

The Latta Genealogy Newsletter

Issue 1

Summer 1996

Robert H. Latta's Legacy Lives On

Robert Henry Latta was a Denver attorney and amateur genealogist who made a lifelong study of Latta families in America. At the time of his death, circa 1940, he had identified forty-nine distinct branches. His branches have served as a starting point for a great many Latta researchers over the years, and we owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude for the monumental service that he performed.

Born in Boston in 1852, Robert Latta took his mother's surname. Initially a printer by trade,

Latta moved to Denver in 1881, where he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1886. He married Sarah Olivia Myers in Mexia, TX in 1891.

Latta was editor and publisher of a number of periodicals, including the Colorado Graphic, The Military Review, and Golden West Magazine. He was one of the Organizers of the Denver Bar Association, and belonged to many organizations, among them Woodmen of the World, Patriotic Sons of America, Sons of Veterans, Pioneer Printers of Colorado, and the Colorado Editorial Association.

Robert Latta enlisted as a private in "B" Company, 1st Infantry Battalion of the Colorado National Guard in 1885. He rose to the rank of sergeant before his discharge in 1888.

During his lifetime Robert H. Latta carried on an extensive correspondence with persons named Latta, from whose letters he

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Family Tree Yields Presidential Timber

William Jefferson Blythe IV, better known by his adoptive name of Bill Clinton, forty-second president of the United States, is a descendant of Joseph Latta, Branch 19.

Charles X. McCalla III sent in the information taken from *Ancestors of American Presidents* by Carl Boyer 3rd. The line of descent is:

John (1) LATTA, d 1768, mar Margaret ROSS.

Joseph (2) LATTA of Mecklenburg NC, mar Miss NESBIT.

Esther (3) LATTA, b ca 1777, mar Ephraim PHARR III in Mecklenburg NC, 14 Jul 1801.

Mary Elizabeth FARR, b KY 3 Jul 1802, d Marshall Co 24 Nov 1862, mar Moses BAUM.

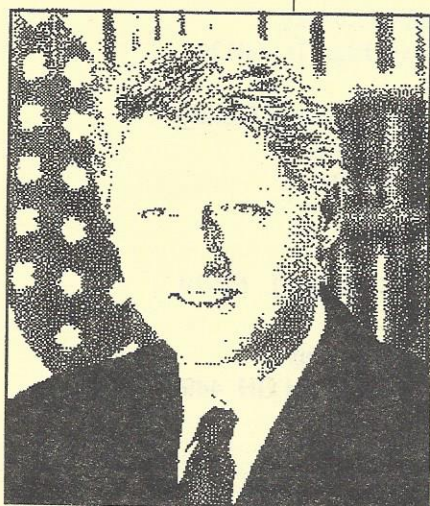
Esther Elvira BAUM, b TN ca 1825, d MS? ca 1865, mar Thomas Jefferson BLYTHE 1 Jan 1849.

Henry Patton Foote BLYTHE, b 18 Sep 1851, d 3 Jul 1898, mar Frances Ellen HINES 29 Oct 1874.

William Jefferson BLYTHE II, b 21 Jan 1884 (or 1882), d 5 Feb 1935, mar Lou Birchie AYERS 19 Aug 1906.

William Jefferson BLYTHE III, b 27 Feb 1918, d 17 May 1946, mar Virginia Dell Cassidy 3 Sep 1943.

William Jefferson BLYTHE IV (Bill Clinton), b 19 Aug 1946, adopted by Roger CLINTON, mar Hillary RODHAM, 11 Oct 1975.



President Clinton
is a member of
Latta Branch 19.

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Editorial**Taking Flight**

Like the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk, we sometimes wondered if this project would ever get off the ground. George and I have been talking about it for a year or more, and now, here it is at last—the maiden flight.

The interest in the newsletter has been gratifying and the financial contributions that have come in have made it possible to get out the first issue. Where it goes from here depends on you.

The actual cost to put out a twelve-page newsletter three times a year will be about seven dollars. The first issue has been sent to everyone on our mailing list, so you can “try before you buy,” but we can’t keep doing that on our good looks alone. Will you send us a check?

Next, we need content. The first-person account in this issue is rather long. Something like 1500 to 2500 words might be on target. Write about the research you’ve done or sing the praises of an illustrious (even if only in your eyes) ancestor. Queries are essential to helping researchers connect with each other. If you’ve read a good book that helped you with your

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Library Project Will Help Us All

One of the ways we can enhance our research efforts is by making our work available to the largest possible audience.

We hope to send copies of The Latta Genealogy Newsletter free of charge to libraries and societies where they will be seen by other Latta researchers.

Why not send us an extra five or ten bucks and the name and address of a library or genealogical society or two, and we’ll mail them copies of each issue?

These are the institutions already on our list:

Allen County Public Library
900 Webster St., Ft Wayne IN 46802

Arlington Heights Library
500 N Dunton Ave,
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Gail Borden Public Library
200 N Grove Ave, Elgin IL 60120

Greensburg-Hempfield Area Library
237 S Pennsylvania Ave.,
Greensburg PA 15601

Newberry Library
60 W Walton St, Chicago IL 60610

Ohio Genealogical Society
34 Sturges Ave, Mansfield OH 44906-0625

Rockford Public Library
215 N Wyman St, Rockford IL 61101

Western Reserve Historical Society
10825 East Blvd, Cleveland OH 44106

Westmoreland County Historical Society
951 Old Salem Road,
Greensburg PA 15601-1352

Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society
4400 Forbes Avenue,
Pittsburgh PA 15213-4080

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The Latta Genealogy Newsletter

Published approximately thrice annually

Dedicated to research among the forty-nine branches of the Latta family in America, and of our family’s origins in the Old World.

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suggested contribution: seven dollars per year

Please send your family group sheets, pedigree charts, photos,
documents and/or gedcom files to:

George P. Latta
PO Box 352
Holley NY 14470
e-mail: Latta34@aol.com

Send your subscription contributions, address changes,
newsletter articles, queries, comments, etc. to:

Paul H. Calhoun
129 Lincoln Drive
Port Clinton OH 43452-1248
e-mail: PHCalhoun@aol.com

George P. Latta

In Search of the Latta Family in the work of Robert Henry Latta, author and compiler of *The 49 Branches of the Latta Family*

How often have we all heard, "What branch are you from?" I wonder how many times it has been said in the past 56 years—I'll bet more than most of us realize.

Because Robert H. Latta's work is so well known and used so much both now and in the past, I think it would be wise for us to correct and update this work as much as we can.

When I started to read the information in each of the branches I saw that some names were misspelled and some dates incorrect and the branches contained many other errors. But then I thought of all the years of hard work this man had done to try and preserve the family's history and how much he must have hoped it would help the next generations in finding their family heritage.

And now the original work in the Library of Congress is badly in need of repair or lost in part, and with it, the history of that line of the family. I fear to think of what would be left when we have all passed on. So with that in mind, I with the help of all who are willing to share their work with me have set out to retype all of Robert H. Latta's work and make as many corrections and updates as we possibly can. I would like to show each branch down to the person who sent me their family information if possible. In this way I hope this work will be used for years to come as a tool for genealogy.

So far I have retyped the In-law Index and the Surname Index and have sent out all 49 branches to be retyped. I hope to get a copy of the state/country listing index and notes a-z soon and have it retyped. When the retype of the branches is done I will send out to all who request it a copy of their branch on 3 1/2 disk by U.S. mail or by E-mail. Then any updates and/or corrections that may be added will be sent out at a later date.

Along with the updates I would like to

add notes on the last page of a branch such as:

Proof and where to find it

Books and other references that may have that branch in it

Accounts of individuals in that branch.

I talked to the Library of Congress and they told me, when I finish the retype of the work and send them a copy of it, both on paper and disk, they would then send copies of the retype when asked and save wear and tear on Robert's original work.

I will be sending a copy to LDS, eventually to each state Library, and to AmericaOnline (AOL) upload files.

Included in the Robert H. Latta collection are pages called "Possible Connections" of some branches, and in the next issue I hope to write more about it and what I have found on my own. At this point I would like to ask all of you who think they know of a tie in the branches to write me. Please try to show in as much detail as you can how you think the branches tie together. I'll add it to the "possible tie list" for posting in the next issue. And if you have any more proof of your line that you would like to see added to your branch's history, such as:

John Latta branch two line three born 1845, wife....

can be found in the PA records of.... etc.,

please mail them to me and I will make sure your information is forever preserved in the Branches of the Latta Family.

Just think—in the past two hundred years of moving around and apart we have almost lost any family tie we may have had to each other. But as we work together we may find that lost tie that once made us all FAMILY.

A warm "thank you" goes to Ms. Constance M. Latta of VA who sent me a copy of the indexes, and Mrs. Diane Nichols of CA for sending many of the branches and general family information. Also to all the people who have been so kind to send their family information—Thank You All.

George P. Latta, Branch 13 & 38.
PO Box 352
Holley NY 14470

How often have we all heard, "What branch are you from?"

Branch 5**Autobiography of Samuel Rankin Latta**

The following autobiographical account was submitted by Dorothy B. Ruhmann, great-granddaughter of Samuel Rankin Latta. It was originally written in 1886.

Samuel R. Latta was born on the 2nd day of December 1827 in the village of New Alexandria, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. His father, John Latta, was born in Lancaster County, Pa., on the 15th day of April 1796, and was of Irish parentage--his father and the grandfather of the subject of this sketch,-- John Latta Sr., having migrated to this country from Ireland late in the eighteenth century.

John Latta Sr., moved at an early day to Westmoreland County, in western Pennsylvania. He was a mill-wright, and was killed in the erection of a mill on Loyalhanna Creek, early in the century.

John Latta Jr., learned the saddler's trade in Greensburg, the County seat of Westmoreland County, and while carrying on his trade in New Alexandria, in the same county, he intermarried with Lucinda Ellen Gilchrist, on the 22nd day of April 1823.

Lucinda, his wife was born in Dauphin County, Pa., on the 31st day of March 1793. Her parents were John Gilchrist, who served as a lieutenant in the Revolutionary War ---, and Ellen Berryhill, both of whom were of Irish descent.

John Latta Jr.'s mother was named Mary Rankin and she died at the home of her son in New Alexandria, on the 20th., of January 1826, age 73 years. He had but one sister and no brothers and the sister died while quite young.

To John Latta Jr. and his wife, Lucinda, were born, in the village of New Alexandria, Westmoreland County, Pa., children as follows, to wit:-

John Gilchrist Latta, born May 1st. 1824

William Berryhill Latta, born February 1st. 1826

Samuel Rankin Latta, born December 2nd. 1827

James Mitchell Latta, born October 16th. 1829

Francis Henry Latta, born October 28th. 1831 and

Francis Henry Latta, 2nd., born December 5th. 1835

Both the latter died in infancy, the first December 11th.

1832 and the second on the 24th. of February 1837. The former lies buried in the graveyard of Congruity Church, five miles west of the village, and the latter in the graveyard of the Presbyterian Church in New Alexandria.

After carrying on his business in New Alexandria until the Spring of 1837, making but a very scanty living, though practicing the most rigid economy, John Latta and his wife, with their remaining children, removed to Blairsville, a town some ten miles away, in Indiana County. It was situated on Conemaugh River, along which was the Western division of the Pennsylvanian canal. Here they continued to reside, John

Latta carrying on his trade. By practicing the most rigid economy, they bought and paid for a comfortable home, where they raised their children respectably.

They were strict Presbyterians, of the strictest of their sort of that day. The children were all required to attend Sabbath-school, church and prayer-meeting, as a matter of course, and there was no excuse sufficient except sickness. On the Sabbath there was no sort of recreation allowed. The children were not permitted to go on the streets except on the way to church or to Sabbath School, and the writer remembers that a funeral happening on Sunday was a sort of God-send to the children of the family, because they were to attend funerals on Sundays, and thus might get out from home. No books or newspapers were allowed to be read on that day, except the most religious ones; and it was regarded as an awful sin to whistle, even a hymn-tune on that day.

It was obligatory on all Presbyterian children to commit to memory the Shorter catechism, and on every Sunday evening, the children were called together, and made to recite it to the father. In those days, the catechism was one of the tasks required of Presbyterian children at the secular schools, and the writer well remembers reciting his daily task of catechism, to the then teacher of the secular school in New Alexandria, John W. Geary, who was afterwards a Colonel in the Mexican War, a Major General of volunteers in the war between the North and South, and then Governor of Pennsylvania. At the time Geary was teaching in New Alexandria he could not have been more than twenty years of age.

The rigid economy practiced in the days when John Latta and his wife were thus bringing up their family of boys, is but little known or practiced by their descendants in the good year 1886, in which this is written. I have no idea that the whole yearly expense of my father's family in those days, was over \$400.00 and yet, children were as well cared for then as now, though their clothes and schooling did not

Provisions and clothing at the present day, are as cheap as they were in the years from 1840 to 1850

cost as much; but that was because they were not given as much, and taught to make them last longer. Provisions and clothing at the present day, are as cheap as they were in the years from 1840 to 1850, and perhaps more so. Of the four surviving sons, the eldest John G., and the youngest, James M. both had good English educations, and both learned their father's trade, working with their father until after they were grown.

The third son, Samuel, was also put into the shop to

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learn the same trade, but about the year 1842, a classical school was opened in Blairsville, and an old gentleman, Capt. Wm. Smith, persuaded Samuel that he ought to persuade his father to let him go to the Academy. When the notion once got into the boys head, he gave his father no peace. The father reasoned with him; that he was wholly unable, on account of his limited means, to give him a classical education. The boy's reply to this was, that he only wanted his father to pay his way until he was qualified to teach, and then he would work his own way. The father then wanted to know what the boy wanted to make of himself. The boy's reply was that he wanted to be a missionary. The boy may have thought so then, but has suspected since that there was some slyness in it.

However, he gained his point, and for three years he went regularly to the Blairsville Academy, then under the charge of Mr. Matthew McCall. At the end of the summer of 1845, the father told the boy, that he had done for him all that he could, and that the time had come when he must bear the expense of his own schooling.

In those days in Pennsylvania, the Free-schools were kept open in the county about five months each winter, and in the fall of each year the school directors of each township would advertise that a given day at a certain place in the Township they would meet to examine such parties as wished employment in the township as teachers through the winter. So in August of the year 1845, Samuel presented himself, before he was eighteen to undergo the dreaded examination. Among a crowd of a dozen or more, who were there for the same purpose, he was by far the youngest. The examiner was the Rev. Dr. McFerin, a venerable Presbyterian divine, who was pastor of the Congruity Church in the neighborhood for fifty years. The examination passed off successfully and Samuel was employed to teach that winter in District No.----(Shields' schoolhouse) for a five months term at \$17.00, out of which wages he paid board at \$1.00 per week. But at the end of the term he had \$50.00 in clean cash.

It was now the Spring of 1846. Samuel was flush with money all his own, and it struck him that it would be better to try to increase it by trading than to spend it just then in going to school. So, in answer to an advertisement in a Philadelphia newspaper, he undertook to canvass a district composed of Franklin County, East of the Mountains, for a book-publisher, by whom he was guaranteed to clear at least \$25.00 per month in selling the publisher's attractive books. So Samuel invested \$25.00 of his winter's wage in books, which he found when they arrive in Blairsville, were nothing more than very cheap illustrated novels. But he was in for it. His money was in those books and it had to be gotten back somehow. The first question to be decided was, how was he to get to his territory east of the mountains? There were no

railroads in those days. So he bargained with the owner and conductor of a canal boat, a section boat, for a cheap fare on his boat to Harrisburg,-- cheap in consideration of Samuel's rendering what aid he could in running the boat. So on this section-boat he shipped himself and his box of books, bound to Harrisburg by the canal, from whence he was to go to Chambersburg, the county seat of Franklin county and the center of his territory.

The memory of that trip over the mountains on that section-boat is a pleasant one. The boat was loaded with

The mountains were crossed by a system of inclined planes

shelled oats in bulk, bound for Philadelphia, and the oats was his bed for ten nights it took to reach Harrisburg. How did the boat cross the mountains? Between the Western and Eastern divisions of the canal, on either side of the mountains, was a railroad. The mountains were crossed by a system of inclined planes. The boat was built in sections. Upon its arrival at Johnstown, at the Western foot of the mountains, railroad trucks were run down into the water, the boat's sections were taken apart, and each section was loaded upon a truck. Then a locomotive, or sometimes horses driven tandem, hauled the train on a level several miles, until they reached one of the inclined planes. These inclines were from a mile to a half mile in length, and rose up the mountain at an angle of perhaps 30 or 40 degrees. The train was drawn up these inclines by stationary engines at the top, the train being attached to an endless wire rope. By this system of levels and inclines, the boats were taken over the mountain and deposited again in the canal at Hollidaysburgh on the Eastern side of the mountain.

Down the beautiful Juniata amid the mountains, down the lovely Susquehanna with its ever changing scenery, at the rate of about four miles an hour, passed the young traveller, enjoying at night his bed on the shelled oats, as well as if it had been a bed [of] down.

Two things at Harrisburg made a lasting impression upon his memory. One that war had actually begun between the United States and Mexico; the other was seeing the first Telegraph wire he had ever seen, and which was then a new thing in the world.

On Saturday evening he arrived at Chambersburg, the centre of his work, and on Monday morning he entered on his new occupation. As before said, the books were cheap novels, costing six and thirteen cents each. The former were sold at twelve and a half and the later at twenty-five cents each. The travelling had to be done on foot from house to house and from town to town. The books in a carpet sack made a heavy load, for enough had to be thus carried to

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Branch 5**Autobiography of Samuel Rankin Latta***(Continued from page 5)*

make a weeks sales. At the end of the first week, the young merchant returned to Chambersburg, footsore and wearied. A net calculation showed, that by very hard work, sometimes walking twenty miles a day, he had made clear of expenses, about seventy-five cents per day. Living cost but little, as he stayed in country houses, where, if they made a charge at all, it was very small. Again on Monday he started on his weary tramp. The books must be sold, but another week and weary tramping over hot and dusty roads with but poor success in the way of sales, brought great disgust. One weary day he travelled long into the night, before he found a house that would take him in, and he began to think of trying something else. He could do nothing but teach and inquiry disclosed the fact that in the village of Loudon, situated just at the foot of the Blue-Ridge, they wanted a teacher and thither he wandered his way. His youth was against him he was only eighteen. But fortune favored and he got a situation for a term of five months at \$18.00 a month. He put the balance of his books for sale on commission in a bookstore in the town of Mercersburg, taught the five months out, and then in the fall, staged it home over the mountains.

The following winter, he taught a country free-school, at McClellands school-house, in the Conemaugh Township, Westmoreland County, Pa., at \$19.00 per month. The following summer he attended the Blairsville Academy for five months and the following winter taught another five months session at McClellands. The following summer he taught a five month's session in the public school at Blairsville, as assistant teacher, at \$20.00 per month, and the next winter at Youngstown, a village in Westmoreland County at \$25.00 per month. Having now made enough money to try college, in the spring of 1848, he entered Washington College at Washington, Penn., entering the Junior class half-advanced.

At the end of the first five month's session, the whole of the junior class rebelled against the faculty, on account of their suspension of one of their number, and refusing to

The whole of the junior class rebelled against the faculty, ... and refusing to attend recitations, the whole class was suspended

attend recitations, the whole class was suspended. Part of the class bought their peace by yielding to the demands of the faculty. These were such students as were subject to and dependent upon parental authority. About half of the class, among them the writer, refused to submit and left school,

and were suspended. In a short time they were all admitted into Jefferson College at Cannonsburg, Pa., and graduated in the summer of 1850.

In the fall of that year, he found employment as a chain carrier with a party of engineers and engaged in surveying the route of the Pennsylvania Central Railroad, on the eastern slope of the Allegheny mountains, from Altoona to the top of the mountains.

The new flourishing town of Altoona, at that time, consisted of one whiskey shop. While thus engaged with the surveyors, the writer earned \$1.00 per day and accumulated about \$40.00., and then determined to go south, where the wages of teaching were better. So about the middle of October he left home, travelling down the Ohio from Pittsburg by steamboat. He took passage to Memphis, expecting to teach in West Tennessee or North Mississippi but on his way down the Ohio, hearing of several situations in West Tennessee, where he might find employment, he stopped at Hickman, Kentucky, and carrying a carpet bag weighing at least forty pounds, he walked from there to Dyersburg, a distance of fifty miles. He obtained employment as a teacher in the public academy and continued to teach for three years. His wages as a teacher during those years varied somewhat, averaging perhaps about \$60.00 per month. In 1852, he purchased the piece of land about half a mile north of the town of Dyersburg, where he now lives, (1886), built a little house upon it, and in December of that year, he married Miss Mary Granger Guthrie, at Eaton in Gibson County, Tennessee, and brought his young wife to that little house. The house has grown as their family increased, but they have never changed their residence, nor do they expect to do so, until they are called home.

While teaching, he had been studying Law, and in the summer of 1854 he was admitted to the bar at Dyersburg, and at once entered on the practice of his profession in partnership with his preceptor, T. E. Richardson, Esq.

He continued the practice of his profession actively and successfully until the breaking out of the Civil War. His sympathies were warmly with the south, and in May 1861, he assisted in raising a company of twelve months volunteers, of which he was elected captain, and joined the Tennessee troops, then under the command of General Gedion J. Pillow at Randolph on the Mississippi River, where he and his company were mustered into service.

At the Battle of Belmont, in Missouri, his company which was in the 13th. Tennessee regiment, was engaged and lost three killed and twelve wounded, among the latter, himself slightly.

Again at the Battle of Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing, his company were engaged, and suffered severely in killed and

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wounded. After this battle, his time having expired, he was discharged and his health and the situation of his family forbade his again entering the service, and he remained at home during the remainder of the war, though his sympathies were as much as ever with the South. After the war he resumed the practice of his profession actively and profitably, but in the flush times succeeding the war he indulged in buying real estate, and in the crash of 1873 and succeeding years, he suffered severely, though never to insolvency.

Mary Granger Guthrie, his wife, was born on the 8th. day of August 1833, at Bright Hope Furnace in Green County, East Tennessee. Her father was John Guthrie, one of the proprietors of that furnace. He was a Scotchman by birth and education, but the time and place of his birth are unknown to her. Her mother's name was Minerva Wear, a daughter of Samuel Wear.

John Guthrie, before engaging in the iron business, had owned or managed a paper mill in Knoxville, Tennessee. About the year 1840, he disposed of his iron interest and moved with his young family to Missouri, and settled with his slaves in Polk county, but stayed there but a short time,

In the crash of 1873 and succeeding years, he suffered severely, though never to insolvency

perhaps a year, and moved back, and settled at Columbia, in Maury county, in Middle Tennessee, where he bought a mill on Duck River, but before he had time to make it a success, he lost his wife, and in a few months he followed her, dying in 1844. He and his only son, an oldest child, Franklin Wear Guthrie, both died the same day, the latter than being about fourteen years of age. He left surviving him five daughters named as follows: First Catherine Margaret, who intermarried with Dr. Thomas W. Kelton, of Gibson County, Tennessee, in the year 1847. Second, Mary Granger; Third Helen Marr, who intermarried with Dr. John Hocker in Mt. Vernon, Lawrence County, Mo. They both died soon after their marriage without issue. Fourth, Victoria, a bright and intelligent girl who at the age of nineteen, in the year 1863 became insane, and is yet living, an inmate of the asylum at Fulton, Mo. Fifth, Martha who died when about twelve years of age, in Arkansas, where she was living with Dr. Kelton. Mrs. Kelton is still living in Mt. Vernon, Mo. She has living the following children: Thomas, living unmarried at Mt. Vernon, Mo. Dora, intermarried with Manse Gaither, and now also living in Mt. Vernon, Mo. Lucy, intermarried with Frank Smeltzer, and now living in Van Buren, Ark. Richard unmarried, and now at Mt. Vernon, Mo. Martha

intermarried with George A. McCanse, and also living at Mt. Vernon, Harry, Granger and Thaddeus, lads all living with their mother.

Mary Granger, - wife of S. R. Latta (and so named after the wife of Gov. Willie Blount, of Tennessee) was educated at the Columbia Female Institute, graduating therefrom in the year 1849. After Dr. Kelton intermarried with the oldest daughter, Catherine, he was appointed guardian of all the younger children, and removed them all from Columbia, to his home in Gibson County, Tenn., and it was there that she was married as stated above.

To Samuel R. Latta and his wife, Mary Granger Guthrie, there have been born children as follow:

First: John Guthrie Latta, born at Dyersburg, Tenn. June 21st 1857

Second: Kate Latta, born Oct. 17th, 1859

Third: Sarah Knott Latta, born February 12th, 1862

Fourth: Mary Elenora Latta, born March 9th, 1864

Fifth: Franklin Wallace Latta, born July 4th, 1866

Sixth: Samuel Granger Latta, born August 5th, 1871

John Guthrie Latta, the oldest son, was married to Miss Lee Poland in Marshall, Texas, on the sixth day of December, 1882, and to them have been born two children, -Leslie, a daughter, born at Marshall, Texas, Nov. 1883, and Nell, a daughter, born at Dyersburg, Tenn., April 24, 1886.

Kate the second child of Samuel R. and Mary G. Latta, intermarried with Thomas C. Gordon, at Dyersburg, Tenn., on the 25th. of June 1879 and to them have been born thus far (1886) three children, thus:

Mary, born April 26th. 1880

Winfield Osceola, born January the 21st. 1882

Sadie Louise, born July 27th 1884

Returning to the Latta family: John G. the eldest son, as before stated, learned his trade with his father in Blairsville, Pa. but in the year 1852, his health having somewhat failed, he came to Tennessee, and taught school in Dyer county for over a year.

In the summer of 1854, Samuel R. and his wife and John G. Latta visited their parents in Pennsylvania, and the next year the old people, with their son William B. and their son James M. and his wife and child all removed to Dyersburg, Tenn., and James G and James M. Entered into partnership, in carrying on their business of saddlery.

A short time after his parents came to Tennessee, Samuel R. enlarged his house and took his father, mother and brother Wm. B into his family, and with him they lived until their deaths many years afterwards.

John Latta, the father died December 1872

Lucinda E. the mother died October 28th. 1874

William B. died January 23rd. 1877

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Branch 5**Autobiography of Samuel Rankin Latta***(Continued from page 7)*

Of the latter, it can only be said, that he was of weak mind. He remained, mentally always a child, and was never capable of taking care of himself. He lived with his parents, and with his brother Samuel, up to the time of his death.

John G. Latta, the oldest of the brothers, married in the year 1861 or 1862, Miss Mary Silsby. She was a New England woman and was visiting her brother Mr. Howard Silsby, when he made her acquaintance. In 1862, he took his wife and first born child to Newton, Mass., the residence of her parents, and shortly afterwards was appointed post master of that city, and has so remained until now, 1886. By his wife, Mary Silsby, there was born to him the following children:

First: Lilian, born in the year 1861

Second: Florence, born about the year 1863

Third: Mary, born about the year 1865

Fourth: Jennie, born about the year 1867. The latter died quite young. The others are all alive.

His wife, Mary Silsby, died about the year 1869, and a year or so afterwards, he married Miss Nellie---, by whom he had two sons, one of whom died in infancy and the other named Samuel, still survives.

James Mitchell Latta, while carrying on his business successfully died at Dyersburg on the 27th of September 1857, and was buried at Hurricane Hill Church, about five miles north of Dyersburg, Tenn. He left two children and his widow surviving him.

Lucy, the oldest of his children, was born at Blairsville, PA., about the year 1853, and intermarried with John G. Seat, at Dyersburg, Tenn. about the year 1874 or 5. They still reside in Dyersburg and have three children:

Glenn, a boy about thirteen,

Birdie, a girl aged about eleven

and a third child (daughter) born to them a few days ago.

Samuel R. Latta, and his wife, Mary, have now (December 1886) been married, nearly thirty four years.

They were married December 1852. They are yet occupying the same house in which in their young days, they began housekeeping, though it has been enlarged as their family increased. It is situated about half a mile north of the village of Dyersburg, and the same forest trees are still around it, amid which it was originally built.

Although West Tennessee has always been regarded as an unhealthy country the family has always had good health. Death, has never entered their home. They have always had enough to eat and wear and in all things have always had abundant cause for thankfulness to a kind Creator for unnumbered blessings.

(After the mention of Lucy, as the daughter of James M. Latta, above, should have been mentioned his son, Samuel James Latta, born in Dyersburg, Tenn., in the year 1857. In the year 1885 he married Miss Betty Cowan of Memphis, Tenn., and is now residing in that city.

I have written the above brief history, that my children and their descendants may know more of their mother and father, and their kinsmen, than I know of mine.

The question might well be asked--"cui bono"? [*Latin: Who stands to gain?—ed.*] Well, it is hard to say. It may satisfy some curiosity, at least. There is something in each

I have written the above brief history, that my children and their descendants may know more of their mother and father, and their kinsmen, than I know of mine.

one of us that prompts the quere, "who was my father? Who was my grand-father or my grand-mother? And if one can trace back their lineage, through a long line of ancestors they are disposed to boast themselves upon it. This perhaps is well. But again the question comes, "cui bono"? Where is now the descendants of Caesar or Alexander? Or of more recent days, where is now the family of Washington, or who cares for them? Victoria, queen of England, may be able to trace back her history through many names, but what is there to boasting it? Not a name in the whole line as illustrious as that of Washington or Lincoln. And how far back can the name Lincoln be traced? Or a hundred years from now, who may be able to trace to him, their parentage?

We have in our family bible printed in the year 1601, in London. It is in old English type. It is now owned by John G. Latta, as the oldest son of our father. There is in it some family records, of which we know nothing. About all that can be learned, is that we have been a Protestant family for many years, but that is all. Our grand-father came from Ireland; that we know. But where did they come to Ireland from? It is more of a Welsh name, than Irish, but if they came from Wales to Ireland, from whence came they to Wales? Who can tell, and why should anyone care to know? Still, the world is prone to pride itself, upon its ancestry, but for what good reason, it is difficult to tell.

This is true, that it is important that each individual should so well act his or her part on the stage of life, as to leave their posterity and to the world, an untarnished name. In doing this, they have more to boast of, than they could possibly have, by ability to boast of a long line of ancestry, however distinguished that ancestry may have been.

For all that however, it would be a matter of great pleasure to me, if I could have, even a brief history of my

(Continued on page 9)

Branch 5**Autobiography of Samuel Rankin Latta***(Continued from page 8)*

ancestors, telling me of their lives, and actions; where and how they lived, who were their ancestors, and where they lived. Such a record may have once been prepared, just as this is, who can tell? And a hundred years from now, this may be as unknown as if it had never been written. Who can answer for it? No one.

Some of my children, or my grand children may some day read this, and add to it their history for their children. And it may thus go down from father to son, or in a few brief years there may be no one who will care for it at all. Well, so be it.

[Later: this was added to the above history twenty years later—in longhand, by S. R. Latta, writer of the above.]

In an idle time, July 11, 1906, I have re-read this. It is about twenty years since I wrote it. We are all living and well. My grand-children number twenty-five in all—all living. Three died in infancy. Our great-grand-child, Gordon Pelham, a bright boy, son of our oldest daughter's daughter, Mrs. Kate Gordon, has been born to us. My wife and I are still living in the same old house where we began.

Today, we are expecting our daughter, Sadie K. Anderson, wife of Rev. Dr. W. M. Anderson, pastor of the first Presbyterian church at Nashville, Tenn. with her six boys, to spend a month in the old house with us. When she arrives, my whole family will be here -- not one missing -- except Dr. Anderson, numbering in all, -- parents, children, and grand-children, and great-grand-children, forty souls - less one, Dr. Anderson being the only missing one.

Background**Who Were the Scotch-**

The term "Scotch-Irish" is an Americanism, generally unknown in Scotland and Ireland, and rarely used by British historians. In American usage, it refers to people of Scottish descent who, having lived for a time in the north of Ireland, migrated in considerable numbers to the American colonies in the eighteenth century.

Millions of Americans have Scotch-Irish ancestors, for when this country gained its independence at least one out of every ten or fifteen Ameri-

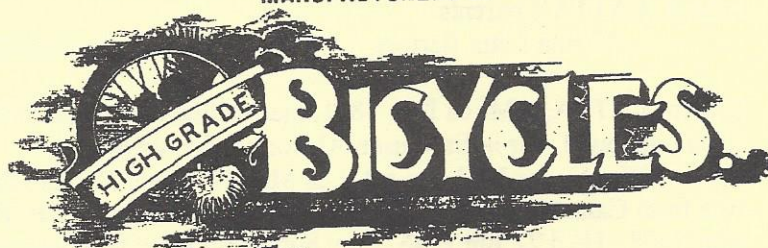
cans was Scotch-Irish. Already these recent newcomers had begun to intermarry with their neighbors, in a way that was to become characteristically American, with no particular concern about whether they were descended from Scots or Englishmen or any other national groups. The first Scotch-Irishmen went to the frontier regions of the colonies, especially in the back-country from Pennsylvania southward to Georgia. They were enthusiastic supporters of the American Revolution, and thus were soon thought of as Americans, not as Scotch-Irish; and so they regarded themselves. After the revolution, when the United States expanded into the region of the Ohio Valley, the Scotch-Irish were among the vanguard of pioneers who crossed the Alleghenies. Beyond the mountains the intermingling of peoples proceeded apace, and by 1800 few families, except in certain Virginian and Pennsylvanian communities, were any longer wholly Scotch-Irish.

If the Scotch-Irish were a distinctive people, it was because of their heritage and experiences. There are indeed, three principal chapters in their story: their life in Scotland, when the essentials of their character and culture were being shaped; their removal to northern Ireland and the action of events of their residence in that region upon their outlook on life; and their successive migrations to America, the nature of their life as pioneers, and an estimate of their importance to their adopted country.

Taken from The Scotch-Irish: A Social History by James G. Leyburn, ©1962, The University of North Carolina Press, PO Box 2288, Chapel Hill NC 27515-2288.

The term "Scotch-Irish" is an Americanism, generally unknown in Scotland and Ireland

LATTA BROTHERS.
MANUFACTURERS OF



FRIENDSHIP, N. Y.

Queries

Send your queries to the editor, Paul H. Calhoun, 129 Lincoln Drive, Port Clinton OH 43452-1248.

William Franklin LATTA, b. PA about 1810, was in OH before 1837 when he married Eliza WORKMAN, daughter of Joseph Workman. William Franklin LATTA was probably the son of Ephraim LATTA [Branch 1, family 9—ed.], whose farm was within a mile of the farm of Eliza WORKMAN's parents in Ashland Co. OH. I'm searching for positive proof of William's parentage.

—Ken Hart, 1776 Stuart Street, Cambria CA 93428-5832. (khart@telis.org)

(1) Has anyone found marriage records, and if so when and where, for William LATTA [Branch 1, family 2—ed.], died April 1808, son of James Melyne LATTA?

(2) Has anyone found the first marriage record, and if so when and where, for James Melyne LATTA [Branch 1, family 1—ed.]? Also, dates and places of birth and death?

(3) Has anyone found the third marriage record of Sarah J. LATTA (1852-1939) [Branch 1, family 33—ed.] to "Grandpa" EVINGER, possibly circa 1907?

—Kenneth A. Mueller, 337 Gertrude Street, Elgin IL 60123-7401. (Doc Huer@aol.com)

My father, Everett LATTA, was born and raised in McComb, OH. Grandpa's name was Ernie LATTA. Any information about my Latta ancestors would be greatly appreciated.

—Karen Latta, PO Box 154, McComb OH 45858-0154 (KML1959@aol.com)

Seeking information on Sarah JACKSON, wife of James LATTA [Branch 4, family 2—ed.]. The indication is she was a native of New York and therefore may be related to one of the twelve known patriots of that colony [see DAR Patriot Index]. Any clues would be welcomed.

—Marion Latta Fawl, PO Box 2002, Weaverville CA 96093-2002

Ephraim LATTA [Branch 3, family 6] first appears in the tax rolls of Cumberland Co, PA, in 1773 as a "freeman." He later served in the militia from Cumberland County. Are there any records of his whereabouts prior to 1773?

—Paul H. Calhoun, 129 Lincoln Drive, Port Clinton OH 43452-1248 (PHCalhoun@aol.com)

"Belle" LATTA b. 1871, mar James Wallace MOORHEAD 6 Nov 1889, Vigo Co, IN, d. 1972, bur. Oak Hill Cemetery nr Riley, IN. Charles LATTA (no dates) mar Zetta BARKER, had sons Everett and Lester. Everett mar Evangeline COLLINS and their son, Elvin LATTA, mar Martha Ellen FELL. Lester LATTA mar Irene KIEFNER, they had son Michael Lee LATTA. Any info would be appreciated.

—Marvin Bratt, 1790 Sheffield Terrace, Marion OH 43302-6854 (hbratt@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu)

Carl P. LATTA, b 14 Jan 1890 in West Newton, Westmoreland Co PA, d 5 May 1928 in Windber, Somerset Co PA, bur West Newton Cemetery. His parents were I. LATTA and Mrs. RUFF, both born in West Newton. Carl mar Freda M. (UNKNOWN), and they apparently had a son, Howard Moss LATTA, d 27 Nov 1917, bur Dick Cemetery, Sewickley Twp, Westmoreland Co, PA. Desire any info about Carl or his parents.

—Paul H. Calhoun, 129 Lincoln Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452-1248 (PHCalhoun@aol.com)

John T. LATTA [Branch 30, family 2—ed.] born PA ca 1790-1800, mar Margaret SMALLY 27 Apr 1825 at Huntington Twp, Brown Co, OH. Children: Elizabeth, mar James BOGGS; female, died young; male, died young; Phillip Smiley, mar Hannah MEFFORD; Sarah Jane, mar Eli SAMS. Any information would be appreciated, esp re: John T. LATTA's parents.

—Norma Latta Bertola, 1454 Paradise Lane, Taylorsville UT 84123-4340 (jamesber@ix.netcom.com)

Sara(h) LATTA, b MI ca Feb. 1871, mar William Marshall WILKERSON (or Wilkinson) ca 1884, d in Nashville TN (date unknown), bur in Stevenson AL (or nearby town).

Wm M. (or L.) Latta b MI ca May 1871 mar Rhoda Jane SWEENEY 30 Jun 1889 in Nashville TN. His father was from Canada (per 1900 census). Ms. Sweeney mar/2 Mr. BALDWIN, and she mar/3 John William LATTA, mar 4 Mar 1908. He d 22 Jun 1946. Any info about these families would be appreciated.

—Gene Wilkerson, 313 Eulala Circle, Nashville TN 37211.

Our Financial Contributors through 1 June 1996

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

<u>Name</u>	<u>Postal Address</u>	<u>e-mail address</u>	<u>Branch</u>
Corrine L. Afton		KS	1
Norma L. Bertola	1454 Paradise Lane	Taylorsville UT 84123-4340	jamesber@ix.netcom.com 30
Paul H. Calhoun	129 Lincoln Drive	Port Clinton OH 43452-1248	PHCalhoun@aol.com 3
Doris M. Campbell	806 Davis Street PO Box 856	Garden City KS 67846-0856	1
Wilma L. Chambers	3006 S Chrysler	Independence MO 64052-3237	30
Marguerite L. Davis	4915 Aiken Lane	El Paso TX 79924-7001	3
Margaret M. Evans	9103 South Urbana #B	Tulsa OK 74137-3958	47
Marion L. Fawl	PO Box 2002	Weaverville CA 96093-2002	4
Kris M. Fetter	1258 CR 192	Antwerp OH 45813-9306	1
Mary J. Fultz	Rt 4, Box 32	Stillwater OK 74074-9722	3
Edna Hamm	48 Division St	Catskill NY 12414-1633	13 & 38
Ken Hart	1776 Stuart Street	Cambria CA 93428-5832	khart@telis.org 1
Eileen M. Hook	1001 Sagamore Way	Sacramento CA 95822-1714	eileenhook@aol.com 4
Henry S. Jamison	617 Ridgeway Avenue	Greensburg PA 15601-3418	3
Joy L. Kirby	231 E 19th	Idaho Falls ID 83404-6021	
Marilyn K. Larsen	PO Box 33	Sand Point AK 99661-0033	mlarsen2@aol.com
Jack Latchford	103 Trotter Lane	North Wales PA 19454-1816	Latch9@aol.com 1
Beth & Colleen Latta	7104 Brixworth Pl	Atlanta GA 30319-4173	buzylizy@aol.com 45
David R. Latta	2214 Eccles Avenue	Ogden UT 84401-1806	4
Douglas R. Latta	810 SE 5th Street	Newport OR 97365-3869	29
George P. Latta	PO Box 352	Holley NY 14470-0352	LATTA34@aol.com 13 & 38
James M. Latta	343 Sunset Drive	Pittsburgh PA 15235-5239	3
Leroy & Pearl Latta	965 E Armstead Street	Azusa CA 91702-4732	18
Robert J. Latta	Box 288	Kaycee WY 83629-	3
Steven B. Latta	102 Shady Creek Ct.	Greer SC 29650-3013	SBLatta@aol.com 27
Charles X. McCalla III	PO Box 151	Paoli IN 47454-0151	32
Billie J. McInerney	12563 E 43rd St	Yuma AZ 85367-6093	18
Carol A. Milner	PO Box 7967	Seminole FL 34645-8901	45
Roberta L. Milton	Box 653	Dubois WY 82513-0663	3
Kenneth A. Mueller	337 Gertrude St	Elgin IL 60123-7401	Doc Huer@aol.com 1
Yvonne S. Perkins	2107 54th St	Lubbock TX 79412-2610	10
Joanne L. Politano	320 N Atlantic Avenue	Pittsburgh PA 15224-1256	3
Jeff Reece	1550 North Parkway #610	Memphis TN 38112-4986	15
Dorothy B. Ruhmann	PO Box 516	Portland TX 78374-0516	5
Barbara R. Smith	3333 W 4630 South	West Valley City UT 84119-5920	1
Edith H. Tresner	54 Auburn Rd	West Harford CT 06119-	13 & 38

May we add your name here?

Latta's Legacy Lives On

(Continued from page 1)

compiled his forty-nine branches. At his death, his work was willed to the Library of Congress, where it is housed in the rare book collection. It consists of approximately a dozen loose-leaf notebooks containing typewritten narratives of the various branches. Several of the notebooks contain indices, a correspondence journal, newspaper clippings and a few transcribed documents such as wills and land patents.

George P. Latta of Holley, NY, has obtained copies of the entire 49 branches and the indices to both the Latta surnames and the surnames of spouses. George is making updates to the branches as members send them to him. You may send George the names of your Latta ancestors and he can identify the branch to which you belong (in most cases) and, upon request, will send you a copy of your branch.

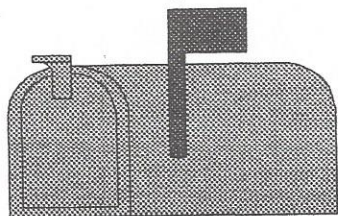
Take a Chill Pill

Readers are asked to be patient with George. Apparently he's been deluged with mail. If you don't get an immediate reply to your letter it's because he has one or two other things to take care of first—but he'll get to you. In addition, some of the questions asked by some of you are currently under review, and the answers may appear in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

Please be patient! Thanks.

Dead Letter Office

The following Latta researchers have moved, and the forwarding order has expired. If anyone has their new address, please let us know so we can send them a copy of the newsletter:



Ms. Marian Griffiths
106 Primrose
Tulahoma TN 37388

Mr. John Davis
2883 Kelly Square
Vienna VA 22181

Mrs. Dorothy A. Latta
4154 Violet
St. Clair MI 48079

Editorial Taking Flight

(Continued from page 2)

Latta research, write a book report on it (we may edit it, but we won't grade it).

Send your group sheets and pedigree charts to George and he'll report on progress in each issue.

Finally, pass the word. Tell other Latta researchers about the newsletter. Send them a gift subscription. Read about the "Library Project" on page 2.

Book Review

Good News for Pennsylvania Researchers

The Pennsylvania Line by William L. and Shirley G. M. Inscrupe, Southwest Pennsylvania Genealogical Services, PO Box 253, Laughlintown PA 15655, \$9.50.

If you do much research in Pennsylvania, you should have a copy of *The Pennsylvania Line*. It's a handy size to use (6"x9") and it's full of helpful information. There are outline maps of all the counties and townships, maps showing the formation of the counties from 1682 to the present, and a list of all the present-day townships and their parent townships. There's a list of cities, boroughs and villages in PA in 1900 and the county and township in which they're located. You'll even find a list of rivers, creeks and runs, with the county and the waterway to which they are tributary.

The county courthouses are all listed, with their hours, telephone numbers, zip codes and the cost for making copies. You'll even learn whether the courthouse has a snack bar.

The Pennsylvania Line includes an explanation of the Russell Index system (you'll need to know this for searching courthouse records), an article on the Old Style and New Style calendar dates, and a perpetual calendar.

On top of everything else, it contains a ton of maps, books, periodicals, etc., that are available for purchase.

The list goes on, but you begin to get the idea. This is a nearly indispensable volume to own, and it's well worth the price.

There is no page 13. We were just teasing. But you tell for it! You really thought there was an advice for the lovelorn column, didn't you?