

NOV. 1995

# THRASHER NEWSLETTER

Mentor: Dot Pruett

Editor: Barbara Eger

Circulation: John Thrasher

Vol. 14, No. 1

## 1995 Thrasher Reunion a "Trip to the Past"

Nearly 50 Thrasher family members attended the 20th Annual Reunion in Ashburn, Georgia, June 24. Lyn Thrasher of Macon was in charge of our reunion this year, and arranged for it to be held in the lovely old house built by Emmett and Grace Thrasher at the turn of the century and home to several generations of Thrasher descendants.

The beautifully restored home is now a community center for Ashburn, under the auspices of the Community National Bank of Ashburn. We all would like to express our thanks to Lyn, whose efforts made this one of our most memorable reunions.

Thanks also go to Ginger Brock, whose husband Brinson is executive vice president of the bank. Her talk describing the history of the house, its restoration, and how it is enjoyed by Turner County residents, as well as many from other areas of the state, was a highlight of our meeting. Gerald Bishop, Nancy Cherry, Lyn Thrasher and Col. Warren Thrasher gave brief talks as well.

A delicious buffet dinner was catered by Dianne Robinson, and the beautiful table decorations included flowers provided by several Ashburn residents and arranged with candles, mirrors and ferns by Margaret Harper of Turner County Florist. The Ashburn newspaper, *The Wiregrass Farmer*, sent a photographer and printed a picture and story on the reunion in their June 28 issue.

Those attending came from six states and the District of Columbia — Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Tennessee and the city of Washington. Among those attending their first Thrasher Reunion were Eustace and Mary Alice Bishop, Lanier and Katherine Bishop, Lucie Thrasher Bryant, Tom Bryant Jr., Steve and Julie Drake, Evelyn Evans, Frank Hardin, Frances Leitner, and Pattie Bishop Savelle.

## DATE, LOCATION SET FOR '96 REUNION

Next year's reunion will be Saturday, June 22, at The Colquitt in Moultrie, Georgia. Our thanks go to Gerald Bishop of Moultrie, who has offered to be in charge of arrangements. The Colquitt, now a retirement living center, has been carefully preserved and restored to reflect the grace and elegance of the Old South.

This reunion site will offer something extra for anyone interested in research. Moultrie is the site of the Ellen Payne Odom Genealogy Library, one of the largest private genealogy libraries in the country. The Odom

Library is noted for the Emmett Lucas Collection specializing in the southeastern United States and the migration routes west, as well as its Scottish Collection, holding material deposited by more than 80 Scottish Clans. If any of you would like to plan some extra time in Moultrie to explore this library, the hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

We are looking forward to another memorable reunion. Mark the date on your calendars now, and plan to attend. Details will follow in a later newsletter.

## NEWSLETTER CHANGES

With this issue, the Thrasher Newsletter is undergoing a major change. Dot Pruett, who has been editor from its inception, has asked that she be relieved.

She has been the "guiding light" of the association for the past 20 years, and, while we have reluctantly agreed to the change, we are grateful that Dot will continue to be involved as treasurer, newsletter advisor, and general supporter. I personally owe Dot a great deal for her kindness, and I know everyone joins me in expressing our thanks to her for all her hard work and enthusiasm over the years.

Items for the newsletter now should be sent to me, Barbara Eger, at 8770F Allison Drive, Arvada, CO 80005. If you have Internet

access, you can send e-mail to me at eger@spot.colorado.edu. Please drop me a note about anything you would like to share with the family — research, stories about previous generations, and especially today's news about family marriages, births and deaths.

Remember, any and all suggestions are VERY welcome. If I make mistakes, please let me know. John E. Thrasher of Micanopy will be reproducing the newsletter and mailing it out to all of you. See, Dot, how important you were to us — it takes two of us, with advice and help from you, to do what you have done alone all this time!

## THRASHER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Thankfully, Dot has agreed to continue collecting dues, maintaining the membership list and managing the finances for the newsletter. Annual dues for the Thrasher Family Association are \$20. The money is used for reproduction and mailing costs for the newsletter. A coupon for payment of your annual dues is enclosed with this issue. Please send your coupon with a check to Dot as soon as possible so that we can continue to keep you in touch with both the old and the new about the Thrashers and all of our many branches.

## FAMILY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

### WEDDING BELLS RING IN MONTGOMERY

Joseph Thomas Wilson and Jennifer Kaye Mills were married on June 25, 1995, at Vaughn Park Church of Christ in Montgomery. The groom is the son of Lelia Thrasher and Sidney Madison Wilson of Auburn, Ala., and the bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Laughry Mills of Montgomery. The couple is presently residing in Opelika, Ala. Congratulations and best wishes for much happiness to both of them.

### IN MEMORIAM:

### NELL STRICKLAND THRASHER

On behalf of all the family, our deepest sympathy goes to Earl Thrasher of Quitman, Georgia, on the loss of his wife. Nell Strickland Thrasher, 75, died Friday, Jan. 6, at Brooks County Hospital after a lengthy illness. She was the daughter of Walter Homer Strickland and Clara Beaty Strickland. Born in Brooks County, Georgia, she lived for many years in Lakeland, Florida. In addition to her husband Earl, she is survived by three sisters, Margaret Nash of Tallahassee and Betty Jo Buntyn and Jewell Davis of Jacksonville, as well as several nieces and nephews.

## RESEARCH CORNER

The Research Corner is something that I'll need your help on -- if you have something research-related to share with the rest of us send it in and I'll include it as space permits. It can be specific to the Thrashers and connected families, general tips on sources of genealogical information or an article you think might be just of general interest. The idea is an experiment, and will depend on people sending me enough stuff to keep it going.

### OLD NEWSPAPERS: WINDOWS ON THE PAST

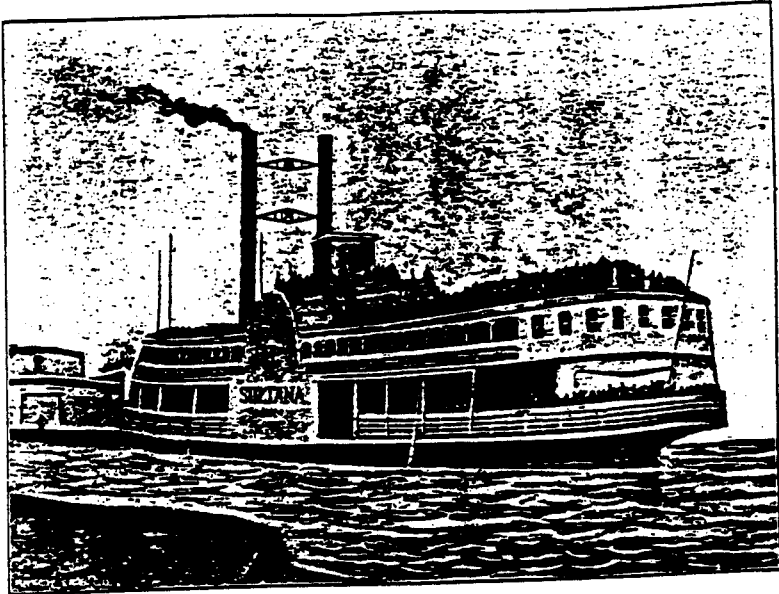
During a recent trip to Dade City, Florida, I discovered that the Pasco County Library has microfilms of almost all of the old issues of the Dade City Banner, the local newspaper from the 1930s and 1940s. They are a fascinating window on a time that most of us either don't remember at all or remember as small children. Bond drives, war news, and just the every-day events of a small town in a simpler time make fascinating reading. I even discovered my great-grandfather's (Willis Edgar Thrasher, youngest son of "Cousin John" Thrasher) obituary in the Oct. 19, 1934, issue. Most libraries have similar microfilms of the old newspapers from their areas, and these are a rich source of information.

### CAN ANYONE FIND CLUES TO THIS THRASHER?

A woman belonging to the genealogy newgroup I subscribe to sent me the following information from a book she found, "Loss of the Sultana and Reminiscences of Survivors" by the Rev. Chester D. Berry.

Obviously, the Thrashers, like so many families, had members on both sides of the Civil War. This would seem to be one who fought on the Union side.

In the spring of 1865 when the War Between the States was closing, the Union decided to exchange some of their prisoners. Union prisoners from Cahaba prison in Alabama and Andersonville in Georgia were released. They were marched to Vicksburg and loaded onto the steamboat Sultana to go up the Mississippi. Most of the prisoners were from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia. The steamboat was licensed to carry about 370 people, but more than 2000 were crammed on the boat. Disaster struck when the boat's boiler exploded at 2 a.m. on April 27, 1865. Ultimately all but 300 people died, most by drowning or dying of injuries from the explosion, although many of those who were able to swim died of exposure. One of the survivors was a Samuel J. Thrasher, b. Hawkins County, Tenn., in 1839. He is listed as being from Company G, Sixth Kentucky Cavalry Volunteers. He is shown as being alive in the late 1880s and living in Brown's Cross Roads, Kentucky. There don't seem to be any links to known Thrasher branches. Does anyone out there have any information or ideas? Following is a copy of the book's title page and Samuel's account of the disaster.



# LOSS OF THE SULTANA

AND

# REMINISCENCES OF SURVIVORS.

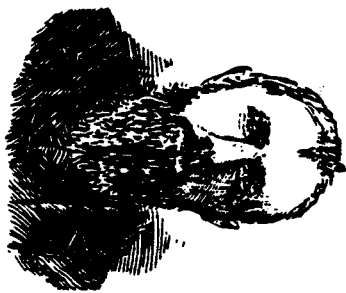
HISTORY OF A DISASTER WHERE OVER ONE THOUSAND FIVE  
HUNDRED HUMAN BEINGS WERE LOST, MOST OF THEM  
BEING EXCHANGED PRISONERS OF WAR ON  
THEIR WAY HOME AFTER PRIVATION AND  
SUFFERING FROM ONE TO TWENTY-  
THREE MONTHS IN CAHADA  
AND ANDERSONVILLE  
PRISONS.

By REV. CHESTER D. BERRY.

LANSING, MICH.  
DARIUS D. THORP, PRINTER AND BINDER.  
1892.

4

## SAMUEL J. THRASHER.



I WAS born in Hawkins county, East Tenn., on the 19th of November, 1839. Enlisted at Louisville, Ky., February 8, 1863, in Company G, 6th Regiment Kentucky Cavalry Volunteers. Was captured near Tuscaloosa, Ala., March 31, 1865, and confined in a prison at Marion, Ala.

On the evening of the 25th of April, 1865, at Vicksburg, Miss., I was put on board the ill-fated "Sultana," which steamed up the great "Father of Waters," until it reached Memphis, Tenn., where it landed and put off some freight, then went up the river to the coal yard, coaled for Cairo, Ill., and then after proceeding about seven miles the boiler of the boat exploded. This occurred on the 27th of April, 1865, at about half-past two A. M., there being on board at the time 1,966 peroled soldiers, a part of whom were killed by the explosion and others crippled or maimed.

When the steamer caught fire almost every one on board became frightened. The writer could not swim and thought his chance for life was slim, and stood holding to a small rope to keep the men from crowding him overboard. A comrade, Abraham Rhodes, here said if we would not get excited we could save ourselves. After the crowd quit surging so there was no danger of being knocked overboard, we got the cable

rope and made it fast in the rings on the bow of the boat and throw it over into the water. We then made a large chain fast in the same way and throw it over. When the heat became so intense we could not stay on the boat any longer we went down into the water, under the bow of the boat, holding to the rope and chain until the cabin burned down. There were several swimming around and when they saw the chain and rope they laid hold of it. After the cabin had burned down, those who had got into the river prepared to swim, having on only shirt and drawers, climbed back on the boat and throw down a rope which we put under our arms and they drew us up to the hull of the burning steamer. After all were back on the hull we went to work and put out the fire, so that it would not sink so quickly.

As we were drifting down the river we struck a grove of saplings. We had made a small raft out of the timbers of the boat and ran out a line, made fast to a sapling and stopped the boat or hull. Some of my unfortunate companions went out to a house that was surrounded by water, got a large hewed log and fastened it to the raft, brought it in and took out as many as twelve at a time by lying flat across the log. The raft made some three or four trips before all were taken off. The writer and one of the 3rd Tennessee Cavalry were the last to leave the boat, and had not been off the hull but a short time when it went down. After a while a picket boat came up and took us back to Memphis where we were cared for in the hospital. From there we went by boat to Cairo, Ill., and then to Louisville, Ky., then to Nashville,

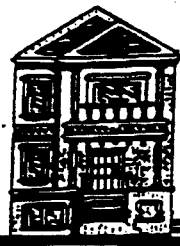
where I was mustered out on the 23rd day of July, 1865.

Present postoffice address, Brown's Cross Roads, Ky.

75¢

No. 9

Old



# Tuscaloosa

C O U N T Y M A G A Z I N E

HISTORY, HUMOR AND TALL TALES OF OLD ALABAMA

Page 18



## When Thrasher Shot Bass 'Bloody Bibb' Was Born

By Suzanne Pickett

"Why Bloody Bibb?," referring to the name once commonly used for the small county.

There are many reasons, but the culminating act came when Bart Thrasher shot Griff Bass and from then on the "Bloody Bibb" stuck.

An eye witness, Archie Blackman, son of a slave told the story years ago. "Yes ... I seen him kill Griff Bass. Me and Tanter and Bart came into town together. He (Bart) swore he would kill Bass and Cole when they shot his brother."

The Thrasher boys grew up and got into trouble with the law. Bart, a fearless man, was arrested many times. A man of his word, he told his family which day to expect him, and that very day he showed up.

A posse found his brother at Big Springs and

shot him ruthlessly, pumping 16 shells into his body. Then deputies Cole and Griff Bass walked up to shoot him again. Bart Thrasher learned the details of his brother's death and swore to avenge him.

Though an outlaw, Bart, like Jesse James, was loved by his family and friends. Even at his death, at age 37, Blackman never admitted that Bart was a bad man.

"I'd fight to the death for him, and he'd do the same for me," Archie told me.

"I loved that white man. All Bart wanted was revenge for the way they shot his brother — shot him down like a dog. He swore he'd get even with the man who done it, and he did. I loved him like my own self."

Archie had gone to school with Bart. "I ain't never gone to no colored school," he boasted to me. "The law made the former owner's school the colored children." So Archie lived with, attended school with, and loved the Thrasher family.

His last stay in jail, Bart had taken a powerful rifle from a guard and brought it home with him. When he, Tanter (a member of the Thrasher gang), and Blackman came to West Blocton, someone told Bart that Bass was in the drug store.

The three men went to the back and looked in the window.

Thrasher fired once; Griff Bass fell to the floor. Then Bart walked into the drugstore, where there was a group of men, but no one made a move.

"Griff, are you dead?" Thrasher asked, standing over him. "Are you sure that you are dead?"

Bass didn't move.

Thrasher shot him once more, then walked out.

JAN. 1996

# The Thrasher Newsletter

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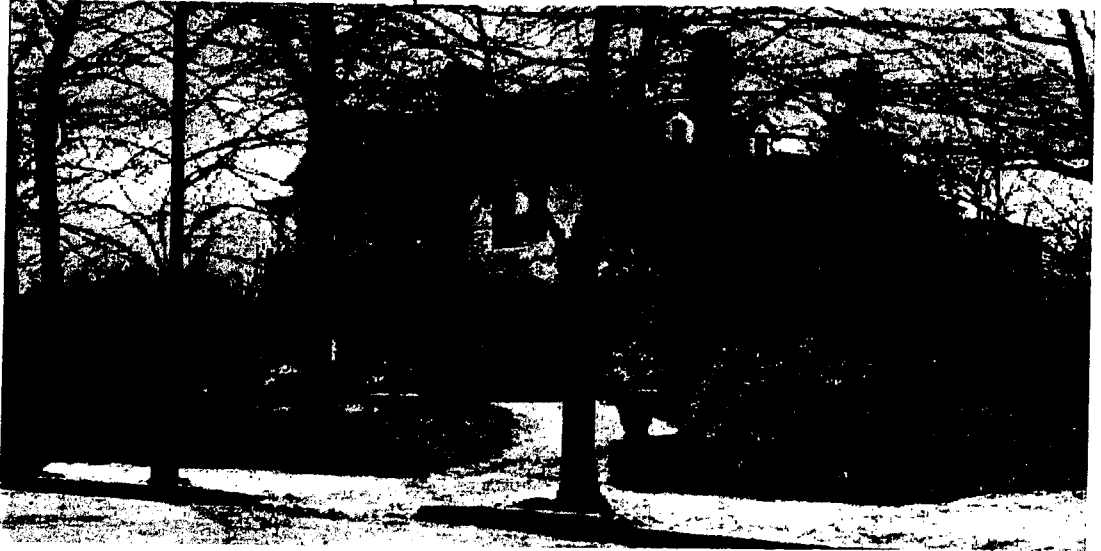
## Samuel Thrasher and the Sultana Revisited

Dale R. Thrasher of Berkeley Springs, W. Va., had answers for the questions in the Sultana article in November's newsletter. The following is excerpted from his letter. Dale writes that he is a second cousin thrice removed to Samuel and that Samuel has 1427 relatives in Dale's genealogy file!

Samuel J. Thrasher is one of the south-central Kentucky Thrashers who have been identified by Steve Thrasher of Louisville and other Thrasher researchers. Samuel is also included, along with some of his ancestors, in "Early Times in Clinton County" by Jack Ferguson of Albany, Kentucky (p. 286). Samuel and his wife Catherine (Willen) are both buried in the Five Springs Cemetery in Clinton County. He was born in Fentress County, Tennessee on Nov. 11, 1839, the son of Isaac H. Thrasher, Jr. and Sarah Ann (Sallie) Cline.

In addition, Clyde Thrasher wrote to Dot Pruett confirming the connection. Clyde is Dale's cousin through his father's brother's son, and told Dot that Dale has more Thrasher information than anyone he knows!

**Wanted:** Information on family events. This is your newsletter -- send items of interest (births, deaths, engagements, marriages, graduations -- any important family milestones) to Barbara Eger, 8770F Allison Drive, Arvada, CO 80005.



Atlanta Homestead of Cousin John Thrasher, circa 1919-1920  
Picture courtesy of Willis Brunson, Marietta, Ga.

## Looking for a Connection

Ada Thrasher is another of the "unknown" Thrashers here in Denver. She is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery in the section reserved for veterans of the armed forces. The marker reads "Ada H. Thrasher, Texas; Nurse, Army Nurse Corps; 3/2/1872, 2/17/1942." Since the death notices I have been able to locate say she had children, she must have been married to a Thrasher, but which one? A husband is not listed as one of her survivors, and since all I have found to date are brief death notices, not full obituaries, the information is sketchy. The mortuary, Cline and Glenn, has long since gone out of business, so no help there. Given her age at death, she would have to have been an Army nurse during World War I at the latest, and possibly even earlier--perhaps the Spanish-American War in 1898 or the Philippine Insurrection in 1899. Clyde or Dale (or anyone else), any help on this one?

### A New Puzzle to Consider

The following information comes from a man named John Wayland by way of the Net; like so many people who converse this way, I have no idea of where John is from.

"My great-Grandfather fought for the Confederacy. This was dangerous in his home state of Missouri as it was a state of divided loyalties and many eyes and tongues. He was captured at his home in Charlton County while on leave from "Price's Army." He took an "oath of allegiance to the Union" to keep from starving to death in the prison camp and was released under penalty of death if he should be discovered to again be aiding the Confederacy. He was only 18, and returned to the fight only to be recaptured and sentenced to death. Only a trip by his mother to Washington, D.C., and her successful bid for a presidential pardon from Abe Lincoln kept him from a firing squad. Others were not so fortunate."

John went on to say that he had requested and received information from the National Archives listing some prisoners captured for violating this oath of allegiance and the disposition of some of them. Among the names is a Joel Thrasher, and the following information is from that record. The question marks indicate where John had trouble deciphering the handwriting on the record. Note that a Daniel Barton is one of the group.

Joel Thrasher. "Those from Monroe and Shelby counties who were out with us that I knew are Cy (?) Maddox and two or three of the Kerr boys and two John Maupins, Morgan Barlow, John Perry, Wm. Harris, Grose McBroom, Budd Mason, four Dry boys, David Stalcup, Wm. Stalcup, David Heniger (?) Jr., Daniel Barton, Cy Thrailhill (?), John Thrailkill and two of the Bates."

Joel Thrasher is number 353 in the record, which also says that he "took the oath before Captain Benjamin at Shelbyville and afterwards joined Capt. Sidner's Company under Col. Porter. Sworn into service of C.S.A. at Gosney's Mill, Monroe County, on or about first of August, was at the Newark and Kirksville fights. Was captured

by the militia last Thursday a week, say first part of September."

John went on to say no year was given in the documents, and there was a notation by Joel's name that John believes is "St. Louis." The same notation was written beside each of the names other than those where it was indicated that they were to be "shot to death." He thinks these notations may have been written in by the brigadier general in charge, based on the men's records.

If the notation is indeed St. Louis, and someone out there has any more information, this may tie in the Thrashers buried here in Denver who seem to have originated in Missouri.

### A Date to Remember

**Don't forget to plan on attending the 21st Thrasher Family Reunion the weekend of June 22nd in Moultrie, Ga. Let's have a good turnout for our annual get-together!**

**Where and how to make your hotel and dinner reservations and the cost for both will be coming in an abbreviated issue of the newsletter as soon as we receive more definite information from Gerald Bishop in Moultrie.**



## **A Great-Grandson Remembers the Atlanta Home of "Cousin John"**

Willis Brunson, a great-grandson of Cousin John Thrasher, sent the color picture on page 1 of the Atlanta home built by Cousin John, along with the following memories of the house. Some of his letter repeats information Dot and other researchers have made available, but I found the personal recollection made it more real to me, and perhaps the same will happen for you, so here it is.

The picture of the home was made from a picture (in color) on a post card prepared for Dr. E. L. Connally, owner and occupant of the house from 1887 into the 1920s. At the time the post card picture was made, evidently around 1919 or 1920, the property had been divided into city blocks and the house was the only building in an area of a city block.

The house was last sold to John S. Spaulding according to the newspaper item (Willis is referring to the Dixie Living article, I believe) and it must have been after Dr. Connally died, probably in 1926-27 or 28. The Spaldings vacated the house in 1930-31 and it was torn down.

The acreage owned by Cousin John and the property on which the house was located is some of the land where two black colleges were built. Ashby Street and West End Avenue are located in southwest Atlanta — near the downtown area.

The newspaper item states: "Cousin John built a handsome brick home on a 300-acre plantation on Ashby Street opposite West End Avenue in 1854 to 1858.

"During August 1864, just prior to Sherman's occupation of Atlanta, the house was headquarters of General John B. Hood, Commander-in-Chief of Confederate forces in and around Atlanta."

I thought that Grandfather (Willis E. Thrasher) was born in the house, but now I think he moved in as a small boy. Grandfather was a youngster during the Civil War while his two older brothers were officers in the Confederacy. I remember him telling about when he was a boy when the Union troops occupied Atlanta, that he and his friends (small boys) would sit on the fence and say smart things to the troops and then take off and run.

I do not know the date, but when I was a young boy, probably 1925, and Grandfather and Grandmother were visiting us in Birmingham. We made a trip down to Chattanooga first (I thought) to visit some relatives, no doubt, and then we drove down to Atlanta to visit relatives of Grandfather; Thrashers, although I do not remember that name in connection with the relatives. It was the Brunson family and Grandfather and Grandmother that made the trip.

The day we spent in Atlanta we drove out to Cousin John's home. A butler, or something of the sort, met us at the door and I remember being told that Dr. Connally was ill, the occupant of the house. I should say owner. Grandfather explained to the man who he was, etc., and when the message was repeated to the Dr. (in bed) he insisted that we come in to see him. The Dr. has a nurse on duty to take care of him and he was excited to meet Grandfather, the son of Cousin John Thrasher. We were given postcards at that time. Dr. Connally loved the house and the history of the South. His family wanted him to sell the property, move into a small place or nursing facility, but he wanted to live out his life in the house. Of course, he had the income to do that with plenty of hired help to run the place.

I remember a beautiful stairway that curved and Grandfather told how he used to slide down the stairway and the family worried about him breaking a statue at the foot of the stairway. The statue was left in the house when sold by Cousin John and it was still in good shape. Grandfather had a ball walking through the house and pointing out things to us. I remember outside he showed us a place on the house where a cannon ball struck during the War. I think it was Grandfather's first visit back to the house since leaving as a boy.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL THE FAMILY  
EVERYWHERE: MAY  
1996 BRING YOU JOY,  
HEALTH, AND HAPPINESS!**

## Bits and Pieces



Frank Edward Thrasher,  
Outfielder  
Born 8/9/1889  
Died 6/12/1938  
Hometown: Watkinsville,  
Georgia  
1915: Highest Batting  
Avg. in S.L.  
1915: Atlanta Crackers  
1916-1917: Philadelphia  
Athletics

(sent by John E.  
Thrasher III)

*From Col. Warren Thrasher:* The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta is relocating from its current location on Marietta Street in downtown Atlanta to Midland. The move is planned for 1999. The present location is the site of the Thrasherville Historical Marker commemorating the original settlement which became present-day Atlanta. Warren and the Thrasher Association were the forces behind the erection of the marker by the Georgia Historical Society. The Fed's move may make the marker's future uncertain. (The text of the marker and a copy of a photo are on page 5.)

*From John E. Thrasher III of Micanopy, Fla.:* I have learned a great deal about the Americanization of immigrants' names by working with my wife's Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. One family, the Schoenly's, have been traced with 25 different spellings, yet are the same family. In researching Eleanor's immigrant ancestors I have found, so far, at least three immigrants who probably are Thrashers! I know that several of you said that you have German Thrasher ancestors, not the documented John Thrasher of Virginia or Thomas Thrasher of Maryland. Perhaps what I have found so far will help some of you in your research. I hope so!  
From The Pennsylvania Archives, Series II, Vol. 17 page 15: Ship Mortonhouse, from Rotterdam, Qualified Aug. 19, 1729

\_\_\_\_\_George Threhe\_\_\_\_\_  
page 255: Ship Galley Ann from Rotterdam, last Orkneys, Scotland. Qualified Sept. 27, 1746. --  
- Hans Georg Trescher---  
page 483: Ship Minerva from Rotterdam, last from Cowes. Qualified Nov. 9, 1767 ---John Thraubach---

*Also from John E.:* "The following is an excerpt from a letter sent to me by L. Z. Thrasher of Columbus, Ga., in response to the article in the November newsletter concerning Bad Bart Thrasher. Perhaps some of you can help with the genealogy of those L.Z. mentions. I also thought you would enjoy L.Z.'s memoirs and Thrasher history."

Thanks for the interesting Thrasher newsletter. When I was a small child we lived in a little town 20 miles below Dothan, Alabama, named Gordon. My daddy had to have an operation at the hospital in Dothan. My mother and I stayed in Dothan at a Thrasher hotel. I called the owners Uncle Bart and Aunt Ophelia. I stayed in the daytime with Aunt Ophelia while my mother went to the hospital with Daddy. I just wonder if this is the Bart Thrasher mentioned in this newsletter? The Thrasher hotel has long been gone from Dothan and there is another hotel on that site now. We moved to Auburn, Ala., when I was four years old so this has been years ago as I am 74 years old now. This must be a Bart, Jr., as the Uncle Bart I knew would be over 100 years old now. They had a son named Jelks Thrasher that was a strange person. He went to visit one of my aunts, and she said he brought a monkey with him! We may have some skeletons in our Thrasher closet that we don't want to pull out!

*From Elizabeth Thrasher Baldwin of Madison, Ga.:* A letter to the editor from an Atlanta resident suggested:

Now that the Atlanta Braves and the Cleveland Indians are in the World Series, maybe we should give our Native Americans the respect they deserve by changing the names of the two teams.

I suggest the name the Atlanta Thrashers. The Braves belong to Atlanta and Georgia, and since our state bird is the brown Thrasher, the name fits. A thrasher logo on the cap would look great. Watch out, Orioles.

## News and Notes

*Get well wishes* go out to Dot Pruett and Peggy Thrasher. Dot was hospitalized with blood clots in one leg and Peggy is recovering from surgery. Here's hoping both are fully recovered and up and going by the time this newsletter reaches everyone.

*Congratulations* to Barton W. Baldwin of Mount Olive, North Carolina. Barton has been elected Middle-Atlantic Director of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy for 1995-96. NASBA coordinates the activities of the nation's state boards of accountancy, which administer the Uniform CPA Examination, license certified public accountants and regulate the practice of accountancy in the United States.

*Congratulations* also to A. Quillian Baldwin, Jr. of LaGrange, Georgia, on his appointment as a Georgia Superior Court judge in the Coweta Circuit. He served in the Georgia Senate for eight years, is a former president of the Troup County Bar Association, and was Juvenile Court judge in Troup County for five years.

Both Barton and Quillian are sons of Elizabeth

### THRASHERVILLE Where Atlanta Began

In 1839 "Cousin John" Thrasher built a settlement called Thrasherville at this then forested site near the peg marking the planned terminus of the Western & Atlantic RR. This railroad was later built by the State of Georgia to provide a link to the north for other Georgia railroads. While building northward near Griffin, the Monroe RR accepted John Thrasher's bid to build an embankment to enable a future junction of the Monroe RR with the W&A RR. The Monroe Embankment, a \$25,000 project, required about two years to complete. To fulfill his contract John Thrasher brought in many laborers, built rough shelters to house them and opened Atlanta's first store. Atlanta's first religious service, labor trouble, social event and baby are associated with this settlement. In 1842 the terminus was changed to the place now marked by the Zero Mile Post. Thrasherville, Terminus and Marthasville were the names given to the railroad generated settlement activity which preceded Atlanta. Thrasherville and

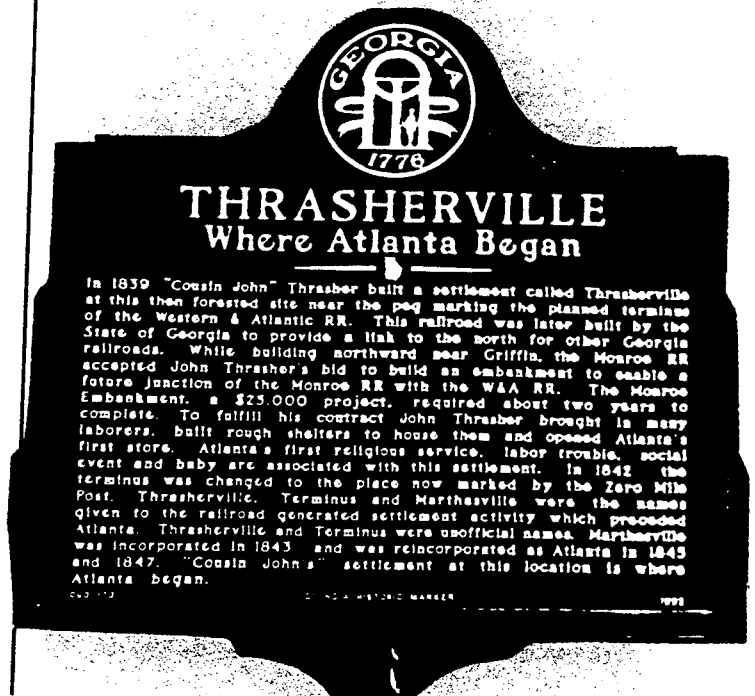
(Thrasher) and Asbury Baldwin of Madison, Georgia. The elder Baldwins are charter members of the association.

### In Memoriam

*Condolences* to Clyde Thrasher of Gainesville, Ga., on the recent death of his sister, Nina Mae Thrasher Brown at the age of 96. Nina was born Aug. 9, 1899, in Kentucky, the daughter of Robert C. and Lou (Clayborn) Thrasher. She married Grover Brown and lived in Whitewright, Tex. Interment was in Whitewright with others of the family.

*Belated condolences* to Edna Marlowe Clarke on the death of her brother, Dr. James M. Marlowe, on Jan. 17, 1995, in Tampa at the age of 64. Dr. Marlowe was a respected physician and civic leader in Pasco County. He served for 10 years on the Pasco County School Board and was on the board of Florida Southern College in Lakeland. He became ill on a European trip with his sister and his wife Selma and was hospitalized on his return.

Terminus were unofficial names. Marthasville was incorporated in 1843 and was reincorporated as Atlanta in 1845 and 1847. "Cousin John's" settlement at this location is where Atlanta began.



## *Some Were Pioneers*

One of the Thrashers buried in Crown Hill Cemetery here in Denver is Lucy B. Thrasher. There was no obvious connection to our family, but in checking out leads, I found that Earl L. Thrasher of Fort Morgan had paid for the gravesite and funeral. Assuming that Earl L. Thrasher and Early Leslie Thrasher were one and the same, there had to be a connection of some sort. Further research in Fort Morgan and at the Colorado History Museum in Denver unearthed the information.

Lucy Bennett Thrasher, wife of Earl L. Thrasher, died at Colorado General Hospital in Denver. Cancer was the cause of death and her age was either 59 or 60, depending on the source.

She and her husband lived in various parts of Morgan County for 18 years, and since the Bennetts were a Fort Morgan area family, he probably met and married her there. Her obituary included the following information: "Mr. Thrasher owns property on the Wildcat northeast of Fort Morgan.

Funeral services will be held at Olinger's drawing room, Denver, Speer Boulevard at Sherman, Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock. Interment will be in Crown Hill, Denver."

It listed her husband and three step-children, "Mrs. Gladys Peterson of Hillrose, Miss Birdie Thrasher of Denver, and Raymond Thrasher, who is a radio operator in the Navy and who is stationed at Honolulu" as surviving her. These match the children of Early Leslie Thrasher listed in Dot Pruett's book, "Our Thrasher Heritage."

From all this, it would seem that Early Leslie Thrasher remarried after the death of his first wife, Betty Anna Banker, in 1911. This would be logical, since he had been left a widower with three small children -- 10, 8 and 3 years old -- at her death. Colorado was still pretty close to being a frontier at the time, and life would have been difficult.

Range and water wars were not that far in the past. In fact, as late as 1915 and 1917 there were large-scale slaughters of sheep by cattlemen near Craig and Crested Butte, and other incidents took place as late as the early 1920s. The cattlemen were used to free use of the open range, whether on land they owned or on public

land. Shepherders and homesteaders were regarded as interlopers with no right to settle on spaces that cattlemen saw as their own, and the law, if it existed at all, frequently took the cattle ranchers' side or looked the other way. Even without the hostility of the cattle interests, nature would have a formidable enemy. The eastern plains of Colorado are arid, with water for crops or livestock scarce or nonexistent before today's irrigation systems. Water rights are still the cause of bitter battles, although they take place in courtrooms instead of on Main Street at high noon.

In view of all this, those who chose to settle here and who stuck it out had to have been special, with great reserves of courage, fortitude and perseverance. The women, especially, would have had difficult lives due to the isolation which meant no neighbors or family to turn to, the lack of ordinary things such as medical care and schools for their children, the frequently angry moods of the weather, which brought heat and tornadoes in the summer, blinding blizzards and frigid cold in the winter, and the wind. The wind blows here everywhere, and is almost constant on the plains. Its dust sifts into every nook and cranny even today, and its noise echoes in the ears. To top it all off, predators, both human and animal, must have been all too common a threat.

There are a lot of questions still remaining about Lucy. Hers is the only unmarked Thrasher grave in Crown Hill -- why? The Petersons are buried in Fort Morgan, Early Leslie reportedly in Missouri. Why is Lucy alone in Crown Hill? Why did Gladys Peterson not mention Lucy in her correspondence with John E. Thrasher prior to her death? The three children were all born in Missouri -- were Early Leslie and Betty Anna en route to Fort Morgan, possibly to homestead, when she died? When did the family actually leave Missouri and why? Did Early Leslie return to Missouri while he was living or was he taken back for burial after his death? Is there any connection with the Joel Thrasher sent to a Union prison in St. Louis or with the other Thrashers buried in Crown Hill? It seems that every genealogy question that is answered spawns a multitude of others. I hope to pursue (after snow season; I don't care to venture out east in winter) some answers to these questions.

There is a child-size grave in the Dade City Municipal Cemetery that is obviously very old. Its marker is hand-made of cement, and over the years weather and time have made the inscription illegible. An article on the marker is reproduced below. Some time ago, John E. Thrasher III of Micanopy contacted a Dade City lawyer, William Dayton, who is somewhat of a collector of local history, and received the letter reproduced on pages 8 and 9 from him. Note the P.S. in Dayton's letter -- if anyone can come up with more information, Dayton is still a Dade City resident. The hand-written notes about Willis Edgar are John's, and there is no connection between the child buried in this grave and Willis Edgar.

**florida**

By Hampton Dun...

## 'Homemade' tombstone old example of folk art

DADE CITY — It is believed to be the oldest example of Florida folk art in this part of the state. The "homemade" tombstone over the grave of little Dora Thrasher in the old Dade City Cemetery is distinctive and historic.

Probably every other tombstone in the burial ground is fancier and certainly more expensive. But none demonstrates more tenderness and love than does the crudely painted marker for Dora.

A feature of the art work is a drawing of the "Great Speckled Bird." The inscription and the drawing of the bird were traced into wet concrete, probably with a twig and obviously by a person who was getting tired and having trouble remembering his letters.

The unique grave stone was discovered by William G. Dayton, a Dade City attorney, president of the Pasco County Historical Society, and a historian himself. Dayton notes

that most surviving tombstone art of the 1880s was sculpted elsewhere and shipped to Florida, but Dora's memorial was done on the spot, probably by a member of the little girl's family.

The use of the great speckled bird as a tombstone decoration refers to an old hymn and the line, "I'll be joyfully carried to meet Him, On the wings of the great speckled bird."

The wording on the stone reads: "...To the memory of Dora, daughter of W.G. and D.P. Thrasher. Born Feb. 10, 1885. Died July 22nd 1886. With a farewell kiss to her heart-broken parents. Her little soul flew in the arms of Jesus."

The year-and-half-old child was buried here while Dade City was a part of Hernando County. In the following year, 1887, Pasco was carved from Hernando, and at the same time Citrus County also was chipped from Hernando.

*Answered*  
*5/16/76*

Law Offices of  
Dayton, Peel & Corbett, P.A.

Post Office Box 444  
First Federal Building  
Dade City, Florida 33525  
Telephone (904) 567-5115

George C. Dayton  
Vincent Peel  
William G. Dayton  
J. Craig Corbett

Post Office Box 486  
615 5th Avenue  
Zephyrhills, Florida 33599  
Telephone (813) 782-6611

Reply to: William G. Dayton  
Dade City Office

May 11, 1976

Mr. John E. Thrasher  
6619 Almond Avenue  
Jacksonville, Florida 32210

Dear Mr. Thrasher:

Thank you for your recent letter. I'm afraid there is not a great deal of information which I can give you, since you already have a copy of Col. Hendley's history and very little else has ever been published on the subject.

Presuming that you are interested in information regarding the Thrasher family, I enclose a photo of a Thrasher tombstone in the old Dade City Cemetery. It is, to my mind, the most interesting grave marker in the area and perhaps the only clear cut example of nineteenth century Florida folk art in the county. The photograph was taken right after I had cleaned the tomb and traced the letters and design with varnish. The varnish had dried in the upper portion of the inscription and the camera did not pick up that part so well.

The tomb has a drawing, traced in concrete, of the great speckled bird (an allusion to an old hymn) and the bird's beak has a scroll or balloon (I think the artist started out drawing a scroll and wound up with a balloon). The inscription reads "Sacred to the memory of Luniedora, daughter of W. D. and D. H. Thrasher, born February 10, 1885, died July 22nd, 1886, with a farewell kiss to her heart broken parents her little soul flew in the arms of Jesus". ("Luniedora" may be "Little Dora", there is a crack in the concrete so that the first part of the name can't be clearly read.) There are a number of other Thrasher graves in the cemetery and as there are several unmarked graves around this particular tomb I suspect it to be an old Thrasher burial plot.

*14*

Unfortunately there is no single county-wide cemetery association and the records are quite scanty, particularly as to burials before 1905. Coleman-Ferguson Company has the records of the Dade City Cemetery for more recent years, however their records are not accurate before the 1920's and there are no records whatsoever of the oldest part of the cemetery, where most of the Thrasher graves are located. There may be some Thrashers buried at Enterprise Church, Mount Zion, Townsend House Church and in the old Tucker cemetery near Richland. So far as I know there are no complete lists of graves in these cemeteries and I am relying on my own memory to say that I think there are Thrashers buried there.

If I am correct that you are interested in information on the Thrasher family, please also let me know of any particular names you would like to locate. The next time I go visiting in any of the old pioneer cemeteries, I will make a point of seeing what Thrashers I can find.

By the way, there is a natural land formation known as "Thrasher's Ridges" out east of the Withlatchoochee River in property that is now owned by the Cummer Company. This may indicate that some Thrashers settled out there at an earlier period.

Hoping that this information is of some use to you, I remain

Very truly yours,

*William G. Dayton*  
William G. Dayton

*William*  
WGD:g

*Son of Thrasher*  
*Edgar*  
*↓*  
*Walter*  
*Manly?*

P.S. Do you have any information on W. D. and D. H. Thrasher? I would be quite interested to learn what their little daughter's name was, so that I can properly repair that tomb. I would be pleased to receive any information on any of the Thrashers who settled in this area in the old days.

Thanks to Willis Brunson for sending this.  
ATLANTA - Capital of the South

Edited by Paul W. Miller  
Oliver Durrell, Inc. - Publishers  
New York 10, New York

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Page 10 - In 1837 Brisbane drove the stake, probably at a location under the present Board Street viaduct, marking the southeastern terminus of the projected railroad. Actual construction began the next year and a few settlers moved immediately to the area to take advantage of the expected land boom. Lack of funds slowed progress on the road and in 1839 there were only a few impoverished families living in the village in dirt-floored shanties. John Thrasher was the village's first merchant and the grading contractor for the Monroe Railroad (Macon & Western) branch. Affected by a nationwide depression, the stock of that road soon dropped to ten cents on the dollar. Thrasher, who was paid partly in the stock for work on the Monroe embankment (near the present Terminal Station) took his holding to McDonough and traded it for a gold watch, a carriage and merchandise for his commissary. In 1841, after selling his land for four dollars an acre, he abandoned his store and left the area.

Page 62 - The region's first commercial establishment was John Thrasher's general store, hastily erected in 1841 to serve the crews of railroad workers laboring on the line being cleared through upper Georgia from Tennessee. The first industrial venture was a horse-powered sawmill erected by Jonathan Norcross. When the tracks of the Georgia Railroad neared the town in 1844, Norcross began fashioning construction timbers for roadbeds and bridges and rough slabs for workmen's huts.

The little community grew rapidly and before the year was out it could boast a grocery store, a general emporium and a millinery shop, followed by a coffin factory and a cabinet shop. In a few months, the lines from Madison and Monroe were completed and Atlanta's commercial life definitely began. Cotton was the leading product of the state and the railroads quickly made Atlanta an important distribution point for the area.

Page 122 - The wives of the first settlers tried to substitute more "genteel" forms of entertainment. John Thrasher, contractor for the Monroe Railroad, relates the account of a dance given in 1840 by Mrs. Milligan, the wife of Thrasher's Irish foreman, to celebrate the opening of her recently built cabin, in which a puncheon floor had been laid. Thrasher led the first dance with Mrs. Mulligan and pronounced the ball a huge success. Despite strong opposition from some strict church members, dancing was popular with the early settlers.

Federal Reserve Bank site - site of first mercantile business 1839 - general store of Johnson & Thrasher. Home, 1842-45, of Mr. & Mrs. Willis Carlisle and their Daughter, Julia Carlisle (Withers), "Atlanta's first baby" - born August 17, 1842. First Presbyterian Church was built here in 1850; rebuilt 1877, and occupied until 1916.

Corner of Peachtree St., Edgewood Ave., and Decatur Street. - Site of first post office in store of George Washington Collier, Postmaster 1845-49



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# *The Thrasher Newsletter*

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Mentor: Dot Pruett Editor: Barbara Eger Circulation: John E. Thrasher III Volume 14 No. 3 May 1996

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## **Better Late (a Thrasher) than Never!**

It wasn't until 1991, when I was 45 and my two sisters were in their 50s, that we discovered our Thrasher heritage and connection to the Thrasher descendants of John J. Thrasher. We were all born and grew up in Dade City, Florida, where our father, Joseph Sumner, was a citrus grower. He died, however, in 1959, and never talked much about his family genealogy.

We knew that his mother's maiden name was Frankie Thrasher and one of my sisters (now Frankie Goldsby) was named after her. However, she died when our father was still a boy. My aunt once told me that Frankie Thrasher came to Dade City in the early 1890s with her mother, Ellen E. (Mason) Thrasher, and father, David Oliver Thrasher, who was a judge and the first school superintendant for Pasco County, Florida. The same aunt once told my sister Joann that Frankie Thrasher came from a "prominent Peachtree Street family" in Atlanta. But those were about the only things we knew about the Thrasher family until 1991.

The credit goes to my oldest sister, Joann Bandy of Rockville, Maryland, who discovered the Thrasher connection while doing research in the DAR Library in Washington, D.C. There she found Dot Pruett's book, "Our Thrasher Heritage," and discovered that our grandmother was the granddaughter of John J. (Cousin John) Thrasher of Atlanta. Much to our surprise, we later discovered that he and his wife were buried in the Dade City Cemetery, and we never knew about them for all of those years.

Of course, we were all elated to discover that we had a "famous ancestor," a

railroad builder who founded the settlement of Thrasherville that later became Atlanta.

One evening I was talking to an Atlanta friend on the telephone and telling him about our famous ancestor. He said that his next-door neighbors were Ken and Cathy Thrasher. Later I called Ken and he told me there were "a whole lot of Thrashers in the Atlanta area" and they even had a family association. He said his father, Hugh Thrasher of Sweetwater, Tennessee, knew more about the association than he did, so I called Hugh. He told me about Dot Pruett, the Thrasher Association, the newsletter and the annual reunion.

Pretty soon we all joined the association. Frankie lives in St. Petersburg, Florida; Joann lives in Rockville, Maryland; and I live in Muncie, Indiana. Career endeavors had taken all of us in different directions, but we decided to have our own reunion and attend that year's family reunion in Columbus, Georgia.

The rest, as they say, is history.

For me the greatest thing about being a part of the Thrasher family is that it has given me a whole new sense of connection to my father's side of the family. Prior to discovering the Thrashers, I didn't have a single living relative on his side of the family that I knew of except for a cousin. Now I feel as if I have "Cousins by the Dozens." And, indeed I do.

*Thanks to one of our cousins for this contribution on what discovering his roots has meant to him.*

*David E. Sumner, Ph.D., is an associate professor of journalism at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. He says the main reason he doesn't live in Georgia is that the University of Georgia didn't offer him the teaching position he interviewed for in 1993!*

## Bits and Pieces

*The following is excerpted from information compiled by Col. Warren Thrasher some time ago, and is being reprinted here as background to the information on page 3 on a new book about the history of the town of Bishop, Georgia, which is in Oconee County.*

Many generations of the Thrasher family are traceable in Great Britain. The earliest Thrasher in America was Robert, who arrived in Virginia on the ship Bona Nova in 1620. John Thrasher, the progenitor of the Thrasher family in Georgia, was first established in Goochland County, Virginia. In December 1761 he was granted 693 acres of land in Guilford County, North Carolina, the county from which Rockingham County was created. Following the American Revolution John Thrasher and his wife, Susan Barton, came to Clarke County (now Oconee) and took his land bounties as a Revolutionary War soldier. The children of John and Susan married as follows: Barton to Mary Frances Oates; Ruth to Robert Trimble; Elizabeth to Green Reynolds; Isaac to Elizabeth Hester; David to Mary "Polly" Hughey; Frances to John Fletcher Foster; and Mary to Anderson C. Middlebrooks.

The offspring of these marriages resulted in the Thrasher family becoming well established in Clarke County. For the thirty years preceding the Civil War, Barton Thrasher and Isaac Thrasher were among the largest plantation owners of Clarke County. Other prominent landholders were John A. Cobb, Stevens Thomas, Augustin S. Clayton, Alsa Moore, William Lumpkin, Edward Paine, William Stroud, William Dearing, Jacob Phinizy, Burnell Pope, Robert Taylor, John Billups, Thomas E. Williamson, Lewis Lester, William M. Morton and James P. Mayne.

The Thrasher family in Georgia has long been prominent in state government. Family members who have served in the Georgia General Assembly, either as state senators or legislators or both, are John J. ("Cousin John") Thrasher, Barton E. Thrasher, Tigner Emmett Thrasher, and Roy Thrasher. Quillan Baldwin, whose mother was a Thrasher, is currently a state senator. (Editor's note: Since this was compiled, Quillan Baldwin has left the Legislature and is now a Georgia Superior Court judge.) B. E. Thrasher III

served for many years as state auditor and during the two-governor controversy in Georgia, on his own initiative, took action to insure that Georgia would not lose its opportunity to purchase Jekyll Island.

Robert Woodruff and George Woodruff of Coca Cola fame trace their heritage to the Thrasher family of Oconee County in that their great-grandmother was Asenath Caroline Thrasher who was the first wife of Basil Hallam Overby. The Overby's daughter, Mary Frances, married Ernest Woodruff and was the mother of Robert and George. Asenath Caroline Thrasher died at age 32 and is buried in Oconee County in the Barton Thrasher plantation cemetery near the Apalachee River not far from Highway 441.

Cousin Warren cited the following sources for his information:

Atlanta and Environs, Vol. I, by Franklin M. Garrett

Our Thrasher Heritage, compiled by Dorothy Pruett

Antebellum Athens and Clarke County, by Ernest Hynds

The History of Norcross, by Allen Philip Francis

Dot Pruett sent me the following little test, and I thought it might be fun for everyone. How "relative" is your knowledge? The answers are simple; the trick is in how they are described.

What kin are the relatives below?

1. Your father's sister: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Your uncle's son: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your mother's brother: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Your grandfather's father: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Your mother's sister's son: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Your father's daughter: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Your cousin's father: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Your uncle's wife: \_\_\_\_\_

**News and Notes**

Congratulations to Dot Pruett on her new great-nephew. Hunter Journey Cooper was born March 8, 1996, weighing 9 pounds, 7 ounces. Parents are Kim Sturgis Cooper and James Cooper, Jr. of Wilmington, North Carolina. Kim is the daughter of Dot's late brother, Ernest T. Sturgis.

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Congratulations also go to Charles M. Ingrum, Jr., son of Katheryn Elizabeth Walkley and Charles Mack Ingrum, Sr., on finishing law school and passing the bar exams. He will practice with his father in Opelika, Ala.

\*\*\*\*\*

Belated best wishes for a happy life together go to Emily Thrasher Bowen Muller and William M. O'Neill, who were married May 21, 1995, in Oak Harbor, Washington. Emily is the daughter of Charles R. and Emily Bridger Bowen.

\*\*\*\*\*

A note from Peggy Thrasher of Griffin, Ga., said she is doing so well in recuperating from her recent surgery that she has been able to completely resume her normal schedule. She and Albert will not be with us at the reunion this year due to attending a wedding that weekend. They will be missed -- hope they can make next year's.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Editor's Lament**

Help Wanted Please: Because I live a long, long way from all of you, my knowledge of family news and information is limited. Articles or queries on family history or memories of the past, pictures, information on family events (births, deaths, engagements, marriages, graduations or other important family milestones) -- all are welcome. Help make this newsletter interesting -- send anything that might be appropriate to: Barbara Eger, 8770F Allison Drive, Arvada, CO 80005.

**Missing Links**

Dot Pruett sent me a copy of an article from the Piedmont, W. Va., *Herald* published Sept. 19, 1989. It is a review of an exhibit of paintings by Leslie Thrasher, known in the early 1900s as the cover illustrator of the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Liberty* magazines. Dot has not researched his connection to the family, if any, but maybe someone out there has more information.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dot also recently received a letter from a Phillip C. Trump, who is seeking information about his roots. His great-grandfather was William David Thrasher, who was born in Indiana, the son of William P. Thrasher, born in Ohio. William P. Thrasher is believed to be the son of Benjamin Thrasher and Susan Greentree. Dot doesn't know of any connection, but if any of you think you can help, let one of us know. He included a very good tree showing several generations.

\*\*\*\*\*

Information Request: In researching old census records on my last trip to Salt Lake City, I found Willis E. and Pallen J. Thrasher living in Ellenton in the 1900 census with six children listed. Since all family records show them as having only five, this sixth child is a mystery. The child is a two-year-old boy named Samuel, and his year of birth is 1897. This would make him the youngest child. By the 1910 census the family was in St. Petersburg and only the five known children were listed. Since this is my own line, I'm particularly interested, and would greatly appreciate any clues, suggestions on where to do more research, etc. Thanks. Barbara Eger

\*\*\*\*\*

See page 7 for 1996 Reunion information. Make your plans now to join the family in Moultrie, Georgia, June 22

## *In Memoriam*

### **Charlie Thrasher Seay Caldwell**

John Thrasher in Micanopy recently learned of the death of Charlie Thrasher Seay Caldwell. Mrs. Caldwell died August 13, 1994, in Duval County, Florida. Interment was in Evergreen Cemetery, Sanford, Florida. Born April 19, 1897, in Dade City, Florida, she married Wideman Caldwell on May 11, 1917. They had one

child, Henry Ervin Caldwell. She was the daughter of Dr. Walter Ervin Seay and Willie Louise Thrasher Seay. Willie Louise Thrasher was the daughter of David Oliver Thrasher and Ellen Elizabeth Mason, and David Oliver Thrasher was the third child of Cousin John Thrasher.

\*\*\*\*\*



### **John Lafayette Thrasher**



John L. and Lorine Thrasher of Jonesboro, La.  
Photo courtesy of John E. Thrasher III

John Lafayette Thrasher of Jonesboro, Louisiana, died January 22, 1996, at Lincoln General Hospital, Ruston, La., after a lengthy illness. Services were held January 23 at Edmonds Funeral Home Chapel in Jonesboro, La.

Mr. Thrasher was born in the Ebenezer community and lived in Jackson Parish all of his life. A certified tree farmer, he pioneered a variety of woodland practices on many tracts of land, and was instrumental in starting the pine tree industry in Jackson Parish. He retired in 1967 after 31 years in the conservation service.

Well known in the community for his many charitable contributions, he had been recognized by a number of organizations, including the local chapter of the American Business Women's Association, the Jackson Parish School District, and the town of Jonesboro, which in 1989 proclaimed a "John Thrasher Day" in his honor.

He is survived by his wife, Lessie Lorene Thrasher of Jonesboro, and one sister, Bernice Walker of West Monroe, La.

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