

SHAMBAUGH FAMILY NEWS-LETTER

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FROM THE MAIL BAG --

Mrs. T. B. Grapes, 909 Alabama Ave., Selma, Alabama writes: "We were pleased to get the News-Letter again. Many things are beyond me and my memory, but I am glad to know it all. Do you remember Mike and Frank Little, brothers to Jim, whom I am sure you remember? I did not think at the time we were to see Miss Betty Rogers, but it came to me afterwards that Mrs. Mike Little's maiden name was Mary Rogers and she was related to the Shambaughs. Now, I think she was a sister to Betty. Miss Betty told us that her grandmother was Ann Shambaugh.... Madge's son is back after three years overseas. At present he is teaching in Los Angeles city schools....Leon is back in his law office in Davenport, Iowa." Comments: From papers turned over to your editor by Mrs. Scott Owen who took care of Miss Betty in her last illness we believe that her father, Judge Rogers had brothers and sisters, one of whom was probably Mrs. Mike Little. It does not appear that Miss Betty had any brothers and sisters.

Mrs. Grapes' two children referred to are Mrs. Carl Hanson, 10933 Wright Road, Lynwood, Calif., and Attorney Leon A. Grapes of Davenport, Iowa. Mrs. Grapes makes her home with her daughter, Nona V. Grapes.

2/21/1954
Rev. Wm. F. Switzer, 1732 Harrison, Gary, Indiana, writes us: "I have been one year in the hospital, not that I am sick, but I have lost strength and could not stand up....Tomorrow, January 21, will be my 89th birthday, so you see I can't depend on time to help me much. I am glad to have you report the advanced age of many of the Shambaugh tribe....My mother, Catherine Shambaugh, daughter of Jacob Shambaugh and Sarah Hoobler Shambaugh, lived to be 91, but I have already outlived all of my mother's other children. I have only one brother left, Isaac Elmer Switzer at Otterbein, Indiana. He is four years younger than I am. I think that Adam Shambaugh was a grand man. He had more genius than he knew what to do with....I had undertaken the history of the Switzer family. I made three trips to Virginia and almost dug up the bones of my ancestors only to find that many of the Switzers had consented to be called 'Swisher'....Some still live in the Virginia mountains, where one man, it is said, fell out of his corn-field into his potato patch on the mountain side. I am not making guarantee of this statement....My daughter Cathryn is Welfare Supervisor of the Good Fellows Club of the Carnegie Steel Company and I have a granddaughter who is a student in our school for nurses in the Methodist Hospital here in Gary."

Comments: Rev. Switzer concludes his letter with the statement that he never knew a mean Shambaugh. Surely he is one of the grandest of the clan as we who have visited him can testify. In 1922 he came to Gary to help save the hospital that he now turns to for relief and moved his family to the great Steel City in 1923. He has been of inestimable value to the Methodist Church of that region and has been registered most of the time as associate pastor of the City Church of that place. To know him is to love him....From our study of the home and final resting place of George Shambaugh, ancestor of the Virginia Shambaughs, we find that his property was near Capon Mountain in West Virginia and that one of the persons in the ownership of the property which apparently was his, was a Philip Swisher.

Switzer - Swisher!

Rev. Switzer tells me that he believes there was a church and a burying ground in this immediate neighborhood which has been visited by most of your editors.

H. F. Guthrie, 7067 York Road, Cleveland, Ohio, writes: "Congratulations on the re-appearance of the News-Letter! Now, to save your time in going through the files to ascertain my place in the Shambaugh Clan I will here state that of the three sons of the immigrant George Shambaugh, George II who remained in Bucks County for a time is the one from whose lineage I am a part....This George, as told me by my maternal grandmother, was the father of six children, John, George, Christian, Catherine, Mary and Elizabeth. The daughter, Catherine, married Benjamin Walter. To this union were born nine children, one died in infancy. Those who reached maturity were Isaiah, Paul, Andrew, Samiel, Eve, Mary, Sarah and Elizabeth. The last named married Lewis Guthrie, and these were my parents.... That we are now looking forward to a gathering along the Wabash, it behooves us to make it something worth while. But as to myself, despite the fact that I now lack less than a month of reaching my ninetieth milestone, I have not lost interest in the world's movements. And while I am not as agile as I was a half-century ago, I am still trying to do something. Should there be anything that might be of interest to the gathering of the next Reunion that I might be able to contribute, I stand ready to do so."

Comment: Well do we, who were at the Second National Reunion at Loudonville, - remember the fine contribution made to us by Mr. Guthrie. While the spirit of men and women like him still lives, the Shambaughs will continue to be people who have made a great contribution to America.

Mrs. C. C. Kirkland, 4514 Royal Ave., Jacksonville 5, Florida, P.O. Box 6194 found out that the News-Letter was again a reality and sends us her new address. We are of the opinion that she and her husband decided to live near her brother, C. D. Shambaugh whose address we have as 712 Edgewood, Jacksonville, Florida.

SECTION ON FAMILY HISTORY DELAYED.....We had hoped to continue with our family history by giving in this issue the story of Philip, Jr. of Bucks County and Virginia, together with his children and grandchildren. However, some of the data which was to have been presented has not as yet reached us and we will put out this issue without the section on family history.

AS WE SETTLE BACK INTO PEACE TIME CONDITIONS.....We are most anxious to get together all of the data concerning those of our great Clan who have served, or are serving in the Armed Forces. Then, too, it is important that we learn about the adjustments made by those returning to civilian life. In order to make our family letter of the most effect we need to know the latest address of these folks. Write us complete details wherever possible. We should like to have all materials that are to be used in the letter of the month reach us by the tenth so that the letter can be made up and mailed by the twentieth.

PIONEER STORIES WANTED.....One of the really fascinating angles of the genealogy is to be found in the various stories of early days that abound in almost any family history. Since the Shambaugh Clan is so large, dates from such an early time in American life, and has sections in three-fourths of the states of the Union we should be able to dig up many interesting bits of pioneer life that have been heretofore unpublished. Share your treasures with the rest of us.

THAT THIRD ANNUAL REUNION....President Joe, can't we have a message from you about the possibilities?

INTIMATE NOTES FROM THE MEMORY OF THE DAUGHTER OF A PIONEER METHODIST MINISTER...

From best sellers of recent years like "One Foot In Heaven," and "Papa Was a Preacher," we have learned much of what goes on inside the home of a preacher and his family. Down in the little inland town of Baldwin, Kansas, we have the daughter of one of the great pioneer preachers of the southwest in the person of Mrs. Grace Showalter Black, daughter of the Rev. James Atwell Showalter. Mrs. Black, now well past seventy years of age, has kept an excellent record of the happenings in her father's life and we have prevailed upon her to share some of these with members of the Shambaugh clan. This great man of God was born in Indiana, educated in his native state, moved first to southwest Iowa and from there to a pioneer ministry in Missouri and Kansas, taking his young family with him. He was a great-grandson of George Shambaugh of the Bucks county line. From two articles furnished us by Mrs. Black we have chosen first to tell you about ... X

THE GREAT SNOW STORM -- One morning in January of 1880, I found myself with my eyes open to utter blackness. Like a sensible child who would be five years old the next May, I closed them to go back to sleep. A suppressed giggle and a whisper from my sister, Cora, six years old, "The best secret! Won't Grace be surprised when she knows?"...Then, I heard a still more careful whisper from my brother and hero, seven years old, as he said, "Sh! 'You'll wake her and then it won't be a secret any longer! You might wake the baby, too.'"

Without speaking, I slipped out of bed and opened the door into the kitchen where I found my mother getting breakfast, while the sun shone brightly through the upper window, meaning to climb up and see what it was. It looked dark from where I stood, and I was sure that the same thing covered all the panes in the bedroom and made it dark there. Mother told me not to go near the window, but to bring my clothes for her to help dress, before I should catch cold. Father came in from the outside just then and took up dressing me as he said to mother, "There will be school today, and it is growing late. Clarence and Cora will have to eat their breakfast quickly, then I'll take them. Clarence can get along in his boots. I'll carry Cora. The men and boys of the town have been digging paths ever since the snow stopped falling at four o'clock."

To me it was a happy day. When father came back from taking Clarence and Cora to school, he wrapped me up and carried me out to see the snow stretching out so smoothly as far as eye could see, and so deep that only the roofs and chimneys of the one-story houses showed. In some cases, nothing at all of the houses could be seen, smoke seeming to rise from the snow itself. Higher houses rose higher when seen from the south side, the snow was not piled so deep, but left the upper halves of the houses uncovered.

When father brought me back, he finished his chores, concluding with dressing a chicken that had been left by a donation party some time before. Mother thought that chicken stew and dumplings and the rest of the fixings would be the best supper for the children after being out on such a day. So, I had a secret with my parents all day to offset the snow secret of the morning.

Father told mother to be ready to go out with him when he should return from taking dinners to the school house. He wanted her to see some of the objects that the snow had made. He said that the people of the town were saying that no such blizzard had been there in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

Father brought Clarence and Cora home after school, leaving them at the door and going out again. He returned with the local mail, saying that no trains had been yet able to get through. He went to the stove and looked into the kettle simmering on the back of it. "Just what they need!" he said to himself, but his grave tones told us he wasn't thinking of us. His serious expression made the smiles fade from our faces. He said to mother, "Get your wraps on, we are needed. So is the supper." As usual all through her life within my memory mother began to get ready at the call of "Need." Clarence brought her coat and overshoes, Cora her hood and mittens and I rushed about getting the little things she asked me to bring.

Father wrapped the cooking vessels well to keep in the heat and packed them in a hamper, talking to mother at the same time. He told her that when the men and boys digging out the snow had come to the end of Adams street and were starting to go home, a woman called to them that she had seen people at the old shack at the edge of town a short time before the storm began. She thought they ought to dig out there and find out if they were still there. There was smoke when she saw them, but there hadn't been any there since. They found a woman and seven children, all unconscious, huddled in two beds, every cover in the house over them. A fire of trash had been made in the stove that had been set up. There was not a thing to eat in the house.

Our usual supper was placed on the table before our parents left, corn-bread and molasses. On each plate was a minute mound of potato, with a dab of gravy upon it, a third of a dumpling, while on Cora's plate was the neck of a chicken, on Clarence's and mine, a foot each. With instructions to eat at once, then to go to bed and go to sleep - we were never permitted to touch the stove or light the lamp - they set off, saying that they would be back as soon as they could.

We sat down at the table at once. Clarence returned thanks. His voice broke on the "Amen." Then he raised his head quickly, "Girls," he exclaimed, "Wasn't God GOOD to give us such a splendid supper just when it was so much needed so that WE could give it to these people when they were hungry and cold? To let us give it back to Him? You know, 'When he did to the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto Me.'" Down went our heads while we gave thanks for the blessing of having a chicken supper that we liked so much, to give to Jesus' little ones, His Brethren. It wasn't long until we were in bed and Cora and Clarence asleep - but, I could close my eyes.

As I was to learn when I grew older, the husband and father of this family in the old shack had been a promising young man, son of wealthy parents, devoted to church work, president of the Young People's Temperance Society, respected by the entire community where he lived. When he went East to school, everyone expected him to reach the highest life this school affords. He was to marry a young woman, held as high in the estimation of his friends as was he. Social life in the University town where he studied required that a man drink whatever his hostess offered. That was the beginning. When he returned to his home, the friends and relatives of this young woman begged her not to marry him. But the common story ended in the common way. She loved him. She KNEW that with her to help him, he would overcome his desire for liquor.....In spite of every effort on her part, he fell lower and lower. He couldn't hold a position because of drink.

When the seventh baby was born, he was again out of work. Then it was suggested that he go to a strange country and begin a new life. His former friends collected enough money to give him a start, secured a position for him with a business man in our town and he moved in. When they arrived, he saw that he must hurry to get his family into the house and buy fuel and food for a storm was almost upon them. Putting the furniture into the house, he gathered together what pieces of boards and other trash he could find in the yard and made a fire. Then he left his wife and the oldest children setting up the most necessary pieces of furniture, and drove swiftly to the stores for what was needed, expecting to return immediately. But, alas, one of his latest friendly acquisitions, a man who had learned of his weakness, happened to be in town and on the street.... When the wife was restored to consciousness she spoke her fears. Her husband, relieved of his money was found, still in a stupor, in the back room of the saloon.

(This is part of a longer story which Mrs. Black hopes to publish, and is used with her permission. No part of the story may be used without such permission.)