadian. He'd come to Louisiana directly from France, but the little church named for him would be remembered as the first church of the Cajuns in Louisiana.

The oldest church still standing in Louisiana, Saint Gabriel d'Iberville built by the Acadians in 1769

Cantrelle had first settled in the Natchez country north of Baton Rouge. But in 1729 an Indian uprising had all but wiped out the settlement. Cantrelle escaped by hiding in his corn shed. His wife was killed when he left her hiding in the woods while he returned to their cabin to fetch a few possessions. He was one of only 20 survivors of the massacre.

He resettled at Kenner, near New Orleans, married a second bride there, then moved to New Orleans in 1736 - becoming prominent in social and civic affairs. He stayed in the city until 1763, when he and his son-in-law, Nicholas Verret, moved to plantations they had been building in St. James. Cantrelle named his plantation Cabahannocer, from the name given a nearby stream by the Choctaw Indians. It means "clearing where the ducks lands"

At Cabahannocer, Cantrelle developed an indigo plantation and prospered. He became commandant of the past, made friends with the Indians, welcomed the Acadians, and built a dynasty and a church, in which he was eventually buried.

Huge sugar and cotton plantations would one day turn this stretch of Mississippi River bank opened by the Fredericks and Cantrelles and Moutons into a prosperous part of what would be called "the Golden Coast of Louisiana," the richest stretch of real estate in antebellum North America.

At first, however, it would be known as The Acadian Coast, where the Cajuns began new lives in a much humbler fashion.

Antonio de Ulloa (January 12, 1716 – July 3, 1795) was a Spanish general, explorer, author, astronomer, colonial administrator and the first Spanish governor of Louisiana. He was born in Seville, the son of an economist. He arrived on March 5, 1766 in New Orleans to serve as the first Spanish governor of West Louisiana. Sent to New Orleans (1766) as governor of Louisiana after that province had been ceded by France to Spain, he was harassed in his administration by the rebellious attitude of the French colonists and by inadequate military and financial support. After an uprising in 1768 he was forced to leave.

The French colonists refused to recognize Spanish rule, and de Ulloa was expelled from Louisiana by a Creole uprising in 1768.

It was on September 28,1766, that an English ship arrived in New Orleans from Maryland, carrying 224 Acadians, including 150 women and children. They were penniless, starving, and scared. Ulloa immediately gave them what aid he could.

He would write: "Since these people arrived consumed in wretchedness and in the greatest possible need, through the orders of the French General (Aubry) and mine they were helped immediately with fresh bread and biscuits which had been prepared for the first needy ones who might arrive. I ordered that an ox and a calf, which I had sent for up river for my own consumption and that of those who are with me, be given to them. This was done on the same night that they encountered the launch which was transporting them, and the pilot assured me that immediately upon receiving these animals they slaughtered them and ate the meat raw".

Ulloa had given this aid on his own authority. He didn't know what the position of official Spain might be. On September 29, 1766, he sent a letter to his superiors in Spain, asking for instructions: "The arrival of these people, together with those of the same kind who were already in the colony and others who might come, is a very great problem for me and for anyone else who might govern because from the moment they arrive it is necessary to spend money on them in providing the necessities of life and to continue to do so until they have a way to subsist by themselves, which takes at least two years. In order for them to establish themselves it is necessary to provide them with arms and ammunition, tools and everything else. It is necessary to give widows and orphans everything and to provide them all a surgeon, medicines, and special diets, since shortly after their arrival and in the first two years they become ill a great deal and a high number of them die...On the one hand, one is moved by charity and the obligations of hospitality, for if one fails to help them they will without doubt perish; and on the other hand one is pressed by the obligation not to use funds for purposes which are not determined by royal decision".

Spain recognized the value of the Acadian settlers. She needed warm bodies to populate the Louisiana colony. The Acadians knew how to build dikes to hold back the Mississippi River and how to reclaim lowlands. They could help feed a growing New Orleans with their produce and fish.

The exiles were also good soldiers, as they had shown "against the British as well as the type of warfare conducted against the Indians." Such citizens were important to Ulloa, "in this colony which must always depend upon the settlers for its defense."

Ulloa sent the Acadians to present-day St. James Parish and up the river to its intersection with Bayou Manchac, where they built a fort and a town called St. Gabriel de Manchac. The town remains today. In addition to land, each Acadian family was given six hens, one rooster, one cow and calf, corn, gunpowder, bullets and a musket.

Ulloa's successors would broaden Spanish defenses against the British and others by placing settlements along important Mississippi River distributaries, and using Acadians to populate them. The Acadian emigres would be sent down Bayou Manchac to Galveztown (abandoned in the 1800s) and to French Settlement (still a thriving community). He placed another settlement at Lafourche des Chetimachas. Indian lands at the fork of Bayou Lafourche and the Mississippi River today's Donaldsonville. Another new settlement was established down Bayou Lafourche at Valenzuela now Plattenville

From these places the Acadians would spread up and down the Mississippi River, along Bayou Manchac to the Amite River, down Bayou Lafourche, southwest from Donaldsonville. The area would become known as The Acadian Coast. It would become one of the ironies of our history that more French-speaking settlers would come to Louisiana during the 40 years of Spanish rule than during the entire period of French control.

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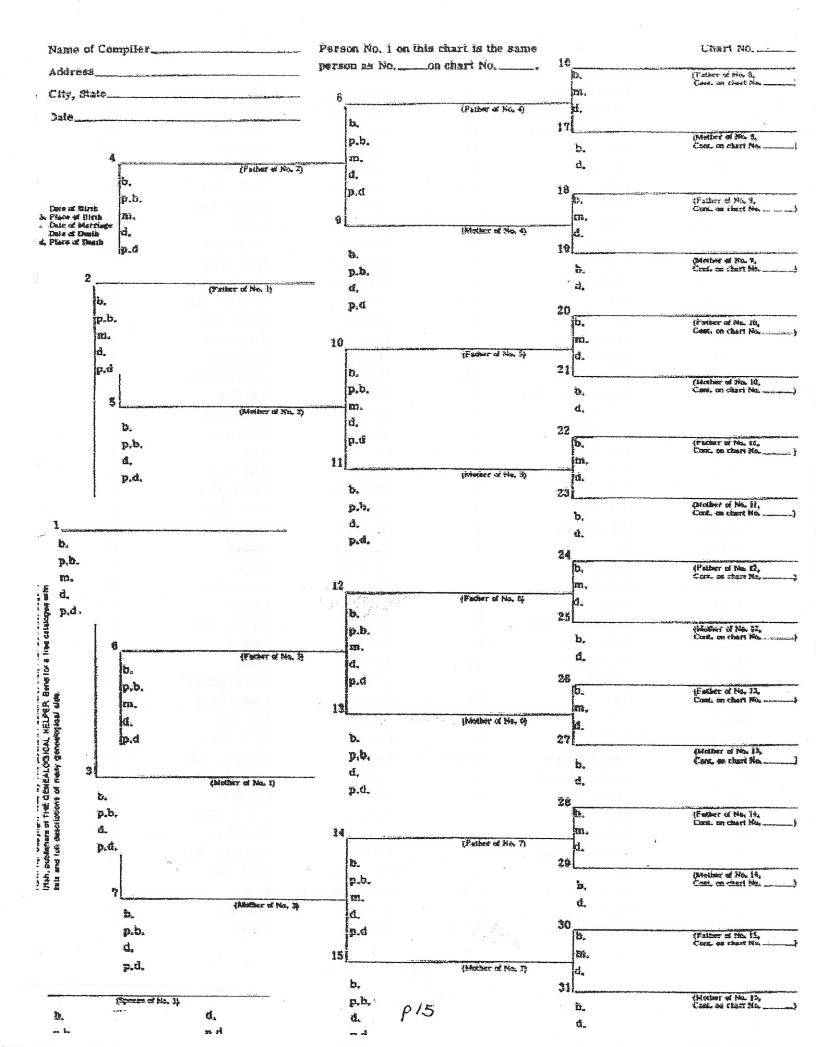
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