
The Latta Genealogy Newsletter

Issue 40

Spring 2010

Life in Them Thar' Hills

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Most of genealogy is centered on names, dates, places--on births, marriages, deaths. Court documents and obituaries give meager glimpses of lives lived, lives lost. However, the featured picture provides more than just a printed page. It "shows" a segment of their lives, of what they enjoyed.

Pictured in this 1891 photo are some of the children of Mary Jane (Morris) and John Copeland Latta. John Copeland Latta was born^{1,2,3,4} on 13 Aug 1837 in Fairmont, West Virginia, the youngest son of Anna Elizabeth (Hockenbury) and John Latta. He died^{5,6} on 10 Nov 1915 in his home near Miltonsburg, Monroe County, Ohio. Mary Jane was the daughter of Mary (Kinkade) and Henry Gusler Morris. She was born^{7,8,9,10,11,12} on 6 Sep 1837 in Woodsfield, Monroe County, Ohio. She died^{11,12} on 13 May 1927 in Malaga Twp., Monroe County, Ohio. The children pictured here are David Wilson Latta (1881-1956)* and his banjo, Louisa Ellen (Latta) Matz (1871-1949)* in front of her organ, John Tilden Latta (1876-1950)* and his violin, and Thomas Leroy Latta (1866-1925)* and his auto-harp. I've submitted more information and photographs of these extended families to the Monroe County, Ohio web site at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ohmccogs>.

The photo was taken outside the home of Mary Jane and John Latta in Malaga Township, Monroe County, Ohio. Monroe County is still referred to as the Little Switzerland of Ohio for its rolling landscape and probably for many of the early settlers who emigrated from Switzerland. The home was built on 62 acres originally purchased by Mary Jane's father, Henry Gusler Morris, through the Marietta Land Company on 20 March 1837.^{13,14}

Mary Jane lived here most of her life. She married John Copeland Latta on 16 March 1861¹⁵ and for a few years lived in Wayne Township with or near John's parents and his brother Samuel Seymore Latta. Following Henry's death, her husband purchased the property from the other descendants of Henry G. through Quit Claim Deeds, and they lived there the rest of their years. The property is very hilly with many trees. Now the house and the barn are gone. A few shards of pottery, a bottle or two, part of the springhouse foundation are all that remain. Pictures taken around 1940 show a mailbox and a car parked by the house. Now one cannot tell that a road ever existed there. Accessing the cemetery on the property where Henry Gusler Morris, his wife, and several descendants rest takes 50 minutes of struggling through the floribunda and walking on the sides of hills. One leg is always higher than the other. No paths even remain. Even in the

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Editorial

In these hard economic times, I really appreciate all of our contributors. Without their help, there would be no newsletters mailed, nor any Irish research, nor any DNA studies. I thank each of you.

Our next issue, number 41 will conclude the *Reminiscing!* by Sheridan G. Latta. It will also include the family history of Jane Latta as told by Lindy Wise.

I encourage all of my readers to keep up the good work, and send in their stories and photographs. Like Eugene Latta, you may reconnect with your Latta cousins.

The Latta Genealogy Newsletter

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Dedicated to research among the fifty-three branches of the Latta family worldwide, and of our family's origins in the Old World. Funded by members of the Latta Genealogy Society, a non profit corporation registered in the State of Washington.

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Please send your membership donations to:

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4281 Winfield Rd., Taylorsville, Utah 84123-2344,
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Please send your address changes,
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Please send family group sheets, pedigrees, and ged-com files to your branch captain.

We're on the World Wide Web! Visit our web site at
<http://www.latta.org>

Articles will be edited for grammar, spelling, and clarity. Requests to publish an article will be individually evaluated by the editor.

Revised List of Branch Captains

Another goal of our Latta Family is to find a branch captain for every branch of the Latta Family. Unfortunately, we do not have a Captain for every Branch. We could use some more volunteers. If interested, please contact Sue Lattea Cox, Branch 17, Coordinator of Branch Captains. The duties of a branch captain were spelled out in issue 27, Fall 2005, page 32. Here is a revised list of our branch captains, with names and addresses.

Branch 1: Ken Mueller, 7400 East Mule Circle, Prescott Valley AZ 86314, Doc Huer@aol.com. I also am your editor.

Branch 3: Alan L. Latta, P.O. Box 508, Inkom, ID 83245, allatta@aol.com.

Branch 4: Randy Phillips, 41 S. Morrell Ave., Geneva NY 14456, parting_glass65@yahoo.com.

Branch 5: Margaret J. Hundertmark, W7489 Honold Rd., Fond du Lac WI 54935, mjc-mark@execpc.com.

Branch 6: Robert G. Nunn, 12 Dunbarton Court, Highlands Ranch CO 80126, rgnunn@qwest.net.

Branch 7: Lorraine Latta, 3268 1/2 Atwater Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90039, Lorraine Latta@aol.com.

Branches 10 and 15: Cindy Stiene, 158 Intracoastal Dr., Madison AL 35758-7925, lmsjfs@knology.net.

Branch 12: Belinda J. Peterson, 43 Railway Pde, Murrumbena, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3163, Peterson.belinda.j@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Branch 13: Gary Pokoradi, 11 Glenayr St., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L9C 7C1, pokerman@sympatico.ca.

Branch 14: Ian Latta, Ryedale House, Old Carlisle Rd., Moffat DG10 9QJ Scotland.

Branch 16: Kathy J. Latta, 6104 94A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6B 0Y8, lattakj@telusplanet.net.

Branches 17 & 43 & 46: Sue Lattea Cox, 6 Woodhill Ave., Salem WV 26426, cscocox57@verizon.net.

Branch 18: Mrs. Sue D. Martine, 3906 E. Simpson Rd., Gilbert AZ, 85297-9402, susea@qwest.net.

Branches 19 & 27/47: Ellen Rowan Taylor, 2763 Gengarry Way, Sierra Vista AZ 85650, ellenrt@cox.net.

Branch 20: Vicky Latta - McCain, 1216 West Elm Street Kokomo, IN 46901, v.latta-mccain@sbcglobal.net.

Branch 22: Robert M. Hawkins, 520 Audubon Place Ct., Manchester MO 63021, Bobhawk507@sbcglobal.net.

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LATTA GENEALOGY SOCIETY
Treasurer's Report
1 March 2010

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REPORT PERIOD 12/01/09 – 3/01/2010

Income 12/01/09 – 3/1/10 \$815.56

N. Ireland Research Fund \$ 0

General Fund Donations – 32 donors \$ 815.56

Expenses 12/01/09 – 3-1-10 (\$755.29)

Latta website fee \$ 44.85

Nov, Dec, Jan @ \$14.95 ea

Newsletter 39 expenses (Ken Mueller) 680.75

State of WA, Annual Report 10.00

Reprints (Ken) 19.69

COMBINED FUNDS on hand – 3-1-2010 \$ 5868.99

N. Ireland Research Fund Balance \$ 950.00

General Fund Balance \$ 4918.99

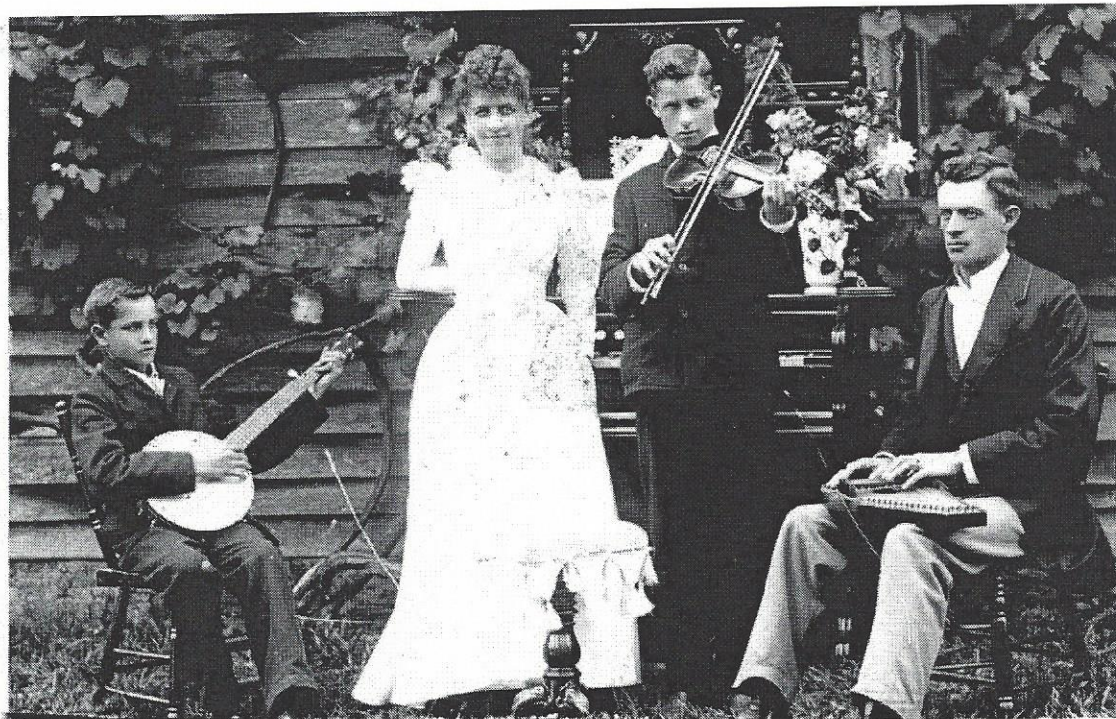
Membership: The bylaws state, "Any person who supports the purpose of this Society may become a member in good standing upon payment of the minimum donation." The minimum donation currently is \$10 for subscribers within the U.S. & Canada, \$15 for other countries. Newsletter only status (non-voting) is provided for libraries and those interested in the newsletter but unable to make a donation.

Your donations support the publication and mailing of the newsletter and cover other expenses of the Latta Genealogy Society.

PLEASE SEND DONATIONS: Treasurer, Ms. Beryl Redfield, 4281 Winfield Road, Taylorsville, Utah 84123.
Thank you for your generous support!

Life in Them Thar' Hills

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Four musical children of the John Copeland (1837-1915) and Mary Jane (Morris) Latta (1837-1927) family.

Left to right: David Wilson Latta (1881-1956) and his banjo, Louisa Ellen (Latta) Matz (1871-1949) in front of her organ, John Tilden Latta (1876-1950) and his violin, and Thomas Leroy Latta (1866-1925) and his autoharp.

Photo taken about 1891 in Monroe County, Ohio.

life spans of these people working that land was difficult, very difficult. Louisa [pictured in front of the organ] told her niece Jan Edith Latta that even the horses had to work hard. Louisa, who really liked to dress up and wear fancy clothes, and her husband Chris Matz moved to Ashland, Ohio to raise their family.

With all that work, what did they do for fun?

Music was important to them. In addition to the picture, we have a yellowed newspaper clipping

about the birthday party for another sister, Mary Belle Latta, probably around 1899 that says:

"The beginning of the evening was spent in social chat, interspersed with instrumental music by J. T. Latta and sister and brother, after which came the ice cream supper (with cake and lemonade to prevent taking cold.) During supper J. T. Latta gave us some fine comic songs with banjo accompaniment." The article went on to include the names of almost fifty guests and the gifts, that included a black serge dress pattern from her parents, a fancy hair pin from her little brother Davy, a lamp from her sister Lou, a silk handkerchief from her brother J.T., and a water pitcher from her brother Thomas and his wife.

John Tilden Latta, usually referred to as "J.T.," [pictured with his violin] wrote poetry before the

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age of twenty. A small copy of his book, *School Poems*, copyright 1901, was published in Newark, Ohio. He played several stringed instruments. J.T. went to the Doane Academy. The invitation for his commencement on June 10th, 1902, held in the Baptist Church in Granville, Ohio, addressed to his brother David Wilson Latta, is in our collection. He continued his studies at Denison University and the University of Chicago. In 1904 his address was 52 M.D. Middle University Hall. A flyer entitled UNION Revival Meetings, Lake Geneva Wisconsin, pictures thirteen young men on its cover with the caption EVANGELISTIC BAND OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO. Under "Members of the Band" J.T. Latta is listed as a hymn writer. In addition to his book of school poems his daughter Lois told me that he wrote 300 songs and about 1000 other poems. Lois said that he married Mary Elizabeth Udell on September 9, 1905, in Gibson, Ohio, and was ordained at the Salem church in October and then went to Burma as missionaries with the A.B.F.M.S. (American Baptist Foreign Missionary). They arrived in Rangoon December 19, 1905, and proceeded on to Thonze the next day where he served until April 1, 1940. [The family did return home for sabbatical leaves during that time.] Thomas Leroy Latta [pictured with the autoharp] taught at several schools in the area before becoming county school examiner. Both his brothers Davy and J.T. were his students in 1894. A brown notebook, top-bound with spiral wire, typical of stenographer use, shows his lessons around 1894. It has a section listing the 29 students with tic marks behind their names as to how many of the 46 quotations in the lesson-plan book each student had mastered. They were listed as TREASURED THOUGHTS, and one was:

"I willingly renounce the world, which has to present . . . * that music is a higher revelation than all their wisdoms and philosophy."—Beethoven [My note: *I cannot read the handwriting at this point.]

Oral recitation was important. Parts of a play written in vernacular style, ending with a line with the single word "Curtain" were included in the book. The addition of the word "Curtain" indicates to me that the students performed the play.

My grandfather, David Wilson Latta, pictured with the banjo, met his future wife Effie Jane Schaub at singing school. As an adult, he loved the opera. He attended the opera and collected many opera records. He also enjoyed photography and had a dark room set up as a teenager. He considered becoming a photographer until a cousin told him, "Give me a nickel's worth, Dave."

In addition to music, politics was another interest of my grandfather. He believed strongly in the two-party system, and because of that, he would always insist on voting. He had strong political feelings even as a youth. At least two of his editorials were published in the Saturday Evening Post when he was a teenager still living in "Miltonsburgh," Ohio. Below is one of the editorials:

Editor, Saturday Evening Post:

The able treatment of the editorial, Our New Midway Plaisance, has caused it to be read with more than passing interest. It seems to me that there is danger of becoming an Imperial Republic. If there is not, how can we face expansion? Can we hold out the Monroe Doctrine, on the one hand, and say to the Powers, Keep Off the Grass, and on the other deliberately trample upon it ourselves?

No. There is danger of becoming vain because of our achievements. Look at the tone of our ultimatums to Spain and note the Imperialistic command that is implied. It seems that almost every man of office who has any influence whatever is trying to climb on some person's shoulders and then push him down as he springs upward, that he can give Imperialistic commands.

For instance, look at General Miles' military bill. It provides for a Lieutenant-General. Who will that Lieutenant-General be? Look at the International Bimetallism scheme and see what a snare

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that was. The time seems fast approaching when the officials at Washington will lay off their cloaks and, swaggering round in their seeming importance, say to other nations, "You shall."

Miltonsburgh, Ohio

D. W. L.

David graduated from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, in 1903. The family legend has that he got there by riding his bicycle [quite a distance from Monroe County, Ohio] and that he supported himself while in school by working as a bee-keeper.

In 1913 David began working with the Kuehn-Wilson Electric company for \$3.50 a day, and he worked ten hours every day. In June 1918 he was hired by the Hercules Motors Company in Canton, Ohio. Later he became a designing engineer. He liked to invent. Another yellowed clipping shows:

PATENTS OBTAINED

"Frease & Bishop, patent attorneys, list these patents as granted during the week . . . and Hercules Motors Corp. assignee of David Wilson Latta, patent on governor controlled compression ignition."

During the Depression, Hercules had a five-year project with the Russian government. Although David enjoyed golf, by the 1940's he no longer had time to pursue that recreation. During the war years everyone worked for the war effort. Plants worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so he was very busy. He traveled throughout Michigan, Illinois, Indiana for the firm. During the week he lived in Chicago and took the train home to Canton, Ohio, on weekends. One of his proudest possessions was an Ordinance Distinguished Service Award, presented to him on July 20, 1944, as a member of the Coordinating Research Council in recognition of "outstanding and meritorious engineering advisory service" to the U.S. armed forces.

David also enjoyed gardening and had a green house as well as a "posey" room.

Sister Mary Belle, not in the musical picture—what did she do for fun? She enjoyed collecting autographs. Her little (2 ½ x 5 inches) velvet album began with this dedication she wrote in 1889.

Go forth thy little volume

I leave thee to thy fate.

To love and friendship truly,

Thy leaves I dedicate.

Mary B. Latta

[It is very interesting for me as I work on genealogy to read through each autograph and be able to recognize who most of the people were.]

Mary Belle lived in the family home and took care of her parents as they aged. She never married. Mary Belle liked to garden. Photographs circa 1938 show beautiful flowers surrounding the house. She was also a very good shot with a rifle. This story was related to me by Frank Christman in 1997. The drama occurred in the late 1930's, early 1940's. Frank and his older brother Vernon had been practicing with their 22's, and now that they were teenagers they figured they were getting pretty darn good. So one day they decided to challenge that old lady who lived up the "holler." Everyone talked about how good a shot she was. Nobody messed around her place, and folks were afraid to hunt on her property. So Vernon and Frank hiked up the holler to show her a thing or two. Mary Belle said okay, she'd do some shooting with them. Vernon hammered a nail into a tree, and they stepped off 50 paces. Vernon shot first. His shot barely missed the nail head, a little to the right. Frank's next. His shot was close, but a little to the left. The only one still to shoot was Mary Belle. She took aim and hit that nail right on the head. She went back into her cabin, and the boys hung their heads in shame as they traipsed back down the "holler." They couldn't imagine how could that old lady have beaten them.

Other children in this family not previously mentioned include the first two little boys. An ornate memorial wall hanging gives testimony to their birth and their death. Henry Harvey was born February 13, 1862, and Samuel Seymore II on July 8, 1864. Both little boys died within days of each

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other--September 24 and September 26, 1865--from cholera.

The birth of another son, Allen Forrest Latta, varies according to the source. Although his death certificate gives February 15, 1874, he was listed as age 1 in the 1870 census of Monroe County, Ohio. The parchment invitation to his graduation from the Louisville [Kentucky] Medical College on "Friday, March 8th, 1895, at 2 o'clock, Masonic Temple" supports the earlier date. Following graduation Allen Forrest, known in the family as Doc, practiced medicine for many years in Graysville, Monroe County, Ohio.

Life in them thar' hills? It was hard, so hard. Yet it was the impetus that drove the dedication to education that resulted in the doctor, the teacher-school examiner, the teacher-missionary, and the engineer--The Latta Family.

Notes:

*The Morris-Latta Family Bible, death certificates and obituaries were used for all the dates within the article unless otherwise stated. Various census records were also used.

1. Obituary, yellowed clipping from the collection of David Wilson Latta

2. Death certificate for John Copeland Latta, #62134, Monroe Co., OH.

3. Census, 1910 Malaga Twp., Monroe Co., OH.

4. Census, Wayne Twp., Monroe Co., OH, p 291

5. Obituary, yellowed clipping from the collection of David Wilson Latta

6. Death certificate, #62134 Malaga Twp., Monroe Co., OH.

7. Death certificate, #30855, Monroe Co., OH.

8. Bible Record. The Henry G. Morris Bible is currently in the possession of this writer.

9. Census, 1910 Malaga Twp., Monroe Co., OH.

10. Census, Wayne Twp., Monroe Co., OH, p 291

11. Obituary, yellowed clipping from collection of David Wilson Latta

12. Death certificate, #30855, Monroe Co., OH.

13. Morris, Henry G: Land Office: Marietta; Document Number 276; Total Acres: 61.76; Date: March 2, 1837

14. 23-page *ABSTRACT OF TITLE OF THE LANDS OF MARY BELLE LATT A SITUATED IN MALAGA TOWNSHIP, MONROE COUNTY, O.*

15. Original marriage license belonging to John C. Latta and Mary Jane Morris

Reminiscing! Part 2

By: Sheridan Gorton Latta

[written about 1950]

Reprinted from:

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/nyallega/index.html>.

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On April 1, 1887, I began working as Baggage Master on the New York Lake Erie and Western Railroad, at Friendship, NY, under George W. Fries, Station Agent. I had improved in Telegraphy but not enough to hold down a job on the old Erie.

August 1, 1887, I resigned this position to accept one of Telegraph Operator and Assistant Agent on the Lackawanna and Pittsburgh Railroad, at Friendship, under Charles H. Hammond, Station Agent. The station had burned down and we were located in the wing of a family residence. One small room was ticket office, telegraph office, freight office and general waiting room-- using a box car for baggage and freight storage. I still have the original copy of the first train order that I ever

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Reminiscing! Part 2

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received as a real telegraph operator, and it is a very unusual one at that. It reads, "Look out for freight car on main track at Higgins." Higgins was a small settlement about three miles East of Friendship that had no switch. This railroad was accommodating by attaching a car of lumber to the rear of the caboose and leaving it on the main track while the train went on the Angelica. and picking up the empty car on their return trip several hours later. This being the only train on the road, there was little danger. The passenger train laid over at Friendship and left a little after 5 a.m. and I had to be on the job before this to sell tickets, get the train, telegraph orders, etc.

In the adjoining room to our temporary quarters lived a couple of Italian trackmen that became an interesting study for me. They were as different as two people of the same nationality could be. One was a decided blond coming from a part of Italy that sends out very few immigrants. The other was a very dark and well educated man, Frank Marino, who had not been in this country long and was working hard to learn English. No matter how early I came to work, he was at his Italian-English book and as after the early train had gone I had plenty of time to spare, I became interested in him, and sometimes he would get stuck in his translations and I would help him with what I could. He gave me his history and showed me papers that showed that he would have been of some importance had he stayed in Italy. Instead of coming here broke, as most newcomers did, his father gave him five hundred dollars and if he did not like America to come back home. He very soon showed his ability to grasp opportunity. This narrow gauge railroad was in financial difficulty and each pay day became farther apart. As most of the trackmen became short, Frank would advance them the amount of their wages (less a good discount) and when pay days did come around, he would collect about all of the checks. I left the L. & P. on July 31, 1888, when they went bankrupt and closed down. They soon

reorganized and the new company paid off the oldest unpaid payroll and the current one at the same time. Under this system I drew my back salary for either six or seven months, one at a time.

December 15, 1888, I went to Bolivar, NY, as Relief Agent for Barney Dun, who was the Station Agent on the Bradford, Eldred, & Cuba Railroad, as he went back east to spend Christmas with his folks. Fred Reid, one of my telegraph students, who became a first class telegraph operator, took me over there with their family horse and sleigh.

If anyone ever had a busy first day on a new job it was I. I arrived there in the p.m., only a short time before Mr. Dun's train came, so that I did not get very complete instructions-- being in a strange village, knowing none, a railroad that I had never even been on, knowing none of the telegraph calls, the forms used, or the required procedure. The express company had an old fashioned large safe that required a special form key to be inserted before the combination could be worked and Mr. Dun had lost the key, so there was no safe to use. On this same train a money shipment of three thousand dollars arrived for the bank and, it being after banking hours, surely put me in a spot. To my great relief the cashier of the bank stepped up and introduced himself saying they had expected the money and he had kept their bank safe unlocked to take care of it.

I locked the depot and climbed on a truck and went directly to the bank, got the proper receipt and believe me, it was a great relief.

However, the fun was not over yet; the depot had burned down and they were using a temporary building. In a fairly good sized room, they had put up a thin board partition separating it into a waiting room and the all around office.

However, the fun was not over yet; the depot had burned down and they were using a temporary building. In a fairly good sized room, they had put up a thin board partition separating it into a waiting room and the all at all. The waiting room was used for baggage as well, and, as this train was the last one for the day, I put the uncalled for trunks in there, and in some way I rolled a heavy sample trunk against this partition hard enough to knock

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Reminiscing! Part 2

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the ticket case off the shelf, which landed on its face spilling the tickets all over the floor. In those days they used printed tickets to every station on the road, as well as for many other points. Each of those tickets had a serial number arranged in the case to draw the lowest number from the bottom of its particular slot. You can imagine the job I had in getting all those around office.

I stayed there until January 1, 1889, when Mr. Dun returned and he later sent me a very nice letter thanking me for the way I had done the work, especially for doing some of his office records that he had been a little behind on. I still have that letter.

Soon after this, I received a letter from Brother Frank who was still Station Agent at Verndale, Minn., on the Northern Pacific RR, that if I wanted a job as night car checker at Winnipeg Junction, Minn., to come at once. I immediately left for the job, stopping off in Verndale long enough to say hello to Frank, then on to Winnipeg Junction, arriving one afternoon when in the morning it was 40 degrees below zero. And was I surprised at dinner times; they served ice cream for dessert. Winnipeg Junction was just what its name suggests. It is 25 miles east of Fargo, ND, a point from which a branch Northern Pacific RR runs to Winnipeg, Canada. This place consisted of a General Store, a Liquor Store, a Depot, a RR Round House, and a rather large Hotel owned and operated by the Railroad. I expected to go to work that night, so early in the p.m. I thought that I would go to bed for a few hours and be in better shape to make the all-night shift. Before I got to sleep there was a crash outside that ended my contemplated sleep. This branch line goes directly north and there was quite a grade at the beginning and it was common for Winnipeg trains to back down on the main line to make a run up the grade. In doing so this time, someone failed to lock the switch and it flew open, ditching some cars and scattering various goods all over the place. Instead of checking cars my first day I checked

mixed up merchandise. Here again was an experience of extreme cold weather-- the old habit of sticking a lead pencil on the tongue to make it write better did not work that way here. The moisture placed on the lead simply froze and the pencil would not even make a mark until cut off or warmed up. After we got this job done, the man working the day trick opposite me informed me that he would do the night shift and that I could go on in the morning, saying that he was soon to move to California and would rather have the day time to do his personal work. This made it so that I did no night work while I was there.

We did a lot of car checking for the N.P.-- built another long branch up in Canada, and all the material for it went through Winnipeg Junction. All the switches were full of cars, steel rails, and ties, coming in faster than the branch could handle them and the company required that the cars on hand the longest must go out first. So it made a lot of work to make up the correct switch list. Winnipeg Junction was a great station for new agents. When I first went there a young man named George Plank, who put in too much time in the saloon, was replaced by Mr. Comstolk. He was shortly promoted to a better station and Charley Horbeck, a former train dispatcher who had the misfortune of running two trains together on the branch, took his place. One of the new Telegraph Operators, Frank Fox, who had quit the Burlington RR because of a strike, was there only a short time when he was made Station Agent at East Grand Forks, Minn.-- just across the Red River of the North from Grand Forks, ND. The Minnesota side of the river was very wet and most of the business places were saloons, while the other side of the River was dry, so the traffic over the several bridges was rather heavy. Frank Fox wired me that if I wanted a better paying job to come up there and go to work for the North Dakota Elevator Co. The supt. was a fine man, etc. As I was glad to get out of Winnipeg Junction, I went to East Grand Forks and started in a much different line of business.

The company had about twenty-five grain elevators covering a wide territory. The wheat came

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Reminiscing! Part 2

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to the elevators mostly in tank trucks direct from the threshing machines. We first put the truck on the scales, dumped the wheat into a large hopper every so often taking out an official measured sample, weighing the empty truck, and yelled to the blind horse to go ahead, elevating the wheat to its proper bin. All the elevators had blind horses working on the "sweeps" as they will work without any attendants, whereas a horse that can see will go around a few times and stop. This place was in a great wheat producing section and from the elevator one day I counted the smoke from 24 threshing machines.

One of the waiting rooms in the Depot was not used and the night telegraph operator and I had just fixed it up for a bedroom, when I received a telegram from John Costigan, from Friendship, saying that Will Hasley was quitting at such a date and asking if I would come back and take the job. Being so greatly interested in the future Mrs. Latta, I was not long in answering, and was soon on my way back East. I again stopped at Verndale for a final visit with Frank. I do not recall the exact date, but it was the latter part of 1889.

The old Erie Station had been greatly changed since my first job there. They had taken one corner of the large combined freight and baggage room for an office for the track supervisor, made two small waiting rooms into one, done away with the Station Agent's living quarters making the living room the freight office, and tearing down the whole east end which gave the waiting room windows on the end as well as on the sides. The biggest change, however, was that John J. Costigan had replaced George W. Fries as Station Agent. I was baggage and freight agent, helping with the express business and carried the US Mail to and from the Post Office to the Mail trains. Frank Pettibone and Fred Reid worked the opposite trick as ticket agent and telegraph operators and the four of us, all about the same age, made a very friendly working crew, and we stayed the best of friends to the end. Sad to

relate, I am the only one left to tell the story.

I stayed on this job until Nov. 1891-- during the time on May 20, 1890 I was married to Helen Mar Graham, one of the best and finest woman ever to be found, and we lived very happily for the long period of 53 years. On Sept. 22, 1943, she took the long trip ahead of me and one of these days I hope to catch up with her and renew the long loving companionship. We were married in Mother Graham's residence by the Rev. Palmiter, the Universalist minister at Friendship, with Miss Jennie Lambert and Miss Vina Collins as signers of our wedding certificate. This ceremony took place at nine a.m., and after the wedding breakfast we had intended to take train #3 for Buffalo, but we got word from the station that the train was nearly an hour late. Brother George was then a locomotive fireman on the Cuba Pusher engine and had driven his much-thought-of horse to attend the ceremony. So instead of taking the train, where a bunch of our friends were laying for us as usual, I drove George's outfit to Cuba and we took the train there. Meanwhile all of those attending the wedding went over to the depot as if they expected us, completely fooling the gang laying for us.

We went to Jamestown for dinner and into Buffalo for the night, taking in the sights the next day. We took a steamship for Cleveland, Ohio, where we took in the dedication of the James A. Garfield Monument in which President Harrison, Secretary of War Sherman, and other big wigs took part. From Cleveland, we went to Youngstown, Ohio, where we visited Helen's old school mate and friend, May Thompson, then Mrs. Warren Williamson.

This brings to mind another old incident. During the time that I was working at the Scott Drug Store, May Thompson was visiting Helen in Friendship, and I thought that she was pretty nice, so I got Helen's brother Frank, who was then a clerk in this same store, to make a date for a buggy ride one Sunday afternoon. At this time Father had some cattle pasturing over in what they called the Honeyoye, and on this day he had me go over there and bring back a large bull. I rode there with Fred

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McKee, whose wife's folks lived there, and I walked back leading the bull. It was a very hot day and too much for Mr. Bull who laid down in the middle of the road. It was hours before I could get him on his feet, so when the time came for my much desired ride to start, I was many miles away with a tuckered-out bull on my hands. It was nearly midnight when I got home and that was one sad story to relate. The Erie Railroad had just completed a cut-off running from Cuba to Hunts, on the Buffalo Division, which avoided the two heavy summits known as "Tip Top" Summit and Cuba Summit. This new line joined the Allegany Division about a mile west of the Cuba Station and they moved the telegraph office to that point and handled all the train orders and the general railroad work from there. This still left the town with a secondary telegraph office. The regular operator, Chet Marvin, of course, went to the new office and the Cuba station agent wanted a clerk as well as someone to handle the telegraph part of the station. I, being able to handle all the clerical work and now well on the way to handle telegraph work as well, was transferred by the company from Friendship station to Cuba, NY. On November 1, 1891, I began working in the Cuba station of the Erie RR under Mr. A. L. Coffin. Shortly after this date we moved from Friendship to an apartment over a millinery store run by a Mrs. Rice, a widow with three daughters. The day that our household goods arrived, I came near leaving them in the freight house until the next day, but fortunately I secured a drayman and hauled them to the apartment. I had a banjo that I had paid \$40 for (which was a lot of money in those days) which I left in the ticket office. Then when we were eating supper the fire alarm sounded and the old Erie Station was a thing of the past. I hated to lose that banjo, but was very grateful that we did not lose all of our household goods.

About this time the Allegany Division (formerly Western Division) put in a block system its entire length from Hornelsville (now Hornell) to Salamanca. Their block stations were located about the same distance apart, two stories high, with all windows on three sides. At Friendship there was a very long passing-siding running East from the Station, and here the blocks were closer together than usual. They put one just west of depot at west end of siding at Friendship Tower and another one at the other end of the switch, about one mile east of the depot.

I had become capable to handle a telegraph job. The freight agent paid \$37.50 a month, and an operator paid \$40 and one had to work only twelve hours a day, seven days a week. Half of that time was at night. All the block stations operated on split tricks, one operator working from noon to midnight, the other from midnight to noon. The morning trick was considered the best as it allowed one to take in any show or other attractions that always take place in the evening. The operator that has been the longest on the job had his choice. In this case, I being the youngest, went to work at noon until midnight. The operator who has been the one opposite me, a Richard Enright, many nights would stick me by not showing up on time-- sometimes several hours late. I finally had to report him, which caused me more trouble as he tried to make it as hard for me as he could. He turned out to be an unusual character. At this time my wife's mother was operating a boarding house, and he was one of the boarders. One morning one of the girls working there discovered that her pocket book was missing, and strangely enough when Enright went off duty the next noon, he had prepared a notice of the loss already made to post in the Post Office. The question was how did he know of the loss while he was away from midnight to noon? It was no question for me, for among the ashes from the stove in the tower, I discovered the metal frame of the lost purse. He was transferred to Olean, NY, and while there delivered a political speech before a Democratic meeting that got a lot of praise, but instead of his own production, he had committed to memory

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one of Dave Hill's speeches (a leading New York politician). Later he secured a position as telegrapher in the New York City Police Department and in some way got into the good graces of Mayor Hylan, who appointed him Police Commissioner of the city. He became one of the big Taminy Hall politicians.

I began as telegraph operator at S. P. Tower, one mile east of the Friendship depot on November 1, 1892. The only thing out of the ordinary that happened during my stay at this point was one night about 9 p.m. passenger train #1 going west, was about due and I had given them a clear block, when I heard a big smash and realized that something serious had happened. I immediately dropped the semaphore and grabbed the red lantern and stopped the train just in time to save a lot of trouble. As I stated before, this passing siding was very long and a freight train going east took this switch at its west end, but in coming down the grade from Cuba Summit, the train had broken in two, without the train crew knowing it. The front end came to the end of the switch and made the proper stop, but when the rear end of the train struck, the force was so great that it smashed several cars, throwing them into the main track. One of these was a large gasoline tank car, spilling gasoline over the track only a short distance from the passenger engine. It also ran down the bank and nearly surrounded a residence. There was a lot of hustling to prevent a fire getting started. At this exciting accident I made a simple mistake that any telegraph operator would enjoy. The train master was there in charge of clearing up the wreck, and his office sent him a message (which I will always remember) "Look for Post on 84." I took this over to him and he said "what the !!!! and went back to my office to find out what it was. The message should have been Look out for HOSE instead of POST. 84 was an east bound freight train that threw off a length of hose to use in handling the spilled gasoline. In the Morse Code

the letter H has four dots, letter P has five dots. The letter T is a short dash, the letter E a short dot. The other letters being the same it is easy to see how this happened.

On this division the two mentioned Tip Top and Cuba Summits, with their heavy grades, compelled the running of two sets of Engine pushers. This made an unusual number of train orders to be issued, making a lot more telegraph work along the territory of these summits.

In the days of my first station work as baggage master, they used only brass checks on leather straps for all local services. Each station having its own name. Each station as soon as receiving so many checks, sent them into Division headquarters, and they were distributed to the other stations. Thus each station being supplied.

Early in 1893, I got leave of absence to attend the Chicago World's Fair. Mrs. Latta, her mother Mrs. Graham, Mr. and Mrs. John L. Robinson, and I made a jolly trip, taking large lunch baskets, as traffic was very heavy. Sleepers and dining cars were out of the question unless you had reservations. While in Chicago, we stopped at Mrs. Graham's brother's widow, Mrs. Lucian Scott. I think that we were there about ten days.

When we got back to Friendship they had made a big change in the block towers. They moved the S. P. Tower up just east of the depot and had done away entirely with the F. R. Tower. I was in hopes of getting one of the F. R. tricks, but both Ed Handy and Elmer Wilkins were older in the service than I. They gave me White House Tower located between Cuba and Hinsdale, about half way. This was certainly a secluded spot-- woods close on the back side, highway crossing about a quarter of a mile west, the front facing way below the old abandoned Genesee Valley Canal, just part of one farm house visible from the tower. The only person I saw was the track walker once in a while. The operator working opposite me lived in Cuba and I and my wife boarded in Hinsdale with Dr. and Mrs. Henry Vincent, Mrs. Vincent being my wife's cousin. I worked the day trick, which because of its location they could not work the usual half and

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half. The Cuba man would come to work on train #1, due about 9:30 p.m., which slacked up enough for him to get off and for me to get on for Hinsdale. In the morning we would reverse the act-- I going from Hinsdale on train #6 at 8:30 a.m. They would slack off enough for me to get off and the other operator to get on for Cuba. We never saw each other only to say hello as we always met in the rush of the change.

While here, I had a good chance for nature study. Right back of the tower at the edge of the woods was an open space that was the general meeting place of crows. Several times I witnessed them go through the same performance that has always been a mystery to me. They would form a large, almost perfect, circle, and one crow would hop around in the center cawing, and then some of the others would make a reply, or even several at a time. It seemed as if they were playing a game, or holding a meeting. I have often wondered what they were really doing, but it is beyond me. Another interesting act to me was one day I heard the baying of foxhounds in the distance, heading toward me. Right in front of the tower, only a short distance away, coming out of the woods into the open, was a big fine looking fox who, coming up to a crooked rail fence, jumped up on the fence and ran back along it for some distance. Pretty soon he jumped off the fence and ran back in the same direction that the dogs were coming. Did that fox know enough to fool the dogs?

I was not at White House Tower many months when a Mr. Salisbury, and old time operator on the Erie working at H. R. Tower, 1-1/2 miles east of Olean Station, died and I was now old enough in the service to get this vacancy. We immediately moved our goods to Olean and again began house-keeping. We rented a good house in Boardmanville, just across the small river from Olean (and now a part of Olean proper). This location being nearer to the tower yet still over a mile away. Louie Johnson, the other operator, lived in East Olean, still much

farther away. This made it so difficult to make the usual half day and night change, that we worked days and nights. I was lucky enough to get the day shift. H. R. Tower was nearly a mile and a half east of the Olean station at the west end of a long siding and was much larger than the other towers. The company had intended to put in an interlocking system making this the main railroad yard, but because the New York and Pennsylvania crossed the Erie just west of the station making it necessary for all trains to stop there, they abandoned this plan. We had to go quite a ways to get water from a farmhouse, so I personally drove a water well close to the tower. I had a hard time in doing this, as I had to go through a bed of quicksand, but I finally got a good well.

For the information of those not familiar with some of the Tower workings, I will explain some of it. At each east and west side is a signal bell with a push button, never placed together or where it could be reached from the desk. As a train approaches from either direction, the operator from that direction rings a signal asking for a clear block. If we give him a clear block, we immediately drop the semaphore headed from the opposite direction, which protects the oncoming train. As soon as the train enters the clear block, the operator signals me that he has done so, and before it reaches me I get a clear from the operator in the next tower. I then pull down the semaphore which gives the train the go-ahead signal, ringing the train in the next block and ringing the back operator that the train has passed that block. I then report by telegraph to the train dispatcher the number of the train and the time it passed. So one has to go to each end of the tower twice for every one that passes. Because of all the trains having to stop at the RR crossing, they did not stop at H. R. Tower, so that we did not get many train orders or other usual business. This was the easiest job on the division.

During the time that Johnson and I were at H. R. we both tried a Civil Service examination for Railway Mail Clerk and Local Mail Carrier. I passed the highest mark ever passed in that office, 99 plus, which was only good for one year at the

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end of which I again headed the list, but during this entire time there was not a single vacancy or any increase in the force. The point counting the most in these examinations was the reading of fifty cards with names and addresses, which were given us bottom side up. Time and accuracy were what counted. To prepare for this we went to the Olean House (the leading hotel in the city) where in the basement we found a big stack of old hotel registers. We were allowed to take them to the tower for study, and for variety of signatures and addresses they could not be equaled anywhere. This study enabled us both to make remarkable showings in this test.

Johnson secured a temporary position weighing the mail on the Erie between New York City and Salamanca, NY, and some time later became a regular mail clerk on this same run. By the way, that system was a big fraud on the government. For thirty days all mails are weighed both on and off the mail trains. Upon the results of this weight, a five year contract was made for carrying the mail. All along the route they had big sacks of newspapers, magazines, etc., that were never taken to the Post Office but piled upon the baggage trunks and again put on a train and reweighed over and over again, thus securing contracts for many times more than they should have.

A couple of years or so after moving to Olean, one of our good family friends and neighbor, the Elsworths, moved away from Olean and we rented their house in which we lived until leaving that city. At one time while in H. R. Mother Graham, at Friendship, was sick for some time and Helen went there to help take care of her. I went there for meals and lodging, part of the time going to Olean on #1 at 9 p.m. working at H. R. twenty-four hours, then back to Friendship on #12.

The one and only great event happening during my long sojourn at H. R. Tower was that on October 22, 1897, we had born to us a charming and

beautiful daughter, Romaine Dorothy Latta, who has been all these years a most wonderful and appreciative daughter that could not be surpassed.

On February 1, 1898, I resigned from the old reliable Erie RR, after ten years of service without receiving a reprimand of any kind or form. I did this to accept a position as bookkeeper in the J. L. Brown Banking Company of Wilcox, Elk County, PA. Years before this time Mr. Brown had been a prominent business man and there was no bank there or nearby, he kept a bank account in New York City. So many residents and business men came to him that he was really forced into the banking business. He finally opened a small office under the name of "Banking House of Brown" and placed one of his daughters in it as cashier. This being strictly a private bank, it was not subject to any supervision or checking. Late in 1897, Mr. Brown died and his only son, Frank R. Brown, his two sons-in-law, Daniel K. Condon and Emmet G. Latta (my oldest brother) organized as the J. L. Brown Banking Company as of January 1, with F. R. Brown, President; E. G. Latta, Vice President; and D. K. Condon, Cashier; with Fred Aldrich as assistant cashier in charge.

On my arrival on February 1 to take over the bookkeeping end of the business, I readily saw that neither Miss Brown or Mr. Aldrich had ever had any banking experience other than this one and the bookkeeping was far from being up to modern bank practice. With my little experience in actual bank work and the complete instructions at the Buffalo Business College, I worked out a system that made several changes and we had to wait several weeks for new books and stationery. I had to put in the new system as of January 1, as that was when the new firm started. We had to continue the old system until I could get caught up by doing two days of rewriting the actual business every day. This I in time did and we had a very satisfactory working system.

Wilcox is located in a valley between several big hills on the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad (a branch on the Pennsylvania RR) six miles west of Johnsonburg, Pennsylvania, with a heavy grade all

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the way, especially between Wilcox and Kane. There was a little settlement "Tambine" half way between Johnsonburg and Wilcox with a chemical works the only industry. Also half way between Wilcox and Kane was "Sargeant," another small settlement also with a chemical works. At this place, when we first went to Wilcox, there still were standing several Indian teepee shaped structures which they formerly filled with the finest hard woods and burned just for the charcoal, losing all the other content of the timber. After developing modern methods, charcoal became of the least value of any of the many by-products obtainable from hard wood.

A couple of miles north of Wilcox was located the Wilcox Mfg. Co., a large chemical works in which the bank was heavily interested, of which F. R. Brown was President and Superintendent. This company also owned a six-mile railway which ran up to their timber territory. It was originally built by Henry Bayard and Co.-- a large Philadelphia lumber concern. The number of crops of natural resources is indeed surprising. This land was originally a timber country. First the tanning companies cut all of the hemlock trees only for the bark for tanning, then the lumber companies using only the best of the trees, the paper companies then picked up all the poplar wood, cucumber, bass wood, etc. After this the chemical companies took all the hardwoods left, using everything up to two inches in diameter only having to remove all the bark as that cannot be used. Later they developed a system whereby hardwood could be used in manufacturing paper, making it worth more for paper than for chemical products. As proof of this, a paper company paid the Wilcox Mfg. Co. forty thousand dollars for their property and then dismantled the chemical works and shipped the wood to their paper mills.

Up near the end of this railroad, there is a small

settlement called "Burning Well" where the first gas well in the U. S. was discovered. They did not know that gas could be used for fuel and they ran a pipe up in the air and it burned that way for several years. They ran excursion trains from Philadelphia, New York, and other parts, to see the world's wonder, and the last that I knew this well was still producing gas. It is easy to see from this locality and works of nature, how this town and post office got its name.

Beside the main highway running from Johnsonburg to Kane, there is a highway running north four miles to Rasselas, and beyond there is a station on the Bradford branch of the Erie Railroad. This Wilcox end of the road is known as the "Pike" and most of the farmers there are Pennsylvania Dutch. All had very large families, were gentlemen, and very industrious. Our bank was paying 4% interest on savings, payable January 1 and July 1, and on those days it looked as if there was a run on the bank. Most of them just wanted to know the exact amount of interest, never drawing the interest, but would deposit enough more to make it up to even money. Some of these fellows would come into the bank wearing overalls, looking as if they did not have one dollar to rub against another, yet they might have had as high as six or seven thousand dollars on deposit.

The tannery employees were mostly Swedish. In many cases the men would work in the tannery and the whole family would work on a small farm which they owned. As a class they were all very industrious. Many of them had savings accounts and if they knew of any of their friends who wanted to borrow a little money, they would come to us to make out a note and would let them have it at 6%, thus getting 2% more than we were paying them.

When we first went to Wilcox there was still standing a large brick chimney, all that remained of a large saw mill that was formerly there. There were a number of stacks of hemlock lumber, nicely piled with cross strips at every layer. Nobody would buy it, and it sat there so long that dry rot had hit where the cross boards were. So finally they burned it up and tore down the old chimney. The

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Wilcox House was a rather large hotel for a small town, but in its early days it was a popular place and always had some city people there to spend the summer. The only industry was a large tannery owned by the U. S. Leather Company. At one time it was the largest tannery in the country. In its early days it worked exclusively on buffalo hides, and for years has handled damaged South American hides which requires the greatest skill for proper handling. Wilcox was a very poor banking town, as there were too many deposits and no demand for loans. Mr. Condon, manager of the Rolfe Pennsylvania Saw Mill of Henry Bayard and partner of Condon & Johnson General Store, did not have time to devote to banking, so he resigned as Cashier and Fred W. Aldrich became Cashier. I then became Assistant Cashier of the J. L. Brown Banking Company. Mr. Condon was a rather particular person, very formal in every way, and faultless in his dress. Every weekday he drove from Wilcox to his office in Rolfe. One of his employees was a Mr. Johnson (who also lived in Wilcox and drove this same route, but never together) who would, each morning, hitch up Condon's horse standing in the barn ready for Condon to go on to Rolfe. In the evening it would be reversed. Mr. Condon would drive into the barn, hitch the horse by snapping on an already tied strap, and leave the unhitching for Mr. Johnson. In all my time there I don't believe Mr. Condon once hitched up or unhitched his own rig.

A few years before, Mr. Brown had built a large duplex house for his son Frank and daughter, Mrs. Condon. It originally had a flat roof, but the heavy snows were causing a lot of trouble, so they removed that flat roof and put on a gable roof, which really added another story, making it a very large house. After Mr. Brown's death, the daughter, Mrs. Condon, and family moved over to the old home place with her mother and we became the new tenants of this fine large house, and the best part of it was that we had no rent to pay.

In Wilcox gas was so plentiful that they had no meters, making flat rates. In this large duplex we had a big furnace in the basement, water tank, kitchen range, and any number of lights, with even a wide open burning torch as street light. We paid \$1.25 per month each side. Later Frank Brown built a new house downtown, and rented his side to Mr. George, one of the owners of the new glass factory locating in Wilcox. We also built a new house and Mr. Ben George, son and part owner of the glass factory, rented the side that we had occupied.

The bank building was a good two-story frame building standing on one of the main corners of the town. Across the back end about two thirds from the front, there was a partition making a large office which at one time was the office of Henry Bayard and Company. About two thirds the distance from the east side another partition ran, making a fairly good sized office used by Mr. Brown as an insurance and surveying office, and everything in general. This left a fairly wide hall running back to the back office. We remodeled this building by tearing out this front partition, moving the hall over to the side of the building, thus nearly doubling the bank's space. We put up new basket weave oxidized metal for the sides and new counters in front, up-to-date new vault doors, a fine new bank safe, and a new long standing desk for bookkeeping parallel with the side of the hall. This made the back room the insurance and general office for various interests. During this time we increased our partnership by taking Mr. T. H. Burt, F. W. Aldrich, and S. G. Latta as partners of the J. L. Brown Banking Company. The entrance to the bank was on the corner and the entire second floor was occupied by the Masonic Lodge.

One day in checking some records, Aldrich discovered that there was no gas reservation on 640 acres of land owned by T. H. Burt, and they proceeded to organize the Manufacturing Gas Company, and developed this territory getting some good gas wells. With this supply of gas they induced the George Window Glass Company to move their factory from Ithaca to Wilcox. This put

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new life into the old town. A Mr. Ralph, once the owner of the tannery and general store in Wilcox, sold the tannery to the United States Leather Company, but retained the store, which Mr. C. W. Spettigue managed. Not long after we went to Wilcox, Ralph sold the store to Smith Brothers-- Perry L. Smith of Ridgeway and Charles H. Smith of Sheffield. Mr. Hincle, their brother-in-law, became their manager, and a good many improvements and much rebuilding took place. Soon afterwards Mr. Spettigue started another store. Mr. Japhus George, a glass blower, and Mr. Ben F. George's Don, a glass cutter, built and operated a new glass factory, a forty thousand dollar plant. (Incidentally, I acted as paymaster during its construction.) This factory contained 12 pots, 6 on each side, with the necessary cutting room, flattening, and storage building. The Gas Company furnished them gas for 4¢ per thousand feet. Another natural resource which I failed to mention was the great quantities of natural rock, both on top and underground, which was over 90% pure silica, the main article in glass manufacturing. The farmers brought this rock in mostly during the off season, and received from 80 to 90 cents per ton for it. This was over fifty years ago, and for the benefit of some of you younger ones, I might describe some of the workings of the window glass industry.

There were four distinct divisions of window glass workers-- blowers, gatherers, and cutters, and another small bunch of so-called snappers, who could not join any union and had no standing. For illustration, these unions had then been in operation for over thirty years and the strongest ever known up to that time. One of their rules was that unless a man was a son or brother of a union member he could not become a member. Mr. Ben George, a union cutter and half owner of the factory, had a brother-in-law living with him, but could not get him a job in his own factory above that of a roustabout snapper. Had the young man been Ben's real

brother, he would have been able to join. The result of this ruling, having been in operation so long, that everybody in the glass business was related. When I was a kid, they used to tell us that glass blowers were short lived, but if any of them did die young, it was on account of heavy drinking, not glass blowing. You never saw a group of men with more beautiful skins than those blowers and gatherers. At work they wore loose slippers, thin overalls, a thin shirt outside their pants, and each gang had a large wash tub full of ice water with a generous supply of oatmeal in it. Each blower and gatherer work in teams and all of their work is handled by the same cutter and flattener, so that each team gets credit for their output. Each blower is a specialist. One will be the big ring blower, who makes the large size of glass. Some blow small long tubes for long narrow sized glass. Some single and some double strength blowers-- but no blower produces both single and double strength. In the pot furnaces, the pots have to be refilled every day if the melt is not perfect so that it cannot be worked out, it has to be dipped out by hand and a new mix put in. The day's work was six hours and forty minutes, taking the rest of the day to refill and melt, ready for the next day. Even at 4 cents per thousand feet for gas, this company used an average of \$1500 per month.

Some time after this factory got into production, we got the Van Clive Glass Company of Cleveland to build a glass factory just above the George plant. Their gas contract called for ten cents per thousand feet, which made their bill over \$2500. This plant was much larger than the George plant and on an entirely different system. Instead of the fire clay pots, requiring daily filling, this factory had a large tank furnace into one end of which were fed the raw materials, which melted and ran down to the other end where the gathering openings were located. There were ten gatherers on each side. I do not recall the number of years these plants ran, but because of trouble with the unions, they did not run for a while. In the meantime the Standard Oil Company, who owned all of the other rights around our company's 640 acres, began drilling wells on three sides of this tract, installing

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compressors and trying hard to put the local gas company out of business. They finally did this, but gave the Mfg. Gas Co. a check for eighty thousand dollars to turn it over to them.

On February 1, 1898, when we moved to Wilcox, the Pennsylvania Telephone Company, a subsidiary of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, had a single grounded line running from their Johnsonburg Exchange to Wilcox-- a distance of six miles-- equipped with the old Blake Transmitters and large exposed finding posts on the receiver lines-- all in bad shape. They charged seventy-five dollars per year rental and took their time in making repairs when the line went out-- sometimes taking several days before getting attention. They had four subscribers and two pay stations in Wilcox.

Mr. Brown had run a telephone line from the bank to his house. Frank Brown extended it to his house. Then they ran it up to the chemical works, to the Philadelphia & Erie RR, to the tannery, to the tannery Superintendent's house and several other places, about ten or twelve in all. These were all Manhattan cheaply constructed telephones with old wet battery magneto style. All on the same circuit with a single grounded line in series, so that if one telephone was out of commission, they all were, and it was some job to find out where the trouble was. As it always left the line open, the guilty telephone had to be called on, and it fell to my duties to look after the system. Of course there was no exchange, so every telephone call called every phone on the line. About this time the Stoweger Automatic Telephone was invented, but was not yet on the market. I immediately investigated this with the view of installing it in Wilcox and do away with that constant ringing of all the phones. Right here in looking up my interest in telephones, I met Mr. Earl Caldwell, then Superintendent of the Union Telephone and Telegraph Company of Erie, Pennsylvania, with headquarters in Erie. His company covered

northwestern Pennsylvania and into New York at some points, Olean being their principal plant. He advised me not to put in the automatic system as his company was coming right down our way with toll lines. In fact they had already established an exchange in Kane, PA, only nine miles from me. At this time the Elk Telephone and Telegraph Company had a flourishing exchange in St. Marys and were building a new system in Ridgeway, the county seat, an exchange in Kersey and one in Portland Mills, and also wanted to cover Johnsonburg. Because of the Ridgeway Order of Elks not granting Johnsonburg the privilege of organizing an Elks Lodge, they saw a chance to get even. However, I got in touch with Mr. Caldwell and we arranged a meeting with the Johnsonburg City Council and, offered a good dinner, the Union Company secured a franchise and subsequently turned it over to the Elk Company. I proceeded to put in my system in Wilcox. I went up on the Pike and paid Dick Crow fifty dollars for all the scrub pine trees on a small tract of land. I used some sixty of the choicest ones in building Wilcox and sold to the Elk Company for their Johnsonburg installation for which I received three hundred fifty dollars. I built this Wilcox plant under the name of Wilcox Telephone Company, but was the sole owner, and personally installed most of the telephones outside of banking hours. We had some 40 telephones in operation, every one a private phone, all new equipment. As I did all the repair and upkeep work it only cost me \$10.00 per month I paid a young lady that ran an ice cream parlor to operate the exchange.

I received \$1.00 per month for residences and \$1.50 for business places. A little later I built a line from Wilcox up through Rasselas Instanter and Straight, and on this line I installed a Baird System, which enabled the use of up to 19 telephones on the one line, every call having to be made by a switchboard operator, who made the calls similar to the up-to-date dial now in general use. This worked fine in handling pay stations, several small towns being on the same line. When the operator makes the call it locks out every other phone on the line. There was an emergency button only allowed to be

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used in case of an accident or fire. We later put this system in on a farmers line from St. Mary to Kearsey and had to replace it as they would not stand for a line that they could not listen in on. This makes me think of a little incident there. I sold a couple of old telephones that were in use by the old outfit to Messrs. Lindquist and Anderson who ran a livery with two barns, one at the Wilcox House and one at Burmeither House. After getting them installed I asked Lindquist to try it out. He called up the other barn and as Anderson answered him in Swedish, Lindquist looked greatly surprised and said, "God, that thing will talk Swede, won't it."

At this time there was a great rivalry between the Bell System and independent companies springing up all over the U. S., especially in the East and Midwest. There were some forty subsidized Bell Companies, each with a certain territory, all controlled by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, which owned a controlling interest in all of these companies and owned outright the Western Electric Company and forced all of these companies to buy all their equipment from them. AT&T had a contract with the various companies whereby they paid AT&T \$12.00 per year for the rental of all Blake transmitters which were then used on all Bell telephones. AT&T owned all the toll lines in the U. S. and only allowed these smaller companies 10% on all toll charges, not to exceed ten cents on any one message.

The Bell Company did everything possible to head off the independent companies, but these little companies were owned by local people and could secure franchises, rights of way, and everything to a great advantage. I had my system in good working shape but no outside connection with the Elk Tel. and Tel. Co. now built in to Johnsonburg, only six miles east of me, and the Union Tel. and Tel. Co. with their long distance toll lines and exchange at Kane, Penn., only nine miles west of me. You can imagine how I worked to get these companies

to build their lines into Wilcox and put me in contact with the outside world.

Right now I will digress a little from the telephone business and recount another affair that sure helped me put in my spare time. The Wilcox Postmaster, who was a telegrapher, ran the Western Union Telegraph office, located in the Post Office. Along about this time the Post Office burned down, leaving the only telegraph office up in the Railroad Tower about a mile and a half from the depot, and that being a good half mile from the center of town. With the glass factory getting under way, the Western Union Telegraph Co. wanted an office right in town.

When the Western Union Telegraph Co. found that I was a former telegraph operator, the Railroad's Chief operator and the Station Agent came up to our house one night just as we were going to bed. Their pole line running from their old office to the depot was just ready to fall down and would have to be rebuilt. It ran along one of the main streets and through a fine line of maple shade trees. My new pole line came up an alley midway between two streets with a good clear way the whole length. The fine appearing pine poles that I had used in telephone installation were disappointing as they did not hold the long ten-pin cross arms properly by the lag screws I had used. I finally told them that if they would replace the lag screws with bolts running clear through the poles, and run a loop from the bank to my house, so that I would not have to keep the Western Union office open after banking hours, that I would take the job. I had one of my telephones, I think, in every business place and a good many residences, so that I was able to make nearly all telegrams by telephone, for which the telephone company received two cents.

The Western Union office was strictly a commission office, I receiving 50% of the cash receipts. If a message came in paid, I got only the two cents for its delivery, but if it came in collect, I got half of the charges plus the two cents. The same applied on outgoing. A message going out paid, I got half of the charges, but if sent collect, I got nothing.

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The glass companies were both good users of Western Union and it was easy to arrange so that all company business would go out paid and the incoming come in collect. I submitted monthly bills and everything worked out fine.

As I got more and more into the telephone business, I had to be out of town now and then to attend a meeting or some other business. While I was away from the Western Union office, I had an arrangement with the young lady telegraph operator to answer my calls from her Johnsonburg office and deliver by telephone.

I also installed a time clock service in Wilcox by leasing a master clock and several other clocks. I personally installed them, running the lines on my poles. The Master Clock I placed in the bank, and by throwing a switch every noon, it was connected directly to the Washington Observatory Clock, synchronizing it perfectly. The Master Clock synchronized all the others every hour. For this service I received one dollar per month for each clock.

I handled this Western Union business several years, until the Western Union Telegraph Co. and the Postal Telegraph Co. got into a fight over the lines running over the Philadelphia and Erie R.R. The railroad owned the pole line, and Western Union had a lease to run their wires on those poles. In some way the Postal Co. got possession of this lease (or a new one) and immediately put a gang of linemen at work cleaning every pole and cutting every Western Union wire, letting the pieces fall on the ground. A railroad engine with a gondola car followed with a crew picking up the twisted scrap of wire.

That ended my service with the Western Union Telegraph Co. My last information was that the Postal Co. never established an office up town, but only from the R.R. tower. Now, just a few years ago the Postal Telegraph Co. was taken over by Western Union Co., and the Postal is no more. The wrecking of these lines of course ended the

Western Union Clock Service. As I owned the clock circuits, I replaced the Western Union clocks by purchasing outright Prentiss Improvement Clocks. The two systems were very similar, the only difference being the Western Union Master Clock would set all the others should they be fast or slow, whereas the Prentiss Clock had to be adjusted to run a little faster or slower.

This destructive act put me out of telegraphy for some time, but as I was getting more and more into telephones, I could make good use of the time saved. Before leaving this old pole line, I will relate a little experience that I had at the start of my work as a lineman. I had never had any experience at this work, but had purchased the proper tools-- among these a set of new Klein climbers, used by all linemen. These brand new spurs were very long and sharp and my poles being pine were soft, so that the spurs sank pretty deep. I went up a forty foot pole and did my work OK, but in doing this, changing one foot to the other, I drove the spurs so deep that I lacked the strength to pull them out of the pole. Instead of putting my knees far away from the pole, I hugged the pole with them, which made the spurs all the tighter. There I was with no one around to holler at, up a forty foot pole, and unable to get loose. Finally I got them loose and I shinnied down the pole. I was never so glad to get my feet on the ground.

The Elk Tel. and Tel. Co. built their lines from Johnsonburg to Wilcox, which fixed me to the East, but the Union Tel. and Tel. Co. told us that they had covered so much territory and installed larger plants than expected. They would have to reorganize with larger capital before they could build to meet us. They said that if we would build this stretch between Wilcox and Kane, they would make a more advantageous toll arrangement. The Elk Co. decided to build this section and found that the Elk Co. franchise only covered Elk and Jefferson counties, and the State was very particular in these matters. Elk county line joined McKean county three miles east of Kane. It took a long time to get this settled so that they could go ahead with the line.

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Here is where I really begin to get into the telephone business. The Elk Co. having decided to build the line from Wilcox to Kane, they came to me and said that they were giving county service to all their subscribers, and as they had to go through Wilcox with the new line, they wanted a Wilcox plant. After due consideration, and taking into account that Wilcox was not an incorporated village, they could duplicate my outfit, and without any outside connections, I would be strictly up against it. I came back with an offer of a set price, taking part cash and part stock in Elk Tel. and Tel. Co. They accepted my offer, and the only legal proceedings required was for me to issue a bill of sale, and the Wilcox Telephone Co. was a thing of the past.

I was elected a Director of the Elk Co. and immediately became familiar with all the inside workings of the Co. They were paying Dr. Wilson, a St. Marys doctor, a small salary as Treasurer. Having lost a good little income from my company, I put myself forward as the Treasurer at the first annual meeting, but at that time they did not want anything to leave St. Marys. It fell to me to look after Wilcox and Johnsonburg Exchanges. It took only a short time to discover that the accounts were not properly kept. I took this matter up with Mr. M. S. Kline of Ridgway, PA, who was the Cashier of the Elk County National Bank and also President of the Elk Telephone and Telegraph Co.

He fell in with my suggestions and I had an interview with Mr. R. V. Page, Jr., Auditor of the United Tel. & Tel. Co., with headquarters in Philadelphia. We worked out a complete system of telephone accounting.

Then I placed Miss Willard, the Chief Switchboard Operator in Ridgway Exchange, in charge of a new set of books, requiring all the exchanges to send the money collected to the Treasurer, with lists showing who it was collected from sent directly to the Auditor.

This made it so that the Treasurer did not know

where the funds came from, and, of course, he did not like it. He turned in several hundred dollars more than the blanks call for, sold his stock in the company, and resigned as Treasurer.

In opening this new set of books, the very first entry, Capital Stock, I found that the Elk Tel. & Tel. Co. had organized with a capital stock of twenty five thousand dollars, but they had only issued twenty thousand of it. They did not know what to do with this unissued stock, as there was no way of knowing what it was worth. The company had never paid a dividend, probably never would as long as they were digging up every dollar possible to buy more telephones and try to keep up with the big demand for our service. They finally voted to let all the stockholders have allotments in accordance with their present holdings, and if any of them did not want it at par, the others could increase their bids. Right here I made a big mistake, I put in a bid for my share and all that were unsold. I think one woman put in a bid for 15 shares, but I got all the rest. Some of the biggest stockholders got together and figured that I being a banker and just having gone through the books so thoroughly, that if I wanted it, it must be good, and that accounted for the increase in the value of the Elk Tel. & Tel. Co. I became Treasurer of the company and the next year Vice-President.

If you will look at a map of Pennsylvania, you will better understand the telephone bug that bit me. There was the United Tel. & Tel. Co. covering all the western part of the state, with lines as far west as Lock Haven, the Union Tel. & Tel. Co. of Erie, covering the northwest part of the state, their lines as far as Kane, PA and Olean, NY. The Huntington and Clearfield Tel. & Tel. Co. headed our way as far as Clearfield. The Summerville Telephone Co. covering a large section, Reynoldsville, Punxsatawney, and up our way as far as DuBois, with the Inter-Ocean big toll lines into Coudersport, and our little company running from St. Marys, Ridgway, Johnsonburg, and Wilcox. You may visualize how that undeveloped territory appealed to me.

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I took my wild idea to Philadelphia and interviewed Mr. W. D. Barnard, President of United Tel. & Tel. Co., who had also just secured control of the Union of Erie. My plan very nicely fit in with his and he, Judge Ellis L. Orvis of Bellefonte, PA, President of the Huntington Tel. & Tel. Co., and I met and planned out so that a little later we met in Ridgway and organized the Commercial Union Telephone and Telegraph Co., with a capital of \$250,000.00, and an authorized bond issue of 500,000 shares. Our charter covered 14 counties in PA, with W. D. Barnard as President and S. G. Latta as Secretary Treasurer. The night that we met in Ridgway to organize, Mr. Barnard was taken sick. We put him in a Pullman for Philadelphia, and he never recovered. This was a bad blow for independent telephony. He had a wonderful head for business, plenty of financial backing, and the ability to make things work smoothly.

In forming Commercial Union I had agreed to turn over a controlling interest of the Elk Tel. & Tel. Co. I picked up some of the stock by trading the blocks of bonds that I had secured, allowing them a fair price for the stock, showing them that it would be a long time before they would ever receive a dividend, whereas the bonds were tax free and paying 6% interest. I tried to buy the stock of the most undesirable stockholders so as to keep the best ones interested in the new company.

The day before I was to have a majority of the stock, I made a deal with John Cashman of St. Marys, a railway engineer, and the heaviest stockholder in the company. I was to give him \$2,000.00 in bonds for his \$1,500.00 of stock. I went to St. Marys to make the exchange, where I found that several of the stockholders had got together and figured that I was after control and got him to back out. I was five shares short and time was also short. I took the next train back to Ridgway and called on Judge Harry Hide. I told him

of my predicament and that I would like to buy five shares that would fix me OK. He said that he only had ten shares, and that if I would take them all, well and good. This I did and the next day when I voted a majority of the stock, there was some surprise.

Two years after this Mr. Cushman came up to see me and said he guessed he was the only old stockholder left and wanted to know how much I would give him now. I told him that I did not want them, but I would be fair with him and give him the same \$2,000.00 bonds for his stock. He said, "But I will lose the two years interest," and I replied, "I know it. I am ahead that interest received from the bonds." I informed him that there was as much in knowing when to sell stocks and bonds as when to buy them. During this time, on June 8, 1906, the second great event of our lives occurred. We had born to us a fine boy, Sheridan Graham Latta, who I am now proud to say is one of the finest and most pleasant business men to be found anywhere, a high grade architect of distinction.

We sold our Wilcox house to Fred Beckstrom, and Frank Brown took over my J. L. Brown Banking Co. stock and we moved to Ridgway, PA, as Secretary-Treasurer of the Commercial Union Telephone Co. on November 1, 1906. Ridgway, the county seat of Elk County, PA, is located on the Pennsylvania and Erie R.R., running east and west on one edge of the city and the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburg R.R. running north and south on the opposite side of the city. The County Court House and jail occupied an entire large block in the center of the city.

For a small place Ridgway had an unusual number of wealthy people, but I will say I never saw a nicer lot of people, and that wealth made no difference with them. If one behaved properly and attended strictly to business, you were treated as one of them, even if you did not have a cent. Ridgway was the headquarters of the United States Leather Co., with a large number of tanneries located over a wide territory. The

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Niles and Bannett Tool Co. had a fine manufacturing plant. The Russell Snow Plow Works had the only rotary snow plow works in the U. S.

We were very lucky in getting a fine large square 8-room house, located on the corner of a fine residential section of the city. This home for years had been the home of John Whitmore's father, who had quite recently passed away. The noted lawyer's son had the house refinished, putting in a cement floor in the entire basement. A friend who was a wall paper dealer asked Mr. Whitmore to let him paper the whole house as a sample of what he could do. This he did, and I wish that you could see the effect, of which we obtained the whole benefit. This house was on a very large corner lot, and I told Mr. Whitmore that the only thing I did not like was the amount of snow to be removed from so much walk and the great size of the lawn to be kept mowed. He said his gardener would attend to both, so I was sitting pretty.

Before coming to Ridgway I had had my eye on the Home Telephone Co. of Port Allegany, PA, which had some 350 subscribers with no outside connections. This village lies about midway between Smethport on the west and Coudersport on the east, two county seats that had toll lines and a direct highway between them. The Coudersport & Port Allegany R.R. runs from Port Allegany to Coudersport, over which I later obtained a right of way to build a telephone line in connection with the Railroad and Tide Water Associated Oil Co.

To personally see the lay of the land between Southport and Port Allegany, one day I took advantage of an Odd Fellows Convention in Smethport, to which the Railroad ran an excursion from the Wilcox vicinity. I did not take in the Smethport festivities, but hired a liveryman to drive me to Port Allegany, where I had an interview with A. V. Hunt, John Grey, Carl and Nat Bard, sole owners of the plant, looked over the property and got a good idea of the possibilities of the whole situation. More later on this plant.

While Secretary-Treasurer of the Commercial Union Tel. & Tel. Co., I did considerable outside work, selling bonds, securing franchises, rights-of-way, etc. This position did not last long, for Feb. 1, 1907, the American Union Telephone Co. was organized, consolidating some sixty independent companies with a capital stock of twenty-five million dollars. This let me out of the financial part of the business.

I was appointed Division Manager of the new company, and to the old Elk Tel. & Tel. Co. exchanges at Ridgway, St. Marys, Johnsonburg, Wilcox, Portland Mills, Kersey, and Port Allegany, they added Kane, Mt. Jewett, Smethport, Bradford, and Olean, NY, giving me twelve exchanges to look after. While still in Wilcox and Vice President and General Manager of the old Elk Tel. & Tel. Co., I attended a meeting of the Pennsylvania State Independent Telephone Association at Allentown, PA on September 27, 1904, and was later appointed Alternate Delegate to the National Interstate Telephone Association at Chicago, Illinois on June 20 & 21, 1905. These meetings gave me quite an insight into the workings of large corporations and I came in contact with some big figures that were in the business.

While picking up a controlling interest of the Elk Tel. & Tel. Co., we had a saloon keeper in Kersey that all the other stockholders were glad to get rid of. I made a bargain with him to pay him one thousand dollars for his stock, and was going to Kersey to make the exchange. He advised me that he would take no checks, but must have cash. To accommodate him, I went to a St. Marys bank and secured one thousand silver dollars in a canvas bag and took attorney D. J. Driscoll, a stockholder and company attorney, along with me, and drove from St. Marys to Kersey. When we gave him the heavy bag of silver to count, he went wild and begged us to take it back to St. Marys and deposit it for him, as he had no place to keep it.

Then again while for the Commercial Union Tel. & Tel. Co., Judge Ellis L. Orvis of Bellefonte, PA and I went to Clarion, the county seat of Clarion County, where three men owned all the stock

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of the Clarion County Telephone Co. We had a very satisfactory session and came to an agreement which would have been a winner had not the big financial bust killed our whole plans.

Another interesting meeting was at a stockholders meeting of the Red Bank Telephone Co., held in the Brookville County Court House. They had so many stockholders that they could not all get into the Court House, and the largest stockholder only held \$20.00 of stock.

This was strictly a farmers' line, each member building the line across his property, buying his own telephone and keeping up the batteries, etc. They had only a single grounded line that reached into three different counties, and they charged each subscriber ten cents per month for switching charges. They had so many telephones on one line, that they could not work a ringing code, but would give a ring and everyone would answer to find out who was wanted.

The only telephone in use then was the old Magento Crank ringer with wet battery. Most of them had a jackknife switch installed in the telephone, so they could cut out the battery while they were listening, and most of them thought so much of their telephone that they had cotton flannel bags to keep them covered up when not in use. You can imagine the service with a single line running into three counties of free service, and with hundreds of subscribers.

Judge Orvis and I also had a meeting with the Director of the Summerville Telephone Co. at Du-Bois, at which we proposed a consolidation of the various companies. Instead of making a counter proposal or any reply, they came out in the next morning's paper with a statement that the Big Trust was trying to buy them out, but they would never sell out.

At that meeting one of the Directors, Dr. Knox of Knoxville, PA, sat next to me. He leaned over

and said that we had made a very fair offer, "but now, in my case, I am getting two free telephones, and every time we have a Directors meeting, we get five dollars and expenses. Every time there is a circus, county fair, or any special event we always call a special meeting. Besides I have only \$20.00 of stock, so I cannot afford to sell out."

While we were living in Ridgway, my wife and two children went to Friendship, NY to visit her mother and friends. They returned just as there was a very serious outbreak of typhoid fever, and I loaded them on the next train out to go back until the epidemic was better.

This developed into a very bad situation-- hundreds of cases, many fatal ones. Ridgway had a fine, good-sized hospital that was full. The YMCA building, Elks club, every church parlor, public hall, and every place to be found was filled to overflowing. There were over 150 out-of-town nurses, and all the doctors that could be found came to help out.

Ridgway's water, obtained from drilled wells, had a rather sulphurous taste and a slight odor, so everybody thought that that was the cause of the fever. To make matters still worse, there was a fine county spring up the hill a short distance, the water from which was piped to the County Court House and Jail. Everybody thought that that water was absolutely pure until some of the people from out of town attending court, who had only drunk this spring water, came down with the disease. Upon analysis, it was found that all the trouble came from the spring, from which hundreds of citizens carried water from the Court House fountain.

It was very severe. One might be talking to someone and one of them drop to the ground, and quite a number did not recover. At one time both railroads would not stop their trains at Ridgway.

I can't help thinking of one of my old neighbors, living almost directly across the street in a fine large brownstone house. He was a wealthy retired lumberman, President of the Elk County National Bank, and so industrious that every morning about four o'clock he would take his lantern and go out to his barn to milk his cow. He was a

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rough-talking man, using plenty of profanity, and not very good language in general. Talking to me one day he said, "Lattie, by God, I have learned how to make money, but by God, I don't know how to spend it. When in the city I'll go into one of those cafes and order what I think will be a hell of a feed, but by God before they get it to the table I think what a damn fool I am to spend so much money, and by God I don't want it."

After getting the Commercial Union Telephone Co. properly organized with an authorized capital of \$250,000 and a bond issue of half a million dollars, with a charter covering 14 counties, and several extensions of our lines partly arranged with Ridgway in the center of the territory, with five larger companies all heading our way, it looked as if we would have to have larger quarters, and I started to do this.

The Lepsch Brothers had just completed a fine three-story brick building on Broad Street in which they had just opened an up-to-date jewelry store with an apartment and office rooms on the second floor, and the third floor was one large unoccupied room. Mr. J. K. Gardiner had also built an exact building adjoining it and they worked together so that they built a large stairway and elevator space in the center, both utilizing the one hall. Gardiner had rented his third floor for a Lodge Hall and Joe Lepsch, myself, and two other men rented the ground floor, each putting up \$200 and started a nickelodeon, a five-cent moving picture theatre, one of the first in the country, when there was only one place where films could be had, viz: S. Lubin in Philadelphia. Then two reels were the longest to be had, and there was no such thing as a film exchange. They would ship the show from one theatre to another until worn out, and we were never sure what the show would be until its arrival. Sometimes we would get the same one that we had already shown.

We gave the two reel "Feature" and a short reel

of so-called "Comic" and an illustrated song with the accompanying slides, always with the film for a nickel.

There was a young married man there who had been a brakeman on the railroad, who had lost a leg. We gave this fellow the job of Manager and his wife the job as Ticket Seller. Although we had lots of competition we were doing fairly well when our receipts began falling off. I could not account for this as there seemed to be as many attending as ever. I had one of our switchboard operators take a peg counter (used in checking up numbers of calls on any certain section of the board) to the theatre. She found that the Manager was taking the tickets taken in at the door and passing them through the curtain and giving them to his wife who was selling them over, instead of selling from the rolls of new tickets properly numbered. Just at this time the fever epidemic broke and we closed the theatre and never reopened it. This fellow had the fever and we never did anything about his shortage.

We junked the theatre and for my \$200 I got a pipe wrench and a phonograph which I sold for \$25, for which I took a note that later went to protest that cost me a two dollar fee, so the pipe wrench (which I still have) really cost me \$202.

I had made a deal for the Port Allegany plant, but lacked the necessary funds to complete the deal. I also had arranged with Joe Lepsch to buy his building by paying a certain amount of cash and a block of Commercial Union Telephone bonds. J. K. Gardiner held a five thousand dollar mortgage on Lepsch's building. This had to be cleared up and I wanted funds to make the deal on the Port Allegany plant. I called on Mr. Henry Schimmeleng, a retired lumberman, who ran a large sawmill at Instanter, Penn., and did his business with us in the Wilcox Bank. I made a full explanation of my intentions and he called his attorney. Going thoroughly over the matter he granted a twelve thousand dollar mortgage on what was now to be known as the Telephone Building. This enabled me to pay off the Gardner mortgage, pay Lepsch two thousand dollars cash on his building, and give me the five thousand cash to complete the Port Allegany plant.

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Mr. Gardiner did not want his mortgage paid off as he had no good place to use it, so I sold him five thousand dollars of Commercial Union bonds, which cleared up the whole situation.

We had run a line on the branch railroad Pole Line from Johnsonburg to Glen Hazel, Penn., and constructed our lines from Portland Mills to Du-Bois to connect with the Summerville Telephone Co., and established an exchange in Brockwayville, where we met with Bell Telephone's strong opposition to installing free telephones to all that would take them. Twelve exchanges were too much for one man to handle and the Company changed their division lines. As of March 1, 1908, I was transferred to Olean, NY as Division Manager of Division #25 in charge of Olean, NY, Bradford, Smethport, and Port Allegany, Penn.

After an absence of ten years and one month, I was glad to get back to Olean where my daughter Romaine had been born and had spent many happy days.

Our exchange and division office was located on the second floor of the Masonic Temple, which adjoins the Olean House, the principal hotel in the city. The City Hall and Fire Station were on the other corner across the street. From my desk I could look across the park onto the residence of then New York Governor Frank W. Higgins. A little later we moved both the exchange and office across the hall into much larger quarters and farther away from the street noises, which was much better. Before we made this move a thrilling event had happened there. Adjoining my office was a dentist's office in which one night my night switchboard operator heard someone prowling. She called the Police Department which was just across the street and it so happened that Chief Bassett was on duty. He immediately came over, not waiting to put on his coat, and started upstairs. He met the burglar coming down who opened fire. The Chief returned his fire but was killed. The burglar calmly walked around the block into the Olean House

where he had been registered and went to bed, but he was so badly wounded that he died the next day.

This new position was not an easy one, our new company lacked the necessary funds to properly keep the equipment up to standard, and the Bell Telephone Co. operating this territory were rebuilding their properties. It was hard sledding to properly hold our own.

The Inter-Ocean Telephone and Telegraph Co. had a fine toll line running through here but our Bradford business had to go through Olean and our lines between Olean and Bradford were always in trouble. The Union Telephone Co. in originally building this line, instead of running a direct independent pole line, made a deal with the Olean and Bradford Trolley Line whereby they put a ten-pin cross arm up on top of the trolley poles. As this territory is very mountainous the trolley had to make many twists and turns to make it. This required more poles and they had to run "booster" circuits for the cars, which made it bad for telephone service and we had lots of trouble. I made a survey and staked out a proposed toll line direct from Bradford to State Line where we could connect with the Inter-Ocean Toll Lines, but for lack of funds this line was never constructed.

One of the first affairs that I had to settle when I first had the Bradford Exchange put into my territory was the fact that the city of Bradford had voted to tax the telephone company one dollar per year for each pole that they had in the streets of Bradford. The Superintendent of the Union Telephone and Telegraph Company of Erie, Mr. W. H. Wilson, had refused to pay this charge. He made the plea that this company was not responsible, that the Union Telephone and Telegraph Company had been reorganized (which had been done to enable them to increase their capital). The City came back that if that was the case the present company had no franchise to operate in the city of Bradford and gave the company 30 days to remove their poles from all city streets. That was the situation at the time I made about my first appearance in Bradford.

I first called on the Bradford City Attorney, Mr. T. H. Schommaker, and during our conversation

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Reminiscing! Part 2

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we found that his wife and my older brother's wife were cousins and that we knew some of the same people. We got along fine and I had several meetings with the City Council and finally got the pole removal order cancelled. Better still we got a new franchise which enabled us to raise our rates. In the general financial condition of the country our company failed to keep the system in proper working condition and so gradually lost business until forced out of business entirely. Trying to keep expenses down in May 1910 the company combined some of the divisions and the four exchanges that I had charge of were placed in another division and I retired from American Union Telephone Company.

I then thought of buying out some small telephone exchange, and looked over one in Perry, N.Y., and one in Warsaw, N.Y. Then I got in correspondence with Jones & Winters of Chicago who were then constructing telephone plants in various sections of the U. S., and had one in Abilene, Texas that they wanted a Superintendent for and asked me to call on them in Chicago. Right at that time I received a letter from brother Frank, who had for a number of years been Asst. Cashier of the Merchants National Bank of Wadena, Minn., saying that they were going to establish another bank in Crosby, Crow Wing County, Minn., a new iron mining town, and that if I wanted the position as Cashier to come to Wadena, and meet the bunch and look over the new town as soon as I could conveniently.

(To be Continued)

New Captain for Branch 31

By: Sue Cox, Branch Captain Coordinator

We have a new Captain for Branch 31. He is:

John Moore, P.O. Box 13429, Trapper Creek,
AK 99683, johnm@mtaonline.net.

Branch 31 Information

By: John Moore, Branch 31 Captain

I am sure that John Latta (3) is the father of James Latta (3) and Thomas Latta (3) and probably his father is James Latta brother of John Latta (2)

This leads to mistakes in Branch No. 31, Branch No. 6 & Branch No. 7

Known Facts

1. John Latta d. abt 1828 in Maury Co TN is the father of Thomas, Sarah, Mary, Elizabeth, Rebecca and Jane by his will dated 11 Aug 1829. Also of James Latta by other records below.

2. Thomas Latta m. Mary Ann (Pollie or Mollie) Moore 04 Oct 1803 in Orange Co NC by NC marriage records and following account.

This account was written by Mary Ann Moore Sparkman (daughter of John Moore and Mary Rogers), born 10 November 1820, died 4 September 1901. This was found in an attic in a little wooden box, and was submitted to Historic Maury by Millie Adkison.

My Grandfathers father name was Jim Moore and he married Cathrine Robertson and Great Grandfather he died on his way from North Carolina up near Franklin Williamson County, Tennessee. Great Grandfathers name was Jim Moore. I don't know who he married he was a Widower when he came here his wife died in North Carolina. Grandfathers children name was Aunt Peggy, she married Benjamin Polk at fathers house. Aunt Peggy she died in Texas. Aunt Mollie she married Thomas Lottie she died in Kentucky Purchas. Aunt Betsy she married Joe McColister, she died in Kentucky Purchas. Aunt Sallie she married Jackson Fitzgerald and she died in Texas and he had two sisters and two brother Jim and one of the Marthas

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Branch 31 Information

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and one of the Jims got burned in my Grandfathers house then the other Martha she died and the other Jim got killed in the battle at New Orleans he was fighting under old Andrew Jackson then uncle Alex he married Sallie Lottie and he and his wife both died on Redford Creek and buried at lasting hope.

3. Thomas Latta was in Williamson Co TN prior to 1805 by witnessing land purchase with John Moore (22 Jan. 1805)

4. Benjamin Polk husband of Peggy Moore (sister of Alex Moore & John Moore) was listed between Thomas Latta and John Latta for 1820 Maury Co TN census; Shadrack Chandler husband of Elizabeth Latta (they were in Maury Co prior to 1806) on same page as is William Hutchingson the husband of James Latta's widow Martha Moore.

5. Age comparison of family in 1820 census gives the confirmation that John Latta is a generation older than his children and this includes James Latta's widow.

4. 1814 DEED of conveyance to John Latta from William Polk (the father of Benjamin Polk) for two hundred and twenty two and three fourths acres of land in Maury Co TN

5. James Latta and brother Thomas Latta served in Capt. John Jackson's Co. of Inf., 1 Reg't Tennessee Militia from Nov 14th 1814 to May 13th 1815. I do believe there is some truth in the account offered by his grandson, Sims, said that "James was returning from the Revolutionary War (this has proven to be the war of 1812) when he died". I believe he died 1815 when Andrew Jackson brought his men back from New Orleans over the Natchez Trace to Columbia for dismissal. The age of Thomas and James Latta's children are the same as are the ages of their wives leads me to believe they were brothers.

6. Much has been made of the fact that the Battle of New Orleans was fought after the Treaty of Ghent was signed (24 December 1814). However, the treaty had not yet been ratified and a British

victory could have complicated the peace agreement. The enormity of the victory was a huge boost to the morale of the United States, giving the impression that America had won the War of 1812, when, in fact, it could be said that the war ended in a draw. As for Jackson and his Tennesseans, they lingered in the camps at New Orleans until March 1815. Ironically, hundreds of Tennesseans who survived the rigors of battle succumbed to the deadly illnesses that permeated the camps of New Orleans after the battle. Jackson was proclaimed a national hero and embarked on a political career that eventually took him to the White House in 1828.

7. James Latta is declared dead on the 3d Monday of May 1815 in Maury County Court; John Latta is appointed Administrator for the estate.

8. On the 23d of May 1815 John Latta gives Thomas Latta power of attorney to collect any monies owing to Estate of James Latta deceased for his service in Capt. John Jackson's company for the term of six months. (I have these records and their service records) J Moore

9. James Latta's estate sale was in 1815 in Maury Co and he is said to have been a resident of the county when he died.

10. June 1815. Sale of James LATTA, deceased. Buying: Thomas TAYLOR; Thomas J. HARDAMAN; Martha LATTA; William WEBB; Josiah HOGAN; Thomas GOAD; John LATTA; John POLK; Pleasant CREWS; William HENTY; Joseph WINGFIELD; John KINDOWS; Thomas LATTA; James ONEAL; David WHERTON; Julius BURTON; John CANADA; William SEALARS; Charles NEELY; Andrew MILLS; William GRANT; John P. POWELL; John DUCKWORTH; Allen RAINY; Luke PATTERSON; Shadrack CHANDLER; Green B. ROGERS.

11. James left two young sons (John and Moses) and wife Martha Moore Latta. James's father John is appointed guardian and they are raised by Martha and her new husband William Hutchingson. I am sure John Latta had a big hand raising them through their teen years. (I have numerous records of guardianship records) J Moore

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Branch 31 Information

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12. In John Latta's will 11 Aug 1829 probated he mentions his wife Elizabeth and daughters Jane Latta, Ruth wife of Seth Sparkman, Sarah Moore, Mary Robinson Thomas Latta. He mentions John and Moses Latta and calls them his sons but they were his orphaned grandsons.

13. Mrs. Emily Powell, daughter of Jane Latta Sparkman, writes from Leiper's Fork, Tenn. March 1, 1916, (she was then 84 years of age), . All of John Latta's daughters are dead, and all of their children except Rebecca's son, Samuel Sparkman and his wife, and Janes' daughter, Emily Powell. I never knew anything of an Aunt Martha. I think there must be some mistake in the history of John Latta given you by Dr. William Latta and Jesse Mitchell. For they have him born five years later than my chronology, and I feel sure he married Mary Jackson, for I have a piece of all fancy work she did with her name on it. I do not think I had an Aunt Martha to marry a Mitchell as late as 1846. My mother, (Jane Latta Sparkman), was the only unmarried daughter when my grand father died about 1827 and she married in 1828 or 1829.

14. WILL.. In the name of God Amen. I John Latta late of Maury County state of Tennessee being in sound mind and memory and willing to the mortality of my body do make and ordain this my last will and testament, I first of all I resurrect my sole to God who gave it my body to the earth who gave it to be buried in a (series of unreadable words) like manner at the discretion of my and forsaking such worldly (series of unreadable words) or goods when which it had pleased God to bless me. I give bequeath and distribute in the following parameters this after my funeral expense and debts paid and I bequeath to my daughter Jane our horse his shoes and saddle and bridle one chair four sheets two beds and featherbed one pot and six plates six (series of unreadable words) and six knives and forks One negro girl named Charity, and of the said negro girl Charity amount to more than her equal share Jane is to pay back and if the said

negro does not amount to her equal part then it is to be made up to Jane & equal with the rest. The other property before mentioned not to be valued in her part only the negro. I give and bequeath to my daughter Rebecca wife of Seth Sparkman one negro girl named Chorlett said if last negro Chorlett dect net amount to her part besides what they had already got. Rebecca to be made equal to the rest but if said negro Chorlett should amount to more than share then Rebecca to pay back. I give and bequeath to Shadrack Chandler ten dollars and to the heirs of the body of Elizabeth Chandler my daughter. I give and bequeath one M??? to be equally divided between them but after Shadracks death if Elizabeth his wife is not provided for then Elizabeth to be supported by rest that then during her natural life or widowhood. I give and bequeath to Moses Latta one hundred dollars to his brother John Latta twenty five dollars. And pay with it that my son Moses Latta and my son John Latta and my daughter Mary Robinson and my daughter Sarah Moore give an equal part of all my property besides what they already got. Save my land & three negros Charity & Buck David & Milley May be valued and sold or properly dist and my heirs can agree. only the two first named negros Charity and Chorlett valued & I also will that my son Thomas B Latta & that Alex B Moore (husband of Sarah) & John Moore (brother of Alex) be the sole executors of this my will and testament in who set my hand the 11th of August 1829.

Moses Latta Sign

15. Columbia TN Nov 20th 1978 letter from Clarence Latta

William Craig had two daughters, Louisa and Matilda. Louisa married John Latta, Matilda married Moses Latta who was my great grand father. The first John Latta came to Maury & Williamson Co in the late 1700's. He had one son James Latta who died on the way from North or South Carolina (again I believe this mis-information for Sims account). James left two sons who were raised by their grandfather. Moses was my great grandfather and Moses Jr was my grandfather. Sims was my

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Branch 31 Information

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father and my name is Clarence. I am 78 years old; very hard of hearing. My wife is a Robinson and a direct descendent of Mary Latta sister of James Latta.

16. I have been researching the Lattas for about 13 years now and still have not been able to sort out the southern branches. I am a descendant on what is sometimes called "branch 7." I have reviewed the information that you sent and have a few comments.

I believe Thomas Latta who married Polly Moore was known as "Thomas B. Latta" and eventually moved to Graves County, Kentucky. Further, I believe 2 Thomas Latta did not marry Janey Scarlett, but rather married Sussanh Jackson. Relatedly, while it is often stated that the father of John B. Latta was John Latta, I believe his father was James Latta the original Latta settler in Orange County, NC. As I am sure you know, the Latta patriarch in Orange County known as John Latta was the brother of James the original settler. John, the brother did have a son named John, but not "John B." John, the son of John the patriarch, married a Cabe and died as a young man, leaving his children under the guardianship of his father John, the patriarch.

Joshua Armstrong

James2 Latta (James1) was born 1732 in Ireland, and died Aft. August 16, 1804 in Orange County, North Carolina (Source: DAR Application: #476234). He married _____ Synott Bet. 1756 - 1758 in Orange County, North Carolina?, daughter of Michael Synott.

Notes for James Latta:

James Latta's date of birth is also noted 1735. (DAR Papers)

I am not certain that this James is married to Ms. Synott -JJA (9/13/96)

Orange Co., NC Book 11:210, FHL 305929

John Latta Born in N.C. 1761; d. 1828 m. 1) Elizabeth Wood 2) Mary Jackson in NC on June 10, 1804. Went from Orange Co., N.C. to Maury Co., Tenn. in 1813

Children

JOHN

THOMAS m. Polly Moore 4 Oct 1803 in Orange Co NC

JAMES m. Martha Patsey Moore 27 June 1804 in Orange Co NC

ELIZABETH m. Shadrack Chandler in Orange County NC 27 Feb 1810. Children: Rebecca. Amelia m. Mr. Rone. Sarah m. Mr. Rone. John. Shelby m. Lonarie Fitzgerald. James

REBECCA b. February 24, 1797; d. April 20, 1883; m. Seth Sparkman of Boston, Williamson Co., Tenn. July 9, 1822. She lived near Franklin, Maury Co., TN. Children: Mary Williams m. John Alexander. William Latta m. Luvinda Wakefield. John Jackson m. Elizabeth Burns. Seth Golden m. Lucy Cummins. Samuel Thompson m. Eliza A. Oakley. James Thomas (father of Latta Sparkman of Amarillo, Texas) m. twice. 1) Marietta Dabney 2) Laura King. Nathan Aman m. Emily Roundtree.

SARAH m. Alexander Moore of Maury Co., Tenn. Children: James m. Mary Bunch. John m. Angeline McKee. They lived in Maury Co., TN.

MARY m. John Robinson of Boston, Williamson Co., TN. December 9, 1813. Lived in Boston, TN. Children: Rebecca m. Nicholas Robinson. Mary Ann m. Matthew Sparkman. John Latta m. Mary J. Daniels and Elizabeth McAlpin. Sarah Jane m. Shadrack Robinson. Charles Marion m. Elizabeth Hassell.

JANE m. Robinson Sparkman of Boston, Tenn. Lived in Williamson Co., Tenn. Children: Mary. Emily m. Thomas Prowell. Thomas m. Margaret Trimble. Jane m. John Wood.

The 1820 Census of Maury Co TN supplies a wealth of information on the linking of families of Thomas Latta, John Latta, William Huthingson, Schadrack Chandler, Benjamin Polk, Catherine Moore, William McKee, and William Craig.

Affidavit of Henry E. Shaw, Jr.

By: Henry E. Shaw, Jr, Branch 3

THE STATE OF OHIO, DELAWARE
COUNTY, ss:

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared Henry E. Shaw, Jr., husband of Sharon Kay Shaw, of 27 Griswold Street, City of Delaware, Delaware County, Ohio, who, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is a son of Henry E. Shaw and Marjorie Helen Hendrickson Shaw, his wife, and was born _____ in _____ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; further, that the said Henry E. Shaw was born on October 21, 1906 in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and died in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on January 18, 1999 and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and the said Marjorie Helen Hendrickson Shaw was born on June 29, 1908 in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and died in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on September 23, 1991 and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; further, that the said Henry E. Shaw and Marjorie Helen Hendrickson Shaw were married in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on June 17, 1936 and the following three children were born of said marriage:

1. Henry E. Shaw, Jr., born _____ Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and married to Sharon K. Trout Shaw on October 3, 1964 in Delaware, Delaware County, Ohio. One daughter born of said marriage: Jennifer Lynn Shaw Gams, born on _____ and married to Mark Howard Gams on November 18, 1995 in Columbus, Ohio and two sons born of said marriage: David Henry Gams, _____ and William Max Gams, _____.

2. Infant daughter Shaw died at birth on December 13, 1945 in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

3. Suzanne Marjorie Shaw McCreary, born _____ in _____ Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and married to John R. McCreary on August 1, 1970, in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and two children were born of said marriage:

Matthew Shaw McCreary, unmarried, _____
and Diana Elizabeth McCreary, unmarried, _____.

Affiant further deposes and says that his mother, Marjorie Helen Hendrickson Shaw, was a daughter of Christopher Miksell Hendrickson and Cora Latta Hendrickson, his wife; the said Christopher Miksell Hendrickson was born on October 21, 1867 at Corel, Indiana County, Pennsylvania and died in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on March 8, 1938 and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and the same Cora Latta Hendrickson was born on March 28, 1875 in South Huntington Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and died on March 4, 1964 in Windber, Somerset County, Pennsylvania and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; further, that the said Christopher Miksell Hendrickson and Cora Latta Hendrickson were married in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on May 18, 1896, and the following four children were born of said marriage:

1. Frank Christopher Hendrickson, born in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on April 18, 1898, died in Latrobe, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on December 31, 1945 and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Married to Ethel Croyle in November 1920 in Cumberland, Maryland, said Ethel Croyle Hendrickson was born on May 23, 1903, died on December 24, 1997 and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

2. Henrietta Hendrickson, born in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on July 26, 1903, died on December 31, 1979 in Windber, Somerset County, Pennsylvania and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Married to Donald L. Ruffner. (NSDAR National Number 462017)

3. Kenneth Latta Hendrickson, born in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania in July 1904, died on September 25, 1904 in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and is buried in Coles Cemetery, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

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Affidavit

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4. Marjorie Helen Hendrickson married to Henry E. Shaw. (NSDAR National Number 420234)

Affiant further deposes and says that his grandmother, Cora Latta Hendrickson, was a daughter born to William Wesley Latta and his second wife, Henrietta Wheeler Laken Latta; the said William Wesley Latta was born on May 25, 1833 in South Huntington Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and died in East Huntington Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania on August 8, 1896; and the second wife of the said William Wesley Latta, the said Henrietta Wheeler Laken Latta was born on September 30, 1850 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania and died on April 8, 1920 in Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; both the said William Wesley Latta and the said Henrietta Wheeler Laken Latta are buried in the Mount Lebanon Methodist Church Cemetery, Tarrs, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. (Reference, page 110, Cemetery Records of Bedford, Somerset, Westmoreland and Fayette Counties, 1953, filed by Braddock Trail Chapter NSDAR, Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Also, dates from Bible from the late William Wesley Latta, as recorded during his lifetime, which record shows the date of marriage of William Wesley Latta and his second wife, Henrietta Wheeler Laken Latta as January 11, 1871; and, further, that the following eight children were born of this marriage:

1. Frank M. Latta, born on March 14, 1871 and died on January 27, 1939. Buried in the Mount Lebanon Methodist Cemetery, Tarrs, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

2. William Wesley Latta, born in 1873.

3. Cora Latta, born on March 28, 1875 and died on March 4, 1964. Married to Christopher Miksell Hendrickson, born on October 21, 1867, and died on March 8, 1938.

4. Sara Anna Latta, born in December of 1876 and died in 1898. Married to Marion J. Kelley, born in 1870.

a. One son born of said marriage, John M. Kelley. (NSSAR National Number 70276); (Pennsylvania State Number 5029).

5. James Latta.

6. Pearl Latta, married to Earl I. Courtwright.

7. Boyd S. Latta married to Hilda Willor.

8. Gertrude E. Latta married to Andrew Batiston.

Affiant further deposes and says that his great grandfather, William Wesley Latta, was a son born to Moses Latta and his wife, Sarah Johnson Latta, the said Moses Latta having been born on June 24, 1796 and died on June 16, 1871, in South Huntington Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; and Sarah Johnson Latta, the wife of the said Moses Latta, was born on August 1, 1796 and died on August 20, 1880. Said Moses Latta and Sarah Johnson Latta were married on June 5, 1821, as disclosed by the Bible records of the late Moses Latta and tombstone inscriptions in the Dick United Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Sewickley Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. (Reference: page 68, tombstone inscriptions filed by Braddock Trail Chapter NSDAR, Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, 1953, Bedford, Somerset, Westmoreland and Fayette Counties.)

The following ten children were born to Moses Latta and Sarah Johnson Latta, his wife, as per Bible records:

1. Mary Anna Latta, married to Joseph Robinson.

2. Ephriam Latta, born in 1824, married to Jane Dick.

3. Frances Jane Latta, born in 1825, married to Henry M. Husband.

4. Matthew Latta, born in 1826.

5. Joseph S. Latta.

6. Sarah Latta, born in 1830.

7. William Wesley Latta, born on May 25, 1833 and died on August 8, 1896. Married to Henrietta Wheeler Laken Latta.

8. Martha Latta, born in 1834.

9. Elizabeth Margaret Latta, born in 1836.

10. Robert Latta, born in 1837.

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Affidavit

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WILL OF MOSES LATTA, DECEASED

"I, Moses Latta, of South Huntington Township, Westmoreland County and State of Pennsylvania, being of sound mind, memory and understanding but ill in bodily health do make and publish this my last will and testament hereby revoking and making void any former will by me at any time heretofore made.

And first I direct that my body be decently interred and that my funeral be conducted in a manner corresponding with my estate in life. As to such estate as I die possessed of I dispose of the same as follow VIS: -- To my beloved wife, Sarah, I give and bequeath one bed and bedding, maintenance and support and all the necessities and comforts which she may need during her natural life and at her death decent interment which said maintenance necessities shall be furnished by my Sons Ephraim, William and Joseph S. equally as herein directed.

To my daughter Mary Ann intermarried with Joseph Robinson I give and bequeath the interest on five hundred Dollars to be paid her annually during the term of her natural life -- at her death the said five hundred dollars to be divided share and share alike between my sons Ephraim, William and Joseph S. and my daughters Sarah and Elizabeth Margaret. To my daughter, Frances Jane, intermarried with Henry M. Husband, I give and bequeath the sum of four hundred dollars to be as hereinafter directed. To my daughters Sarah and Elizabeth Margaret, I give and bequeath to each Two Cows; one-half dozen of the green chairs; all the beds and bedding which each one claims as her own maintenance and support on the place for One year after my decease if they elect to remain and to each the sum of Seven Hundred dollars to be paid as hereinafter directed.

To my son, Ephraim Latta, I give, devise and bequeath the Mansion house, barn and out buildings connected therewith, and one hundred acres

of the farm or piece of land on which I now live, strict measure, to be taken from the western or north western part, the line running from Sewickley to the extended in a direct course to the salt-works road, thence up said road to the turnpike and thence across to southern or southwestern boundary so as to embrace One hundred acres strict measure, and he, the said Ephraim Latta is to pay the one-third of all my debts, funeral expenses, settling estate, one-third of the maintenance, support, necessities, comforts, which my said wife may need during her natural life; one-third of the maintenance of my daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth Margaret, for the term of one-year after my decease, one-third of the interest on Five hundred Dollars to be paid annually to Mary Ann Robinson, during her natural life and at her death one-third of said Five hundred Dollars, Being the principal as hereinbefore directed and the sum of Seven Hundred Dollars to each of my two daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth Margaret to be paid as follows to wit: One hundred and seventy-five dollars to each in Ten Years after my decease and the same amount annually -- thereafter to each one until the whole amounts are paid in full without interest, all of which said sum of money shall be and remain liens on said one hundred acres until fully paid and satisfied. To my sons, William Latta and Joseph S. Latta, I give, devise and bequeath the remainder and residue of my plantation on which I reside after cutting off the hundred acres devised as above to Ephraim Latta and containing one hundred thirty-three acres more or less; Jointly and with the direction that neither shall sell his interest in the same to a Stranger without the consent of the other, and they, the said William and Joseph S. Latta are each to pay one-third of the maintenance, support and necessities, comforts and etc., which my said wife may need during her life; One-third the maintenance of my daughters Sarah and Elizabeth Margaret for the term of one year after my decease; one-third of the interest on Five hundred dollars Annually to Mary Ann Robinson during her natural life and

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Affidavit

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one-third of five hundred dollars at her death to the parties as hereinbefore directed and one-half of the sum of four hundred dollars to Frances Jan Husband, payable as follows: Fifty dollars each in ten years after my decease and the same sums annually thereafter without interest until the said Four hundred dollars are paid in full. The foregoing sums of money is to be liens on said part of the Real Estate so devised until the same are fully paid and satisfied.

The Rest and Residue of my Estate, Real and personal, I give and bequeath to my Sons Ephriam, William and Joseph S., Share and Share alike. And I do hereby constitute and appoint my Sons, Ephriam Latta and William Latta and my son-in-law Henry M. Husband, Executors of this my last Will and testament."

In Witness whereof, I, Moses Latta, the Testator have to this my Will written on one sheet of paper, Set my hand and Seal this 21st day of December A.D. One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy. Signed, sealed, declared and published by the above named Moses Latta as and for his last will and testament in the presence of us who have heretofore and hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses thereto in the presence of the said testator and of each other.

Signed: Samuel Morton, Jacob Waltz

Moses Latta (SEAL)

Westmoreland County, ss:

I, C.F. Warden, register of wills, etc., in and for said County, do certify that I affixed on the probate of the Original Will of Moses Latta, deceased, the same remaining on file in my office a \$3.50 W.S. Revenue Stamp – and cancelled the same this day. The value of the property passing under said will having been declared not to Exceed \$7,000.00. Witness my hand and seal of this office this 24th day of June 1871.

Signed: C.F. Warden, Register

SEAL

Affiant further deposes and says that his great-grandfather, Moses Latta, was the only son of Ephriam Latta, who assisted in establishing American Independence, while acting in the capacity of a Private in Captain Samuel Royer's Company, Associators & Militia, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, which record is found in Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, Volume VI, Page 517, and the said Ephriam Latta was taxed in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, as a single man, in 1779, as is found in Third Series, Pennsylvania Archives, Volume XX, Page 124; and that said Ephriam Latta was warranted 300 acres of land in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, on April 4, 1786, as is found in Third Series, Pennsylvania Archives, Volume XXVI, Page 460. The original patent for this warrant was formerly in the possession of John Millard Kelley, NSSAR National Number 70276, Pennsylvania State Number 5029, the said John Millard Kelley being now deceased, and having formerly resided at 550 East Crawford Avenue, Connellsville, Pennsylvania, a copy of which said Patent is quoted in full as follows:

SEAL The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENCE
COME, GREETINGS:

Know ye, that in Consideration of monies paid by Ephriam Latta into the Receiver-General's office of this Commonwealth at the granting of the Warrant hereinafter mentioned and of the sum of Five Pounds and twelve shillings, being a balance allowed him in said office – there is granted by the said Commonwealth unto the said Ephriam Latta a certain tract of land called "Plainfield" situate on Big Sewickley in Huntington Township, Westmoreland County.

Beginning at a stone thence by land of John Baker north five degrees west ninety-four perches to a white oak by land of John Thompson south eighty-five degrees west fourteen perches to a white oak north thirty-seven degrees west ninety-two perches to a white oak south eighty-five degrees west eighty-five perches to a hickory north ten degrees west ninety-nine perches to a hickory south seventy degrees west forty perches to a

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Affidavit

(Continued from Page 34)

dogwood thence by land of John Miller south thirty-five degrees west one hundred forty perches to a post south twenty-one degrees east one hundred forty-four perches to a white oak thence by land of William Hunter north fifty-eight degrees east twenty perches to a white oak south fifty-seven degrees east eighty-three perches to a hickory north eighty-three degrees east fifty perches to a black oak and north seventy-two degrees east one hundred fifteen perches to the Beginning, containing three hundred five acres one hundred twenty perches and allowance of six per cent for roads, etc., which said tract was surveyed in pursuance of a Warrant dated 4th April 1786, granted to the said Ephriam Latta – with appurtenances. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract or parcel of land, with the appurtenances, unto the said Ephriam Latta, and Heirs to the use of him the said Ephriam Latta, and his Heirs and Assigns forever, free and clear of all restrictions and reservations as to Mines, Royalties, Quit-rents or otherwise, excepting and reserving only the fifth part of all Gold and Silver Ore for the use of the Commonwealth to be delivered at the pitt's mouth clear of all charges. IN WITNESS whereof, Thomas Mifflin, Governor of the said Commonwealth, hath hereto set his hand and caused the State's Seal to be hereunto affixed the eighteenth day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred ninety-four, and of the Commonwealth, nineteenth.

Attest, /s/ A.L. Dallas, Secretary

Affiant further deposes and says that his great-great-grandfather, Ephriam Latta, was born probably in Ireland, the exact date of birth not of record; that said Ephriam Latta married Mary Thompson and had one son, Moses Latta, born of said marriage, which is proven by the will of the said Ephriam Latta, the original of which being of record in the Westmoreland County Courthouse in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, in Will Book One, Page 190, File 305, as follows:

WILL OF EPHRIAM LATTA, DECEASED

"In the name of God, Amen. I, Ephriam Latta of Westmoreland County, South Huntington Township, being weak in body but sound in mind and memory but calling to mind the mortality of my body that is bound to die and afterward to come to judgment, and as it has pleased almighty God to bless me in some worldly substance which I wish to be disposed of after my decease in manner and form following: First: I commit my soul to almighty God, who gave it to me and my body I desire may be decently buried at the discretion of my Executors who are to be hereafter named. As to my worldly substance I wish it to be disposed of as follows and first I desire that my debts may first of all be paid out of my estate, real and personal. I do secondly bequeath unto my loving wife, Mary Latta, eight hundred dollars with privilege to purchase as much property at the sale or vendue of my property as she shall cause the remainder of eight hundred dollars as her share to be paid out of the third or last sale which will be coming from the sale of my lands: The remainder of my estate I do bequeath unto my only son, Moses Latta, and desire that his share may be put to interest and that he be put to school and continue there at until he becomes a good English scholar and likewise he may be brought up in a Christianable manner. Should my son Moses die without issue I desire that my sister-in-law Mary Latta's children, four in number, get one hundred pounds each. And likewise, I bequeath unto my brother, Moses Latta two sons, one hundred pounds each, and likewise unto my brother Mongo's son, John one hundred pounds; also unto Jane Dunbar, one hundred pounds in case as before inserted that my son Moses Latta should die without issue. But should it so happen that there should not be sufficiency to amount to what is within inserted, my desire is that it be equally divided among them. In testimony whereof I have nominated my Executors to this my last will and testament vis: John Milligan, esq., and William Latta, son of Moses Latta. In witness whereof I have subscribed my name this 28th day of November, 1803.

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Affidavit

(Continued from Page 35)

In presence of us: Signed: Ephriam Latta
Moses Latta Mary Latta (her mark)
Francis Hill
February 16th, 1804
Proved by Moses Latta & Francis Hill
The subscribing witnesses before me.
James Guthrie Register

This affidavit has been prepared for use in complying with the requirements of an Application to the NSSAR.



The preceding photograph is of Henry Shaw, Jr., and his mother, Marjorie Shaw. See also page 39.

**Caption for Above Photograph**

By: Tom Kintigh, Branch 3, tqkintigh@q.com

The above photograph is of Harry Markel Latta and his wife Rachel Funk Latta and their grandson, Donald Monroe Latta. They lived in Irwin, Pennsylvania. Harry was the son of Ephriam Latta (brother of Joseph Shaw Latta & William Latta) and a first cousin of Clarence Johnston Latta, Sr.

Research Queries, Replies and Notes. Send your queries to the editor, Ken Mueller, 7400 E. Mule Circle, Prescott Valley AZ 86314, Doc Huer@aol.com.

1. The pictures contributed by Eugene **Latta** to Issue 39 of the Latta Genealogy Newsletter generated a series of e-mail messages between Eugene Latta, Ken Mueller, Henry Shaw, and myself.

It turns out that Eugene **Latta** and I are third cousins. Our great-grandfathers (Joseph Shaw **Latta** & William **Latta**) were brothers. William Latta's son is also a William (William Wesley **Latta**, my grandfather) and that may cause some confusion. I think I figured out who Harry & Rachel are. I'm sure they are Harry Markel **Latta** and his wife Rachel **Funk Latta** and their grandson, Donald Monroe **Latta** (not Eugene's uncle, Donald Monroe **Latta**); they lived in Irwin, PA. Harry was the son of Ephriam **Latta** (brother of Joseph Shaw **Latta** & William **Latta**) and a first cousin of Eugene's grandfather, Clarence Johnston **Latta**, Sr.

I was amazed to see the picture on page 23 of issue 39 of Marjorie **Shaw** of Derry, PA. Cora **Latta Hendrickson** (Aunt Cora) is my grandfather's sister and Marjorie **Hendrickson Shaw** is my mother's first cousin. She and my mother were very close. We lived near Greensburg, PA when I was a kid, not far from Derry, and we went to visit them often. I think Marjorie's mother, Aunt Cora, lived with them because I remember her being at the house. I remember one time after I had a drivers license, of taking my mother and grandmother to Derry for a visit. The boy in the picture had to be her son Henry. He and I are about the same age. I've known him since we were kids. Henry went to college in Ohio and became a judge in Delaware County, Ohio. I was able to make contact by e-mail and he confirmed it was him in the picture.

I thought I would submit this picture of my grandfather, William Wesley **Latta**, and his siblings. They are the children of William **Latta**, Family 27, Branch #3, and are Frank Moses **Latta**, William Wesley **Latta**, Cora Luella **Latta Hendrickson**, Sarah Ann **Latta Kelly**, James Burrell **Latta**, Elizabeth Etta Pearl **Latta Courtwright**, Boyd Sutton **Latta**, and Gertrude Evelyn **Latta Battistone**. The picture was taken in the 1930s. Missing is Sara Ann **Latta Kelly**, who died in 1898.

Left to right: Boyd **Latta**, James **Latta**, William **Latta**, Gertrude **Battistone**, Frank **Latta**, Pearl **Courtwright**, and Cora **Hendrickson**.



Henry also commented on the article I had written in Issue 19, Spring of 2003 Latta Genealogy Newsletter about my aunt, Amber H. **Latta**; information that I was not aware of. Henry wrote: "Indeed, Amber was one of the Greatest Generation. My wife Sharon is also an RN - - 1961 graduate of Ohio State University College of Nursing. During the time that Sharon and I lived in Greensburg, PA, (fall of 1964 through spring of 1967) Sharon was a staff nurse at the Westmoreland Hospital and soon joined the staff of the Hospital Nursing School. Anyhow, during Sharon's tenure at Westmoreland, she and Amber became well acquainted. At the time, Amber was doing private duty nursing. Sharon has fond memories of Amber.

Since I wrote that article, I have learned more about Amber's duty location in England. The manor house where she was quartered is Lilford Hall in Barnwell, Northamptonshire. The 303rd Station Hospital was attached to the 303rd Bomb Group, USAAF, at nearby RAF Molesworth, part of the 1st Air Division, Eighth Air Force. The planes warming up at night were USAAF B-17s preparing for a dawn takeoff. On the next page is a picture of Amber and her brother, Sgt. Emerson L. **Latta** somewhere in Britain during late 1943 or early 1944. Emerson told me he wasn't supposed to talk to her because she was an officer. Tom **Kintigh**, Branch 3, tqkintigh@q.com.

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Our Financial Contributors since the last issue. We really appreciate your support!
If there is a number before the name, it is that person's branch number. The editor suggests that the reader contact researchers of the same branch and share information.

We now accept PayPal donations from the button on our website. We have received several such donations so far, and it seems to work fine. Our web site is: <http://www.latta.org>.

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2010 Annual Meeting of the LGS

By: Ken Mueller, President, DocHuer@aol.com

The 2010 Annual Meeting of the Latta Genealogy Society will be held on 31 July 2010 at the home of Virginia and Joe Curulla. Please contact Virginia for more information at 4511 154th Place, Bellevue, Washington 98006, 425-6430309 or Latta4gen@comcast.net.

We also need ideas for the 2011 meeting. If you have a suggestion, please contact me.

Research Queries

(Continued from Page 37)



Caption for the above photograph:

Amber and Emerson **Latta**, World War 2.

2. Well now, indeed the photo on the upper left on page 36 is of my mother, Marjorie Helen **Hendrickson Shaw**, and the little guy to her left is yours truly, Henry E. **Shaw**, Jr. As I recall, there are a series of these B&W photos, one of which is of Grandmother **Hendrickson** (Cora Louella **Latta Hendrickson**).

Just to give a bit of history and geography relative to the Page 36 photo, I believe that it was taken in the summer of either 1942 or 1943. The scene was in the backyard of my parents' home at 619 West Second Avenue, Derry, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Judge Henry E. **Shaw**, Jr., Branch 3, hsshaw@colombus.rr.com.

3. Douglas Ray **Latta** was born 15 March 1927 at Latta Lake Place, Deerwood, Minnesota, and died 14 Jan. 2010. He always carefully read the Latta Genealogy Newsletter. Your most recent publication [Issue 39] had the postcard photo of Elda **Latta**. She was Doug's aunt. There were four children of James Selkirk **Latta**. They were: Ray (Doug's father), then Elda, Mildred and Randall. Their mother's name was Eva **Upson**.

Sincerely, Barbara **Davidson Latta**, Newport, Oregon, Davidson589@charter.net.

Douglas Ray Latta March 15th, 1927—January 14, 2010

By: Barbara Davidson Latta,
Davidson589@charter.net.

Aurore Roy and Ray Latta were married at Fort Morgan, Colorado on August 1st, 1922. During the first few years of their marriage, the couple traveled extensively, logging an impressive 45,000 miles which took them through much of the United States and into Montreal and Toronto.

In April of 1924, they settled in their new home, a log cabin at Latta Lake Place, in Deerwood, Minnesota. They worked their land, and purchased a herd of goats. Miles Roy Latta was born on March 2nd, 1926. Douglas Ray Latta was born on March 15th, 1927. In May of 1927 the family moved to Bay Lake, Minnesota where they began sheep ranching.

Over the next several years, Aurore and Ray owned and operated a grocery store and gas station. They also made several trips out to California and eventually moved to Riverside, California in 1936. Ray was a golf instructor and also sold golf equipment. Ray became very ill with colon cancer and died in September of 1941. In December of 1941, Miles died as a result of a bicycling accident.

At the age of 17, Doug enlisted in the Navy and served for two years. After his discharge, he worked in the southern California oil fields until he decided to move to the Portland area, where his

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Douglas Ray Latta

(Continued from Page 39)

mother had settled and remarried. He met his future wife, Jean Mignon Lisi, in Portland, in 1948. Doug's fondest desire was to marry and have a family. They were married January 15th, 1949. Nancy was born in 1950 and Judy in 1952.

Doug went to work for Oregon Willamette Lumber Company in Portland. In 1954 he was transferred to Newport to become manager of the Newport store.

Doug and Jean loved raising their daughters, and they were very active in school activities. They were members of the First Presbyterian Church and Doug was active with the church's youth organization. For many years he took groups up to Pioneer Mountain on hay rides at Halloween and skiing at Santiam Pass.

In 1976, Doug retired from Oregon Willamette, and built Newport Industrial Park, then Sea Towne Shopping Center, developed Lakewood Hills, and was involved in numerous other business ventures. He became a passionate gardener, raising many varieties of tulips, tuberous begonias, and fuchsias, in addition to banana bushes. He often donated his plants for fundraisers in the community. He was also passionate about Oregon strawberries (eating them, that is).

Jean died in 1998, after 49 years of marriage. To help fill the void, Doug began experimenting with fused glass, and eventually began marketing his products throughout the United States.

In 2000, Doug married Barbara Davidson. Doug and Barbara enjoyed traveling and expanding the fused glass business.

Doug was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2009. He was able to stay in his home until the time of his death. He died peacefully on January 14th with his wife and two daughters at his side.

Doug will be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, uncle, and devoted friend. He was always happiest when surrounded by his family and involved in business ventures.

List of Branch Captains

(Continued from Page 2)

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Branch 49: Stanley R. Latta, P.O. Box 998, Alamo-gordo, NM 88311, Reddog@wayfarer1.com.

Branch 51: Ken Erdle, 7890 Wexford Ct., Bloomington IN 47408, sasquatsh1@gmail.com.

Branch 52: Connie G. Latta, 11931 Lambert Ave., El Monte CA 91732-2031, Mudpie3133@aol.com.

Newsletter By E-mail

Any member who wishes to receive the Latta Genealogy Newsletter by e-mail, please contact the editor. It would save our Society some postage and conserve resources.

Nominating Committee Needed

In the Fall of this year, our Society will hold elections for the offices of President and Treasurer. The term of office is for two years. Before the ballots are printed, we need a Nominating Committee to select suitable candidates for these important positions. Interested persons should contact the editor.

Reprints of Issues 1-39 are available for \$4.00 each. If interested, please contact the editor,

Ken Mueller, 7400 E. Mule Circle, Prescott Valley, Arizona 86314, Doc Huer@aol.com.
