

Bryant Family Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Special points of interest:

- If you are a Bryant descendant, your feedback is needed for this to be a success.
- See the descendants' list enclosed.
- Want to have a family reunion? Respond with your thoughts.

Inside this issue:

<i>The first six</i>	2
<i>Are they kin?</i>	2
<i>Who are they?</i>	3
<i>A special message to the Bryant family men:</i>	4
<i>What about a Bryant reunion?</i>	5
<i>Final thoughts...</i>	5

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Welcome to an experiment

This publication is an experiment in several ways:

- It provides genealogical information that I have gathered to other interested Bryant family members.
- It solicits the input of interested family members in adding and correcting genealogical information.
- It solicits your response as to whether you are interested in the Bryant family genealogy and wish to continue on the mailing list for this publication.

Although I would like to have as much genealogical information as possible going as far back in our ancestry as possible, this newsletter will focus on Bryant family genealogy of the **Henry Van Eaton Bryant/ Nettie Martha Cobb Bryant** line of descendants.



All the children of this union have now passed on leaving my generation as the eldest. Unfortunately there are a lot of family details, stories, and facts that I heard from my mother in the past which I, in the immaturity of

youth, made no effort to remember. I would dearly love to now recapture those faintly remembered details.

In addition to putting together a genealogy of as many Bryant family members as possible, I have also been making electronic copies of as many photos as I have been able to get to. I still have quite a number of old pictures from my mother's collection that I've not yet dealt with. (I'm also trying to do all of this with the Anderson side of my family as well, so this is proving to be a long-term task.)

As you'll see further in this issue, I need help identifying people in some of the pictures as well as assuring that I've properly added them to the genealogy.

Finally, I will be putting some of this genealogical information on the internet through one or more web sites. I've currently got a web site on my ISP (Netdoor) but have focused only on my immediate family and those ancestors which fought for the Confederacy in the War Between the States. If you are internet-active and would like to visit my current site, it can be viewed at www.netdoor2.com/~csa4ever.

How you can help me with genealogy

Within this issue you will find a multi-page report entitled "Descendants of John Wesley Bryant, Sr." This list begins with the first generation I have information for and lists all the descendants on which I have at least a name and relationship. Due to space considerations I could list only names, and birth (b.), marriage (m.), and death (d.) dates. Where dates are missing, I do not have complete information.

You will also find a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope in this issue. Please review the descendants' information and provide me with corrections and additions using the envelope provided. You may write your information directly on the descendants pages if you wish.

I thank you and I'm sure our ancestors would thank you for helping keep their memory alive.

The first six

This is a photo I scanned into electronic form from a copy my mother had made from a borrowed picture. It reportedly shows **Van** ("Papa") and **Nettie Bryant** with their first six children. Therefore, I presume the children to be **Claude** (probably boy at far left), **William** (Willie, probably boy in front center), **Lela** ("Sister," girl at far right?), **Phalby Ann Eliza** ("Dolly," girl standing in center?), **Wilhelmina** (in Papa's lap?), and **Nettie Lee** (in her mother's lap?)



technician made no attempt to restore the original to improve the image clarity. I would love to be able to get a better copy.

Do you agree with my assessment of who is who in this photo? If you don't, please let me know who you think each of the children are.

Although **Nettie Lee** lived for only 3 years and 9 months

before succumbing to diphtheria, she is almost certainly shown in this photo as I stated earlier. This fact and her apparent age (between one and two) in the picture help date it to about 1912. Any thoughts on this?

Does anyone out there have an original copy of this photo in better condition than this? The copy I scanned was made from a supposedly original copy but the photo

Are they kin?

The pictures shown here were in the possession of **Leon Bryant** when he died. The attorney handling his estate presumed they were family photos and did not include them in the estate sale of other personal items. I currently have them, primarily to assure that they do not become lost; however, if anyone in the family can identify who the individuals are and has a claim to the pictures through a more direct line of descent, I'll be happy to give them up.



This picture (above) is about 5"x8", oval, mounted on a metal frame. The frame is coated with a tan paint around the photo. Picture and frame are covered with a plastic-like clear coating which is cracked and separating. The photo itself is coming loose from the frame. The couple's dress implies an 1880 to 1900 date.

The photo below is in a badly desiccated wooden frame with rounded corners and a two-piece thin wood backing. The photo and backing are held in place by relatively modern finishing nails. The photo is in fair shape but the "softness" of the man's image indicates the photographer did some retouching before the picture was printed. Vintage is early, perhaps late 1800's.



The picture above is of a boy of age ~10. Appears to be a photo which was hand-colored. The colors are now darkened and tend to be mostly shades of brown. A lot of detail that might have otherwise been in the photo has been lost due to the coloring. Is also in an old wood oval-shaped frame, no backing, nails are old and rusted. Can't guess date.

Who are they?

Here are two photos of **Van Bryant** delivering logs to a sawmill in either Gloster or Centreville. He's the man with the derby and handle-bar moustache in both photos. Although the log wagon is stopped in nearly the same place in both pictures, the pictures were almost certainly taken on different days because the loads are different (top picture shows 3 large logs, bottom shows 4 slightly smaller logs). Also, the oxen teams seem to be paired differently.



In the top photo, there are a man and boy with Papa. They've been cropped out and enlarged at right below the top picture. Does anyone know who they are? The boy may possibly be either **Claude** or **Willie**. If it is one of them, his size would indicate his age to be 8 to 10 years old, dating the photo to about 1910 to 1915.



In the bottom photo, a different man is present and there is no child.

Although it probably cannot be seen in these size photos, a "telephone pole" is visible in the distance in both. Given when these were probably taken and the fact that there is no electric transformer visible on the pole, the wiring is probably for telephones and the photos predate electricity being available.



A message to the Bryant family men:

You need to be a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans!

The Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) was begun in 1896 to provide an organization through which the male descendants of Confederate soldiers could keep alive the memory of those soldiers and the cause for which they fought. Many Confederate veterans, including such figures as General Stephen D. Lee, had been waging a battle since 1865 against the Northern viewpoint being the only viewpoint allowed to be told in history books and taught in schools. They realized early on that they could not prevent the Northern-perspective from being told and set about to create means by which the Southern perspective would be available. As the number of veterans began to dwindle, the SCV was formed and charged with the responsibilities of carrying the truth of the Confederate cause forward into the future and of "keeping the memories of our heroes green."

To any of you who think joining such an organization as SCV would be tantamount to favoring slavery or the continued treatment of blacks as less than equals, forget any Northern propaganda that promotes this. The War Between the States wasn't fought over whether slavery was moral or immoral or whether it should be allowed or prohibited. The cause of the War can be summed up by saying that it was fought over how the Constitution was to be interpreted. The Northern states favored an interpretation that made the federal government superior to the states while the South believed that the states were sovereign and were not subject to federal rule in any areas not already specifically granted to the federal government by the Constitution. The fact that some 30,000 to 90,000 blacks, both freedmen and slaves fought willingly for the Confederacy and were incorporated into racially integrated units with whites should be enough to tell you that perpetuation of slavery wasn't a real issue in the conflict. In contrast, the North segregated blacks, paid them far less than white soldiers, and frequently gave the black combatants the "suicide" assignments.

The Bryant family males that will be seeing this are descended directly from **William James Bryant** (Van Bryant's father) who was a Captain in Company E of the 21st Mississippi Infantry Regiment. This company volunteered as the "Hurricane Rifles" in Wilkinson County soon after the start of the War. W.J. Bryant was elected Lieutenant (election of officers was typical in volunteer units) before the company entered Confederate service; he was later promoted to Captain when the company was incorporated into the 21st Mississippi. The 21st fought the entire war in the Army of Northern Virginia commanded by General Robert E. Lee. The unit's most memorable battle came on the second day of Gettysburg against the Yankees in the Peach Orchard.

W.J.'s brother, **David H.**, also served the Confederacy but in the 38th Mississippi Infantry. He was promoted to Assistant Surgeon of the regiment soon after enlisting. The 38th began as a true foot-soldier unit but was later converted to mounted infantry which meant that they fought more in the manner of a cavalry unit. This regiment's most memorable battle came in being one of the besieged units at Vicksburg. I can't begin to imagine what horrors of war David H. Bryant must have dealt with in his role as an assistant to the regimental surgeon. When he returned to Wilkinson County in 1865, he began a practice as a doctor and later moved to Liberty in Amite County where he practiced medicine until his death in 1883.

W.J.'s other brother, **John Wesley, Jr.**, may have also served in the 38th. A John Bryant is shown on the regiment's rolls; however, John Wesley is known to have begun working for the newspaper in Woodville in 1863 so, if he served in the Confederate army, his service was brief.

Help preserve the memory of these ancestors and honor their selfless deeds and sacrifices by joining SCV. You can contact me and I will do whatever I can to aid you in making application for membership. Write me at 1737 Bridgers Drive, Raymond, MS 39154, call me at (601) 857-8272, or e-mail me at csa4ever@netdoor.com.

What about a Bryant reunion?

When my mother passed away in May of 1999, I saw or talked with more Bryants than probably at any time since I was a small child. Several casually mentioned that there hadn't been a true family reunion in a long time (the last I remember was in 1959). Since the success of a family reunion depends on attendance by as many family members as possible, I'm raising the question of whether you'd be interested in attending a reunion if one can be planned.

I think reunions should always be held in the vicinity of the "old home place" so that attendees can visit cemeteries to pay respect to those passed long ago and can visit people and places that they wouldn't otherwise make the trip to see. For the Bryants, Amite or Wilkinson County would be the most appropriate location for a reunion.

Quite a number of churches, even smaller, rural ones, now have fellowship halls and meeting rooms other than the main church facilities which can be rented for a relatively small cost, especially if someone in the church congregation has kinship to the Bryant family.

So call, write or e-mail me with your feelings on the following:

- Are you interested in attending a Bryant family reunion?
- If the reunion were in Amite or Wilkinson County, would the location affect your ability or willingness to attend? Do have alternative site suggestions?
- What would be the best time of year for you?
- Would you be willing to pay a modest amount to defray meeting place costs? If so, how much per family or per person would you consider to be affordable?
- Do you know anyone, kin or otherwise, that would have an inside-track to a meeting place suitable for a reunion?

Final thoughts on this newsletter

I realize that, for reasons as unique as the individual, not everyone will be interested in the information in this newsletter and will have no interest in seeing future issues. To those of you with interest, please let me know your interests and give me any genealogical information you might have on Bryant kin. Since this is the premier, test edition of the newsletter, I'll not predict the level of interest or response it will receive and will only say that publication of future editions will depend on the response received from this edition and on whether the cost for printing and postage doesn't become unaffordable. If you have interest in this continuing be sure to let me know and give me your feelings on whether you would be willing to "subscribe" to the newsletter if publication becomes too costly for me personally.

For those of you who haven't seen me in a long while or may have never seen me, here's what I look like at age 53.

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Thanks.