

The Latta Genealogy Newsletter

Issue 7

Summer 1998

"The Erie Years" (Branch 4)

Railroad telegrapher's first-hand account

Upon reading the item in Issue 6 about the Latta connection to the Soo railroad line, Sharon Mountford recalled the memoirs her grandfather had written of his railroad days and went to search for a reference.

Sharon didn't find what she was looking for, but did send a portion of the book she has transcribed to share with us. She writes:

I remember Granddad sitting at his venerable typewriter, in the tiny room that he rented in a house three short blocks from our home in Glendale (after my Grandmother passed away.) Of course he was dressed in his suit and vest, without the coat, if it was hot out. Hot days are the ones I remember best. When I was 10-12 I would walk over to "his" house and shoot baskets on the driveway court outside his window. If no one showed up for a game, I would go in and visit with Granddad and then, after he had put away his work, he would put

on his suit coat and hat, and we would walk to our house for dinner. I can see the shiny dark grey back of the buttoned vest, the white shirt sleeves, the rotary fan in the corner to move the warm air around, and Granddad typing on his black Remington, or was it a Royal? I seem to hear flies buzzing as well. He would always stop and visit with me, so I didn't actually watch him in the writing process,

but to the best of my knowledge, he did not have a diary to consult, but had stored away all of the names, places, and dates in his incredible bald head.

He knew that he wanted several copies of the book he was writing, so there were multiple thin sheets of paper interleaved with carbon. He made few typing errors. Important ones were corrected after the page had been finished, by typing replacement lines, trimming them, and carefully gluing them over the imperfect line—on all copies. When the work was finished, he bound each one in red leatherette and gave them to his four descendants, two children and two grandchildren.

I know that I did not appreciate his work then as I do now. But I did appreciate him and missed him greatly when he died while I was in college.

Here is Sheridan Gordon Latta's account:



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 boxcar for baggage and freight storage. I still have the original copy of the first train order that I ever 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.

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Editorial**Still on a roll**

We're pleased to report that Latta genealogy is alive and well these days.

Our web site has undergone an update and we've inaugurated a genealogy mail list, both of which have brought us new subscribers and cousins and helped many folks extend their research. If you have e-mail capability, please join our mail list. This will be an excellent means for us to stay in touch with one another. See page 7 for more details.

The text of the branches and the notes has been added to the web site for viewing and/or download, and these will be updated as soon as we can get to it. Please feel welcome to download, copy, print out and otherwise distribute these files to libraries, organizations, individuals, etc.

The web site now includes sections for family reunion particulars and links to the home pages of our subscribers. Please send your information for these pages to the editor.

In the next few months we'll call upon the

readers who answered our request for volunteers to help us set up new databases for the web site.

Meanwhile, efforts at linking the branches continues at a slow but steady pace and George is hard at work organizing the information you've sent him.

In response to numerous requests we have reprinted volume one of the newsletter. See the section elsewhere in this issue for details on ordering your copies.

A comment about this issue's cover story: at 5300 words, Sheridan Gordon Latta's memoir is considerably longer than the typical article we publish. For this reason we've divided it into two parts, with the second to appear in a future issue. Because it's written in the **first person** and deals with railroading, a career many of our ancestors pursued, we felt it merits publication in its entirety. We hope you agree and enjoy this letter from the past.

As always, it's gratifying to know that so many of you appreciate our efforts, and we're pleased to have so many cousins working together on our genealogy.

Have a pleasant and productive summer.

The Latta Genealogy Newsletter

Published approximately thrice annually

Dedicated to research among the fifty-one branches of the Latta family in America, and of our family's origins in the Old World.

Funded by contributions from its readers. Suggested contribution: seven to ten dollars per year (US and Canada) international US \$10 to \$13

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

George P. Latta
4 S Pearl Street
Oakfield NY 14125-1217
e-mail: george@latta.org

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

Paul H. Calhoun
736 Grant Street
Port Clinton OH 43452-2149
e-mail: paul@latta.org

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

Extol your branch

Have you always wanted to see your story in print? Now's your chance.

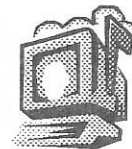
Why not write a front page article about your branch for The Latta Genealogy Newsletter? Tell about the illustrious Lattas it's produced and the heretofore unheralded black sheep. Illustrate your story with an old family photo of great uncle Ferdinand.

You don't have to be an accomplished journalist (or speller, for that matter) because we can do the editing for you.

So fire up that word processor (or sharpen up your Eberhard Faber No.2) and go to work.

Address correction

The correct e-mail address for Sharon Mountford is
SMtford@aol.com

**Ridiculous Riddles**

1. Who was the Latta who spent all his time lying on the front porch?
2. What's the name of the Latta lady whose legs are of unequal lengths?

Railroad telegrapher

(Continued from page 1)

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 payday 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 paydays 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 re-organized 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 no one, 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.

Against this partition set the ticket case, sitting on a narrow shelf, but not fastened 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 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 tickets back in the proper place.

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

(Continued on page 6)

I rolled a heavy sample trunk against this partition hard enough to knock the ticket case off the shelf, which landed on its face spilling the tickets all over the floor.

From the archives of The Latta Family Newsletter

LATTA FAMILY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 1 SPRING 1978 NO. 1

JAMES & ROBERT LATTA*
of York County, S. C.

A good many years elapsed after the location and settlement of our county seat, before it came to the dignity of having a store among its public enterprises. The wants of the industrious are proverbially few. Money too, was very scarce; and its need, of course, discouraged mercantile undertakings. Moreover the condition of the roads was such it was a huge undertaking to get on a small stock of goods. Still, you must not jump to a conclusion and suppose that your grand dames and great grand dames, were debarré that well known delight of feminine life, and were altogether cut off from shopping.

The peddler's pack opened once or twice a year at their doors and gave them a season of gratification more intensely enjoyed from its infrequent occurrence, than a promenade of Main Street with Dobson, Adickes, etc. to all on once or twice a week as at present, by her descendants. The opened goods of the traveling vender offered what her cards, wheel and loom could not supply. Needles, pins, buttons and scissors were laid in as necessities; and if butter and cheese had sold well, out from the traditional stocking came the silver to pay for the stuff petticoat or clock stockings, the comely dame treated herself from the peddler's store. Or, happily, a rosy cheeked lass had "lucked" well with her poultry and the coveted gold ear-bobs, or real silver thimble were now possessed.

Three of the first and most energetic of these traveling merchants, were James Patton, Daniel McMahon, and James Latta. They usually went on to Philadelphia--the mart at which they obtained their stock--together; as the money bags they carried were attractive to robbers, many of which, in those early times, waylaid the road, as in their unity they found strength to resist the attacks. For further mutual benefit and protection, each took a circuit, to which bounds he confined his peregrinations, thus securing large profits by monopoly.

Patton's division was from Spartanburg on through the mountainous region of Buncombe, N.C., and investing his emoluments in the teaming lands of the latter section, laid the foundation for a large fortune. McMahon's rounds lay from Spartanburg on to Union, into Newberry and Fairfield, on to York. Mr. Latta's were York, Mecklenburg, Iredell, Lincoln and Rowan.

Latta was an Irishman--indeed, all of them were from "the gem of the sea"--and he had started forth to cross the main and seek, in the new country a brave fortune. He had with him one little son--Robert--three years of age, and left and elder one with his wife in the "ould country". While at sea, his vessel was wrecked in a

*Extracted by John W. Latta, Jr. from:
Moore, Maurice Augustus, M.D. REMINISCENCES OF YORK
[District, S.C.]. Privately published, 1860. pp 33-35.
[Note: For a reference in time, York County, S.C. was created in 1785. - d]

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He was twice married. First to Miss Allison of York, who died early with consumption. She left two sons and a daughter. Only one survived his father--the late William A. Latta, whose children are the only representatives of the much loved Dr. John A. Allison.

Robert Latta's second marriage was with a lady of Philadelphia--Miss Dilworth. She survived him several years, but is now dead. His only surviving child--the daughter of this marriage--is Mrs. Johnston, of Charlotte, N. C., a "most noble lady."

Robert Latta was a tall, spare man; as dry in conversation as in appearance, having but a faint idea of a joke, and generally failing when he tried one. It was, in truth out of his line of business. For pleasure, as it is generally esteemed, he had no part or parcel. His life's objects were business and health. ***

JOHN WILLIAM LATTA, JR.

John William Latta, Jr. was born 21 May 1933 in Mebane, N.C. The son of John William and Anna Rachel (Hank) Latta. He received his B. S. degree, General Business, from Richmond Professional Institute, Richmond, Va. in 1962. Currently employed: Computer Specialist, U.S. Army Management Systems Support Agency, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. On 24 June 1972 he was married to:

Jane Leslie Stone, born 13 Sep. 1943 in Martinsville, Va. She is the daughter of Rev. Joseph Leslie and Jane Frances (Dunn) Stone. In 1966 she was graduated from North Carolina Wesleyan College, Rocky Mount, N.C., A.B. degree, Vocal Music. Currently employed, Children's Choir Director, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Va. and Handbell Choir Director, Fairlington Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Va.

Their children:

Stephen Holmes Patterson, born 18 June 1968 in Alexandria, Va.
(the son of Jane by a previous marriage).
Harriet Rachel Latta, born 10 Dec. 1974 in Alexandria, Va.

(The above family is that of the Editor and Publisher of Latta Family Newsletter and is based on his personal knowledge).

DANNY RAY LATTA

Danny Ray Latta was born 22 July 1942 in Wichita, Kan., the son of Lester Vernon and Viola Marie (Hink) Latta. He received his B.B.A. degree from the University of Wichita in 1964 and his M.B.A. degree from Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, in 1977. He is currently employed as a Supervisory Auditor for the United States General Accounting Office in Washington, D.C. On July 29, 1967, he was married to:

Connie Lou McDavid, born May 27, 1946, in Wharton, W. Va. She is the daughter of Mansford Charles and Ollie Mae (Willis) McDavid. She is currently employed as a Staff Assistant for the Office of Naval Research. They have no children.

(The above family is that of the Associate Editor of Latta Family Newsletter and is based on his personal knowledge).

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terrific storm, and the conflict with the waves for life, for himself and little boy, seemed a doubtful contest. The Controller of our destinies gave means to save, and, strange to relate, the same day and hour he buffeted the waters so wildly his wife's soul was launched into eternity, all unconscious of the danger of her husband and child. Of course, months elapsed before he knew of the afflicting coincidence, but it was one frequently related.

For years, court week invariably found Mr. Latta at Yorkville. On some planks laid across benches in the public square, his varieties were spread open for the inspection of the crowd, among whom, of course, he found many purchasers. If the weather was inclement, a room at McCall's tavern furnished a shelter and convenient spot for his counter. I wish I could give a bill of goods and prices sold on such a day; but it is beyond my power.

Old Mr. Michael Moore, one of our perambulating hotel-owners, opened the first store in the village. It was a modest assortment, and Mr. Latta's pack still retained, unabated, its popularity. However, the latter, too, concluded to put up a store a little later. His son, Robert, now grown up to man's estate, was left in charge, and thus, in the infant backwoods town, began the career of a storekeeper, of the man who afterward was among the merchant princes of the state. No man ever lived, I suppose, whose attention was more devoted to the business in which he was engaged. The large amount of property owned by his father, was greatly enhanced by the indefatigable efforts of the son.

At the time of Robert Latta's marriage, his father advanced him from a mere clerkship, to the dignity of a partner. This continued some years. In 1810, Robert Latta visited England, and on his return established himself independently in business. He opened a store in York, and afterward had branches in Columbia and Camden. He began dealing in stocks, and money seemed to grow to his order.

It is not my purpose to trace Robert Latta through his successful money-making career--it is too well-known in your midst; but a few words as to the character of this man, whom I knew well from long association and family connection.

He was exact in business transactions to the last farthing--owing or owed, it must be paid. Yet the gift to a nephew, who bore his name, of \$10,000 in cash to enable him to properly establish himself in business, and the handsome marble pulpit of the Columbia Presbyterian Church, prove him to have been no niggardly spirit.

I always thought one great secret of his success was his indefatigability. There was, to use a slang phrase singularly applicable to him, a "never say die spirit" which carried him through every crisis, either mental or bodily. There was a period in his life when he seemed to be in the last stage of consumption; but he would not succumb to the great debility another would not have dreamed of resisting. He throughout the day, would time himself by the watch--walk five minutes and lie five minutes. One day, in this state of health, he rode around to my house in Yorkville, for the transaction of some business, and during the entire time so occupied, he observed this regime, a bed having been prepared in the room for his use.

In this low state, he determined on trying the waters of Virginia Springs. On his way to them, some physician whom he casually consulted, recommended the use of the nitro-muriatic acid bath to his side. He tried it, and always attributed his remarkable improvement to its application. Later, a trip to France seemed entirely to restore him, but he finally died of consumption, at the advanced age of 73.

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SOUTH CAROLINA ARCHIVES -- MEMORIALS OF LAND TITLES*

Vol 6, Part 1, 27A, Page 184

S. Carolina A memorial exhibited by John Latta to be registered in John Latta the Aud. Gen. Office pursuant to an Act of Assembly in that case made and provided of a Plantation or tract of 278 acres of land situate as supposed when run out to be in Anson County N. Carolina on both sides of a fork of Fair Forest Creek beginning at the red oak and runs N 5. ps to a pine then N 50 W 20 ps to a Wt. oak then N. 85 W 260 ps to a pine thence S. 10 W 100 ps to a hickory thence S 15 W 130 ps to a Wt oak then to the beginning originally granted to James Means the 18th of Nov. 1752 2th 4th pro per 100 acres and by him conveyed to the memorialist by deed of release bearing date the 13th day of Feb 1756 but by a late resurvey of the boundary line between N & S Carolina the above tract of land falls within the province of South Carolina in Craven County therefore the memorialist requires this his memorial may be entered in the Auditor Generals Office of this province. In witness whereof he hath hereunto set his hand the 22nd of Dec 1773 /s/ James Latta

Vol 8, 29, Page 337 1765-1769

S. Carolina A memorial exhibited by John Latta to be registered in John Latta the Audr Office agreeable to an Order of Council and to a condition of the grant hereafter mentioned: 200 acres Of a Plantation or tract of land containing 200 acres situated in Craven County bounded to the NE east & North West by David Hunters Land, and to the South by vacant land originally granted the 1st day of June One Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Seven to Samuel Oliver at the Q Rt. of 3/8 Stir or 4/Cis money, two hundred acres to commence 2 yrs from the date. And Sold and Conveyed by him and Elizabeth his wife to the memorialist by lease and release bearing date the 6th day of November One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Eight. In Witness whereof he hath hereunto set his hand this 6th day of Feb 1769. /s/ Henry Foster

Vol 12, Part 2, 33B, Page 452

S. Carolina A memorial exhibited by John Latta to be registered in John Latta the Aud. Gen. Office pursuant to an Act of Assembly in that case made and provided of a Plantation or tract of 278 acres of land situate as supposed when run out to be in Anson County N. Carolina on both sides of a fork of Fair Forest Creek beginning at the red oak and runs N 5. ps to a pine then N 50 W 20 ps to a Wt. oak then N. 85 W 260 ps to a pine thence S. 10 W 100 ps to a hickory thence S 15 W 130 ps to a Wt oak then to the beginning originally granted to James Means the 18th of Nov. 1752 2th 4th pro per 100 acres and by him conveyed to the memorialist by deed of release bearing date the 13th day of Feb 1756 but by a late resurvey of the boundary line between N & S Carolina the above tract of land falls within the province of South Carolina in Craven County therefore the memorialist requires this his memorial may be entered in the Auditor Generals Office of this province. In witness whereof he hath hereunto set his hand the 22nd of Dec 1773 /s/ James Latta

*Extracted by Danny R. Latta

The articles on this page are reprinted exactly as they appeared in The Latta Family Newsletter.

Our thanks to Danny R. Latta and the late John W. Latta, Jr.

Branch 1**Ephraim Latta's descendants**

by Kris Fetter

In Branch number one, William LATTA came over from Ireland around 1740. According to Robert Latta's "A Gazillion Branches of the Latta Family" (just kidding) his son number nine was Ephraim.

Ephraim married a widow named Christiana McFADDEN (what was her maiden name?) born 3 Dec 1776 in MD. She brought to the marriage a son named Daniel (or David?) McFADDEN. Ephraim and Christiana had their children in Pennsylvania, then in about 1826 they moved to Wayne County OH. There Ephraim bought out John FASIG, owner of the first log cabin in town, and started making hand sickles. In 1855 the town changed its name from West Union to Lattasburg.

Ephraim died in May 1838 and his will was presented in Green Twp., Richland County OH on 5 June 1838.

Christiana lived 79 years and 4 months. She died 3 April 1856 in Seneca County OH, where she moved after her husband's death, probably to be near her daughters Sarah and Mary. In the 1850 census there were a Margaret JENKINS age 46, and a Martin LATTA, age 9. Was he a grandson who was visiting? Christiana was buried in the Springville Cemetery, Seneca County OH. Nearby are her daughters and their families.

The children of Ephraim and Christiana were:

1. William Franklin b. 30 Jan 1809 PA
2. John
3. Ephraim Jr. b. 21 Nov. 1812 d. 9 Oct. 1866 md. Diantha KUFFELL.
4. David b. 1813
5. Toby (Tabor?) b. 14 Oct. 1816 PA
6. Sarah b. 20 Jul. 1819 d. 9 Jun. 1860
7. Silas b. 25 Apr. 1821 d. 2 Mar. 1860 md. Sarah FRANKS

8. Mary L. (Polly) b. 13 Nov. 1815 d. 19 May 1862

9. (?) There is another Mary listed in Robert Latta's book, but I found no proof of her. Does anyone else have it?

Sarah was born 20 July 1819 in PA. She moved to Seneca County OH with her mother and sister Mary. Sarah married John LUZADER 10 Jan 1839 in Seneca County OH. She and John had ten children together and she died when her youngest was six months old, 9 June 1860 in Seneca County OH. She was buried in Springville Cemetery, Seneca County OH.

Her husband John was the son of Thomas and Margaret (BERRY) LUZADER of Taylor County VA/WV. Thomas was descended from the first Spanish Jews in New Jersey. The family moved to Ross County OH, where his parents died when he was a young boy. At thirteen he was taken in by Elijah BRAYTON of Wyandot (then Crawford) County OH. John died 20 Oct. 1902 in Carey, Wyandot County OH, and was buried in Springville Cemetery.

Elijah BRAYTON was a pioneer of Wyandot (Crawford) County, having been there since 1816. In 1826 his son Matthew was supposedly kidnapped by the Seneca Indian tribe out of Canada. The Senecas periodically made raids looking for children to adopt in place of lost tribal members. Soon after, John was taken in and raised by the Braytons. The Braytons never gave up on finding Matthew, but he never turned up.

The children of John and Sarah:

1. Thomas Theodore b. 5 Sept. 1840 md. Julia McPHERSON
2. Alonzo b. 12 Aug. 1841 d. 9 May 1842
3. William Ephraim b. 16 Jul. 1843 d. 2 Jun. 1863 in the Civil War.
4. Loweka b. 2 Mar 1844 d. 12 Feb. 1863
5. Alvin Dull b. 9 Jan 1847
6. Margaret Ann b. 1850 d. 1926 md. William J. STAHL
7. Mary Jane b. 1853 md. James SANDERSON
8. Charles Fremont b. 7 Oct. 1854 d. 18 Jan 1929
9. John Franklin b. Oct. 1857 d. 1922
10. Sarah Rachel b. Apr. 1860 md. Charles G. STECKER

Mary L. Latta was born 13 Nov 1815 in PA. She died 19 May 1862 in Springville, Seneca County OH and was buried in Springville Cemetery, Seneca County OH.

Mary (also called Polly) married John JENKINS before 1834 in Wood Co. OH. John and his brother Ben were the first white settlers of Big Spring Twp, where Springville is now.

Mary and John's children were

1. Ephraim Miller b. 1834 Bowling Green, Wood Co. OH
2. Sarah J. b. 1836
3. Benjamin F. b. 1838
4. Melissa M. b. 7 Nov 1840 d. 7 Sept 1847
5. Alonzo H. b. 6 Aug 1843 d. 11 Jan 1865
6. Ransom H. b. 4 Feb 1846 d. 12 Aug 1847
7. Artilissa b. 1849
8. Zoe A. b. 28 Nov 1854 d. 28 Jan 1857.

I have a whole lot more on the LUZADER family if anyone is interested. My sources are listed below.

1. The Forty-nine Branches of the Latta Family, by Robert H. Latta
2. History of Wayne Co. OH pg. 836
3. Ephraim Latta's will from the Richland County OH Abstracts of Wills 1813-1873 by Anne Lockwood Dallas Budd.
4. 1850-1880 Seneca County Ohio census
5. History of Seneca Co. OH 1886, by Warner-Beers and Co.

Any corrections or additions (with documentation please) are gratefully accepted.

Kris Fetter, 1258 CR 192, Antwerp OH 45813-9306, (419) 258-2489 e-mail Geep70@bright.net

Railroad telegrapher

(Continued from page 3)

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 this 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 as 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 to the elevators mostly in tank trucks direct from the thrashing 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 thrashing 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

(Continued on page 7)

Before I got to sleep there was a crash outside that ended my contemplated sleep.

(Continued from page 6)

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 track 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 women 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 compan-

ionship. 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

(Continued on page 12)

What's New on the 'Net?

Web page redesigned, revamped

The Latta Genealogy Newsletter web site is newly revised and residing at its new home at www.latta.org. Visitors will find the site easier to navigate and boasting several new features. Now included are:

- information on Latta reunions
- links to readers' home pages
- access to the following text files
 - * all 51 branches
 - * lettered and numbered notes to the branches
 - * index to Lattas and

In the foreseeable future, the site will present a new, improved, searchable mat and other wonderful bells and whistles.

LATTA-L mail list debuts

If you have e-mail capability but not internet access, you'll still be able to utilize this new service.

Subscribers to the mail list can post messages which are relayed to all subscribers to the list, and receive copies of messages posted by other subscribers.

In just over two months of operation the mail list has more than seventy subscribers and has already helped several folks make new Latta connections.

If you'd like more information about this terrific FREE research tool, send any message to maillist@latta.org and you'll receive an automated reply with all the details, including instructions on how to subscribe.

Don't delay, write today!

Indiana State Library Genealogy Division
 "L - M"
 Indiana Marriages Through 1850

Last Name, Bride or Groom	First Name, Bride or Groom	Last Name, Spouse	First Name, Spouse	County	Date	Remarks
Latta	A.W.	Tevis	Melissa	Rush	2-5-1850	
Latta	Abraham	Dean	Lovica	Vigo	12-2-1849	
Latta	Alexander	Stopher	Margaret	Dearborn	9 15 42	
Latta	Calvin	Jenkins	Rachel	Ohio	3-19-1846	John Hunter, J.P.
Latta	Catharine	Winegar	James E.	Elkhart	11-10-1850	
Latta	David	Bain	Jane	La Grange	12-25-1849	2-77
Latta	Isabella	Dirbin	Melvin	Harrison	11-4-1812	(lic.)
Latta	James	Craig	Eliza Jane	Elkhart	1-18-1842	
Latta	James J.	Jinkins	Sarah	Ohio	6-17-1847	John Hunter, J.P.
Latta	Jane	Goodner	John	Dearborn	11-9-1826	
Latta	John	Morrison	Sarah	Dearborn	1 21 36	
Latta	John Milton	Haney	Lydia	Elkhart	9-4-1849	
Latta	John R.	Orr	Rebecca	Fountain	1-1-1837	
Latta	John T.	Woods	Martha	Dearborn	10 17 42	
Latta	Johnston	Copeland	Martha L.	Elkhart	9-26-1842	
Latta	Margaret	Herrington	William	Jefferson	8-15-1833	
Latta	Mary Ann	Stone	Benjamin	Dearborn	12 15 36	
Latta	Nancy	Fisher	John	La Grange	5-25-1848	2-18
Latta	Nancy	Eversole	Christopher	Vigo	1-25-1842	
Latta	Robert	Keyt	Elizabeth	Jefferson	7-27-1848	
Latta	Robert S.	Tumbleson	Mary	La Grange	12-21-1848	2-43
Latta	Susan	Low	Samuel	Vigo	1-6-1842	
Latta	William	Mewhinney	Barbary	Vigo	12-26-1847	
Latta	William J.	Wyland	Catharine	Elkhart	11-5-1846	
Latta	William R.	Taylor	Rebecca S.	Jefferson	12-23-1840	

Submitted by Ric Eversole

Where in the world?



Reunion plans

On Sunday, July 26, I am planning a family reunion here in Buena Vista of Latta, McLaughlin and Reed family members. The Latta is of Branch 1, but after doing more reading it seems like almost every Latta is related in some way!

Contact Sandy Johnston, PO Box 1131, Buena Vista CO 81211-1131, (719) 395-9385.

Our readers write

Joe and Ethel Kimble Latta mentioned in last EXCELLENT newsletter are my parents.

The cemetery at Apache is out in the middle of a cow pasture, with barbed wire fence, tumbleweeds, and wide spaces. It is near the strange marker where Geronimo surrendered, where Dad courted Mom on horseback...I am writing a book about my parents.

Thanks.

Liz Latta Garver

Queries

Send your queries to the editor, Paul H. Calhoun, 736 Grant St, Port Clinton OH 43452-2149 (paul@latta.org)

LATTA	Is there anyone researching LATTAs from Slovakia? My father's maternal grandmother was Teresa LATTA, a Rusyn from an area near Kosice, Slovakia. Any information on LATTAs in this area would be very helpful. —Carl E. Weaver, 804 W. Morgan St. #V3B, Raleigh, NC 27603 (ceweaver@geocities.com)
LATTA (Branch 7)	Has anyone discovered further information on Thomas LATTA Sr (Branch 7, family 1), such as who he married and when or where he died. I would guess him to have been born ca 1760. —Douglas K. Latta, PO Box 464, Grafton WV 26354
CHAMBERS LATTA (Branch 6) STOKES	William Harvey LATTA (Branch 6) was born in Maury Co, TN on 5 May 1816. He was married to Pernetta Gordon STOKES in Graves Co, KY in November 1836. One of the children was my GGgrandmother, Margaret Fredonia LATTA. She married Wm. Franklin CHAMBERS, a Confederate army POW, in November 1864. I am looking for any photography that could be copied or personal documents or information relating to Wm. Harvey LATTA, his wife and children, and this branch and family (no. 7). I have some photography and will share information. I would also enjoy corresponding with anyone that is a branch 6 descendant. —Gerry Tunstall, 17400 SW Cheyenne Way, Tualatin, OR 97062-8468 (famtunstall@imagina.com)
CALDWELL COMBEVERCE LATTA	My father-law is Homer C LATTA, born Oct. 1, 1923 in Battle Creek MI, died June 23, 1981 in MI. He was the son of Henry Vern and Mildred COMBEVERCE (not sure of the spelling). He was married to Helen Mae CALDWELL and had four sons and one daughter: Steven Vern, Donna Jean who was born 24 Jan 1949 and died 20 Jan, 1989, and John Homer, Jerry Allen, and Donald Wayne. Had two brothers and five sisters: Mercy, Vera, Rollo, Lenna, Lavina, Sally, and Max. If any one knows any thing it would be much appreciate. —Jeannie M. Latta (j.m.latta@juno.com)
LATTA HANAWALT	John HANAWALT married Isabella LATTA 1840 [Branch 3, family 14—ed.]. Looking for more information. I have information I can share. —Kenneth D. Hanawalt, 2226 Raleigh Dr, Augusta GA 30904-5252; hanawaltk@emh.gordon.army.mil



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Paul H. Calhoun, Editor
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Our Financial Contributors since the last issue

Gotta love ya!

Subscriber	Branch	Postal Address	e-mail Address
Merle W. Allen	29	9420 Newton St, Westminster CO 80030-3172	
Dorothy R. Arwe	9	E Surry Rd, PO Box 433, Keene NH 03431-0433	
Gisele A. Atterberry	43	705 W Washington St, Champaign IL 61820-3334	gaatterb@prairienet.org
Norma L. Bertola	30	1454 Paradise Lane, Taylorsville UT 84123-4340	jamesber@ix.netcom.com
Kathleen F. Birt	30	16317 E 33rd St, Independence MO 64055-2922	
Kathleen M. Burns	17	6949 Middletown Rd, Galion OH 44833-8916	
Richard C. Carlson	48	4126 Donald Dr, Palo Alto CA 94306-3800	rccarl@sjm.infi.net
Marcia A. Clements	3	2255 Westmoreland Rd, Colorado Springs CO 80907-4934	
Michelle W. Cook	28	1805 Chestnut Ln, Longview TX 75604-4312	ShellCook@aol.com
Janice Latta Coulter	1	893 Shadow Mountain Dr, Highlands Ranch CO 80126-2173	Janalc@aol.com
Carole L. Craig	3	Address not published at subscriber's request	craigc@mcnet.marietta.edu
Thomas Dolan	46	Address not published at subscriber's request	dolan@micronet.net
Larry D. Draughon	7	1537 E McLellan Rd, Mesa AZ 85203-3842	
Curt and Lee Eakin	3	Address not published at subscriber's request	EakinArkiv@aol.com
Margaret M. Evans	27	9103 South Urbana #B, Tulsa OK 74137-3958	
Ric L. Eversole	51	PO Box 335, Timnath CO 80547-0335	RLEVERSOLE@aol.com
Kris M. Fetter	1	1258 CR 192, Antwerp OH 45813-9306	Geep70@bright.net
John E. Friedell	29	PO Box 293, Shell Lake WI 54871-0293	
Jerry C. Gordon	12	4748 Carmichael Chase NE, Marietta GA 30066-1473	Jakeg@gte.net
Theresa A. Grant	23	PO Box 4936, Palm Springs CA 92263-4936	
Faye L. Grimmer		16683 Remlap Dr, Remlap AL 35133-4207	g.w.grimmer@worldnet.att.net
Donald F. Hanson	15	161 Manitoba St, St Thomas ONT N5P 3A3 CANADA	
Robert M. Hawkins	22	2123 Lilly Ave Apt A, St. Louis MO 63110-2942	artemp@epconline.com
Deborah A. Haywood	33	PO Box 158, Piggott AR 72454-0158	
Ada C. Heinson	3	9214 X Rd, Meade KS 67864-9040	
Patricia M. Hutchings	15	3213 Rugby Road, Durham NC 27707-5428	
Norma H. Johnston	1	PO Box 1131, Buena Vista CO 81211-1131	lejnhj@rmi.net
Joy L. Kirby	1	231 E 19th St, Idaho Falls ID 83404-6021	
Rose L. Kyle	3	1400 Gulf Blvd Apt 103, Clearwater FL 34630-2829	
Virginia L. Latchford	1	134 Morningside Rd, Paramus NJ 07652-1600	
Albert W. Latta	37	452 Rancho Vista Rd, Vista CA 92083-5932	Bigbert99@aol.com
Alex L. Latta Jr.	16	6104 94A Avenue, Edmonton AB T6B 0Y8 CANADA	
Betty A. Latta	13	20 Orchard St, Holley NY 14470-1012	latta11234@aol.com
David L. Latta	9	18901 N Skylight Mt, Caneyhill AR 72717-9405	
Dorothy A. Latta	22	515 Rocky Ford Rd, Columbus IN 47203-1222	dlatta@hsonline.net
Garry Latta	13	1524 Vancouver St, Nelson BC V1L 1E6 CANADA	
George P. Latta	13	4 S Pearl St, Oakfield NY 14125-1217	LATTA34@aol.com
Gregory A. Latta		306 Willard Ave SE, Warren OH 44483-6238	
James M. Latta	3	343 Sunset Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15235-5239	
James P. Latta	9	1315 Alboe Ln, Eckert CO 81418-8606	x3074@co.tds.net
John A. Latta	3	773 Riverview Ln, Winder GA 30680-3144	
John M. Latta	29	1160 Tournament Dr, Hillsborough CA 94010-7432	
Kenneth W. Latta	7	4509 Briarhaven Rd, Fort Worth TX 76109-4606	70731.2221@compuserve.com
Lawrence R. Latta	29	600 Ipswich St, Westerville OH 43081-3216	lattal@iwaynet.net
Richard J. Latta	3	24 Greystone Rd, Marblehead MA 01945-2848	
Robert J. Latta MD	6	19574 Via Monte Dr, Saratoga CA 95070-4522	
Robert W. Latta	4	PO Box 90484, Pasadena CA 91109-0484	rjlatta@email.sjsu.edu
Roseann Latta	3	PO Box 1413, Winter Park FL 32790-1413	boblatta@1stnetusa.com
W. Ralph Latta	13	183 Merlin Cres, Regina Sask S4R 3E6 CANADA	RLatta2488@aol.com
Wayne H.W. Latta	13	210 Webb Rd, Stouffville ONT L4A 7X4 CANADA	Klatta@aol.com
William A. Latta		408 E 80th Terrace, Kansas City MO 64131-2119	
Linda K. Latta-Smith	9	16300 Cambridge Ct, Bowie MD 20715-4342	LKSmith111@aol.com
Charlene A. Latta-Wellman	9	44979 15th St W, Lancaster CA 93534-2104	pdgl192@earthlink.net
Alexander Latto		3 Ochilview, Alva, Clacks FK12 5EU SCOTLAND	
Richard M. Lyman	8	9 Puffin Ct, Novato CA 94949-6638	
Charles X. McCalla III	32	PO Box 151, Paoli IN 47454-0151	
James G. McClure		3704 Stonegate Rd, Durham NC 27705-5476	
Kelly L. McKnight	1	57 SE 951, Knob Noster MO 65336-2014	
Colleen L. Miller	1	1111 Wylie Rd Apt 16, Norman OK 73069-4456	okimom@aol.com

(Continued from page 10)

Subscriber	Branch	Postal Address	e-mail Address
Elaine B. Morris	4	3077 Lakeside Dr, Shelby Township MI 48316-2957	emorris@teleweb.net
Charles Latta Newhall	1	The Carroll School, Baker Bridge Rd, Lincoln MA 01773-	cnewhall@hotmail.com
Theresa A. Oloffson	43	PO Box 207, Wyanet IL 61379-0207	toloff@TheRamp.net
Audrey L. Parker	6	6212 Baker NE, Albuquerque NM 87109-2742	
Randall G. Phillips	4	3303 Ferguson Corners Rd, Penn Yan NY 14527-9344	Phillipsf2@aol.com
Jo-Anne L. Poljanski	13	364 Imperial Rd S, Guelph ONT N1K 1L4 CANADA	jo-ern@wave.home.com
Lyla K. Richard		Rt 2 Box 204-1F, Woodward OK 73801-9635	lrichd@pldi.net
M. E. Ritchie		11 Verona St, Vermont Sth 3133, Victoria AUSTRALIA	
Marie Scaife		106 Banks Lane, Riddlesden-Keighley, W. Yorkshire BD20 5PQ ENGLAND	
Andrew B. Searle	4	P.O. Box 1016, Groton MA 01450-3016	andrewsearle@compuserve.com
Cindy M. Stiene	1	02 Sugar Leaf Ct, Madison AL 35758-7925	cstiene@traveller.com
Jane L. Strickland	3	1131 Melody Ln, Roanoke TX 76262-8834	jstrick@pop.flash.net
John Talvacchio	4	3621 Ridgewood Dr, Pittsburgh PA 15235-5233	talvac@darla.pa.essd.northgrum.co
Edith H. Tresner	13	54 Auburn Rd, W Harford CT 06119-1303	
Gerry W. Tunstall	6	17400 SW Cheyenne Way, Tualatin OR 97062-9415	famtunstall@imagina.com
Arnold A. Van Horn	29	18075 Laughman Rd, Lore City OH 43755-9737	vhorn1@juno.com
Letha B. Van Wyck		9715 NE 28th Street, Vancouver WA 98662-7474	
Susan C. Wells		3615 Luallen Dr, Carrollton TX 75007-2908	Susancwell@aol.com
George W. Wilkerson		419 Achievement Dr, Nashville TN 37209-2830	wilkerbee@aol.com
W. Eugene Wilkerson		313 Eulala Circle, Nashville TN 37211-6107	vikaw@mindspring.com
Sandra S. Wilson	1	2233 E 53rd St S, Wichita KS 67216-3254	sandra751@aol.com

Financial report

from 1 January through 30 April 1998

PREVIOUS BALANCE	\$859.51
Receipts	
Subscription contributions	\$899.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$899.00
Expenditures	
Exchange Fees	\$ 6.67
Postage	\$255.40
Printing	\$239.00
Supplies	\$290.12
Web Services	\$332.80
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1123.99
BALANCE ON HAND	\$634.52

Research in the homeland

by Alex. Latta (Branch 16) allatta@gambit.ab.ca

I would like to offer to researchers of the Lattas some of my experiences in pursuing this endeavor. I am seventy years old now, but have had an enduring interest in my heritage for some time. In this regard, I am fortunate in having relatives still living in Ireland, which has given me a home base from which to work. The work done by Robert H. Latta, of Denver, Colorado, assisted me no end. The accuracy of the history of my family depends on the memory of my grandfather, who had corresponded with R. H. Latta. There are small gaps, which research should fill in. Perhaps some errors.

I had spent several years going to Ireland, and to Donegal, looking for information, with a lot of success, in the hearth tax rolls, and in the stela information that I located. I had somewhat come to a standstill, when I received a letter from Marie Scaife, of W. Yorkshire, who was referred to me by my cousin in Ireland. She had run an ad in the paper, looking for someone in Ireland to help her with her Irish connections. She was

given my name, as the only one doing research in our family. Being 8000 miles away, I felt that a phone call was warranted, and would expedite things. She indicated that she would be in Canada regarding her research, so I invited her to come to Edmonton, and we could exchange information. She did this, and we struck up a lasting relationship. I have visited her and her husband in England several times, now. Marie has a very interesting story, but this is for her to tell. Now, when I arrive in England, I buy a used car, in good driving condition, insure it, and take off. Sometimes my golf clubs are in the "boot." I make a deal with the car lot to buy it back at a given price, if undamaged, on my return. This has proven successful after many trips, and saves me about 50% over renting. This is not satisfactory for trips of less than one month.

I usually go to Scotland, look around a bit, then take the ferry to Belfast, and drive west to Donegal. There, I stay with Ian Latta, near St. Johnstown, who is not immediately related, but with whose parents I had become acquainted. They have both passed away since. It is thought that the house that they lived in, by the Taughboyne church, was at one time occupied by my family, from which they ran a small store, over two hundred years ago. My wife and I stayed in this same house with them. An experience that money could not buy.

I spend about a week here, then proceed to our farm in Wexford. There is no mystery to our history here, so I relax for a couple of weeks, before returning to England. I keep a complete record of our family here, including old and new pictures. Sepia tones are great, if copied by Laser printer. I enlarge all pictures to 8½" x 11", so there is some consistency and give dates and descriptions on the back. Our family bible is also at this site. Each trip raises questions that must be answered on the next trip.

Although I disclose no miraculous secret of research here, I hope it might be of interest to some, and show that an interest in your history could have very pleasant results. I certainly have enjoyed mine.

Railroad telegrapher

(Continued from page 7)

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 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.

To be continued in a future issue

Genealogy pays the Peifers

Bonnie and Oliver Peifer are charter subscribers to *The Latta Genealogy Newsletter* and enthusiastic genealogists and world travelers. Your editor asked them to tell our readers how they were able to combine these two passions in a noteworthy fashion.

Before retirement Oliver was an electrical engineer and Bonnie an executive secretary in California while living in Orange County. After retirement Oliver and Bonnie started looking up their family roots by visiting some of the old homesteads across the U.S. Their goal was to leave behind for their children and grandchildren some knowledge of their immigrant ancestors. This led to months of research in Salt Lake City and the need for college courses on how to proceed.



Bonnie and Ollie Peifer on the lecture circuit

While traveling across the country via motor home, because of their enthusiasm and methods of research they were asked to lecture at various Genealogical Societies. This led to lecturing at genealogical seminars and aboard cruise ships. They have completed four cruises: to Europe, South America, the Panama Canal and Alaska. They have gotten a very good response from the participants and many thanks for starting them in genealogy, an endeavor which enables them to give something to their grandchildren that only they could give.

While at home in Yuma, AZ, Oliver and Bonnie are librarians at the Family History Center, a branch of the Mormon Library at Salt Lake City. During the summer months they usually do their research all over the country, including Europe. They found by donating books of their family research in the areas where their relatives lived, that others are able to contact them for further help.

They are very active in computer use having over 29,000 names of their ancestors in their genealogy program, which they share with others.

Bonnie is a member of Latta Branch 3. Contact the Peifers at 3750 E County 17th St, Yuma AZ 85365-4744, obpeifer@juno.com (if you can catch them at home!)