

The Kentuckian

Journal of the First Families of Kentucky

Volume 9 No. 2

Fall 2015



Greetings from the Governor General

The first thought which comes to my mind as I sit down to write this, my first message to the members in my capacity as Governor General, is one of gratitude. Gratitude for the trust placed in me by my fellow members who nominated and elected me to this post, to be sure. But also gratitude for the Society of the First Families of Kentucky, celebrating the strong points of our Commonwealth and our ancestors, and gratitude for the blessings of living in the Blue Grass State.



I was born in Kentucky, and lived my first twenty-two years here, but then was away for forty years. I lived in Germany, in the District of Columbia, in North Carolina, and

mostly in Tennessee. While I do not wish to denigrate any of those places, and each has its strong points, when it was time for me to retire, there was no question. I would move back to Kentucky. I have thoroughly enjoyed my retirement here.

One day, not long after I retired, I was approached by Jack Early, who told me about a new society being formed, to be called the First

First Families of Kentucky

Luncheon

Saturday, the 24th of October

Two thousand and fifteen

Lexington Country Club

2550 Paris Pike

Lexington, Kentucky

Luncheon at twelve noon

\$30.00

Program by

Donna B. Hughes

"The

Duncan Tavern Historic Center"

Table of Contents:

Governor General Message	1,2
Announcements	1
2015-2017 Officers	2
Pendennis Club Banquet	3,4,5,
Casey Co. 1878 Tornado.....	6
Contermann/Gonterman	7
Reno	8
McConnell.....	9

2015-2017 Officers
First Families of Kentucky
Founded 30 April 2005

Governor General
William C. Schrader, III
WCSchrader3@gmail.com
502-561-1959

Deputy Governor General
Arthur H. Dietz, Jr.
Arthur.Dietz@twc.com
502-363-5549

Treasurer General
Robert Wallace Hughes
rwalhug@twc.com
859-263-1514

Registrar General
Sharon K. Withers
smwithers@twc.com
859-223-7656

Recording Secretary General
Donna Beverly Hughes
dcbh2@twc.com
859-263-1514

Corresponding Secretary General
Laura Snyder Jones
Jonesdogs@aol.com
502-245-0472

Historian General
Betsy Reynolds Kuster
tkuster@prodigy.net
859-987-6122

Chancellor General
Rachel Horten-Jansen
rachelkhorton@me.com
502-741-9060

Chaplain General
Sharlene Sanford Cooper
sscooper5@att.net
502-339-3566

Editor of The Kentuckian
Frieda Curtis-Wheatley
502-426-2780

Honorary Governors General
Ronald D. Bryant
Jack J. Early
Mary David Myles
William A. Buckaway, Jr.
Lynn Turner Shea

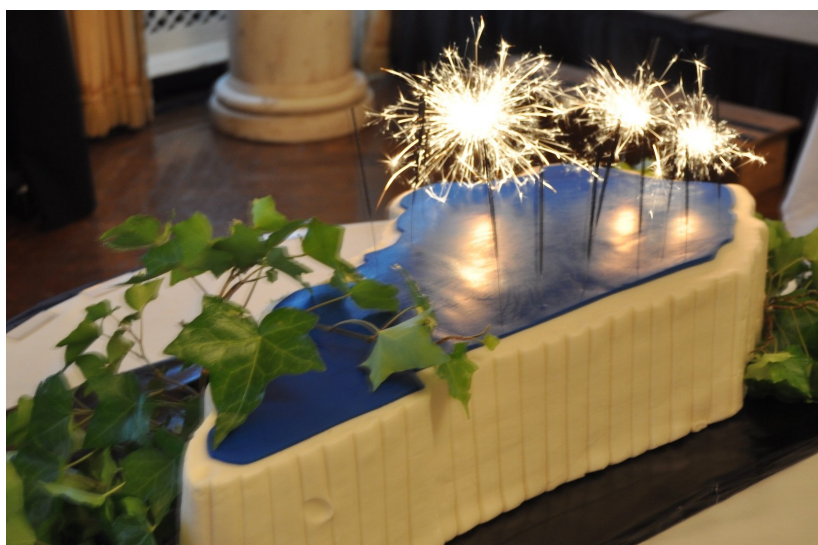
firstfamiliesofkentucky.com

Families of Kentucky, and asked whether I would be interested. I immediately expressed interest, and became a charter member. I have enjoyed being a member, and being on the Council for many years, and expect to continue to enjoy my fellow Kentuckians during my term of office and beyond.

I have large shoes to fill. Founders Ron Bryant and Jack Early are hard enough to follow, but my immediate predecessor was a woman of exceptional ability who brought the Society to new heights of achievement, initiating valuable programs recognizing historic and cultural sites across the state, and recruiting many new members. Lynn Shea will be especially difficult to follow. I ask forbearance during my first months in office, as I learn my duties more thoroughly, and cooperation throughout my term, as nothing can be accomplished without the assistance of members throughout the state and the nation.

In the later eighteenth century, there is a record of a preacher telling his congregation, "Heaven is a Kentucky kind of place." May God continue to bless the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

William C. Schrader, III
Governor General



The Society of the First Families of Kentucky
was founded in the year 2005. We are proud to celebrate
our 10th year.

First Families of Kentucky Banquet



Jack Early



Ronald D. Bryant



Lynn & Ron Shea



Sallie C. Smith



Fay & Jerry Ford



Catherine & Steve Collins



Speaker Ronald D. Bryant



Vocalist Laura Salyer



Charles Grissett, William Rybolt, Kandi Adkinson, Ellen Bailey, Jana Bailey, Emma J. Bailey, Dorothy Butler, Lynn Shea, Kay Thomas, Rick Hollis, Sarah Hamilton, Becky Ragland, Charles Bragg, Cheryl Rios, John Sinks



William C. Schrader, III



Rick Hollis & Lynn Shea



Jana, Emma, Pascal Bailey & Sharon Withers



John, Bettie Miesner, Myrna Parsley & Alex Probus



Cheryl Rios, Sharon Withers, Jane Power



Kandie & Carrie Adkinson



Frances Barr & Joan Mayer



Fay Charpentier-Ford



William Schrader & Carol Winebrenner



Kate Messer



Carolyn & Gordon Krist



Kay & Ed Thomas



Will W. Ward



Laurie & Lyle Roelofs



Fara Tyree, Leslie Miller, Laura Salyer, Sarah Hamilton



Valerie & Banning Lary

Casey County 1878 Tornado

On the 2nd day of March, 1878, there were two storms raging in the Gilpin section of Casey County, one on the north side of Jonathan Fork and the other on the south side of Jonathan Fork. They came together about the head of the creek and formed a tornado which swept everything in its path as it traveled at a terrific speed.

The first building of any note in the path of the storm was a cabin in which James Lawless and family lived. It took the top off this building and passed on to the home of Vinson G. Wesley, where Mr. Wesley and wife, Peg, as she was familiarly known, Martha Bell and Elizabeth Ann, two daughters, V. Green Richardson, Johnson Sloan, and William Taylor, a brother of Mrs. Wesley, were sitting around in the kitchen after having eaten dinner.

Hearing a storm coming they went into the front room, which was larger, and all managed to get into the front room except Mr. Richardson, who saw rails, boards and lumber flying in the air as he reached the door and turned back into the kitchen, as there was an open passageway between the kitchen and the front room. He saw the top of the kitchen and the walls blown away down to the floor and that was the last he knew until he came to himself under a lot of logs. He attempted to extricate himself but found that he was held fast. About this time there came another gust of wind and the logs were blown away.

He got up and looked around but could not see the house or barn and said for a few minutes he did not know whether he was in another world or not. By this time the neighbors had begun to gather and he was taken in charge.

The body of Uncle Vince (age 57) was found inside the yard with one arm cut off and a wall of the house lying on top of him. The girls (ages 17 & 25) were found nearby clutched in each other's arms.

Taylor Sloan was found outside the wall. All were dead. The body of Aunt Peg (age 53) was found about a quarter of a mile away. All her clothes were stripped from her. Her underskirt which was made of lindsey was found about seven miles away on the Elliott place. Some of the quilts that were blown from the bed were also found near her body. It has always been thought that Aunt Peg and the bed were taken up in the "funnel" of the tornado. Aunt Peg would always run and get in bed in time of a storm, as there was an old saying that feathers were a non-conductor of lightning.

The house was built of logs and they were scattered for a quarter of a mile. One of the logs was carried about a quarter of a mile and driven into the ground six or seven feet. There was a beech tree standing near the spring that was about 16 inches in diameter and some twelve or fourteen feet to the first limb. The wind twisted it around, until it was a bundle of splinters, but the roots remained intact. The barn was also built of logs, but the floor was about three feet above the ground. This space was used for a sheep house, then the walls were built on top of this floor. A shed was built all around and stalls were in the shed. The stock must have been in or around the barn when the storm struck as they were found nearby, all dead, except the sheep which were in the sheep house. All of the barn was blown away except the sheep house part. A five dollar bill was found hanging on a briar in perfect condition.

The tornado passed through the Mt. Olive section, tearing down fences, uprooting trees, and the dwelling of Dr. Sherd McClure was moved a few inches from its foundation.

Vinson G. Wesley was the son of Thomas Ray Wesley and Sarah Jones Wesley, my great-great-great-grandparents. Thomas R. Wesley was born in Rockbridge Co., VA in 1799 and died in Casey Co., KY in 1859. Sarah was born in Pulaski Co., KY in 1807 and died in Willow Springs, Casey Co., in 1870.

Submitted by Lynn Shea

The preceding story is from the Edwin H. Wesley Collection in the Pulaski Co. Historical Society, the Ware/Wesley book by Chester Ware, and the Casey County News.

Contermann/Gonterman

Johannes Friedrich Contermann was born between 1664/1670 in Wurttemberg, a Duchy in the Holy Roman Empire. The Holy Roman Empire was the first Reich in German history from 800 to 1806. With his wife, Maria Barbara, maiden name unknown, and three sons, Johannes Friedrich Contermann, immigrated to England ca. 1706-07 with Pastor Joshua Kocherthal. The family left for America in 1708 and settled first in the New York area, then Pennsylvania and finally in New Jersey.

Heinrich, one of Johannes son's, married Arientje Keyser. They had several children, Peter, John, Conrad, George and Henry who was born in 1736, place unknown. Daughters named in Heinrich's will were Mary, Barbery, Margaret, and Elizabeth.

Henry married Cattna Elizabeth (Cass), date unknown, in New Jersey. Cattna Elizabeth was born in 1744 in Sussex County, New Jersey. The couple had several children, one of which was Henry, Jr., born April 27, 1769 in New Jersey. The last name is sometimes spelled Countryman.

Henry served as a captain in the New Jersey militia during the Revolutionary War. As a result of his service he was awarded 400 acres of land in what was then Jefferson County, Virginia. Two safe conduct passes for Captain Henry Gonterman to go to Jefferson County, Virginia and back to New Jersey are now on file in the NSDAR records. Captain Gonterman traveled to the area in 1781 to survey the land that had been apportioned for him and his family.

Henry, his son, Henry, Jr., Peter, Henry's brother, and Peter's son, also named Henry, had all been granted land in reward for their military

services and moved, with their families, to the future state of Kentucky. In 1788, traveling by flatboat, they landed at the Falls of the Ohio in Jefferson County, one of the original three counties in Virginia to become Kentucky.

In a copy of the 1810 Bullitt County Federal Census of Kentucky there were three Gonterman households. The heads of these households were Peter, Henry, and Henry, Jr. The age range shows that Henry would be 75 years of age, with no children residing with him. Henry, Jr., shows in the 20-45 age column and was 41 years of age, with children living in the home. The only other Gonterman in the state in 1810 was Henry's brother, John, who resided in Nelson County.

Henry, Jr., married Polly Roberts. She was born in Jefferson County, Virginia. It is thought that the Gontermans and the Roberts had adjoining farms. Henry, Jr., and Polly settled in a home adjacent to his father. They had several children. John Kanady Gonterman, a son, was born March 3, 1820 in Hart County, Kentucky. Henry, Jr., was an early settler in Hart County. He died January 1, 1864, at John's home in the Dog Creek community.

John Gonterman married Ann Logsdon in Hart County on February 6, 1846. Ann was born July 27, 1826 in Hart County. It was thought the families were neighbors. John and Ann had several children. Silas Lee Gonterman, a son, was born April 5, 1862, at Cub Run in Hart County. Silas married Laura Bell McDowell November 4, 1894, in Cub Run. Laura was born June 20, 1863, also in Cub Run.

Silas and Laura had several children. Among them was William Lee Gonterman, born November 10, 1895, in Cub Run. William married Mayme Woodring, born October 14, 1894, in Cub Run to Haden Blanch Woodring and Sarah Elizabeth Jagers. William and Mayme had seven daughters, six of whom lived to be adults. They were Edith, Eleanor (deceased as a toddler), Winonah, Ruth, Rebecca, Phyllis, and Mary Lynn. The family moved to

Crofton, Kentucky where William served as principal of the high school. He then moved to Munfordville, where he was elected County Judge, later moving to Louisville, Indianapolis, Indiana, and back to Louisville, Kentucky.

Edith, born in 1919, married Harry Lee Moran, Jr., in 1939 in Barren County, Kentucky. Harry was born in 1916, to Harry Lee Moran, Sr., and Lottie Myers Moran of Glasgow and Horse Cave. Edith and Harry had four children - Elizabeth, Michael, Scott and Sarah. They had five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Some of the family still live in Kentucky.

Elizabeth Moran Mitchell

Reno

One of my ancestors with a peculiar name is Zealy Reno. The first thing which comes to mind when seeing that name is where did such an usual name come from. As to the family name, it is documented that the Renos of Virginia were of French descent, belonging to the Huguenot (French Reformed Church) religion, who were assisted by the English government when they fled the dragoons of intolerant France. On 18 August 1688 a bill of denization (naturalization) was issued by King James, II, on behalf of Peter Reynaud, Sarah his wife, and Peter, Lewis, Esther, and Francisca, their children. In the next generation, we find a grant of eight pounds from the Royal Bounty to "Lewis Reynaud of Angoumois, his wife & eight children for tools & other Necessaries (sic) things to goe (sic) to Virginia." This Lewis appears in Stafford County, Virginia in 1700 with land on Austin's Run. In 1712 he and Philemon Waters patented a tract a bit further north on the Quantico creek, which is now part of the US Marine base. By this time, the French name Reynard had been Anglicized to Reno or Renoe. This accounts for the family name of my ancestor. As to his given name, it is found in various forms, including

Zealy, Zealey, Zela, and Zila. While I have found no documentation of this possibility, I suggest that, with his French background, this may be a version of the name Basile, in English Basil, a name which appears among several relatives.

Zealy was born on 3 April 1757 in Prince William County, Virginia, a younger son of Lewis Reno and Elizabeth Whitledge, and a grandson of the immigrant. He married, according to a bond dated 26 July 1775 of Fauquier County, Miss Mary Chinn, who was four years older than he. Mary was a daughter of Charles Chinn, who was a cousin of George Washington through his mother, Margaret Ball. On 1 April 1839 Mary Reno swore in court that she was then 86 years old, which would make her born in 1753. Her brother, John Chinn, likewise swore on an affidavit that he attended the marriage of Zealy and Mary when Zealy was "about 19 years old."

Shortly before marriage, Zealy became a member of the Prince William County militia. According to his sworn statement given in 1833, this was in March, 1775. Zealy had an adventuresome history during the War for American Independence. First, serving as a sergeant, he marched with the militia to Williamsburg to oppose the actions of the Royal Governor, John Murray, Lord Dunmore, who attempted to seize the munitions in the arsenal there. In June, Dunmore was forced to flee to the protection of an armed British ship. Zealy declared that his "uniform" consisted of a purple hunting shirt marked on the breast with the words "Liberty or Death" in large letters, and a maccaroni hat with a buck tail. His captain was Cuthbert Harrison, a relative of his mother; his lieutenant was George Madden, and his ensign was his older brother, Lewis. They were in a regiment commanded by Col. Jesse Ewell. All this took two months. Later in 1775 he was stationed at Newgate in Fairfax County, at Dumfries, at Little York, and at Williamsburg until the British drove them out and they retreated to

Richmond, all in 1775 and 1776. Thereafter he spent his time serving short three-week tours guarding the crossing of the Potomac at Triplett's Landing until 1781. In the spring of 1781, under Captain Simon Hancock, Zealy marched to several locations, ending at what he called Little York (now Yorktown). During the siege of Yorktown, he was under the command of Lieutenant Marks, Captain Hancock, and Major Sam'l Cox in Col. Matthew's Regiment, under General Weeden. After the surrender of Cornwallis, he was employed in guarding British troops at Fredericksburg.

In this declaration, given in Harrison County, Kentucky on 13 February 1833 as Zealy's pension application, he also states that he was christened in the Church of England in Prince William County. After the Revolution, he lived in Prince William and Loudon Counties until 1784, at which time he moved to Fayette County, Kentucky (then Virginia, near present-day Cynthiana, Harrison County). Church records indicate that Zealy was baptized at Cooper's Run Baptist Church in 1790, and was later a member of the Silas Run Baptist Church in 1819. His wife, Mary, was admitted to Silas Run Baptist Church by letter from Cooper's Run in 1802.

According to the *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kentucky: Soldiers of the War of 1812*, Zealy also served in that conflict in Captain Moses Demmitt's Company of Kentucky Mounted Volunteers under the command of Col. John Pooge.

The will of Zealy Reno, dated 10 June 1834, was accepted for probate in Harrison County on 17 February 1837. In her affidavit for a widow's pension, Mary Reno says her husband died on 31 January 1837. In his will, Zealy names his wife, Mary, and children Christopher, Charles, Lewis, Sytha (Cynthia) Jones, Polly Jones, Penelope Calvert, and Margaret Lewis. Family histories indicate the possibility of other children, including Lucy, Benjamin, James, John, and Mary, but these are uncertain.

Zealy Reno must have been an interesting character. William Schrader, III

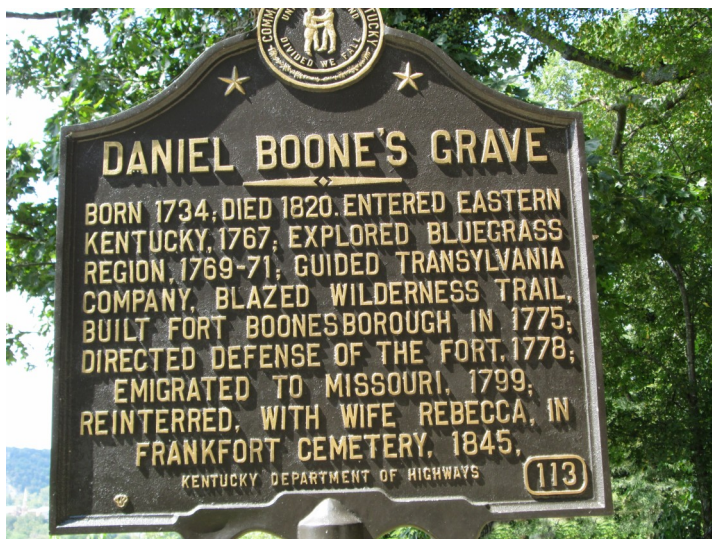
McConnell

James McConnell, II, was a Revolutionary War soldier who served in the 3rd Battalion of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In the winter of 1779/80, James McConnell, II, decided to leave Pennsylvania, with his wife and children, and travel to the far western lands of Kentucky County, Virginia, to join his younger brothers. Because of the severe cold weather the family was forced to hold up in the Monongahela country until spring. In the spring the family started their long journey down the Ohio River. Arriving at the mouth of Beargrass Creek (Jefferson County), they traveled upstream to Spring Station, located on high land north of the creek. The family rested for eight to ten days before continuing on to McConnell's Station in Lexington. After a terrifying attack by Indians, Mary McConnell gave birth to a son called William. She already had a small son born in Pennsylvania, as related in the *Draper Manuscript* 11CC. It is unclear where or when this attack took place.

James' brothers, William and Francis McConnell, had been in the hunting party that arrived in the area in June of 1775 and named their halting place, Lexington, in honor of the American victory at the opening battle of the Revolutionary War in Lexington, Massachusetts. William and Francis McConnell had claimed land on Town Fork in 1777/78, as well as numerous tracts of land along Elkhorn Creek. After Francis was killed in the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in 1781, James, as his older brother, inherited his land.

James McConnell, II, built a stone house and mill on Town Fork of Elkhorn as shown on Filson's 1784 map. In 1952, historian C. Frank Dunn pronounced the little stone house the oldest standing stone house in Kentucky.

J. Murel Wheatley



Preserve your ancestors' Kentucky history by sending his/her story to *The Kentuckian*. Stories should be approximately 600 words or less and all stories will be edited for clarity and length. Copyright material must be accompanied by a signed release from the publisher and the author. Please send photos and articles for the next newsletter to the Editor at 600 Hatherleigh Lane, Louisville, KY, 40222.

Please keep your address and e-mail current.

First Families of Kentucky
Editor Frieda Curtis-Wheatley
600 Hatherleigh Lane
Louisville, KY 40222