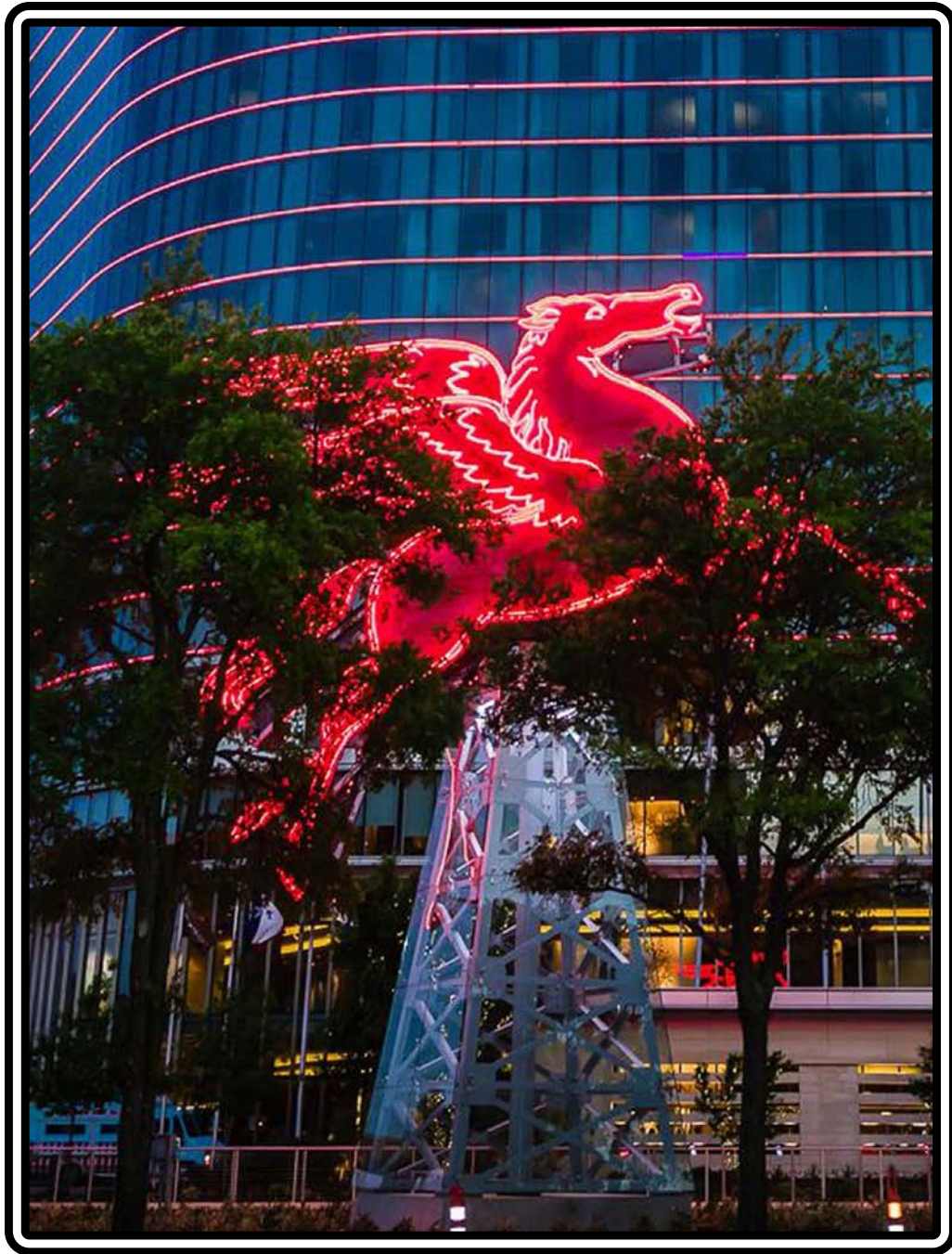


PEGASUS

Journal of the Dallas Genealogical Society



60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE
WINTER 2015
VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2

Pegasus: Journal of the Dallas Genealogical Society

The Publications Committee chose the name *Pegasus* for our journal because the winged horse is regarded as the symbol of the Muses and of aspiring to great accomplishments, and more importantly, because a Pegasus has been an icon of the City of Dallas for decades.

First erected in 1934 on the roof of the Magnolia Petroleum Co. headquarters on Commerce Street, the winged horse sign, fabricated by Texlite Signs in Dallas, became one of Dallas's most enduring and recognizable landmarks. In 1959, it became the logo of Mobil Oil when it merged with Magnolia Petroleum. The city conferred landmark status to the sign in 1973. In 1976, it became the property of the City of Dallas.

In 1978, the Magnolia Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Developers bought the building in 1997 and converted it to the present-day Magnolia Hotel. In 1999, in anticipation of Dallas's Millennium Celebration, the original sign was taken down and put into storage when a new sign was commissioned. A completely new, fully-rotating sign was lit for the first time at midnight on 1 January 2000. This work was accessioned into the Public Art Collection in 2000.

Articles Solicited for *Pegasus: Journal of the Dallas Genealogical Society*

The DGS Publications Committee is actively seeking articles that showcase both genealogical research and writing and compilations that feature unpublished genealogical records. Articles may be submitted by members and non-members of DGS, both hobbyists and professionals. Articles may not have been previously published elsewhere.

There will be two categories of publication: research issues that feature articles (case studies, methodologies, family genealogies) and records issues that feature transcriptions, abstracts, or indexes of records not yet filmed, digitized, or published elsewhere (e.g., cemeteries, family bibles, civil, religious, business groups, etc.).

To encourage article submissions, DGS will compensate authors for their material upon publication. We are one of a handful of societies to reward authors in this manner.

Guidelines for submission and payment terms can be found at: <http://dallasgenealogy.com/dgs/publications/pegasus>.

Send submissions or questions to: pegasus@dallasgenealogy.org.

On the Cover

Night view of Pegasus sign, originally built in 1934 and now restored, that stands in front of the Omni Hotel in downtown Dallas. The restored sign was lit for the first time at a ceremony on 27 May 2015. See full article about the restoration in the Summer 2015 issue of *Pegasus*. Photo by Thomas Garza Photography, provided by LDWW Group and used with permission of Omni Hotels and Resorts.

PEGASUS

Journal of the Dallas Genealogical Society

60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE
WINTER 2015

VOLUME 3



NUMBER 2

MICHAEL S. RAWLINGS

MAYOR



CITY OF DALLAS

December 11, 2015

Dear Friends,

Congratulations!

On behalf of the City of Dallas, I would like to congratulate the Dallas Genealogical Society (DGS) as it celebrates its 60th Anniversary.

DGS was founded as the Dallas Local History and Genealogical Society in December 1955 and changed its name to the Dallas Genealogical Society in 1977. From the beginning, DGS has been faithfully committed to its mission to educate those individuals interested in researching and sharing their family history; to support the Dallas Public Library's genealogy collection through time, acquisition of materials and a variety of other means; and to work to preserve the records of the City of Dallas, Dallas County and the surrounding area for future generations.

On behalf of the City of Dallas, I commend the exemplary efforts of everyone affiliated with the Dallas Genealogical Society and extend my appreciation for your many valuable contributions to the Dallas community.

Congratulations again, and best wishes for many more years of success.

Best regards,



Michael S. Rawlings
Mayor

INTRODUCTION TO DGS 60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

“The ancestor of every action is a thought.”
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

For sixty years the actions of the Dallas Genealogical Society have been guided by the thoughts expressed in its mission statement. This purpose statement has been elaborated in various ways through the years, but the three main aims have remained constant: Educate – Support – Preserve. The goal of the *Pegasus* Editorial Board for this 60th anniversary commemorative issue has been: first, to show how the mission statement was born; second, to illustrate how DGS has fulfilled its mission by reprinting key articles from past DGS publications; and third, to honor past and present members and others who have received service and book or writing awards from DGS.

Part I of this issue contains articles concerning the pre-history of DGS dating from 1930 to the founding of the Local History and Genealogical Society in 1955, which later changed its name to the Dallas Genealogical Society in 1977. The first article discusses the first Dallas Genealogical Society formed in 1930 as an affiliate of the Institute of American Genealogy in Chicago and the following decline in interest in genealogy until the mid-1950s. A photo of the original 1934 Pegasus sign, which is now restored and placed in front of the Omni Hotel in downtown Dallas, is featured on our cover as a reminder of the time when this first Dallas Genealogical Society was founded. The second article is extracted from librarian Margaret Barret Pratt’s article “The Development of the Genealogy Section of the Dallas Public Library,” which recounts Pratt’s role in encouraging the reestablishment of a genealogical society in Dallas and the symbiotic relationship envisioned between it and the Dallas Public Library’s Genealogy Section. John Plath Green and Dee Brown Walker were the chosen instruments as shown by Judge Walker’s letter to the society reproduced from the *DGS Quarterly* of December 1964. The third article is a tribute to John Plath Green by Elizabeth Thurmond who knew him personally as a Sunday School teacher, employer, and friend before his interest in genealogy developed. This first section concludes with a short autobiography by Green reproduced from his book on the Cabiness family, short tributes found in DGS publications, and a formal photo of the founder of the Local History and Genealogical Society.

Part II consists of documents and reprints from DGS publications arranged chronologically from 1954 to the present time, which are sometimes accompanied by transcriptions or short notes. They show the planning and execution of sixty years of activities that embodied the three principles of the DGS mission statement. Even before the formal “Articles of Incorporation” were approved by the Texas Secretary of State on 12 December 1955, the Local History and Genealogical Society had held two organizational meetings in October and November of 1954. The proposed new society “committed to the PURPOSE OF FOSTERING THE COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF GENEALOGY & LOCAL HISTORIES IN CONJUNCTION WITH DPL [Dallas Public Library].” It also “would OPERATE AS A CLEARING HOUSE FOR THE EXCHANGE OF GENERAL INFORMATION AMONG ITS MEMBERS, AND TO STUDY AND MAKE AVAILABLE IMPROVED METHODS OF RESEARCH, TO LOCATE ADDITIONAL SOURCE MATERIALS, AND TO STUDY METHODS OF COMPILING GENEALOGICAL DATA.” This first articulation of the purposes of the new genealogical society can be found in the November 1954 meeting newsletter and the 25th anniversary newsletter of November 1979, both reproduced in this issue. The rest of the reprinted articles show how this firm resolve has remained for sixty years as the foundation of everything DGS has accomplished. Its support for the Dallas Public Library Genealogy Section has continued from its first project of listing and printing the inventory of genealogical books in 1955 through the huge capital improvement project, which greatly enlarged the DPL Genealogy Section in

1996, to the 100,000 Book Challenge in 2005, and is still evident in 2015 with the DGS gift of a book scanner worth about thirty thousand dollars. Educational programs and preservation projects still continue to this day.

Part III concerns DGS service and writing awards given to members and others over the years. Sandra Crowley highlights the importance of DGS volunteers in the success DGS has enjoyed and presents a listing of the service awards given by DGS to honor its own volunteers and other individuals or organizations who have contributed over the years directly or indirectly to realizing shared goals. Marianne Szabo describes how from its earliest beginnings the society encouraged members to write their family histories, then chose to recognize the quality of these efforts first with awards for the best book, and later with awards for writing in a variety of categories and formats. A major benefit of these awards was that each book submitted to the awards competitions became the property of the Genealogy Section of the Dallas Public Library. Many of them are still in the library catalog as reference materials that members can access today.

Finally, the editorial team of *Pegasus* would like to thank Joanne Corney for her much-appreciated help and to give a special thanks to the staff of the Genealogy Division and the staff of the Local and Texas History Division for their patience and assistance in locating the materials we needed for this special commemorative issue.

Pegasus Editorial Team (in alphabetical order)

Sandra Crowley

Janet Khashab

Ed Millis

Shirley Sloat

Marianne Szabo

Julie Cahill Tarr

Elizabeth Thurmond

**CONGRATULATIONS
DALLAS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
DIAMOND JUBILEE**

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PART I



THE EARLY YEARS

DALLAS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES 60 YEARS OF SERVICE (OR 85 YEARS IF ITS ANCESTOR IS INCLUDED)

by Janet Khashab, AG®

On the 12th of December in 1955 the Secretary of State of Texas approved the articles of incorporation submitted by the members of the "Local History and Genealogical Society" in Dallas. The new organization was issued a charter (no. 129750). Twenty-two years later on 25 January 1977 approval was given by the Secretary of State for the organization to change its name to the "Dallas Genealogical Society" thus linking it to its earlier ancestor.

The intention to form the first "Dallas Genealogical Society" was announced in the *Dallas (Texas) Morning News* on 1 June 1930.

Genealogical Society To Be Formed in Dallas

The Dallas Genealogical Society, to be affiliated with the Institute of American Genealogy, will be formed shortly by invitation to residents interested in the subject, it was announced Saturday, Sam P. Cochran and Mrs. George E. Bell are acting for the committee in charge.

The objects of the society will be to foster interest in genealogy and local history, to employ a competent genealogist to aid its members in tracing their own lineages, to provide research facilities in connection with genealogical material in the Dallas public library and other local centers and to concentrate upon the collection of genealogical, biological and vital records of Dallas, which will become a uniform and integral part of the national, as well as local, archives.

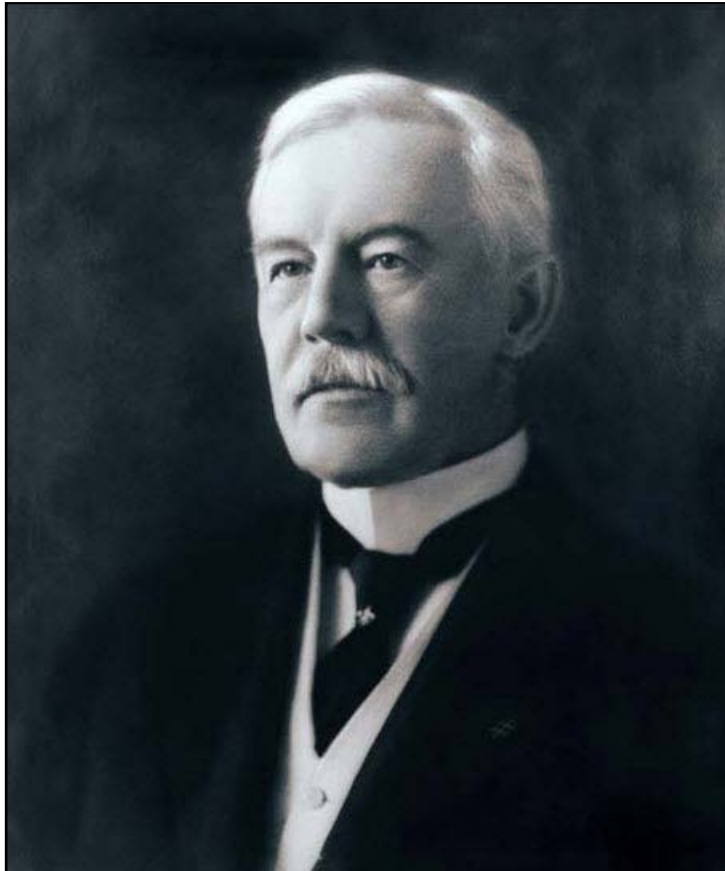
"Genealogical Society To Be Formed in Dallas," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 1 June 1930, sect. 1, p. 13, col. 5.

The Institute of American Genealogy with which the newly formed Dallas Genealogical Society was to be affiliated was the brainchild of Fredrick A. Virkus (1879–1955), the controversial owner of a Chicago-based genealogical publishing company.¹ However, the two main organizers of the Dallas chapter, Sam P. Cochran and Mrs. George E. Bell, were highly respected members of the Dallas community and the objectives of the proposed genealogical society were very similar to the ones upheld by the present Dallas Genealogical Society.

Samuel Poyntz Cochran (1855–1936) and Mrs. Fannie Osborne Slaughter Bell (1868–1946) were born respectively in Kentucky and Tennessee and both were members of several heritage organizations including the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution as were many of the early leaders of Dallas.² The death and burial of Sam Cochran occasioned the publishing of a eulogy in the *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*:

It is not difficult to discern the measure of a man's value to his neighbors. When a man puts honesty, energy and integrity into his own business and into his dealing with those about him, he commands respect and affection. Sam P. Cochran displayed these characteristics throughout his long and useful life.... The guiding star of Sam P. Cochran was service. Successful far beyond the average in his own chosen walk of life, he believed that he owed the world about him an interest in its affairs, so that his efforts were directed toward bettering its conditions....³

On Friday night, 3 October 1930 the charter members of the Dallas Genealogical Society, which included the Dallas Public Library, met in North Dallas High School “to elect officers



Samuel P. Cochran (1855–1936)



Fannie Slaughter Bell (1868–1946)

Part I: The Early Years

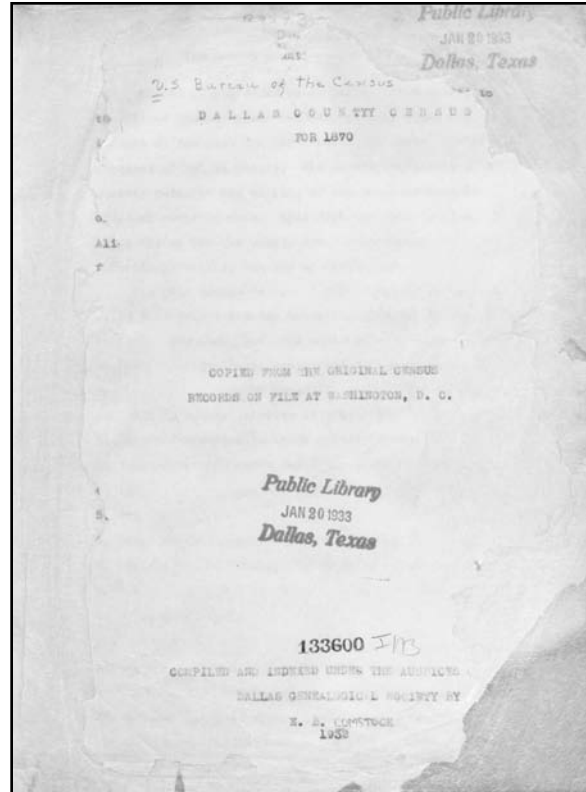
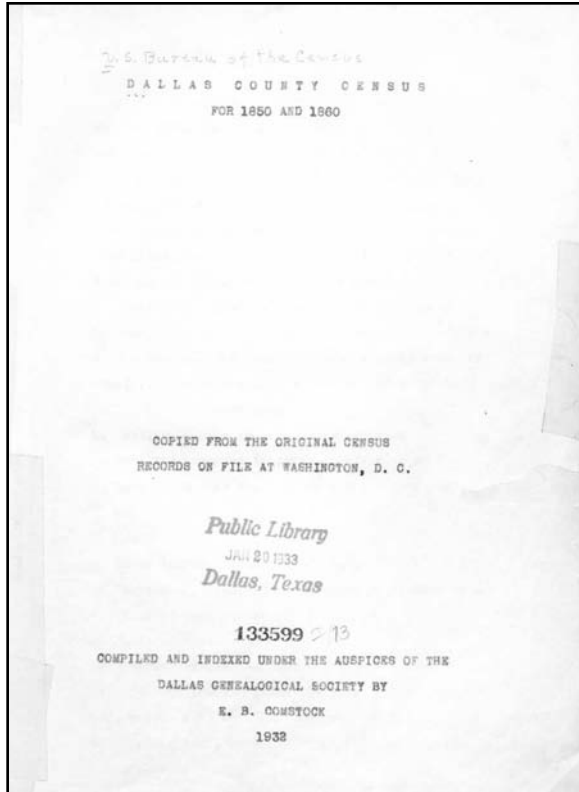
and trustees and to discuss the purpose of the society.”⁴ E. B. Comstock was elected the first president of the society and monthly meetings began to be held at the downtown YWCA.⁵

Ernest Bernard Comstock was born in Riga, Michigan, on 24 March 1879. He graduated from Oberlin College in 1905 and received his Master’s degree from the University of Chicago in 1926. After several years of teaching and being a high school principal and superintendent in Ohio public schools, he moved to Bonham, Texas, in 1911 to become the editor of the town newspaper. He moved to Dallas in 1914 and joined the public school system as a teacher and an administrator. He was appointed as the first principal of North Dallas High School in 1922 and remained there until 1945 when he became assistant superintendent of Dallas high schools.⁶



PRINCIPAL E. B. COMSTOCK
E. B. Comstock (1879–1956), North Dallas High School, *The Viking Yearbook*, 1944; photo courtesy of Ed Millis.

However, as his 1956 obituary stated “Genealogy was Comstock’s avocation and he wrote several pamphlets and books on that subject.”⁷ Although Comstock only held the president’s position in the newly formed Dallas Genealogical Society for one year, he later held various positions including that of a director. He was instrumental in obtaining typewritten copies of the United States Census of Dallas County for 1850, 1860 and 1870. These were bound in red leather and presented to the Dallas Public Library in 1933.⁸ Comstock also later served as head of the first Finance Committee of the newly formed “Local History and Genealogical Society” in 1955.⁹



Title pages from *Dallas County Census for 1850 and 1860* and *Dallas County Census for 1870*, compiled and indexed by E. B. Comstock of the Dallas Genealogical Society. A copy of each book was given to the Dallas Public Library by Comstock in 1933.



J. Howard Payne (1884–1968)

John Howard Payne (1884–1968) was elected as the next president of the Dallas Genealogical Society in 1931 and continued in this position until at least 1933.¹⁰ He became the Dallas postmaster in 1940 and held this position for fifteen years and he served as president of ten various civic and service organizations from the time he came to Dallas in 1906.¹¹

The following editorial letter was published in the *Dallas (Texas) Morning News* as a tribute to J. Howard Payne following his death:

There were giants in Dallas in those days and the littlest giant of these was J. Howard Payne, who scarcely managed to rise over 4 feet tall. His death April 15 removes this littlest giant from our midst forever. ... Payne was a man of so many interests and accomplishments that his obituary spilled over columns and columns of the newspaper.... These were

Part I: The Early Years

men of broad knowledge, curiosity, experience, civilization and immense talents, who, born elsewhere, chose to live out their greatness in Dallas. They were, above all, humanitarians, in a great and ancient tradition....¹²

Interest in the Dallas Genealogical Society went into a decline after 1934 and was not revived until 1954 with the name of the Local History and Genealogical Society of Dallas under the leadership of another Renaissance man, John Plath Green. The disruptive events of these twenty years, the Great Depression, World War II and the Cold War, must have led to a decline in interest in genealogy, which is confirmed by a Gallup poll in 1950.¹³

The quantity and quality of newspaper articles found in the *Dallas (Texas) Morning News* concerning genealogy also mirror this descent. In 1932 Fannie Ratchford, the well-known librarian at the Wren Library at the University of Texas at Austin from 1919 to 1957, wrote a weekly column "About Your Ancestors," which was carried in the *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*. In one of her articles she wrote about the connection of history and genealogy:

History is no longer written by inspiration or from imagination and hearsay—it is written from documents. Neither can genealogies be compiled until family data is placed on record. ... These materials gathered primarily for historical work are of equally great genealogical value—history and genealogy are inseparable.¹⁴

In contrast to Ratchford's series of articles there were news items of more typical general interest including one that highlighted a woman's claim to have traced her ancestors back to Adam and Eve.¹⁵ This occasioned a letter to the editor that stated the woman's research should have continued back to the Neanderthal man or "anyone else beyond Adam." The letter continued by poking fun at genealogical research:

Verily, genealogy is an interesting study, and I have heard that there are those who can construct any kind of family tree that a man may wish—if sufficiently compensated—and that these are always glad to get in touch with people who have newly come into wealth and wish to clear up their ancestry.¹⁶

In 1943 an actual federal case in Dallas, which arose from allegations of this type of hypothetical genealogical research, was reported involving the heirs of Mr. and Mrs. A. V. Lane and the American Historical Company, Inc. of New York. Mrs. Lane, who had been a charter member of the Dallas Genealogical Society, and her husband commissioned a book from the New York company that traced Mrs. Lane's lineage to Charlemagne. The completed volume cost \$18,050 for preparation, engraving, and printing. A balance of \$8,355 was still due, which the executors of the Lane estates refused to pay.¹⁷

After delivery of the complete volume a year ago, following the death of Mrs. Lane and the earlier demise of her husband, the heirs challenged the accuracy of the royal lineage presented, charged fraud had been perpetrated and that the cost of the volume was excessive.

Judge William H. Atwell, in his charge to the jury, narrowed the issues down to the matter of accuracy of the genealogy presented in the book. He ruled no fraud had been shown and that the jury should take no note of the cost of the book because it had been contracted for by intelligent persons.

Judge Narrows Issues.

'I submit to you the question of whether the book is true,' Judge Atwell told the jury. 'One side says it is true. The other says it is untrue. Neither side knows, gentlemen, because they were not there when the questioned events did or did not take place. They rely on historical works.

'If you find there were errors made and they were made in good faith in the belief they were true, then you will find for the plaintiff. If you find errors were made and they were known to the plaintiff, then the plaintiff is not entitled to recover.'¹⁸

Two genealogists testified at the trial. For the defense Mrs. Margaret Scruggs Carruth, a Dallas genealogist and a charter member of the Dallas Genealogical Society, testified against the plaintiff. Mrs. Myrtle M. Lewis, head genealogist and vice-president of the American Historical Company refuted the testimony of Mrs. Carruth. The jury took about twenty minutes to decide in favor of the company.¹⁹

For twenty years the slack of this long dormant period of the Dallas Genealogical Society chapter of the Institute of American Genealogy had been taken up by the many lineage societies of Dallas who had their own genealogical activities and projects.²⁰ However, a younger generation of genealogists was coming of age and by 1954 they were ready to form a new independent society, which has continued to serve the Dallas and Northeast Texas community and is now celebrating the sixtieth year of its foundation.

Author Biography

Janet Khashab is an Accredited Genealogist[®] with ICAPGen[®] (International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists) since 2009. She has been a member of DGS since 2006 and has served on its board of directors as vice president of education (2008–2009), president (2010–2011), and immediate past president (2012–2013). She has served on the editorial board of *Pegasus* since 2013.

ENDNOTES

1. For a lively discussion of the merits of Virkus's *Compendium* and the role of the Institute, see David Green, "Virkus's Compendium," 24 July 1997, *GEN-MEDIEVAL-L Archives* (<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/GEN-MEDIEVAL/1997-07/0869760269> : accessed 3 October 2015). Also, for a more professional view, see Donald Lines Jacobus, *Genealogy as Pastime and Profession* 2nd ed. (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1968), 45–46.

2. For Samuel, see "Kentucky, Birth Records, 1852–1910," database and digital images, *Ancestry* (<http://ancestry.com>), entry for Saml P. Cochran (1855). Also, "Texas, Death Certificates, 1903–1982," database and digital images, *Ancestry*, entry for Sam Poyntz Cochran (1936). Also, "Sam P. Cochran Buried Following Masonic Service," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 13 February 1936, sect. 2, p. 1, col. 3. Also, "U.S., Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889–1970," database and digital images, *Ancestry*, entry for Samuel Poyntz Cochran. For Fannie, see "Texas, Death Certificates, 1903–1982," *Ancestry*, entry for Mrs. Fannie Slaughter Bell. Also, "Services Today for Mrs. Bell," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 17 October 1946, sect. 2, p. 16, col. 5–6. Also, "Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage Books (152 Vols.)," database with transcriptions, *Ancestry*, entry for Mrs. Fannie Slaughter Bell; citing vol. 122, p. 172.

3. "Sam P. Cochran," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 13 February 1936, sect. 2, p. 4, col. 2.

4. "Genealogy Society to Elect Officers," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 31 October 1930, sect. 1, p. 6, col. 4.

5. "Genealogical Society to Meet Friday Night," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 18 December 1930, sect. 1, p. 6, col. 5. Also, "Genealogical Society Told How Records Kept," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 20 December 1930, sect. 2, p. 13, col. 7. Also, "History of Families for Ten Generations To Be Meeting Topic," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 11 January 1931, sect. "Society," p. 1, col. 1.

6. "Texas, Death Certificates, 1903–1982," *Ancestry*, entry for Ernest Bernard Comstock (1956). Also, "E. B. Comstock and W. O. Pipes Honored by North Dallas High," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 15 October 1945, sect. 2, p. 1, col. 2–3. Also, "Death Takes Ex-Official of Schools," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 5 April 1956, sect. 1, p. 1, col. 7.

7. "Death Takes Ex-Official of Schools," sect. 1, p. 1, col. 7 and p. 3, col. 3.

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8. "List of First Families of Dallas Made Available on Genealogy," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 26 November 1932, sect. 2, p. 1, col. 3–4. Also, "County 'Before War' and French Colony's Facts are Compiled," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 15 January 1933, sect. 2, p. 1, col. 8. Also, "Genealogical Society Gives Library Records of Dallas' Early Days," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 18 January 1933, sect. 1, p. 4, col. 3; unfortunately, the original red leather covers have not survived.

9. *Local History & Genealogical Society (Dallas, Texas) [Newsletter]* 1 (February 1955): 1.

10. "Texas, Death Certificates, 1903–1982," *Ancestry*, entry for John Howard Payne Senior (1968). Also, "Organization Activities," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 11 October 1931, sect. 3, p. 7, col. 2–8. Also, "Heraldry to Be Topic of Genealogical Talk," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 21 February 1932, sect. 2, p. 1, col. 5. Also, "Genealogical Society Gives Library Records of Dallas' Early Days," sect. 1, p. 4, col. 3.

11. "J. Howard Payne, 83, Retired Postmaster, Dies," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 16 April 1968, p. A1, col. 5–6.

12. "Letters from Readers: J. Howard Payne: The Littlest Giant," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 20 April 1968, p. D2, col. 6.

13. "Interest in Genealogy Low, Survey Indicates," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 24 January 1950, sect. 1, p. 6, col. 3–4.

14. "About Your Ancestors," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 20 March 1932, sect. 4, p. 2, col. 6–7.

15. "Woman Traces Genealogy Back 150 Generations to Adam, Eve," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 25 February 1935, sect. 2, p. 8, col. 3–4.

16. "Letters from Readers: About Ancestors," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 28 February 1935, sect. 2, p. 4, col. 6–7.

17. "Descent from Charlemagne Denied by Heirs of Mrs. Lane," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 6 May 1943, sect. 2, p. 1, col. 3–4.

18. "Genealogists Win \$8,355 Suit Involving Lane Family History," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 7 May 1943, sect. 1, p. 1, col. 5–6.

19. *Ibid.*

20. For example, see "Colonists Daughters Endorses Mrs. Hawley," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 6 September 1942, sect. 3, p. 3, col. 5; and "Founders Day Ceremonies are Slated," *Dallas (Texas) Morning News*, 14 May 1954, sect. 2, p. 6, col. 1.

Name Index

Editor's Note: Many females mentioned in this issue often appear with multiple surname-like names following their given names. In cases where there is no genealogical data to indicate if these names are middle, maiden, married, or a combination thereof, they are indexed by the final surname, followed by a comma with the given name and any sequential names.

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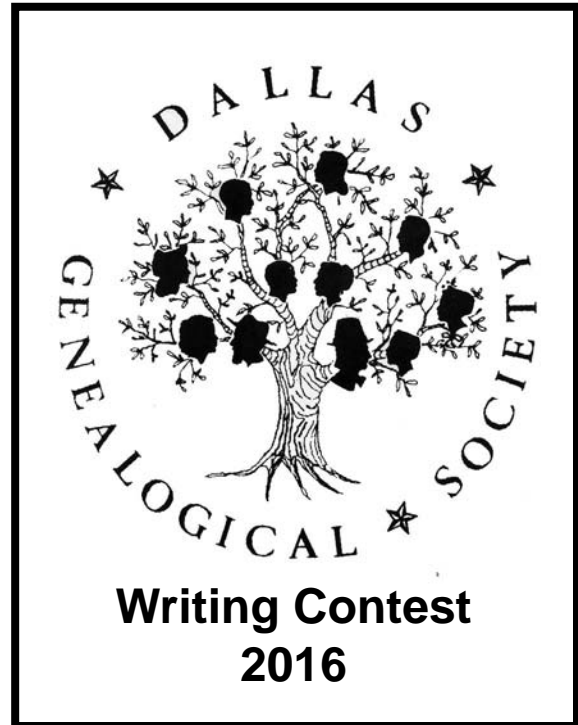
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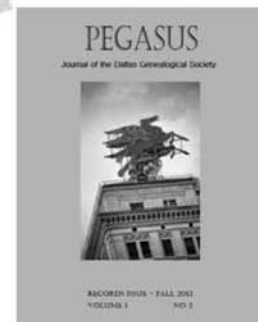
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