

STEWART FAMILY HISTORY NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2007

BACKGROUND

The STEWART family in Texas was headed by Araminta COLEMAN and Daniel STEWART of Hopkins County. They had twelve children – seven of these married and had children of their own.

These seven were: Sarah Jane Stewart **MARTIN CLIFTON DRENNAN**, Mary Catharine Stewart **WADSWORTH FLORENCE**, Effa Matilda Stewart **POSEY**, Louisiana Caroline "Lucy" Stewart **RABE**, Daniel Morrison **STEWART**, Joseph Coleman **STEWART**, Araminta Emma Stewart **STOCKTON**, and Louvenia Domer Stewart **FLORENCE**.

Dear Family,

Welcome to the January edition of our newsletter. I didn't send out one for December. I hope you all had great holidays.

LARSON FAMILY HOLIDAYS

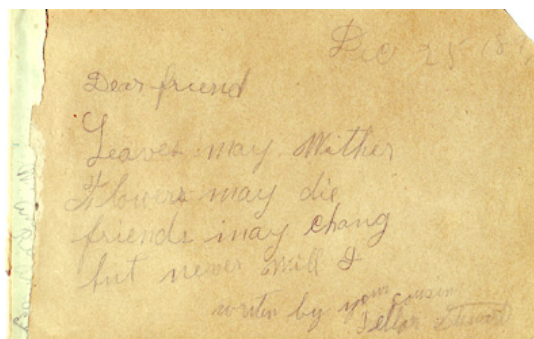
These are the holiday gatherings we had when I was young, a house full of cousins, children of the four LARSON daughters, Eleanore, Twyla, Charlene and Nedra.



Far left on couch: Bob Stewart, Jim Parkinson;
On floor: Teresa Stewart, Carol Parkinson, Corinne Parkinson (glasses), Charles Williams, Pam Williams, Cindy Stewart, Tom Parkinson;
Back in chairs: Gina Williams, Laurie Andrews, Colleen Williams, Cheryl Andrews, Mitch Andrews.
At the home of Eleanore and Jim Parkinson, Boise, Idaho. Thanksgiving, Nov. 27, 1963

AUTOGRAPH BOOK OF THOMAS N. STEWART

Marvin Stewart, the son of [Thomas Newton STEWART](#), shared with me, during my visit last summer, his father's autograph book. It's yellowed and the inscriptions are faded, having been made in pencil, but are still readable. I scanned and transcribed the book. It seems Thomas Newton received it as a gift on Christmas in 1897, when he was about 16. It contains messages from many Stewart relatives. [Read the transcribed entries.](#)



The autograph of [Della Stewart](#), Dec 25, 1897

A town named **Coin, Texas**, is mentioned twice, though I have not been able to find this on any Texas map or in lists of lost and vanished communities. Does anyone know where this place might have been, or what my transcription error might be? [Please let me know.](#)

A POCKETFUL OF POSEYS

Over the last few months I've been working on the Posey family history. [Effa Matilda STEWART](#) married [James Henry POSEY](#), who had previously been married to [Sarah Caroline THWEATT](#). James Henry POSEY had 8 children from his first marriage, and four from his second marriage with Effa Matilda. He was described as a good Baptist, and a deacon in his church. A letter from [Richard B. POSEY](#), a distant cousin, describes the elderly "Jim Henry" as "...very natural yet, and is as talkative and lively as ever. He talks so much that everyone else cannot even get in a word edge ways." The tombstone of this beloved man bears the inscription, "How desolate our home bereft of thee."

STEWART FAMILY HISTORY NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2007, page 2

Of the four children of Effa Matilda STEWART and James Henry POSEY: [Henry E. POSEY ROBERTSON](#), [Catherine Florence POSEY JOHNSON](#), [John Harrison POSEY](#), and [Loula Effie Minter POSEY DAVIDSON](#), we've made contact with the families of two. Over the holidays I was able to do a little research and make contact with the other two, the families of Loula Effie Minter POSEY and Catherine Florence POSEY.

[LOULA EFFIE MINTER POSEY DAVIDSON](#)

The first mystery I want to solve about this family is "Minta's" name. She appears on various censuses under all three. Minta's youngest daughter, Willie, is in her eighties. I'm hoping to contact her and find some answers. It seems Loula Effie Minta was named for both her mother, Effa, and her grandmother, [Araminta](#). "Loula" was a name popular at the time, found peppered through our families

Minta had one daughter named Ruby, who loved to bake. She married John Ford. He loved his wife and loved to make her laugh. He'd wait until she was elbow deep in flour and dough and then run around the house and knock on the back door. There he'd stand expectantly, with two small lizards hanging by their teeth from his earlobes like earrings. Ruby would always end up with flour on her face from laughing so hard.

There are rumors of lots of family photographs, so I'm hoping over the next year that I'll be able to include a lot more information on the DAVIDSON and POSEY family lines.

[CATHERINE FLORENCE POSEY JOHNSON](#)

Catherine Florence went by "Flossie," or "Jake." Her youngest daughter, Kathryn, lives in Kosse, and though I had a great conversation with her I'm still kicking myself for not asking her how Catherine Florence got the nickname Jake. Supposedly even her children called her Jake.

The JOHNSON family is centered in Kosse, Texas, in Limestone County and Preston JOHNSON still owns the family ranch. Kathryn Juanita tells me that each year they have a family reunion at Thanksgiving, and that last year was their 49th. Everyone gathers at the ranch and the tables are piled high with food. If it's cold they fire up the wood stoves.



Johnson Ranch, Kosse, Limestone County TX

MONROE CARUTHERS

The JOHNSON family ran the cotton gins in Kosse, TX, which was big business back then. Monroe CARUTHERS, mentioned in last month's newsletter, was described by Kathryn as practically raising the 9 Johnson children. He'd come to Kosse each year to help with the ginning, and during that time he'd also watch all the children. Kathryn is quite sure she has a photograph of Monroe and will be sending it after the new year.

Monroe was born a slave to James Henry POSEY and stayed with the family throughout his life. I found a Texas Death Certification that lists his death as 6 MAY 1936, and Kathryn told me that he's buried in our family's cemetery in Dallas County. I assume that she's referring to Vernoy Cemetery, where James Henry POSEY and Effa Matilda Stewart POSEY, and other Stewarts and Poseys are buried.

VERNOY CEMETERY

This small family cemetery used to be on the top of a hill out in the countryside of Grand Prairie. Now it is pretty much across the street from a Starbucks. Many of us visited this cemetery last summer. Most of the headstones have been vandalized, but miraculously many of the Stewart and Posey stones at the back of the cemetery (previously the front) remain untouched. The cemetery now sits in the midst of a gated community, sandwiched between two luxury homes. Walking on a small path between these, one enters a small sanctuary which preserves the stillness and wildness of a hundred or so years ago. I spoke with one of the homeowners next door, who told me the neighbors are very protective of their little cemetery, and happy to live next door to it.

STEWART FAMILY HISTORY NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2007, page 3

VERNOY CEMETERY, continued

If you would like to visit Vernoy Cemetery, contact me and I'll give you instructions for getting there. You'll find the graves of [Anna Judson STEWART](#); [Mary Catharine STEWART WADSWORTH FLORENCE](#); [Jeffie E. STEWART](#), the infant son of Thomas Newton STEWART and Mollie Jane ENGLAND; [Effa Matilda STEWART POSEY](#) and [James Henry POSEY](#), and their grandchildren [Vallie Irene POSEY](#), [Flossie Emily POSEY](#), and Homer Dillard CATHEY. Along with these are the unmarked graves of [Alexander Newton STEWART](#) and [Mollie Jane ENGLAND STEWART](#) and her baby Eric STEWART, and [Monroe CARUTHERS](#). Other families represented at the cemetery are the VERNOYS, BARRETTs, and KIRBYs.

COME TO TENNESSEE AND SEE THE SITZ

A little sleuthing on my husband's side of the family has turned up living relations on both his grandfather's (SITZ) and grandmother's (BARRY) families. Ken was happy to talk with his only cousin on his father's side of the family, [Larry SITZ](#), whom my husband had not seen since the early 60s.

Though many say the name, "sits," it's actually pronounced "sites," with a long "i". Earlier and alternate family forms include "Sides," "Sites," and "Seitz." The family originally came from The Netherlands via Rotterdam on the ship "Queen Elizabeth."

[GEORGE WASHINGTON SITZ](#)

George, Ken's grandfather, and his wife, Frances Esther BARRY, had two sons, George, Jr. and Carl Wilson SITZ. Each died tragically in the late 1950s. Ken's grandmother, [Frances Esther BARRY SITZ](#), and grandfather, G.W. SITZ, devastated by their loss, searched for Ken and his older sister for years. Ken was living with his mother in New York at the time. It was Larry SITZ, George, Jr's son and Ken's cousin, that we were able to recently reach.

[FRANCES ESTHER BARRY](#)

The BARRY family had tried to reach my husband Ken in 1993, sending him several letters, an invitation to a family reunion, and even hiring a private agency to locate him. He spoke with one of his relatives on the phone, but given to procrastination, he did not connect again. Thirteen years later I found the trail cold

[FRANCES ESTHER BARRY](#), continued

and had no luck locating this particular BARRY family.

Knowing that Tracy City, where his family lives in Tennessee, is small I decided to call the restaurant where they had their reunion 13 years before on the offchance that the owners might know the family. To my great surprise, Arlene BARRY answered the phone and put me in touch with their family's historians.



Frances Esther Barry Sitz, granddaughter [Carol Wendy Sitz](#) and George Washington Sitz, circa 1950, Camp Lejeune, NC. (Both of Ken's parents were U.S. Marines.)

The [BARRY](#) and [SITZ](#) families have lived in Tennessee for generations, working in the coal mines, and on the railroads. Now that we're back in touch we're planning a trip to visit them next summer.

BIRTHDAYS. Happy birthday to Brody KOON (11/27), Dewey BRAWNER (12/19), Skeeter HATFIELD (12/21), Teresa STEWART SITZ (12/22), Phyllis STEWART (12/26), Bev WOODROOF (12/28), LaDella RABE JONES (1/18), Orion Morgan MCLAIN(1/20)

PASSINGS. Margareta JANSSON, a Swedish relative by marriage, who died in Sweden on 2 DEC 2006, and Lou COWHERD, (my uncle by marriage) who died on 12 DEC 2006.

STEWART FAMILY HISTORY NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2007, page 4

Until next month,

Teresa Stewart Sitz

teresa_stewart_sitz@yahoo.com

www.ouramericanfamilies.com

P.S. Happy New Year!

"The family - that dear octopus from whose tentacles we never quite escape, nor, in our inmost hearts, ever quite wish to."

Dodie Smith, English novelist and playwright