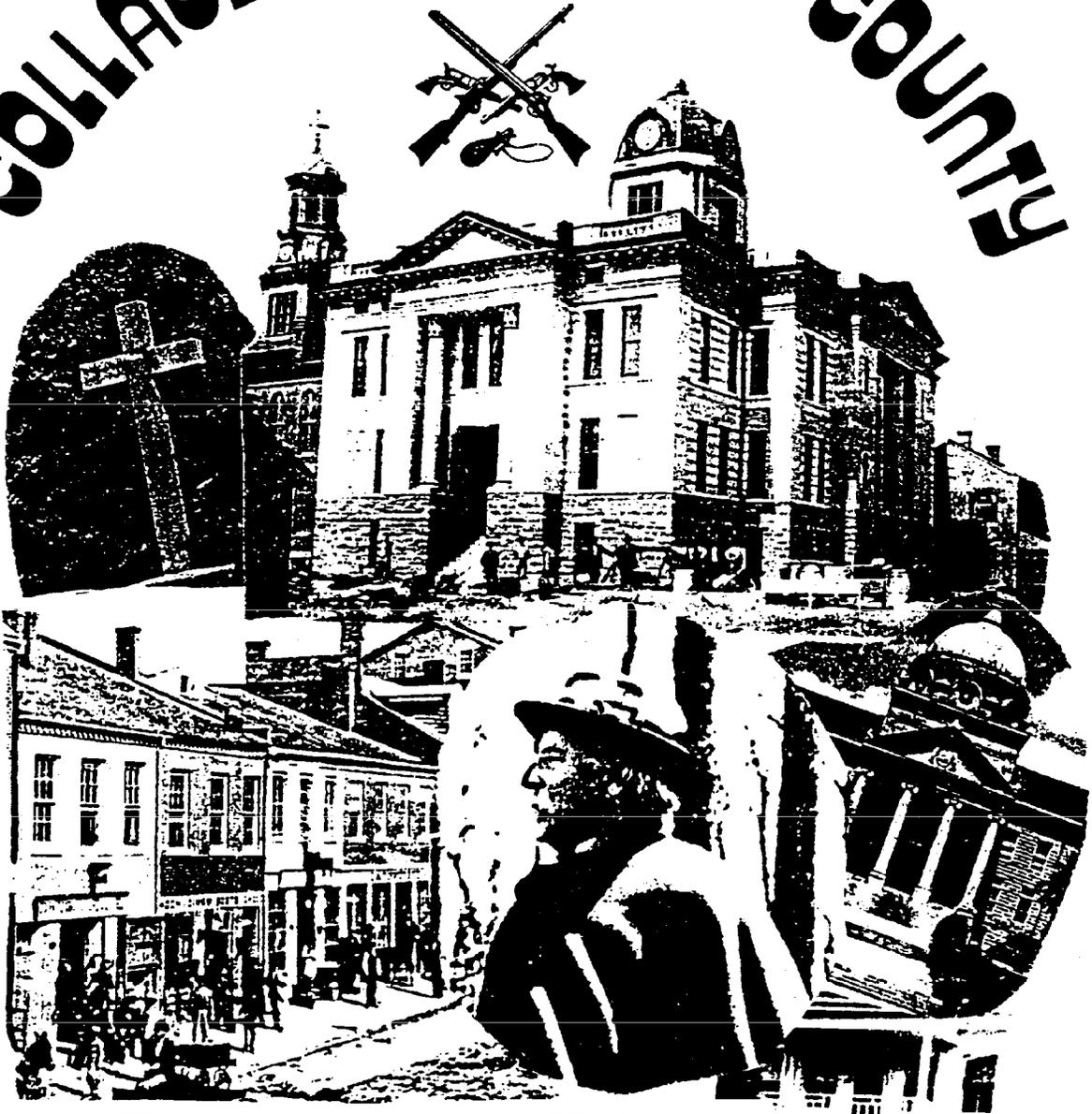


# COLLAGE OF CAPE COUNTY



CAPE GIRARDEAU EXPORTS 1874

Item	Amount	Price	Value
flour	120,000 bbls	\$ 6.00	\$720,000
lime	38,000 bbls	1.15	43,000
bacon	300,000 lbs	.07	21,000
lard	50,000 lbs	.07	3,500
hogs, dressed	150,000 lbs	.05	7,500





CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 571

Jackson, MO 63755

Volume 32 Number 4

March 2013

The Cape Girardeau County Genealogical Society was organized in May 1970, a non-profit organization, its primary purpose is education in the field of genealogy. Membership is open to individuals upon payment of the annual dues of \$10, or a couple for \$15, per year, beginning in May. Life membership is available for a one-time payment of \$250. Web site: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mocgcs/index.htm>

The CGCGS Library is located in the Research Room at the Cape Girardeau County Archive Center, 112 East Washington, Jackson, MO and is open during regular Archive Center hours. Our meetings are held at The Cape Girardeau County Archive Center, 112 East Washington in Jackson, MO, bi-monthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November on the fourth Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., unless announced otherwise.

CGCGS publishes this quarterly, *THE COLLAGE OF CAPE COUNTY*, in March, June, September, and December, sent free to members. All members are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Submissions on disk (MS Word, rich text, or text files) or by email (text or rich text format) are encouraged, but not essential. Mail to **Bill Eddleman, 1831 Ricardo Drive Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 (email: eddlemanw@sbcglobal.net)**.

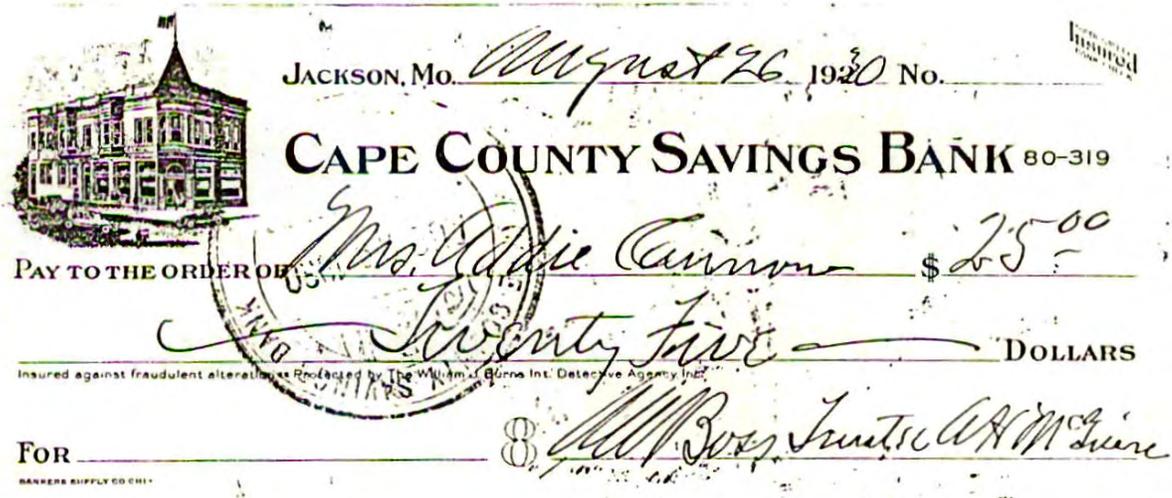
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## From the President

Dear Cape Girardeau County Genealogical Society Members,

As I write this, we are preparing for the centennial of the Missouri State Flag. The flag was designed by Marie Elizabeth Watkins Oliver in Cape Girardeau. Included in the celebration was a local history fair, at which the Society had a table. A part of the historical events in Cape during that week was the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Missouri Conference on History, and the launching of a partnership between the State Historical Society and Southeast Missouri State University. We heard about this at our January meeting, when Dr. Frank Nickell spoke to us about historical groups in Missouri and the future partnership. Of particular interest to us as genealogists will be the ability of the partnership to allow loan historical documents via the local office. More later as this develops.

Civil War commemoration events are also looming on the horizon. The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Cape Girardeau is coming up April 26, and a small commemoration is planned at the corner of Caruthers and Luce streets, where the commemorative sign was placed several years ago. This is literally a few feet from the site of the Lacey House, where the present-day Middle School is located. It also marks the approximate limit of the Confederate advance, although this may have been a block or so west of the sign. Also, Fort D Days is coming up in May, and there may be a skirmish arranged on Saturday, May 25 to reenact the battle.

As I announced at the January meeting, soon the Society will have another book of deed abstracts. This book covers the period up to early 1850 (Deed Books M, N, and O), and was made possible when I finally was able to have a German deed and some signatures translated to complete the abstracts. The book contains two French deeds as well, translated for me some years ago by the late Jane Randol Jackson. Look for ordering information in the next *Collage of Cape County* and the website.

For those of you interested in cemeteries, our friends at the Cape Girardeau County Archive Center have now inventoried dozens of old cemeteries, including photography of stones (many of which were downed or buried). Contact the Archive Center for more details on which cemeteries have been inventoried.

Hope all of you are either enjoying warmer weather or looking forward to it!

Sincerely,

Bill Eddleman





# One of the Family Slaves John (King) Snyder <sup>1</sup>

By Ray Nichols  
Arnold, MO



John (King) Snyder, a slave of my great-great-great uncle Logan H. Snider, often went by the surname King, before and after the War Between the States, but for legal purposes always used Snyder. Although he and the Federal government spelled his surname Snyder, the family of his owner always spelled their name Snider, even in colonial times.

## Early Life as a Slave

George Snider, Sr. was born in North Carolina, the son of John and Catherine Snider. Around 1800 George married Nancy Brannon and began a family. Together they worked a plantation on the Flowers Branch of Mountain Creek on the west side of the Catawba River, in Lincoln County, North Carolina. <sup>2</sup>

According to one family source:

*"George Snider [Sr.] came to Missouri [Louisiana] territory from Lincoln County, North Carolina, in the spring of 1811, with his family and slaves. He left Lincoln County in the fall of 1810, coming through in schooner wagons each drawn by six horses. His oldest son Aaron and a Negro boy each about ten years old rode through on horseback and led other horses. They had a long and tiresome journey through the winter months and arrived at the Mississippi River in the month of February 1811, and crossed over where Cape Girardeau now stands, then a small trading post. They took a westerly course from Cape Girardeau travelling about forty miles they came to [a] level tract of land lying in the forks of Hog and Crooked Creeks where there was a fine spring. Camping there a few days he came liking the surroundings, and decided to clear the land and build a home. He cleared a large tract of land and erected buildings for his family and slaves, corn, hogs, cattle, and horses. He lived there and prospered many years until his death. He obtained homes for all his sons, and daughters."<sup>3</sup>*

Family folklore relates the route taken by these early emigrants to the Louisiana Territory:

*"The first settlers [from North Carolina] followed the Watauga and Holston Rivers through North Carolina and the Virginia-Tennessee border, across the Cumberland Gap*

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the information about John Snyder was taken from his Federal Pension File # WC 751-371 (John's File contains over 350 pages).

<sup>2</sup> Stalon, Marie Allen (Hitt). "Ancestors and Descendants of George Franklin Snider and Sarah Elizabeth Proffer, 1750-1984." (Privately printed, 1984), p. 62

<sup>3</sup> Snider, John Calhoun. "George Snider, Sr and His Descendants." Handwritten manuscript written July 24, 1927.

*in Kentucky and along Boone's trail to Missouri. This route was still in use as late as 1817.*<sup>4</sup>

George Snider Sr. and Nancy had five sons, Aaron, George, Jr., Andrew, John and Logan, and three daughters, Nancy, Polly and Sally. Logan H. Snider, the youngest son of George and Nancy, was born after their arrival in Missouri on February 5, 1818. Logan is said to have owned the largest number of slaves of the Missouri Sniders. John (King) Snyder, the subject of this sketch, was to become one of Logan H. Snider's slaves.

Soon after Logan H. Snider was born, another family arrived in the Louisiana Territory from Lincoln County, North Carolina. John McCombs (1787-1843) and his family arrived in Cape Girardeau County about 1820 where he was appointed Justice of the Peace of Byrd Township on September 21, 1821, by the territorial governor Alexander McNair.<sup>5</sup>

John McCombs began to accumulate land on June 11, 1822, when he obtained 300 acres "more or less" from Charles De Moss. He then added 154 acres, being Lot No. 2, N/W  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Section 5, T-32-N, R-13-E in 1824. In 1827, he purchased 123  $\frac{1}{2}$  acres from Thomas Byrne, being Lot No. 10, part of a 6000 arpen grant to Bartholomew Cousin between Jackson and Bollinger's Mill. He also purchased land in Perry County, Missouri. He would continue to add land and slaves to his possessions throughout his life.<sup>6</sup>

John and Mary "Polly" Abernathy McCombs (1788-1852) had four sons, Robert D., William, Zechariah, and Eli, and six daughters, Minerva, an unnamed girl, Delilah, Lillian, Jane Narcissa, and Malissa. Jane Narcissa was born in July 1829, and would later marry Logan H. Snider.<sup>7</sup>

John (King) Snyder was born in October 1841, into a slave household, the son of a Sam Wettenburg and a slave woman, both owned by John McCombs. On the 1840 Federal Census John McCombs is shown as owning 19 slaves.<sup>8</sup>

While John Snyder was still young his uncle gave him the name of John King. Shortly after John was born, John McCombs died on July 27, 1843, and in the division of property his daughter, Jane Narcissa received the slave baby John Snyder. In John Snyder's pension file Jane would make a deposition that she "nursed him and knew him better than anyone living." She also stated that her father gave her John "when he was about five years old."

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<sup>4</sup> Baker, Otis C. Mr and Mrs. "From North Carolina to Bollinger," in Old Bollinger, Cletus R. Ellinghouse, 16 vols. in one. (Marble Hill, MO: The Banner Press, June 1975), vol. 16, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Eddleman, Bill, and Jane Randol Jackson, compilers. Abstract of Cape Girardeau County [MO] Deeds, Books A/ B-F, 1797-1826. (Jackson, MO: Cape Girardeau County Genealogical Society, 2000), p.140, Serial 1963.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 144, Serial 2029, p. 165, Serial 2297; Eddleman, Bill, abstr. Abstracts of Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, Books G-I, 1826-1838. (Jackson, MO: Cape Girardeau County Genealogical Society, 1998), p. 25, Serial 285, p. 50, Serial 601.

<sup>7</sup> [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

<sup>8</sup> Sixth Census of the United States, 1840. (NARA microfilm publication M704). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C. Roll 221, p. 248

Logan H. Snider's father, *George Snider, Sr.* died November 16, 1841, at the age of about sixty-six. *George's* wife, *Nancy Brannon Snider* had already passed away November 7, 1838 at the age of about forty-six. They are buried in the *Snider Cemetery* at *Laflin, Missouri*.

When *George Snider, Sr.*, passed away he divided what was left of his land between his two youngest sons, *John* and *Logan H.* The three eldest sons had already received their shares of *George's* land prior to his death. *Logan* received "the balance of my land including the plantation on which I now live, by his paying \$100 to each of his older brothers." *Logan* also received a mare named *Juno*, a saddle and bridle, two cows and calves and two sheep. Two slaves, *Isaac* and *Green*, were also given to *Logan*. In the original will dated September 20, 1838, *Logan's* mother was to live with him and he was to take care of her for the rest of her life. That did not take place as she died in November 1838, before the will was probated.<sup>9</sup>

Having established himself as a land owner and farmer, *Logan H. Snider* married *Jane Narcissa McCombs* on October 3, 1844. *John (King) Snyder* then became a slave of *Logan's*. *Logan* and *Narcissy Jane* (as she was called), had seven boys, *John F. Cornelius Cicero*, *Eli*, *Pleasant*, *Bobbie*, *James Perry* and *George L.* They had three daughters, *Mary J.*, *Josephine* and *Nancy E.*<sup>10</sup>

When *John (King) Snyder* was nine years old his mother "took up" with a slave named *Ephraim Oliver* and they had a daughter, *Eliza*. *John's* mother was never married to *Oliver* as *John* later stated, "...she and *Sam Wettenburg* separated before the war. According to *Dr. Urias M. McCombs* in 1899, grandson of *John McCombs*, "John wore goggles and there was scrofula (tuberculosis infection of the lymph nodes in the neck) in the family through his father, and his step-sister [*Eliza*] had it."<sup>11</sup>

The only other thing we know about *John (King) Snyder's* childhood as a slave, was related by his original owner, *Jane Narcissa McCombs Snider*. She said, in 1899, "...several years before the war *John* was thrown from a horse and the bone on one leg was crushed and he walked a little lame after that." Later the Pension Examining Board at *Cairo, Illinois*, in 1883, would note "...old fracture of left leg at the junction of lower and middle third, badly set."<sup>12</sup>

Sometime after *Logan* and *Narcissa* were married, *Logan* acquired land about four miles northeast of *Jackson*. When *Logan* died April 18, 1876, the inventory of his estate showed his real estate consisted of three hundred and eleven acres of land located just south of *Fruitland*, where present day *Interstate 55* intersects *Highway 61* north of *Jackson, Missouri*. His farm was a part of survey no. 2192.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Eddleman, Bill, abstr. *Abstracts of Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, Books J-L, 1838-1846.* (Jackson, MO: Cape Girardeau County Genealogical Society, 2002), p. 67, Serial 883.

<sup>10</sup> Stalon, p. 85.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, Probate Records, Box 105, Pkg. 1932 (Common Pleas Courthouse, Cape Girardeau, MO)

### **Federal Service in the Civil War**

When the war broke out most of the Sniders, living in Cape Girardeau, Scott and Bollinger counties, joined the Confederate cause, initially in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, Missouri State Guard and later in other Confederate units. Logan's oldest son, John F. enlisted in Colonel William L. Jeffers' 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Cavalry as a private in Company G.<sup>14</sup>

Sometime early in 1862 John (King) Snyder was either taken away by Union soldiers or he ran away to the Union army post at Cape Girardeau, Missouri. John, in his pension file, does not indicate how he arrived at the Cape.

According to a later deposition by Pleasant Snider, son of Logan H., "... during the war, Federal soldiers came to my father's plantation, got him [John] and took him away." However, this may be a mix-up in dates because Pleasant would have only been about three years old.

Being so young he could have later overheard talk about an incident that took place in another time frame. In early 1864, Federal troops did visit the farms of Logan H. Snider, Robertson Russell, Andrew W. Flinn, and John Howell, all near Jackson, in Cape Girardeau County, and several farms in Perry County, to enlist slaves. However, John (King) Snyder was already in the federal service by this time. According to the 1860 Federal Census and 1860 Slave Schedules, Logan Snider was 45 at the time and owned 8 slaves. Robertson Russell was 49 and owned 12 slaves. Andrew W. Flinn was 54 and owned 8 slaves. John Howell was 51 and owned 11 slaves.<sup>15</sup>

How John (King) Snyder arrived at the Cape is unknown but William Abernathy, an ex-slave from Cape Girardeau County, in 1896, witnessed that, "John Snyder became a waiter (body servant) of Captain William Flentge, Company D, 12<sup>th</sup> Missouri State Militia Cavalry, USA, at Cape Girardeau in February 1862.

William Flentge, a native of Hanover, Germany, arrived in New Orleans, Louisiana, with his father, in 1844. By 1850 he had traveled to Cape Girardeau where he became a clerk for Cape Girardeau merchant Charles Welling. In 1860 he was married and a miller in Wayne County, Missouri. He later became County Clerk of Cape Girardeau County.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> National Archives, M322. Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations From the State of Missouri. Roll 52, Eighth Cavalry, Mo-Sn.

<sup>15</sup> Eighth Census of the United States, 1860. (NARA microfilm publication M653). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C. Roll 611, pp. 308 and 311; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860. Slave Schedules. (NARA microfilm publication M653). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C. Roll 661, pp. 11, 12.

<sup>16</sup> National Archives. Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1820-1902; Series: M259; Roll #: 23; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M432); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C. Roll 394, p. 374B; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860. (National Archives Microfilm Publication M653); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C., Roll 660, p. 690; ; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870. (National Archives Microfilm Publication M593); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C., Roll 765, p. 60A.

Flentge originally entered service at Cape Girardeau as a Private in Captain Caleb K. Roby's Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Fremont Rangers, Missouri Home Guard on October 13, 1861. He would serve in this unit two months until discharged on December 12, 1861. He then formed a Missouri State Militia Company February 20, 1862, and became its Captain at age 32. His Company then became known as Company D, 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion Mounted Rifles, Missouri State Militia. By May 8, 1862, it was designated Company D, 2<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Missouri State Militia Cavalry. It would appear John (King) Snyder became Flentge's body servant on or shortly after February 20.<sup>17</sup>

During March and April 1862, Company D, 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion Mounted Rifles, Missouri State Militia remained at Cape Girardeau and participated in scouting expeditions, picketing and guarding the Post. On one scout, the company (25 men), along with men of Companies A and B, engaged Captain William L. Jeffers' Independent Confederate Cavalry Company south of Jackson on April 9, 1862, where they were repulsed and forced to retreat to the Cape. As a body servant John (King) Snyder probably remained in camp at the Cape during expeditions.<sup>18</sup>

Company D remained in Cape Girardeau through most of May 1862, doing the same scouting expeditions, picketing and guarding the post. On May 26, Company D, along with Companies A and C were ordered to march 72 miles to Ironton. On June 11, 1862, Companies D and H changed stations to Pilot Knob. By September the Company had joined the regiment at Greenville, MO and subsequently moved to Patterson, MO. On November 3, 1862, the Company, along with several other companies, marched to Jackson, Missouri, where they would camp throughout the winter. John (King) Snyder would have made these marches with the company. William Abernathy, in 1896, confirmed that, "John Snyder spent the winter of 1862 at Jackson, Missouri."<sup>19</sup>

The 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Missouri State Militia Cavalry was broken up February 8, 1863, and Companies C, D, E, F and G transferred to the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Missouri State Militia Cavalry (2<sup>nd</sup> Organization). Company D became Company K of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment. On March 9<sup>th</sup>, Captain Flentge was ordered on special duty commanding a company and detachment of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Missouri State Militia Cavalry at Rolla, Missouri. Company K remained at Jackson until March 12, 1863, when it received Special Orders to depart Jackson and move to Rolla, Missouri, arriving there March 27, 1863. John (King) Snyder made the move to Rolla with Captain Flentge.<sup>20</sup>

Nathaniel D. Abernathy later made a statement that during the war he went by Nathaniel Damascus, was a comrade of John in Company F and was discharged with him. He confirmed John was a waiter for Captain Flentge at Jackson, Missouri, of the 12<sup>th</sup> MSM and was a cook for this officer. He stated the unit went from Jackson to Ironton thence to Rolla.

At some point following the move to Rolla, John (King) Snyder left Captain Flentge and became the waiter or body servant to Captain Peter Hagan according to William Abernathy in his 1896 deposition.

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<sup>17</sup> National Archives, M405. Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations From the State of Missouri. Roll 710, Missouri Home Guards, F-Go and Roll 263, Twelfth State Militia Cavalry, A-Ha.

<sup>18</sup> War Department. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official records of the Union and Confederate Armies. (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1880 - 1901), 128 vols. Series 1 - Volume 8, pp. 364-5. Hereafter, cited as ORA; M405, Roll 263, Twelfth State Militia Cavalry, A-Ha.

<sup>19</sup> M405, Roll 263, Twelfth State Militia Cavalry, A-Ha.

<sup>20</sup> M405, Roll 125, Fifth State Militia Cavalry (2<sup>nd</sup> Organization), A-Bo; Roll 128, E-Ga.

Captain Flentge was placed in command of the regiment from May 26 until June 26 so the change of Captains could have taken place then. Captain Hagan had been Captain of Company E, 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Missouri State Militia Cavalry. When the transfer to the 5<sup>th</sup> MSM took place, Company E became L.<sup>21</sup> Prior to the war, Peter Hagan, born in New York, lived with his family on a farm in Greenville, Bureau County, Illinois. He then moved to Bois Brule township in Perry County, Missouri where he was a laborer, living with the Samuel Hook family. Hook was also classified as a laborer. Peter Hagan enlisted on September 14, 1861, in Captain Michael Dinkel's Company A, of Samuel P. Simpson's Six Months Militia, at Perryville, Missouri. Right after enlistment he was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant on September 30, 1861. He served with the unit until mustered out February 25, 1862. On March 12, 1862, at age 23, he formed Captain Hagan's Company, Missouri State Militia at Ironton, Missouri. This company subsequently became Company E, 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment Missouri State Militia.<sup>22</sup>

After John (King) Snyder became waiter to Captain Hagan, he remained at Rolla until at least April 1863. On April 27 the 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment Kansas Infantry moved to Rolla, Missouri. A sergeant in Company A of the 10<sup>th</sup> Kansas was William O. Kretzinger. The sergeant apparently had some influence on John (King) Snyder because when the 10<sup>th</sup> moved from Rolla to St. Louis in early June, 1863, John must have gone with them. Kretzinger would later be commissioned in the same U.S. Colored Regiment as John and the same Company.<sup>23</sup>

Although the Regimental and Company F descriptive books say John enlisted July 4, 1863, at St. Louis, John claimed in his pension file that he was recruited by William O. Kretzinger at Rolla, Missouri. That is entirely possible as many colored recruits enlisted at one place, were then taken to St. Louis and enlisted in the Federal service. Later, Calvin Israel, a fellow soldier, declared that John enlisted at Rolla.

In mid-1863, Missouri was not allowed to recruit slaves for Federal service. Following William A. Pile's request to Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas, on May 20, 1863, Major General B. M. Prestiss, under Special Orders No. 28, authorized Colonel William A. Pile of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Missouri Infantry, stationed at Helena, Arkansas, to "aid in organizing troops of African Descent in Arkansas." Thomas then issued Special Orders No. 86, added, "He has permission if in his judgment such a course shall seem necessary and expedient to go beyond the District of Eastern Arkansas to confer with Major Generals Blunt and Herron who are respectfully requested to render him such aid and cooperation as may be in their power."<sup>24</sup>

**[To be continued in the June 2013 Collage of Cape County.]**

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<sup>21</sup> M405, Roll 128, E-Ga; M405, Roll 129, Ge-He.

<sup>22</sup> Seventh Census of the United States, 1850; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M432); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C. Roll 99, p. 222B; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860. (National Archives Microfilm Publication M653); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C., Roll 638, p. 638; Missouri Digital Heritage. Missouri State Archives, Missouri Office of the Secretary, Jefferson City, MO. <http://www.sos.mo.gov/mdh/>; M405, Roll 129, Ge-He.

<sup>23</sup> National Park Service. Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Database. 10<sup>th</sup> Kansas Infantry. [http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-regiments-detail.htm?regiment\\_id=UKS0010RI](http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-regiments-detail.htm?regiment_id=UKS0010RI)

<sup>24</sup> M405, Roll 634, Thirty-third Infantry, P-R.



**MEMORIES OF AUNT PHENE**  
**Josephine Brown Piercefield Rice Davis**

October 15, 1870 -January 2, 1956  
A Life-long Cape Girardeau Citizen of Color

By Celeste Beatrice Stanton  
Austin, Texas  
April, 2011



Now in my late 60's, I often think back over my life and dwell on the special, unusual or happy times, and there were many. Recently, while working on a genealogical project on another family member I began recalling my summers spent in Cape Girardeau at Aunt Phene's house. Though she was generally known as Ms. Rice, the family called her "Aunt Phene."

Josephine, born October 15, 1870, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest daughter of John and Amanda Williams Brown.

My grand-aunt, Nellie Allen Stanton, took me to Cape at least three times during summer breaks from school, the last time when I was ten. It was such a different place from St. Louis where I was born. A small town with whites and blacks living on the same street, Aunt Phene's house was located in the 300 block of South Fountain – (census records list 323 as the exact address.) We could walk "to town" meaning to the downtown shopping area from there and I recall that it was only a few blocks from the Mississippi River. The most unusual element about that location is that the houses on both sides of that street sat on the edge of a very deep train gully through which a black, noisy locomotive traveled several times a week belching out thick, black, choking, sooty smoke. When Aunt Phene heard the train whistle blow in the near distance, she'd shoosh me into the house and everyone would hurriedly slam down the open windows and shut all of the doors to prevent the acrid, black soot billowing out of the train's stack from permeating the insides of the home. Once the train passed and the soot settled, the doors and windows would be re-opened and Aunt Phene would see to it that the soot was wiped from items on the porch, and the porch and steps were swept clean. When I visited Cape Girardeau in the Fall of 1991 I could not find the train gully which ran in front of Fountain Street. Looking at the city on a Google map today, it is not there. It is hard to believe that something so deep could be filled in, but it is certain that it has been.

Situated just a couple of yards from the precipice of the gully, Aunt Phene's house was a small, white, one story farm-type house with a screened-in porch and a shallow, but well kept front yard enclosed in a white picket fence. The room into which one entered the house served as both the "front room" or living room, and Aunt Phene's bedroom. To the left of that was a second bedroom and behind that a deep long pantry which opened into the kitchen. The kitchen was narrow but accommodated this wonderful big, black cast-iron, wood-burning stove from which Aunt Phene daily produced the lightest, biggest, most delicious home-made biscuits I've ever eaten. To the right of the kitchen was a small room which later became an inside bathroom. And on the back of the house was a small screened-in area with a door leading to the long, narrow back yard where stood a weathered smoke house, the out-house, of which this city girl was deathly afraid, and a lush vegetable garden.

**The clearest memories:** Priming the green hand pump at the kitchen sink to get the water to pour from the troth-like spout – so much fun for this city girl.

Watching Aunt Phene stick that curved iron instrument into the hole, lift the plate atop the stove and shove pieces of wood down into the black cast-iron stove in order to cook our meals.

Eating the main meal of the day at 11:00 in the morning. Lunch, or as it was called then, dinner, was an early meal often of fresh picked string beans, tomatoes, and watermelon from her garden – fresh ham from the smoke house, and soft yellow corn bread. Aunt Phene would go out into the smoke house and bring in a ham that had hung from the ceiling after she knocked the “skippers” off of it. Skippers, as I realized to my horror, were some sort of worms!! Fresh ham tastes very different from the store-bought, honey smoked ham we are accustomed to today. Supper was the smaller meal of the day enhanced by the biscuits left from breakfast and was always followed by some sort of cobbler. I liked the fresh peach cobbler best.

Another memory was cleaning the kerosene lanterns with newspaper. Without indoor electricity at the time, lighting after dark was by the glow of kerosene lanterns. I remember Aunt Nellie calling them “coal oil lamps.” Whatever the fuel, it left the glass chimneys of the lanterns sooty, so every few days we cleaned the insides of the glass. It seems that newspaper did the best job and it was disposable. Walking around the house at night with a lantern for light was spooky and when it was the only light in an outhouse that could conceivably be populated with black widow spiders and the errant copperhead snake, the dim, golden light was no consolation. I envisioned “things” waiting down in that smelly hole to bite me in my most vulnerable position as I sat on the wooden board with the hole in it. I remember my fear as I reached down for the roll of toilet tissue. Whenever I could, I remember holding myself until the light of dawn illuminated the back yard before I went to relieve myself. Baths were taken in a large, corrugated #2-tin tub filled with buckets of hot water heated on the big cast iron stove. I was always so glad to get back to St. Louis with our brightly lighted, second floor bathroom, contoured toilet seat and deep porcelain bathtub.

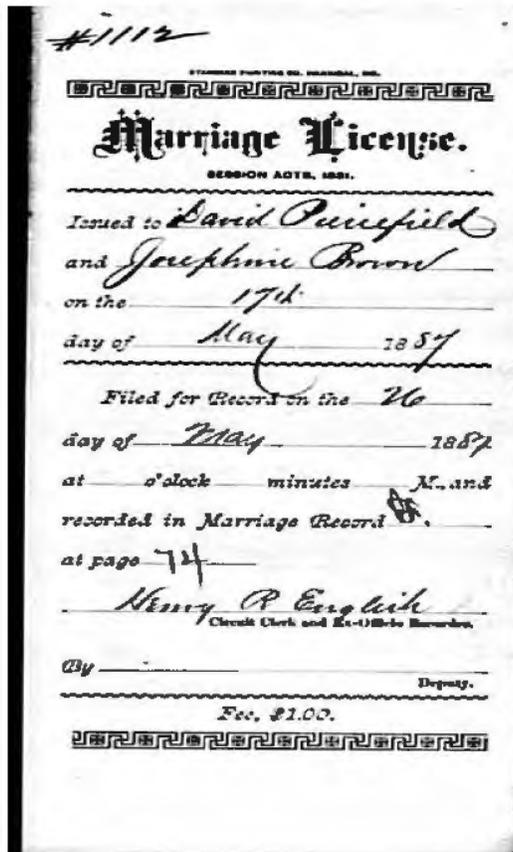


**Josephine Brown Piercefield Rice Davis**  
**At about age 30 – 1910?**

Aunt Phene was a tall, buxsome, handsome, light-brown skinned (mulatto) woman of imposing stature as you can tell from her photograph. Unlike Aunt Nellie, her niece who was only 4 feet 10 inches tall, Aunt Phene was almost six feet in height. I sense that she was a pretty young woman and seemed to have some Native-American looking features but there is no evidence of a Native-American ancestor in the family. She was kind to me but from a child's point of view she appeared somewhat stern. I think it was her size, and the quiet dignity with which she carried herself; maybe it was just the mistaken impression of a precocious, talkative little city girl. A peculiarity that I will always remember is her fastidiousness of dress. No matter what she donned for the day, she insisted on being laced into her corset! I remember pulling on those strong cords to tighten the cotton garment with the vertical boning until she admitted that it was tight enough, then she'd wrap the cord around to the front and tie it neatly at her waist. Then, as now, it seemed an archaic way to dress, but it was a reflection of her pride. It helped to make her straight and tall with a discernable waistline. Though I have no recollection of attending church with her, I know she was a Christian woman.

I don't know how far she went in school, however, the 1880 census shows her, at age 10, in school. Interestingly, her older sister, Catherine, (my maternal great-grandmother), age 15 at that time, was no longer in school so it is possible that formal schooling ended in the family during or after an elementary school education.

What I have learned since is that she was married three times and was a homemaker all of her adult life. There is no record of her having employment outside of the home. At age 19 she married David Piercefield in May 1887 with the written permission of her parents John and Amanda Brown.



(Marriage license-Missouri Marriage Records 1805-2002).

John Brown  
 Amanda Brown  
 Josephine Brown age 19 years.

We the undersigned John Brown  
 Amanda Brown parents of Josephine  
 Brown do hereby consent that a  
 license may issue authorizing the  
 marriage between our said daughter  
 and David Piercefield.

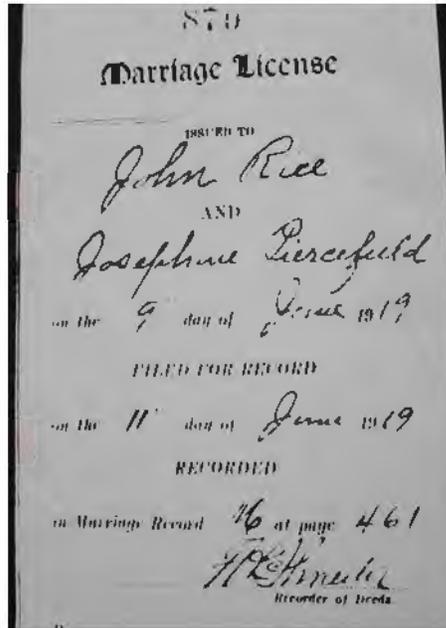
Given under our hands & seal of law  
 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 1887.

Witnesses:  
 John Brown is willing  
 Amanda Brown is willing

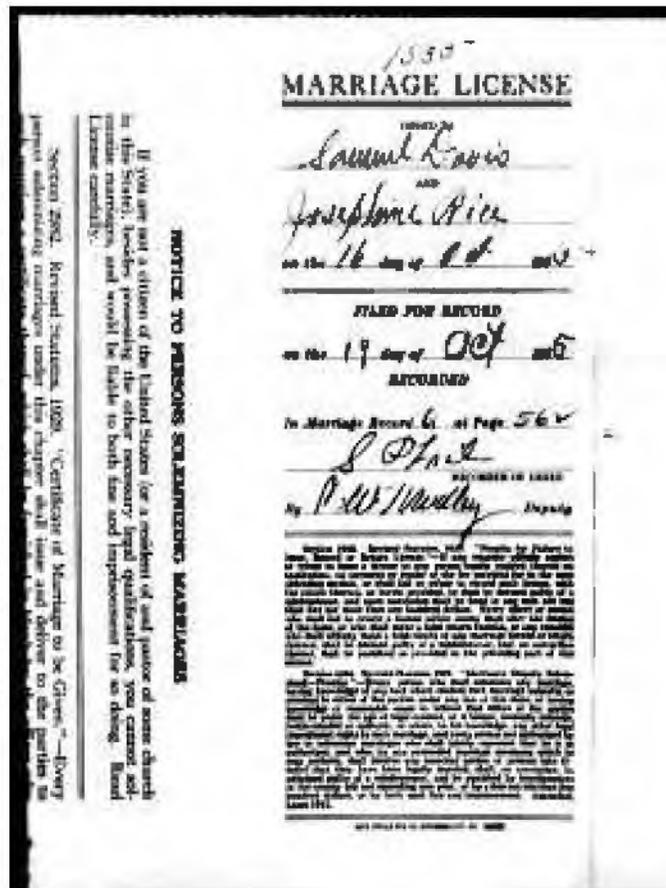
James Coates  
 Henry Cochran

**Permission to Marry Document – Missouri Marriage Records-1805-2002  
 John Brown and Amanda Brown for their daughter Josephine Brown, age 19.**

It was during that thirty year marriage that the couple acquired the residence at 323 South Fountain and produced two children – Myrtle and Duard. According to his death certificate, David died of tuberculosis on March 31, 1917. He was 61 at the time of his death and had earned his living as a dairyman. Josephine later married John Rice in Cape Girardeau on June 9, 1919 (*Marriage License - Missouri Marriage Records 1805-2002*) but was widowed for the second time on February 3, 1930 when John, a chef by profession, died of pulmonary tuberculosis.



Continuing to live in her house on South Fountain (*US Federal Census Records 1920*), Josephine married Samuel Davis on October 16, 1935, (*Ibid, Mo. Rec.*).



I did not know about the 3<sup>rd</sup> marriage until I began my research. Though Mr. Davis was her last husband, she was known into her golden years as "Miz Rice." As an intelligent and clearly attractive

woman of the times, and a woman with property, it is easy to understand that she would be a prime prospect for potential husbands. Conversely, to remain comfortable in her home, it may have been convenient or a matter of practicality to have a husband for support. On the *1930 US Federal Census, Cape Girardeau, Missouri*, she is listed as a widow owning the home and property (the house most likely) valued at \$500. As confirmation of her continuous residency in Cape, she is listed in *Polk's 1949 City Directory*. At my last visit to see Aunt Phene in 1952 or 53, she remained mistress of her well-kept home and was often addressed with great respect as "Miz. Rice" by both white and black citizens.



*Plat from Cape Girardeau County Recorder's Office for January 1931.* The arrow points to Aunt Phene's small house with the front porch at 323 South Fountain. Her block was bordered by Morgan Oak on the west and Good Hope Street on the east. Also note the train tunnel crossing Good Hope Street through which the train ran as it passed in front of South Fountain Street. The train tracks (down in what I recall as the "gully") are apparent as they traverse east to west. Though hard to read, the "box" crossing Morgan Oak and the train track was, as I remember, a broad concrete bridge.

I did not actually realize her biological connection to my Aunt Nellie until I became interested in genealogy. Aunt Phene was, in fact, my grand-aunt Nellie Allen Stanton's biological aunt. The daughter of John and Amanda Brown, Josephine was their second oldest daughter. Catharine, the eldest daughter, was Aunt Nellie's mother. So, Aunt Phene really was her aunt. And Aunt Nellie was the elder sister of my grandmother, Helen Allen Stanton.

Apparently, Aunt Phene went to Chicago to spend the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays with her son and other family members. On, or just after Christmas day, she suffered a stroke (non-traumatic cerebral hemorrhage) and was placed at Peyton Convalescent Home in that city where she remained for one week until her death. As with many of our family members, her body was brought back to

Cape Girardeau where she was born and the place she loved for all the years of her life. Her death notice on January 4, 1956 in the *Southeast Missourian* Newspaper reads:

**Mrs. Josephine Rice**

**Mrs. Josephine Rice, 84 years of age, a life long resident of Cape died Monday at the home of a son, Duard Piercefield at Chicago. Infirmities of age was given as the cause of death. She had been at Chicago about a month. The body was to arrive today at the Sparks Funeral Home. Funeral arrangements have not been made. Mrs. Rice leaves a daughter, Mrs. Myrtle Daniels of Madison Wis. And two grandchildren. She was born in Cape and resided on South Fountain street.**

The last notice of her home-going reads:

**Funeral for Mrs. Rice**

**Funeral services for Mrs. Josephine Rice, 84 years old and a life long resident of Cape who died Monday in Chicago, Ill. will be held Saturday at 2 o'clock at St. James A.M.E. Church. The pastor, Rev. D.O. Meadows, will be in charge, and the body will remain at Sparks Funeral Home until time for the services.**

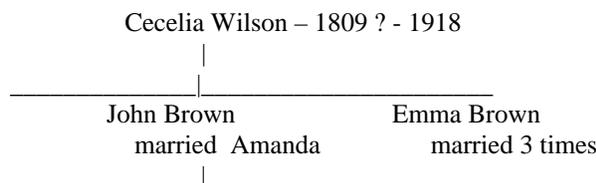


**Aunt Phene is buried in Fairmount Cemetery. Lot #383, grave #3.**

We speak the name of Josephine Brown Piercefield Rice Davis; we honor her life.

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A PORTION OF THE FAMILY TREE SO WE CAN KNOW WHERE WE ARE





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