

The Anderson Record

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Oct/Nov/Dec 2023

“A love not lost”

“Letters from century-old courtship returned to Anderson home”

By Nikie Mayo of the Independent Mail

In the Monday addition of the Independent Mail newspaper dated October 11th, 2011 there was an article about some letters that were found and placed in a box for safe keeping and many years later returned to the family. I thought it would be a good idea to let you read about their return and the joy they brought to the family who thought they were destroyed and no longer available.

“Inside a shoebox on the top shelf of her closet, Michelle Scott has long kept remnants of a century-old courtship between an Anderson farmer and a Georgia school teacher.

Scott is not related to the couple, and she is too young to have met them together. But Scott has known Fritz Watson Sr. and Beulah Moorhead her whole life.

For as long as she can remember, Scott has kept safe a collection of letters that Watson and Moorhead wrote to each other as they fell in love.

The letters cover a period from 1911 to 1914, and chronicle portions of the couple’s unfolding courtship, Watson’s proposal of marriage and Moorhead’s plans for their wedding.

Scott, who lives in Belton, has often wondered if that wedding ever happened.

From the time she was a little girl, Scott has been the keeper of the letters that her father found years before she was born. She is 52 now, but Scott still talks about when she took the letters to school for show and tell. She remembers getting an “A” when she used the letters as part of a presentation she made in civics class.

But it was not until two weeks ago that she began to put together the pieces of a puzzle that is 100 years old. What Scott discovered would change, and bind, two Anderson County families.

Special points of interest:

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- We Need Your Research - Page 10

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A love affair

Fritz Watson and Beulah Moorehead met at the party of a mutual friend over a century ago.

They had something to talk about right away: His distant cousin was married to a cousin of hers. He was eight years her senior, but the young farmer was intrigued by the young teacher.

They began writing letters to each other while she was in Georgia and kept up the correspondence even as she spent time in Tampa, Florida and he remained on his farm in Anderson.

The letters were formal at first.

The more they wrote, the more they included details of their day-to-day activities – how she could buy oranges in Florida for 10 cents a box or how he had nearly worn himself out working on the farm. It wasn't long before the teacher and the farmer were writing to each other every day and each began to anticipate, and hope for, a letter from the other.

Eventually, Watson proposed to the girl that he called his "Georgia gem" and his "little hobo."

When she said yes, Fritz wrote back to Beulah that had he been near her, he would have given her a big bear hug.

In her next letter, from the fall of 1914, Miss Moorhead didn't miss a beat.

"And you would have made me suffer from a big bear hug if I'd been near, eh?" she wrote. "Having been a schoolteacher, I naturally think of punishing boys for their misdoings."

Later, she writes about her decision to accept Mr. Watson's proposal of marriage, and to have their wedding on December 23rd, 1914, the 39th wedding anniversary of her parents:

"How did I make up my mind? I went to bed

and went to sleep (got the letter on the way to the sewing club and didn't get back until night). Then early the next morning, I thought it over and decided that after all it was the most sensible thing, for people claim a holiday for yuletide anyway.

"There's no good reason why I shouldn't do as I most want to. Why not do as my feelings prompt me? Not the least like taking medicine, I don't believe it is any bad dose at all."

As the couple's wedding day approaches, Miss Moorehead writes that she hopes for good weather for their nuptials, but that other things are more important.

"For myself, I feel that I already have so much that I can ask for no more – be the weather what it may," she writes. "I am hoping for the happiest day in our lives, yet I'm sure there will be better to come. I hope that we may help each other keep the Giver of all Good in mind."

As Fritz writes about his love for the woman from Georgia, he also talks about making sure that heir home in Anderson is ready for her. He tells her that her letters are "enough to make

anyone glad they are living."

He tells Miss Moorhead not to worry about the strength of the bond they have.

"Just always feel that we were made for each other," he says. "A glorious thought to me, and I assume (to) you."

Then, on December 17th, 1914, Fritz writes what he calls his "last letter as a single man," and says he can't wait to be married.

Fritz Watson's and Beulah Moorhead's most intimate thoughts to each other remain legible on yellowed pages, tucked away in the same envelopes that held their writings 100 years ago.



Beulah Moorhead

Fritz Watson

Membership Application

Date: _____

Are you on Facebook? YES NO

Last Name: _____

Facebook ID

First Name: _____

Is this a change of information YES NO

Middle Name: _____

Email State News Letter? YES NO

Maiden Name: _____

Email ACGS News Letter? YES NO

Mailing Address: _____

SCGS #

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

Email Address: _____

Surnames being researched:

Please list below the Family Surnames of those you are researching. Please include full names, known dates, and areas in Anderson and surrounding counties. *Use the back of this form if you need more space to add a surname.*

Surname, Given	Locations (City or County)	Dates

New Member

Renewal

ASSOCIATE - \$15.00 - I am a primary member of another SCGS Chapter.
 SCGS Chapter _____ SCGS Member # _____

INDIVIDUAL - \$25.00 - Membership for one person.

FAMILY - \$30.00 - Membership for 2 people, within the same household.
 Name of 2nd person: _____

Donation - _____

Cash
 Check
 Check # _____
 Amount \$ _____

Make checks payable to: ACGS

Mail to: ACC, SCGS, 110 Federal St, Anderson, South Carolina 29625

Chapter XV of Louise Ayer Vandiver's Book— "Traditions and History of Anderson County"

Part 5

"Townships"

"CORNER"

Corner Township took its name from the current appellation of section as "Dark Corner." Why the epithet dark in one of the unanswered conundrums of the county. Many stories were made to fit the name. One of the most probable is that it was bestowed by Elias Earle when he was told about an experience of his friend, Squire Andrew Liddell.

Liddell was tax collector for that part of Pendleton District which afterwards became Dark Corner. On his rounds as tax assessor he rode up to a very humble log cabin. Its furniture consisted of a straw bed, three home-made stools and broken oven. The man of the house was not at home and the visitor spoke with his wife. She asked him what he wanted with her "Ole Man." He replied: "I only want to ask him how much he is worth."

"Well, who sent you here to fin' out what we's with?" she indignantly demanded.

"Congress," replied Liddell.

"Whar do Mr. Congress live?"

Colonel Earle, member of Congress, was living at Centerville, so Liddell replied: "He lives at Centerville."

She told him that her "ole man" would go up there and "Whup" Mr. Congress for meddling in their affairs. Consequently, when the assessor saw Earle, he laughingly warned him to beware of the indignant old man who was coming to whip him. Earle was greatly amused and said that must be the dark corner of the dis-

trict. He said he would dodge the whipping by denying the name of "Congress."

Corner township was settled by people bearing the names Tucker, Thompkins, Jennings, Blackwell, Pickett and Searl. They organized a beat company and Tucker kept a bar room. A story is told of him which is also offered as an explanation of the Epithet dark in connection with the name of the locality.

The court house was at Ninety-Six and there was a small newspaper published there. On one occasion Loudon Tucker was at Ninety-Six attending court. He saw one of the newspapers and it pleased him so much that he bought a dozen or more copies to distribute among his neighbors, thinking they would be as greatly pleased with it as he was, and that several of them would subscribe for it. It was a weekly publication and Mr. Tucker's idea was to get as many subscribers as possible in order that there would be a number of them to take turns in going after the paper, which was the only way of getting it, and if there were a large enough number interested in receiving it, the turns would come seldom, causing little loss of time to any one man. But to his disgust not a single member of the company would take the paper. Failing to persuade them he angrily exclaimed: "How long shall we live in this damned dark age and day!" and the name stuck with the place. It is said that one old man of the community named McKinney remarked that the dark corner was good enough for him and would remain so if people would only keep out books, newspapers and foreigners.

However, it was at Dark Corner that one of the finest schools flourished – Moffattsville Academy.

Iva is a flourishing town in Corner Township. It sprang up as a station on the Savannah Valley railroad and was first called Cook's Station as the charming country home of Dr. A. G. Cook was the most prominent feature of the landscape. But Dr. Cook preferred to have his little daughter honored rather than himself, so at his request the place received the name Iva. Miss Iva Cook in later years became Mrs. David Bryson.

"SAVANNAH"

Named from the great river which is its boundary. In that township lived Paul Earle. His beautiful

home is as hospitable as was the old Evergreen place of his ancestors, and his cultured wife wields a wide influence in the community. Earle's remarkable marksmanship has made his name and his home known very widely. He has numerous beautiful trophies of his skill.

The old Evergreen home of Samuel G. Earle was in Savannah township, and the old Shockley Ferry Church was also located in what was afterwards Savannah township. The preachers – James Burris, Cooper Bennett and Richard Madden are a part of the history of this section.

Dipping Branch and Hollands are points in the township. A family which moved to that section soon after Anderson was established, was that of Thompson. The founder of the family in South Carolina was John Thompson, who came from Pennsylvania before the Revolutionary War, and settled in Union. He suffered imprisonment in Ninety-Six at the hands of the Tories, and after his release walked to his home in Union. It was his son, Addison Thompson, who emigrated to Anderson. He had just graduated from the Charleston Medical College when he came to begin his practice in Anderson District. He lived for a time with his uncle, John Thompson, when he first arrived. John had a daughter, Elvira, who was married about that time to Dr. William C. Norris. That was a very fashionable and elegant wedding. The father of the bride was well off, and the family wished to have the marriage of the only daughter a very brilliant event. The bride's trousseau was bought in Charleston, and a wonderful feast was prepared. All of the elite of Anderson District were invited to the wedding festivities.

The bride had a friend who was also first cousin to the man she was about to marry. Miss Jane Swain Norris was the young lady. She was to be bridesmaid. The girl friends of the bride gathered at the home several days before the wedding, and one day Elvira said to her friend: "Janie, I have a charming young cousin who is coming to see me married. He is a doctor, too, just as your cousin, my bridegroom is. I will give him to you, and we will exchange names. I shall become Mrs. Norris, and you take my cousin and become Mrs. Thompson." Miss Norris laughingly accepted the gift, and on the evening of the wedding she met Dr. Thompson, who really fell in love with her at sight. The affair

terminated in her acceptance of her friend's proffered gift, and actually became Mrs. Thompson. The young couple lived for a time with the bride's father, Ezekiel Norris, who afterward gave them a home near his own where they spent their lives.

The young doctor soon became a popular physician and had a practice which covered twenty miles around. The roads were too bad for vehicles, so the doctor rode horseback, carrying their medicines in their saddlebags. Those old doctors were soldiers of duty. They never stopped for weather; through storm and sunshine, bitter cold and intolerable heat they rode faithfully, night or day, often remaining away from home for several days at a time. It is no wonder that the family physician of those times was like a beloved member of every home.

The eldest child of Dr. and Mrs. Thompson was Richard Edwin Thompson, who also became a physician. When a little boy "Dick" was started to school to Weston Hayes, who taught in a log house near Bethesda Church. That church was built on land given for the purpose by Baxter Hodges, a devoted Methodist, and a Methodist church was built. When it was finished it was found to be on land owned by Dr. Thompson, who was a devoted Presbyterian. The mistake brought to his attention, he immediately deeded a sufficient part of his property to the church to set the matter right.

Dick's next school was a Cross Roads, now the town of Starr. It was taught by a man named Jerry Yeargin. Young Thompson was finally sent to Anderson to attend Hall's Military Academy and he boarded at the hotel kept by Christopher Orr. Miss Jane Orr was the proud possessor of a piano, the first to be brought to the town of Anderson.

Finally, Dick Thompson was sent to Erskine College where he was a student at the outbreak to the war. He enlisted in 1862 and served until the end of the war. After returning home he attended medical college at Charleston, and upon his graduation settled in Varennes township where he practiced. Dr. Dick Thompson lived to be quite an old man. He died during the first quarter of this century and was buried in Silver Brook Cemetery.

He had two brothers younger than himself who enlisted in the army, but both died of disease before

seeing any service.

Richard and Tyler Gambrell were for a time guards of the Confederate treasury in Anderson. They also guarded cotton on the Savannah River.

“HALL”

Hall township was the home of a large family of that same name and lineage. Nathaniel Hall was the first to settle here. He came from Virginia and settled about where Storeville grew up. He was a Baptist minister and the first of that faith in the locality. He found the people of the community greatly prejudiced against his religion, so much indeed that when he held baptismal services according to the practice of his church, it was necessary to provide guards to prevent interference. John Hall, a son of Nathaniel, gained this soubriquet “Stone Fence Hall,” as he was the first and most ardent advocate of using the stones found in abundance about the farms, for making stone fences, thus preserving to some extent the timber.

Zachariah, great grandson of Nathaniel Hall, was, however, the outstanding member of the family, and in his honor was the township named. He was a man of large means, and of education, and he did a great deal for his locality in a mental, moral and financial way. He was magistrate and for twenty five years a deacon in the First Creek Baptist Church. He was buried at First Creek Baptist Church.

Some of the oldest churches in the county are in Hall Township. First Creek and Rocky River are Baptist, and Hebron is Methodist. Carswell Institute was located in Hall Township. After the war the veterans of Company F, SC Volunteers held their reunions from place to place all over the county. Martin Hall believed that a permanent meeting place was a thing to be desired for the company, and he donated to it a half acre of land adjoining the school grounds of Carswell Institute.

Storyville is one of the points of trade in this township. In 1849 Enoch Benson and Theodore Trimmer were merchants of that section. Other men followed them. In the days of rural post offices there was one there.

The Milford family belonged to this township. The late John B. Leverette of Starr was born in Hall

Township, and his distinguished uncle, Stephen Leverette, is buried in an old family cemetery near Iva.

“HOPEWELL”

Named for Hopewell Church which applied for a charter in 1841. Septus, better known as Five Forks, is located in this township. Once it was an ambitious dream to build a town there. Dr. Gailliard owned much of the property, and he had it marked off into lots and sold at auction by Colonel W. S. Pickens.

Before the war there was a post office established at a point in what is now Hopewell Township, named Piercetown, for a prominent family. A little village grew up around it, and there were several enterprises. In the stirring days of war preparation there was a great public gathering at Piercetown and a young lady presented a handsome flag to one of the companies. She made a presentation speech, although it was unusual for a woman to speak in public. Although she might stand upon a platform and made her few remarks her name could not appear in the newspapers, so the journalist account mentions her only as “Miss E.”

The place flourished until ruined by the war. The post office was moved to Watkin’s Mill on Six-and-Twenty Creek and took with it the name. The present locality, known as Piercetown, is not the antebellum village. After the war the community wished to establish again a post office, and it was necessary to find a name for it, so it was called “Guyton” in honor of the Guyton family.

There used to be a section known as “Lick Skillet.” The reason for the queer name is lost, so imagination has run riot. Pioneer wagons have been pictured struggling slowly through the dense forest. Finally, provisions giving out, the hungry family had to lick the skillet in order that nothing would be wasted. Or they may have reached the section to find that former settlers had had a crop failure and were experiencing a scant living.

The first authentic records show a wagon shop kept by Gid Land, and a nearby smithy. That was nucleus enough for a gathering place, the social club of the country side, that is, for the masculine portion of it. The women had no recreation except going to church

Dr. John G. Clinkscales of Wofford, when he

was Anderson County School Commissioner, changed the name of the place to Eureka.

One of the first settlers in that neighborhood was Daniel Campbell, a Scotchman, who had settled first in Newberry, and moved in this section when the Cherokee lands were opened for occupation. The government sold the land for 50 cents an acre. Campbell, in partnership with an Irishman, took up 132 acres. For on time a son of Erin outwitted a canny Scotchman in a money transaction, and it somehow transpired that Campbell paid \$1.00 an acre for his share, and the Irishman paid nothing.

Sandy Springs gets its name from a beautiful spring surrounded by snowy sand. When the religious people of the section were looking for a suitable place to hold camp meetings, a Mr. Smith came forward and donated that beautiful spot. For many years the camp meetings held there drew people from far as well as near. A town grew up around the church, and the place received further notoriety when it became the camp where Orr's Rifles were organized, drilled and prepared for war. It was the home of D. A. Taylor, whose wise, witty and charming letters to the newspapers have long been a pleasing feature. He came from Virginia, but he married an Anderson County woman, and cast his lot among us.

There was once a Rockville projected in the county. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and his wife, Mary, deeded 60 acres to Andrew Pickens, Robert Anderson and others in 1792 to found the town of Rockville. Nothing came of the project, however.

Stuartsville was an embryo town about five miles north of Belton, and until the C&G railroad was built in 1853 it was quite a little center of trade. The first store in Belton was one which was removed from Stuartsville. It was run by J. B. Lewis and Dr. W. C. Brown. Hollands's store, Craytonville, and other places bearing the names of people, speak for themselves.

There was once a corner of Anderson County that got lost. It was lost a long time, but just a few years ago, W. H. Shearer found it.

In 1827 the line between Anderson and Pickens counties was surveyed, and a corner established in the middle of Eighteen-Mile Creek, right in the center of a

road which ran between Pendleton and Central. But if there was ever an official record of that survey made, it was destroyed or misplaced so long ago that it has been entirely forgotten.

Some few years ago there arose a question of building a bridge across Eighteen-Mile Creek, and Pickens claimed that the site of the proposed bridge was in Anderson County, therefore Anderson County should bear the expense of the bridge. Anderson, on the other hand, maintained that the site was in Pickens County, and that Pickens should erect the structure.

W. H. Shearer was appointed civil engineer for Anderson, and F. V. O'Dell for Pickens, to determine where the boundary line was located. The two engineers disagreed, and a third surveyor, R. E. Dalton, of Greenville, was added to the committee. Mr. Dalton agreed with Mr. Shearer's decision.

The original survey was made on May 3rd, 1827, by Thomas Garvin, Thomas Lamar, and James Gilmer, starting from the mouth of George's Creek on Saluda River, running to a point where Eighteen-Mile Creek is crossed by the road leading to Hagood's Store, thence to the mouth of Cane Creek, on Tugaloo River. The old ford where the road crossed Eighteen-Mile Creek has been discontinued for many years, and the road has been changed in many places, but by the help of old maps and examination of many papers connected with the adjacent lands, Mr. Shearer finally found and fastened down the long lost corner of Anderson County.

“A love not lost”

Continued

Gaps in a family genealogy

Jane Watson Morris has spent years tracing her Anderson County roots.

She had large, thick binders full of the letters that passed back and forth between her grandparents, Beulah Moorhead and Fritz Watson Sr.

She found the letters in the house that her family called “Tip Top,” which used to stand on the site where Walmart is now on Liberty Highway. Eventually, all of the Watsons that had lived on the “Tip Top” moved to different homes and left it empty. By the 1970’s, what was left of the house had burned to the ground.

Over the years, Jane Morris has read and re-read all the letters she had that her grandparents wrote to each other while they were courting before they were married. She has made copies of the letters for all of the couple’s grandchildren.

Mrs. Morris knew there were some gaps in the correspondence that she had, but figured the missing letters that her grandparents wrote were long gone.

Solving a mystery

Michelle Scott was reading the Independent Mail two weeks ago when came across an obituary with a name she immediately recognized. The obituary was that of Fritz N. Watson of Anderson.

“As I read it, I realized that it was for Fritz N. Watson Jr.,” Scott said. “When I got to the part that said he was the son of Fritz Watson Sr. and Beulah Moorhead Watson, my mouth dropped open. I had an answer that I had looked for my whole life.”

Michell Scott called the funeral home mentioned in the obituary. Soon, plans were made to get the letters back to the family that traces its roots to an Anderson farmer and a Georgia schoolteacher.

The gift

The Watsons and the Scotts met together in 2011 recently in Anderson to exchange letters, and to

talk about them. Michell Scott’s father Mickey apologized to the Watson family for taking the letters from the empty house the family called “Tip Top.” No one lived there in the 1960’s and 70’s when Mickey Scott, just a young man, went inside with one of his relatives. He asked for the Watsons’ forgiveness.

“We thought it was a haunted house,” Scott said. “I saw the letters scattered all over the floor in an upstairs room, and I decided to take them because they had penny and two-cents stamps of them. The house was abandoned. I never, never for one second, meant any harm.”

“We are just so grateful to have them,” Morris said. “If you hadn’t taken them that day, they would have been lost in the fire. We never would have had the pieces we were missing.”

Morris nodded.

“We don’t need to give you forgiveness; there is nothing to forgive,” Jane Morris said. “What we need to give you is our thanks. You have given you is our thanks. You have given us an incredible gift.”

As the families began to talk about going their separate ways, the Watsons made plans to copy the found letters and pass them around to the rest of their relatives.

“Can I get copies of the letters too?” Michell Scott asked.

“I’ve had these people with me my whole life,” she said. “I’m not sure I’d know what to do without them.”



Neil Watson looks at letters written by his grandparents Beulah Moorhead and Fritz Watson after they were returned to the Watson family by Michelle Scott, who had them in her possession for several years. NATHAN GRAY Independent Mail

FUN WITH OLD PHOTOS

How I connected with my young relatives – and reduced a mountain of pictures at the same time.

By John Ficarra

My uncle and my mom died within 18 months of each other. Both times, I inherited thousands.

Not dollars – family photos. Pictures were stuffed into shoeboxes, manila envelopes and supermarket plastic bags – mostly unmarked and in no order whatsoever. Overwhelmed, I stashed them in the basement and tried not to think about them.

Then along came COVID-19 and months of lockdown. I decided if I was ever going to sort through the boxes, this was the time. Laying out the photos on my dining room table was like curating a museum exhibit of 20th century photography. They began with studio portraits of my grandparents in rich sepia tones and progressed to blurry black-and-white images taken with my father's Brownie box camera. Color and bit more quality arrived in the photos taken after he bought a Kodak Instamatic flashcube camera.

As I started sorting, I realized that my sister and I were now the family's historians or genealogists. It was our responsibility to make sure others knew who all the people in these photos – their ancestors – were. That's when I started Throwback Thursday.

Every Thursday, I selected five of these old prints and snapped a photo of each on my iPhone. I wrote a bit about each one: who was in it, how they were related, what they were like. Then I texted them to my nieces and nephews and their children. (I didn't email them. Gen Zers detest email.)

When I sent an Army photo of my father, I relayed that during World War II, he was stationed on Governors Island in New York. One night he went AWOL to visit a woman he had just met. The MP's caught him, and he received 30 days confinement to the post. He eventually married that woman – my mom.

When I sent a shot of my Uncle Danny, I wrote about the time he invited his parish priest over for lobster dinner. It was a hot day, Danny had one to many, and when dinner time arrived, my tipsy uncle stumbled and sent a lobster flying across the table and onto the floor. (Thirty years later, my aunt still had not fully forgiven him.)

All the while during this fun project, I was painlessly the best photos.

My favorite part of Throwback Thursday was watching the younger generation react to the styles of yesteryear. When I was in college, I had a thick, round Afro – second only to that of Linc from the old TV show *Mod Squad*. My nieces and nephews couldn't believe I ever looked like that. The most razzing I received was when I sent a photo of me in brown-and-white-striped herringbone bell bottoms. (I deserved the razzing.)

The project was often bittersweet. I loved seeing photos of deceased family members, but sometimes I found myself mourning their loss all over again. At other times, I wished I could magically jump into a photo and warn the person of a bad decision they were about to make or a tragedy that awaited them.

Conversely, I greatly enjoyed figuring out how old my parents were in a photo and where they were in their journey through life, and seeing how my journey compares.

When I announced that I was running out of photos to send and stories to share, my nieces and nephews were genuinely disappointed. Throwback Thursday had become something they looked forward to every week. I took that as a win.

But like Al Pacino says in *The Godfather Part III*: “Just when I thought I was out, they pull me back in!” Cleaning out the basement, I found another box of photos from my parents. There were hundreds of images, including the only known photo of one great-uncle and a photo of another great-uncle for 1945 that I think ran in *Stars and Stripes* (it has government-approval stamps on the back). So Throwback Thursday came back in a big way.

It's been said that you die twice – once when

you take your final breath, and again when someone says your name for the last time. I hope I manage to keep some beloved members of my family alive for a good while longer.

Throwback Thursday Tips

Work in Short intervals. Taking this approach will reduce the number of times you feel overwhelmed and just want to throw everything in a box and leave it for your kids to deal with.

Be ruthless. Toss out vacation photos of scenery, any poor-quality shots and most negatives.

Learn from your past. Burn any articles of clothing you still own that you were wearing in photos taken in the '70s, '80s and '90s.

Tell family stories, warts and all. Yeah, two of my great-uncles were arrested a few times for bookmaking. Who cares?

This article was seen in the "July/August 2023 AARP Bulletin" and thought it might give you an idea to get started those photos you inherited and need to organize.

The Anderson County Genealogical Society Is Accepting Your Family Genealogy Information

Please consider sharing your family research with us for others to use in their search for family connections.

Do you have research books that you have bought and would like to donate them back to the Research Center for resale.

We Would Gladly Accept Them

The Anderson County Research Center Corner

By Gary Farmer

People have come and visited the Research Center to research their family genealogy: They were,

Cynthia Clark lives in Columbia, South Carolina and came by to do some research on his family line, Stone family, Shirley and Peacham.

Betty Massey from Toccoa, Georgia came in to do some research on the Hudgin's and Trotters's.

Eleanor Rankin Robins visited with us in November researching the Rankin and Heaton families.

Ray Tavenner from Stony Point, North Carolina visited the Research Center looking for information on his Tavenner family and Kirk-patriots.

Nathaniel Adams stopped by. He is from Anderson, South Carolina. He was doing research on his family relations.

Sara Hademenos traveled here from Houston, TX trying to connect the dots to her family members, Nealy V. Elrod who married Harriett C. Williams, John Thomas Morgan and Sarah Lucretha Keaon and John W. Elrod & Mary Frances Denkins.

Wanda McKinney, from Liberty, South Carolina was looking for any information on H. R. Miller and James Henry McKinney.

Christy Shockley of Anderson came in to check us out and research on the Gilmer, Payne, Farmer, Bolt and Mosley families.

Special Delivery – Children Sent Via Parcel Post!

September 13, 2023, Jenny Ashcraft

In 1913, the US Postal Service introduced “parcel post service.” Customers took advantage of the new expanded regulations to mail things like eggs, “live bees,” harmless live animals, produce, and even an entire building, one brick at a time. The most unusual deliveries occurred between 1910 and 1920, as numerous customers mailed children via parcel post. In 1920, this practice was officially banned (though we found a few instances where it occurred after this date). We’ve combed our archives to find special deliveries that made the news.

Shortly after parcel post was introduced, parents in rural Ohio sent their baby boy with the mail carrier to visit nearby relatives.

REAL BABY IN PARCELS POST.

Delivery Made by a Carrier at Batavia, Ohio.

Batavia, Ohio. – A mail carrier on rural route No. 5, out of this place, is the first to accept and deliver under parcels post conditions a live baby. The baby, a boy, weighing 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, just within the eleven-pounds limit, is the child of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Beagle, of near Glen. The package was well wrapped and ready for “mailing” when the carrier got it. Its measurement reached seventy-two inches, also just within the law, which makes seventy-two inches the limit. The postage was 15 cents and the “parcel” was insured for \$50.

The Minden Courier: January 30, 1913

Initially, sending children through the mail only occurred with rural carriers well-known by the

families sending their precious packages. But as the practice extended, some children traveled greater distances.

BABY IS SENT BY U. S. MAIL

Boy Weighed, Tagged and Forwarded By Parcel Post Arrives at His Destination Safe.

Fargo, N. D., Aug. 23 – Railroad officials here are glad that the limit of dimensions and weight for parcel post packages are not great enough to include adult human beings, and while they are not worrying they are, nevertheless, wondering when the practice of sending children in the state is going to stop.

Recently several children have been sent by parcel post from homes on rural routes to persons in towns out of which the routes run, but probably the first instance of sending a child from one town to another by mail occurred here when Freddie Colby, a 2-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Colby, was shipped to the home of his grandparents at Valley City from Fargo.

The mother was unable to accompany the boy to Valley City and as Freddie came within the limit in weight and dimensions for parcel post packages she took him to the post office, weighed and tagged him and he went through without accident.

The Sauk Centre Herald: September 2, 1915

Girl Sent By Parcel Post

Phoenix, Arizona, Oct 23 – Audray Lenore Christy, six years old, arrived here today from Los Angeles, the first human parcel post package ever sent to Phoenix. When the little girl was met at the station by her parents, she said she liked the trip all right, but wished “they hadn’t stuck those ugly tags on my new dress and sweater.” Audray traveled by Pullman.

Albuquerque Morning Journal: October 24, 1919

Send Boy by Parcel Post.

Danville, Illinois, July 18 – Eight-year-old Austin Kimball, weighing fifty pounds, was offered at the parcels post window of the local post-office for transportation to Coal City, Indiana, and accepted and “mailed.” Attached to his arm was a tag bearing the address and stamps.

Pine Bluff Daily Graphic: July 19, 1914

GIRL SENT BY PARCEL POST

Savannah, Georgia, March 29, - Little 6-year-old Edna Neff, who weighs under the 50 pound limit, wearing a placard bearing her name and destination and 50 cents in parcel post stamps, passed through the terminal station here on her way from Pensacola, Florida, to Christiansburg, Virginia.

The Public Ledger: March 30, 1915

In 1914, the San Francisco Examiner published tongue-in-cheek instructions about how mail clerks should care for their special deliveries.

TO MAIL CLERKS, RAILWAY SERVICE

– Babies by parcel post should be fed every four hours at expense of clerks. Do not stick stamps on baby’s face. All railway mail clerks must pass an examination to qualify in the art of dressing babies, and also in the knowledge of handling safety pins. Feeding is optional, but it is not advisable to give babies frankfurters or boiled dinners. Babies sent by parcel post must be delivered to some one at address. Do not leave them on front doorsteps or in the mail boxes in rural districts. If addressee refuses to accept such mail, wire postmaster general for instructions.

GIRL SENT BY PARCEL POST

NEW LEXINGTON, Ohio, December 1 – When the mail arrived here yesterday, Postoffice employees were surprised to find in it an eight-year-old girl bearing a tag which had been placed on her by New York immigration officers, reading: “This child, Julia Kohan, is going to her father, John Kohan, box 117, R. F. D. No. 4, New Lexington Ohio,” After a breakfast supplied by the Postmaster, the child was taken in care of a rural delivery carrier to the home of her father, who lives six miles south of here. The trip of 7000 miles from Bavaria was made by her alone.

The Mountain Democrat and Placerville Times

The first attempts to stop the practice of mailing children came in 1914 when mail officials in Montana said they would no longer accept “parcels of humanity.”

**CAN'T SEND BABIES BY
PARCEL POST SAYS
LAW**

**Point Raised by Official
in Oklahoma Decided by
Department**

Mothers of Billings will be prohibited from sending their babies through the mails in the parcels post. This order is a recent regulation sent out by the post office department and was inspired by the efforts of a mother at Stratford, Oklahoma who inquired of the postmaster there as to whether she could have her 2-year-old baby sent her by parcels post from Twin Falls, Idaho. The postmaster at Stratford hesitated between duty and the fear of the woman's wrath and “passed the buck” to the post office authorities at Washington. The order is the result.

Billings Evening Journal: February 18, 1914

Cincinnati postal officials also protested the practice in 1915.

**BABY SENT THROUGH
MAILS IS VIOLATION
OF POSTAL RULES**

CINCINNATI, Ohio, Oct 15 – The sending of a baby by parcel post from Carey, Kentucky, is made the subject of investigation by Superintendent John Clark of the Cincinnati division of the Railway Mail Service, and orders went out from Superintendent Clark calling upon the Postmaster at Carey to explain how happened that he accepted the baby to direct violation of the rules and regulations of the Post Office Department.

The Pomona Daily Review: October 15, 1915

Postal officials across the country began refusing to accept children in parcel post. Some [incurred the wrath of angry parents](#) who demanded the right to mail their children. Finally, in 1920, the Postmaster General ruled that [children could no longer be sent](#) through the mail.



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