NOA News

Finding the Path to your Tennessee Roots

VOL XXXVIII ISSUE 2 NATIONAL ODOM ASSEMBLY NOVEMBER 2021

2022

July 14-17

Hosted by:

Wanda Odom Holt

and

Linda Odom Tidwell

GREENEVILLE TENNESSEE

from your President

Holiday Greetings to my NOA Family,

It is hard to believe that the holidays are already upon us. I hope everyone is doing well and staying safe. The COVID epidemic continues to wreak havoc on events and travel plans but we shall overcome this anomaly eventually. In the spirit of family gatherings for the holidays, I hope everyone is making plans to attend

From your editor:

During the Covid times or as one of my Kinz cousins call it the "PanDAMNic" I have been going through boxes and files, organizing, cleaning and in general taking stock. This month I am working on computer files and lo and behold I found one with NOA News contributions that hadn't seen the light of day yet. So note that some of the contributions are late and that is due to my missing a pertinent file last time. Even late, I thought the information was penitent and have included it. So sorry to have misplaced the information, but pleased to include it now. Editor

our NOA meeting in Greeneville, Tennessee next year. I know that Wanda and Linda will do an amazing job and we will all have a great time. Everyone keep your fingers crossed that all COVID restrictions will be dropped, and we can enjoy all activities again.

I do not have any new announcements on my Odom genealogy. It was a busy Summer, and the Fall is not slowing down either. So, I hope other NOA members will share their Odom stories and let us know if any break walls have fallen. I am looking forward to sending our Christmas Cards this year and hope everyone will join me in bringing back this tradition. I was going through some of my grandparents old Christmas Cards, and it was fun to read all the Christmas greetings and well wishes from family and friends. I hope everyone has a great Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Love and Blessings to all,

Danny Powell

NOVEMBER - Individuals and the Miscellaneous GROUP Contribution

Odums and the Pandemic

Wanda O. Holt

I had planned to write a story about my grandfather, Perry Odum, and his encounter with the Spanish flu pandemic while employed at the Old Hickory gunpowder plant. I never imagined that before I finished my research, it would also include my story of encountering a pandemic.

My grandmother, Leona Hix Odum, who lived to age 96, loved to tell the story of the day each of her children were born. I remember the story of how she was tending Papa, sick with the flu, when she had to lie down and have a baby. Imagining her as a young, pregnant woman single-handedly taking care of her sick husband and a toddler is incredible.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused me to want to investigate Grandma's story of Papa having the flu a little closer. Our family storyteller, Aunt Ruby, herself living to the age of 95, had written about the event. In her account, Papa Odum was working at the gunpowder plant during the Spanish flu epidemic. The plant employed thousands and manufactured dynamite, gun powder and gun cotton for the Allied forces in World War I. During its operation, it was the largest munitions plant in the world. Aunt Ruby wrote, "My father told of truckloads of bodies, stacked like cordwood, being carried to morgues in Nashville. One morning while at work, my father became ill. He went to the doctor and was told be probably would not make it home. He collapsed in the doorway at home."

To fill in the story a bit more, I consulted the local newspaper accounts of the Spanish flu as it descended on Nashville and the gunpowder plant. According to The Tennessean dated October 8, 1918, "In the several temporary hospitals at the plant there is a total of about 800 cases under treatment, and the admissions of new cases is already falling below the number of those discharged. The proportion of severe cases is also materially lower in comparison with what has been reported from other cities. To date only fifty-three deaths from influenza have occurred at the plant since the beginning of the epidemic – a refutation of a number of extravagant and pernicious rumors that have gained circulation." Had Papa seen the "truckloads of bodies" himself or was he repeating the "pernicious rumors" he had heard from other?

To collaborate Grandma's story, the date of Papa's flu had to overlap with the birth of a baby. Grandma's second child, William, was born October 7, 1919, and died April 8, 1920, of sepsis of the bowel. I had forgotten about this sweet, little blue-eyed boy who had only lived six months. Papa had to have the flu in 1919 not 1918 when it swept through the gunpowder plant. So, my Papa, like me had been felled by the second round of the pandemic, not the first.

From Aunt Ruby's account, I assume Papa and Grandma along with my Uncle Oscar lived in the gunpowder plant village when Papa had the flu and Uncle William was born in 1919. Old Hickory Village was a self-sufficient community built by the DuPont company to accommodate the thousands of employees and their families but by October of 1919 World War I had ended, and the munitions plant was being shuttered. Uncle Oscar (1917-2019) wrote in his biography that they had lived in one of the company houses. Living in the village would explain how Papa was able to walk home from work after being diagnosed with the flu.

A hundred and two years later while living in Old Hickory their granddaughter came down with

SARS-CoV-2. I really did not want to be a part of the history of the current pandemic and had been fully vaccinated in early 2021 to try to prevent it. I was moderately sick with a high fever, body aches, cough, vomiting, diarrhea and a loss of taste and smell that lingered for weeks. On day seven, I received an infusion of lab-created antibodies from a nurse dressed in bubble-shaped, containment gear. It was surreal to be the one that everyone else was afraid of after a year and a half of mask wearing and excessive handwashing. My husband caught the virus while caring for me but had milder symptoms. The good news, if there is any, is that we now have natural immunity for some undetermined period of time. Like everything else about this virus, how long is up for debate.

My Papa Odum was not my only grandfather who suffered from the influenza. My maternal grandfather, Lummie Edwards died in 1928 at the age of 37 from pneumonia after having what we assume was a later variant of the Spanish flu. He left behind my grandmother and their five children including my mother, Gladys, who was fourteen months old. It is hard to imagine what my grandmother endured as a young widow during the years of The Great Depression that followed

Every family had a pandemic story from the 1918-1919 Spanish flu and now most of us have a Covid 19 pandemic story as well. As a genealogy buff, I believe it is important that we document our stories for future generations. Even though Aunt Ruby and Uncle Oscar's stories don't give a completely, accurate story, at least they give us a glimpse into what life was like during a time very similar to the one we are living now.

Group B Member

From Dot Wise Worth....
My closest Odom ancestor is my mother's great-grandmother Eliza Odom Andrews. Eliza was the daughter of James Madison? Odom, son of Archibald Odom of Pulaski County, Georgia. Helen Odom Harrell helped me prove that connection and, thus, a paper trail to cousin Fountain Odom — we didn't know until after the DNA testing started that she also belonged to that line!

I'm also connected to Obed Wood Odom's line on my father's side. O.W.'s grandmother and my grandfather were siblings, making us second cousin. The years we lived as close neighbors (about a mile) on farms in North Louisiana let me get acquainted with a lot of those Odom cousins. In fact, I had one of them interested in replacing me as the Louisiana representative, but, sadly, Betty Odom Davis passed in 2017.

I'm so sorry I had to miss the NOA in Texas this year. It looks like y'all had a lot of fun! Maybe, by the next one I'll be able to travel again.

I saw a lot of the Colquitt, Claiborne Parish, Louisiana, Odoms (including O.W.) on May 1st when we had our annual Colquitt Memorial Day (homecoming) where we decorated the graves in the Colquitt Cemetery and had a potluck dinner in the Colquitt Community Center. We're going to get a mass photograph next year and maybe? post it as an NOA Louisiana meeting since nearly everyone attending is an Odom or a relative of an Odom.

Merry Christmas

Here is the picture of Frances Odom with her quilt that Frank bought for her at the NOA 2019 Auction.

Frances Odom born March 17, 1940 and died June 22, 2020.

Frank Odom receiving his NOA 35 Year Pin...what an accomplishment and dedication to the group!

Ancestral Mathematics

In order to be born, you need:
2 parents
4 grandparents
8 great grandparents
16 great great grandparents
32 great great great grandparents
64 g-g-g-g-grandparents
128 g-g-g-g-g-grandparents
256 g-g-g-g-g--g-grandparents
512 g-g-g-g-g-g-g-grandparents
1,024 g-g-g-g-g-g-g-g grandparents
2,048 g-g-g-g-g-g-g-g-g- grandparents
For your to be born today from 12 previous generations, you need a total of 4, 094 ancestors over the last 400 years.

Think for a moment - How many struggles? How many battles? How many difficulties? How much sadness? How much happiness? How many love stories? How many expressions of hope for the future? - did your ancestors have to undergo for you to exist in this present moment.....

Kentucky News (from April)

Mildred has been in Hospital in critical care but has returned home and improving each day. Since the Covid everyone has stayed close to their homes and most all of us have received our 2nd shot. We have been blessed no one has had the covid virus.

Tthe group picture was Mildred's mom and dad. Her mom Connie walker Odom is holding her and her dad George Cosby Odom (this is the James Odom Line) her siblings George, Kathleen, Kathryn, James (Ed)

George Cosby Odom Mildred's dad at the age 3.

John Henry Odom, Jr.'s brother Gary passed away from COVID 19 on August 30, 2020 in Spring hill, Florida. He was born December 4, 1946. He served in the United States Air Force before moving to Springhill, Florida, where he served for 30 years as a Florida State Trooper before retiring. He is preceded in death by his parents John and Thelma Odom, brother John Odom, Jr, and sister, Pamela Lewis. He is survived by his loving wife of 48 years; Alice Odom,; daughter, Tara Odom of Spring Hill, Florida; brothers: Tom Odom, Roger Daniel, and Kenneth Newman Odom; sisters; Linda Painter and enny Henry; four grandchildren: DeSani Maartinez, Jadalyn Martinez, Malakai Martinez, and Silas Martinez.

Visitation for family and friends was held on September 7, 2020 at Spring Hill Baptist Church where Funeral began at 11:00 am. Interment with Military Honors were conducted at 10:00 am, on September 8, 2020 at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida.
Raynelle Odom, South Carolina

Meet and greet

PHOTO BY AMY FRENCH | Herald-Press

Sixth grade STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) teacher Jake Odom shows his guitar and classroom to incoming students at A.M. Story Intermediate on Meet the Teacher Night Tuesday. Each school in the Palestine Independent School District hosted events for students and their parents to meet teachers prior to the start of school today.

Hi Cheryl. Hope all is well with you and your family. Thank goodness mine are all right. Both my granddaughter Allison (Chris' daughter) and Alex (who you may remember from years past) work at hospitals as Nurses and of course have been taking the precautions they have to in order to work and be around family.

I'm writing to see if you could include something in your next newsletter. Alex and his wife Donna welcomed Abigail May Odom, born on April 13, 2020 in Charleston, SC. She is the great-grandaughter of John Henry Odom, Jr. (deceased) and Raynelle Odom..This is the second great-granddaughter for the Odom's. Alex's sister, Mary Kathleen, had Julia Christian Sealey last May, 15, 2019.

Thank you in advance if you get this in time to get into next newsletter. Chris, Lynn and I won't be able to attend this year's reunion, but hope to attend next year in Nashville. Tale care and give my best to all. Raynelle from South Carolina.

In Memory of Papa

This following biographical sketch is written in memory of my father, and is based on first-hand knowledge and my own childhood memories. Because of the very personal, subjective (and admittedly biased) nature of the work, all efforts at objectivity have been disregarded - - no references or footnotes needed.

Helen Odum Harrell.

William Ernest Odum, called **Papa Odum** by his children, grand kids, great grand kids, the neighborhood kids, and most younger people who knew him, was born 6 June 1892 in Keachie, DeSoto Parish, Louisiana, first child of James Louis Odum, Sr. and Laurah Antoinette "Nettie" Adams. The family lived at that time on the farm of William Means Adams, Nettie's oldest brother.

Ernest attended school only minimally, for brief periods during two or three school years, learning to recognize letters, to do basic problems in arithmetic, and to sign his name. He could also sketch out a floor plan and tell how many 2 x 4s, how many heavier beams, and how much lumber and materials would be required to build it. He was short on education but long on innate intelligence, organization and analysis, and problem solving. He loved words, and once he heard someone use a word new to him, he added that word to his own vocabulary, even if he failed to get the pronunciation just right. Using one of his words, I would say he was *can-nigh*' (canny).

His family moved about a lot, from Louisiana to East Texas and back to Louisiana. When Ernest was fourteen years old, his mother died of meningitis at the family home near Shreveport. From that time on, he had to assume the role of a man and get by on his own. He worked for several families just for his keep. For a time, his Odum grandparents lived near Columbia, Louisiana, and as a teenager he spent some time there, learning to handle a log wagon with mule teams, hauling logs from the hill section down to the Ouachita River.

In his teen years, Ernest learned to play the fiddle. He was never a violinist, but rather a country fiddler. With his brother James and a group of neighborhood fellows, he used to play for square dances around the countryside. His fiddle band was in demand often [since they played for free]; and he was never too shy to admit that most of the girls at the dances had an eye for him. He could also play the guitar and mandolin, and in later years, he occasionally would sit and chord on the old family piano. During the bleakest of years in the Great Depression, he traded a black cow for a player piano and several boxes of rolls, providing many hours of entertainment for his family.

Before his twenty first birthday, Ernest married, as he always said, "the prettiest little widow woman he ever saw", Mary John Vaughn, nee

As the Roaring Twenties came on, the Odum family moved to the little town of Marshall, Texas, where Ernest went to work at the Darco (lignite) Corporation. He later bragged that he was able to make as much as thirteen dollars a day there !

Then in 1922, he got a job in the Texas and Pacific Railroad shop in Marshall, where he learned the welding trade. He always said that he was the best welder in the whole shop, and perhaps he was right, for later when war was again imminent, he was called upon to teach welding to groups of young men in evening classes after his regular work day was over.

The year 1922 brought joy and sadness. In May, a beautiful baby girl was born. But in December, she became ill with pneumonia, and died two weeks before Christmas. This was a blow from which Mary never fully recovered. She mourned the loss of that baby as long as she lived, even though three more of us came along later.

In 1923, Papa bought several adjoining lots in the City of Marshall and had a house built- - the first home they ever owned. The contract

stipulated a cash payment of $303.75 and a Mechanic's lien of $ 996.25 @ 10 percent interest, for labor and materials for a five room, shingle roof, frame residence with bathroom and 2 porches. The house had electric lights, and a well curb conveniently located on the back porch, for use until the city water lines were extended to our street. While the house did have a bathroom, there were no plumbing fixtures in the bathroom; bathing was done in a number three galvanized wash tub. An outdoor toilet was set at the back corner of one of the lots.

Papa bought a state-of-the-art Atwater-Kent radio, strung aerial wire all through the garden, and set the scene for lots of company. Night after night, people would gather in our living room to listen to the radio, for not too many people had one. Papa was the designated player, for none of us kids had the skill or expertise to play it, and we didn't fool with it. He also bought a gramophone with an assortment of cylindrical records about the size of a soup can. Then a couple of years later, he bought a Victrola of the hand-wind variety in a cabinet about three and a half feet tall; inside the lid of the cabinet was the picture of a white dog, sitting with his head near the morning-glory shaped speaker. Our house was where visitors liked to come for good music, good food, and good fellowship.

In 1927, Papa came home one day driving a brand new Ford touring car which he had bought for four hundred and twelve dollars. It was a black car, since all Fords were black. There were no seat belts, no windshield washers, and not even any windows in the car. But it did have long running boards and it came with "isinglass" [mica] curtains which could be snapped on over the open spaces in bad weather. The wheels had yellow wooden spokes, and instead of tires, it was equipped with "casings" and rubber inner tubes. Accessories included patching material and a hand pump to inflate the tubes. There was no question about who the designated driver was; everyone knew that driving a car was a man's prerogative. In later years, one of Papa's friends bought a car for his wife, and Papa was amazed that "she could drive that car just like a man!"

In the afternoons after work, there was always the coffee hour. The minute Papa got home from work, Mama would have the coffee ready; they would sit and drink coffee together, often from the same cup, and catch up on the news of the day. One day he was able to share a momentous bit of news he had heard at work: a young fellow had flown an airplane all the way across the ocean, from New York to Paris, all by himself !

For most of the twenties, the goose was hanging high. Then came the terrible year of twenty nine and the Great Depression. The railroad shop closed completely. There was no work. Many families were left destitute. They had to accept assistance and food from the government, but Papa did not believe that was the right thing to do. e fall of 1929, Ernest and Mary Odum sold their home in Marshall and bought 104 acres of timbered wilderness about six or seven miles northwest of Marshall. Very hastily, he had built a four room, tin roofed shelter - - it would be exaggeration to call it a house - - and moved the family to what would become our home. Papa bought cows and horses on credit and began to hack out an existence for the family. From time to time, he would go 25 miles away to Longview, Texas and work in the oil fields for a week or two at a time, sleeping on a cot in the welding shop and returning home when he could. The farm produced sweet potatoes, corn, cabbages, onions,

tomatoes, watermelons, beans and black eye peas in abundance; these could be traded to merchants for coffee, sugar, and the other things which could not be grown on the farm. There was never money for luxuries, but always plenty of common food for the large family, and for our assorted relatives, friends, acquaintances, and passers-by. There was always enough to share with anyone in need. Mama could not think of allowing anyone to go hungry. While food was plentiful, money for everything else was scarce or none. Each kid had one pair of shoes, and they were worn completely out before a new pair was considered. Probably that was why I grew up placing such importance on shoes; my adult philosophy became, if the shoe fits - - buy it in every color.

The county road leading to our farm was nearly always in poor condition. In the summer it was rough and dusty; it the winter it was red clay mud. When road conditions became intolerable, Papa would decide that we had to move back to town and rent a place so that the kids could get to school. After a year or so, we would move back to the farm. We moved so frequently that when a mover's wagon came to the house, the chickens would come running and cross their legs, waiting to be tied up.

By 1938, the railroad came back to life. The shop opened; work was plentiful. Roosevelt had worked wonders for the country. Papa had a new house built on the farm; there was butane gas for cooking and heating, and the REA ran electrical lines to our farm. What luxury! Life was getting better and better until the outbreak of war on Sunday, the seventh of December 1941.

During the early years of the war, Papa was able to work for the railroad all day, and on the farm until dark. He operated a dairy, and hired families to work the land. By then, he had bought several more large tracts of land, some of it for less than ten dollars per acre, including mineral rights. He always wanted more land; his planning and determination made it possible.

In 1944, Papa suffered a stroke and had to give up work. The railroad retired him as permanently disabled at age fifty five, but he was anything but disabled for many more years to come. He bought more cows, built better barns, and operated a bigger grade A dairy.

After a life of hard work and the worry of raising a big family, Mama died in 1950. During the time that her body was lying in state at the funeral home, several solicitous widows made their way to her bereaved husband, extending offers of friendship and understanding as well as a listening ear for any of the blue and lonely days ahead. Before long, Papa had married Lucy, one of the kindly-intentioned widows, who had been a friend of the family for nearly forty years.

He and Mama Lucy were good to each other and for each other. They both loved to travel, and they took trips to Acapulco, to the "Rinso Valley" and to my homes in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Papa's first flight was to Los Angeles. He was excited to ride in a jet plane, and said that all the "waitresses" in the plane gave him special attention; they were constantly offering him food or coffee, and just treated him like a VIP.

Papa was the Typical Tall Texan: six feet four and well aware that no one could look down on him. For the last ten years of his life, he was active in ranching and in East Texas Cattlemen's Association. He was also instrumental in the formation and operation of the Cypress Valley Water Corporation, of which he was Vice president.

Although Louisiana born, most of his years had been lived in Texas, and he

learned to brag like a good Texan - - "with a right smart of humility !" Most people felt very comfortable around him and warmed immediately to his spirit of fun and conviviality. Papa had little chance for formal education, but from the school of hard knocks and quick thinking, he was graduated *cum laude.* He was always optimistic, and at age sixty five he allowed that a man of his age "could not plan on much more than about twenty more good working years."

Once, after an obstreperous grandson had attended his first year of military school, Papa inquired about Johnny's progress and behavior. A grand daughter exclaimed, "Oh Papa, Johnny has improved tremendously!" Papa thought only a minute and quickly said, "Tremendously, Hell ! Shah, that won't get it. That ain't good enough. He's got to do better than that !"

Papa was always busy. He kept a project going. On the last day of his life, he went to the farm and showed the workmen just how the plowing should be done. He was preparing for a tomato crop of great proportion. He returned home, ate his dinner, and watched the evening news. A devoted fan of Walter Cronkite and Edward R. Murrow, he wanted to get the news straight, and from only those two experts.

During the night he awoke in excruciating pain, and died almost upon arrival at the hospital. When I flew from San Francisco to Texas to attend the funeral, I answered some of the numerous phone calls that came to their home. One call was from the owner of the feed and seed store. He wanted me to tell Mr. Odum that his *one thousand tomato plants* were ready to be picked up.

William Ernest Odum was a man of the soil, a man of little means and less education; he was, nevertheless, blessed with extremely high intelligence and quick wit. He loved life and he loved people; in turn, people loved him. He was a man of some virtues and many weaknesses, but his love of all people and his generosity overshadowed his faults; his failures were interred far ahead of his body.

The History of the Christmas Card

John Hanc, Smithsonian Magazine

A prominent educator and patron of the arts, Henry Cole travelled in the elite, social circles of early Victorian England, and had the misfortune of having too many friends. During the holiday season of 1843, those friends were causing Cole much anxiety.

The problem were their letters: An old custom in England, the Christmas and New Year's letter had received a new impetus with the recent expansion of the British postal system and the introduction of the "Penny Post," allowing the sender to send a letter or card anywhere in the country by affixing a penny stamp to the correspondence.Now, everybody was sending letters.

Sir Cole—best remembered today as the founder of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London—was an enthusiastic supporter of the new postal system, and he enjoyed being the 1840s equivalent of an A-Lister, but he was a busy man. As he watched the stacks of unanswered correspondence he fretted over what to do. "In Victorian England, it was considered impolite not to answer mail," says Ace Collins, author of *Stories Behind the Great Traditions of Christmas*. "He had to figure out a way to respond to all of these people."

Cole hit on an ingenious idea. He approached an artist friend, J.C. Horsley, and asked him to design an idea that Cole had sketched out in his mind. Cole then

took Horsley's illustration—a triptych showing a family at table celebrating the holiday flanked by images of people helping the poor—and had a thousand copies made by a London printer. The image was printed on a piece of stiff cardboard 5 1/8 x 3 1/4 inches in size. At the top of each was the salutation, "TO:_____" allowing Cole to personalize his responses, which included the generic greeting "A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year To You."
It was the first Christmas card.

Betty Haskett has submitted this wonderful article from Ancestry Magazine by Donn Devine, Sept/Oct 1995 issue about women and their property interests. I will be breaking it up into two parts so watch for the final segment next issue.

The Widow's Dower Interest

The time and place of an event are usually the keys to understanding the genealogical significance of information in contemporary records. This is strikingly illustrated by land transfers affected by the arcane concept of dower, which should not be confused with dowry.

Dower was a widow's right to a lifetime interest in one-third of all land owned by her husband, unless she chose, in place of dower, to accept other property left to her under her husband's will. Generally, dower applied to each parcel of land in which the husband held an inheritable interst at any time during the marriage. In the United States, dower is found in the eastern and midwestern states where law was derived from the common law of England.

You must know exactly how dower operated at a particular time and place to form a hypothesis or a conclusion from the presence or absence of a wife or mother's mention in a deed, will, or intestate land distribution. For example, if you found a deed from a married man which his wife had not joined in making, does it mean that she had already died, or merely stayed home to take care of the children when it was made? In most American colonies and their successor states, a wife who had not joined in the deed could sue the purchaser after her husband's death to recover her dower interest. To avoid such future problems, cautious purchasers insisted that the wife join in the deed, so the absence of her signature strongly suggests her earlier death. However, you'll find many differences from one state to another. For example, in Connecticut until 1723, even the wife's own land that she brought to the marriage became her husband's absolutely, to sell or mortgage as he saw fit, therefore, the absence of her signature on a deed would have no genealogical significant.

Similarly, a deed from a son selling land he inherited from his father, which mentions that the land is subject to his mother's dower right, is proof that she was living at the time of the deed. But if she is not mentioned again, the genealogical significance depends on the time and place. The omission may mean only that what was left her by will was worth more and that she relinquished her dower rights. But if her husband died without a will and there is no record that she surrendered her dower rights to the son, likely she had died by the time the deed was created.

Until the enactment of married woman emancipation acts in the middle to late nineteenth century, a married woman was subject to 'coverture' and was known legally as a feme covert. A woman not

currently married, or who was judicially separated from her husband and so was not under the disability of coverture, was called a feme sole and was almost invariably so described in deeds or wills. Coverture placed the married woman under the legal umbrella of her husband, and only the husband could act for her in any legal proceeding, including selling her own land. For most couples, only the wife's dower rights mitigated the harshness of coverture.

Under coverture, a husband could deal with everything his wife owned as if it were his own - not only her clothes, jewelry, and personal effects, but even land she had inherited in her own right. However, he could not sell more than his lifetime interest in her land, because his rights in her property extended no further (this was not true everywhere). A wife's dower right attached to land as soon as her husband bought or inherited it, and generally he could sell it "free and clear" only if she released her dower interest, either by joining in the deed or by a separate deed of release. Most jurisdictions also required that the wife be taken aside by the notary or judge and examined privately to determine whether she was acting freely and without duress or coercion in giving up her rights in the land. The record of the private examination was recorded with the deed. No one seems to have questioned how much protection this legal formality really provided when the wife had to return home with her husband afterwards.

In England, landed families used the concept of "separate estates, " which allowed a wife with her husband's consent, to manage as her own any property specifically set aside for her separate support. This was the basis for the marriage settlement, so dear to Victorian novelists. Another means for protecting women's land from the effects of coverture was to place it in a trust before marriage, but in America both approaches were used infrequently and only for the wealthiest of heiresses.

The common-law of England evolved over time and , contrary to popular perceptions, was never uniform throughout the kingdom. the law of dower, as part of the common law, also developed over time and varied from place to place in England, and continued to change when transplanted to America.

In the American colonies and later in the states, dower initially differed depending on the first colonists' understanding of the law at the time and place of their emigration, and then developed independently in each jurisdiction to meet prevailing special conditions. This diversity is often not sufficiently emphasized in discussions of dower in legal or genealogical texts.

To be continues in the February issue.

Hot on the trail.

From Rod Rhodes. Left to right = my great grandfather Jeremiah Odum,police Sgt Granite City,IL;my grandfather William Joel Odum, Superintendent, Birdsboro Steel Foundry,Birdsboro, PA, my father, William Raymond Odum who served in the Marines in the Pacific in WWII and was later general foreman of Birdsboro Steel Foundry, and my self,

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/DUES RENEWAL

(Membership Year is August 1 to July 31)

Name: _____ ____ New ____ Renewal

Address:_____

City, State, Zip _____

Contact Info: _____

Earliest ODOM Ancestor: _____

Newsletter Preference: ____ Email ____Snail Mail Have you been DNA Tested? _____Y _____N

Please make your check out in the amount of $25.00 payable to National Odom Assembly and mail to:

Bill Powell, 14515 Wunderlich Drive # 815, Houston, Texas 77069

Your payment of dues entitles you to receive the NOA Quarterly newsletter, publication of queries, entry of your family line into the Members Only Section of the website and entry into the Members Only Section of the website

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