



Claiborne Society Newsletter

The National Society of Claiborne Family Descendants



Fall 2014

Message from the President

I am so pleased to have a family story from our long-time member, Clai Bachmann. Her full name is Jane Claiborne Brumback Bachmann, but everyone knows her fondly as "Clai." Her great-great-great-grandfather was Leonard Claiborne (1759-1839). Leonard was the oldest son of Jonas Cliborn (c1733-1795), who was the oldest son of John of Dale Parish.

In another article, we hear from Elsa Diamond, recipient of the Claiborne T. Smith Award. Dr. Claiborne T. Smith, Jr. was a beloved member of our Claiborne Clan who collaborated with John Fredrick Dorman to publish the book *Claiborne of Virginia: Colonel William Claiborne and His Descendants, The First Eight Generations*. The Clan has honored his memory by naming its award after him, and presenting the award at each reunion. What follows is the text of the presentation speech by Susan Rura at the Richmond Reunion, along with a copy of the award, and a letter of response from Elsa Diamond to the Claiborne Clan Board.

Elsa won the award for her work on transcribing and publishing *The Claiborne Family Journal*. The original aged, beautifully handwritten and illustrated journal was found inside an antique desk that had been purchased at an estate sale in Savannah, Georgia. At the time, the author could not be determined. The buyer passed the manuscript to Bishop Randolph Royal Claiborne, whose descendant eventually donated it to the Atlanta Historical Society, where the original remains. The Claiborne Clan petitioned the Society for a photocopy and formed a special Committee to transcribe and publish the results. After research, it was determined that the author of the Journal was Admiral Christopher J. Cleburne, M.D.

Admiral Christopher James Cleburne, M.D. (1838-1909) was a Rear Admiral, Surgeon and Medical Director in the United States Navy who had a lifelong passion for genealogy. He was first cousin to Major General Patrick Ronayne Cleburne, and it was the Admiral who had a plaque and stained glass window honoring the General mounted in St. Cuthbert's Church in Cliburn, even though the cousins fought on opposite sides during the Civil War. The Admiral's painstaking efforts to document his family's ancestry, as well as that of others with the name, makes amazing reading. The final page of this newsletter is an Order Form you may use to obtain your own copy.

Patricia Clayborn, President claybornp@aol.com

OFFICERS AND BOARD 2013 - 2015

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www.claibornesociety.org

Treasurer's Report May 1, 2014 – October 31, 2014

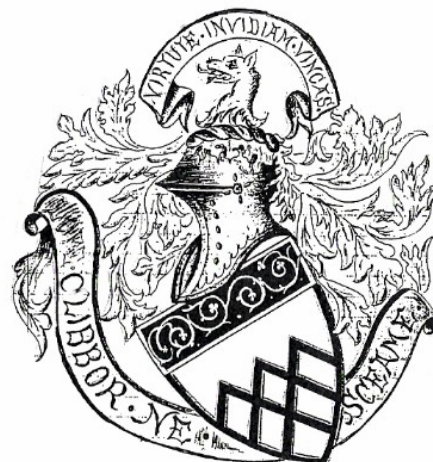
Balance May 1, 2014	\$9,678.71	
Balance October 31, 2014	\$9,848.71	
RECEIPTS		
Dues	170.00	
Total Receipts	\$170.00	\$170.00
DISBURSEMENTS		
Postage for newsletter (reimbursed 9/30/14 to P.Clayborn)	98.00	
Total Disbursements	\$98.00	\$98.00
BALANCE		\$9,848.71

In addition to the assets above, the NSCFD holds 2 CDs at Chesapeake Bank, Port Haywood VA:

#296580203 balance on Sept 3, 2014 =	\$11,155.13
#296570445	= \$5,239.27
	<u>\$16,394.40</u>

TOTAL ASSETS \$26,243.11

Respectfully,
Diane Claiborne Clements, Treasurer



Arms from Stained Glass Window
Cleburne Church

Drawing by Admiral Christopher James Cleburne, M.D.

Eliza Frances Claiborne A Family Story Creates More Questions than Answers

By Clai Bachmann

Eliza Frances Claiborne, my great grandmother, was my last ancestor with the name of Claiborne. This spelling of the Cliborn name appears to me to have been adopted by our family at least around the time of my great, great, great grandfather, Leonard Claiborne of Chesterfield who married Frances Tanner from Amelia County. It may have been her influence which brought this name change as Leonard's father, Jonas's, name is usually spelled Cliborn. Shortly after the Revolutionary War, in



*Sara Ann Bransford Claiborne
Wife of John Tanner Claiborne*

which Leonard participated as part of the Virginia Militia, he married Frances and they settled in Buckingham. They had my great, great grandfather John Tanner Claiborne who married Sarah Ann Bransford. These were the parents of five daughters, the oldest of which was my great, grandmother, Eliza, also called "Fanny".

John T. Claiborne was in the education business, which during the early to mid-19th century was widely promoted and practiced in Buckingham County. I suspect that John T. Claiborne met his wife Sara Anne Bransford, due to his acquaintance with Garland Brown. Sara Anne was taken in by Martha Bransford Brown, Garland's wife, who was a sister of Sara Anne's deceased father, Robert. Garland Brown was a wealthy man who had started the Physic Spring Academy in Buckingham.

John also worked as a teacher and administrator for the Buckingham Female Academy during the 1840's and into the early 50's before starting a school of his own at Gold Hill. By 1859 his school was closed and John T. Claiborne, his wife and their 5 daughters moved to Nashville, TN, and into the boarding house business.

This must have been a difficult choice for this family. Having to liquidate all of their possessions in order to make the move to a strange and distant city and state couldn't have been an attractive option. Relatives of Sara Ann were already in Nashville which was a booming town at the time and the opportunity must have looked better than Buckingham which was rapidly becoming overshadowed educationally by Charlottesville and Farmville.

By 1862 the family was established in the boarding house business and Nashville was occupied by Union troops. This was very distasteful for the family, but could have afforded opportunities to glean some useful information into "Yankee" operations.

Back to the family story – Eliza Claiborne made a long and arduous trip to the Confederate Capital at Richmond to deliver some information to President Jefferson Davis. What this information could have been was not known, but we did learn that Eliza left Nashville on horseback to perhaps catch the train to Chattanooga and hence to Richmond. Though we don't know the route or her means of transportation to Richmond we do know that once there, she stayed with her relative John Francis Tanner.



*Eliza Frances Claiborne
as shown in a locket*



Home of John Tanner Claiborne and the site of his school

The house is beautifully located in a very large field about 100 yards from the highway. The building consists of six rooms, and a full size basement, two long halls, and a small two story front porch. The corner posts were all hewn out of large trees and the floors are of the wide type, original timbers. There are very large brick chimneys on either end of the house, the bricks being thought to have been made on the place.

Courtesy Virginia Currents



John Francis Tanner

John F. Tanner was Chief Clerk at the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond. This position would have been similar to the one we usually designate as Chief Financial Officer today. John had quite a bit of responsibility for Tredegar and traveled widely – as far as New York and Louisiana and Texas in support of the business. He and his wife Herriot had a beautiful home at 216 South 3rd Street, in close proximity to the iron works below on the river. Eliza reached John and Harriet's home in the fall of 1864. The War was not going well for the South and less than a year later, after the flight of the Confederate government and burning of much of the Richmond waterfront, it was ended by Lee's surrender at Appomattox.



Home of John Francis Tanner
216 South 3rd Street Richmond, Virginia

The family story continues after Eliza reached the Tanner home. Unfortunately, we hear nothing of the delivery of the message to President Davis. However, we learn that while the family was entertaining Confederate officers in their drawing room. One man spun around on a piano stool, his gun dropped to the floor and Eliza was shot through both ankles.

We were also told that Eliza stayed on with the Tanners to recover from her wounds and in fact was married in Richmond in 1870 in their drawing room to John Wilson Otley. Shortly afterwards, the Otleys moved back to the Nashville area to join Eliza's mother, Sara Ann Claiborne and the other Claiborne sisters, Laura Virginia, Martha Emma, Mary Tanner (Molly) and Sarah Hill. They settled in the Edgehill area of Nashville and began their family which resulted in living children, my grandmother, Sally Louise and John Tanner Otley.

By the time my grandmother was seven they had moved back to Richmond. John was interested in politics and the West. Educated as a geologist he traveled widely in the west and wrote that he was involved in the discovery of the Spindle top oil well in Texas.

The family eventually moved to Farmville where my grandmother attended Longwood College. Upon graduation she moved to Augusta County where she taught school and met my grandfather, Fay Koiner.

I've enjoyed putting this information together, but it brings up many more questions than it answers. Some include: Did this family remain in Richmond during the burning by the Confederates? I suspect that John Tanner stayed, but I wonder if the families were sent to the country? Of course I wonder about the message Eliza brought for President Davis as I have mentioned. I also wonder if John Otley worked at any time for the Tredegar Iron works to earn money for his education and how he may have been helped by John Tanner, and how he came to meet Eliza?

So, despite all of the fun of discovering new information about John Francis Tanner and the Tredegar Iron Works, I seem to have uncovered more questions to explore.

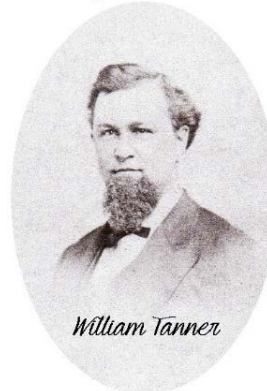
Submitted by: Clai Bachmann



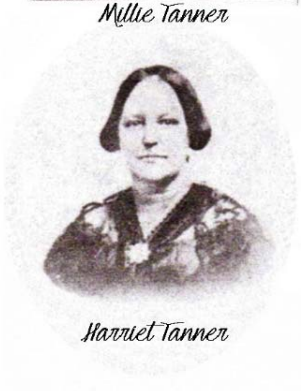
Millie Tanner



Millie Tanner

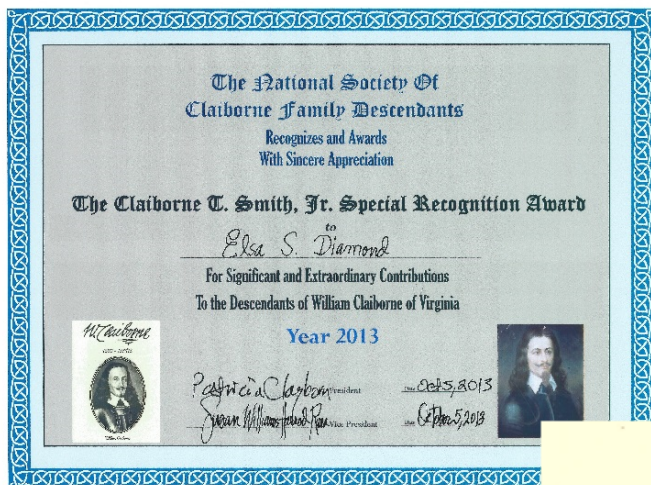


William Tanner



Harriet Tanner

Claiborne T. Smith Award



One of our significant and maybe overlooked achievements has been the publishing of *The Claiborne Family Journal*. What a mammoth task of transcription, making 100 year old scribbles into a useful genealogical tool. Virginia is burdened by being a “burned record” state, having lost many historic records to fire and wars. Consequently the Virginia Genealogical Society publishes quarterly magazines containing many aged lists produced by early Virginians. The transcription of this *Journal*, published 1999 and 2003, had information about Cleburnes, Claibornes, and other spellings which gave hints of various families even before the DNA project began in 2001. So much information of early wills, other Virginia families (Harrison) and English families (Lowther), distinguished houses (Elsing Green), and all written very early (author died in 1909). This book is a genealogist’s delight.

The *Claiborne Family Journal* was produced by a Special Publication Committee of Sue Cliborn Forbes, Elsa S. Diamond, Adele Claiborne Tallman, and Dr. Alex A. Waldrop, III. The Editors were Elsa S. Diamond and Sue Cliborn Forbes. The transcription and typing were done by Elsa S. Diamond, Sue Forbes & Stefanie Norton Forbes. Proof reading was by Elsa S. Diamond, Sue Forbes, and Dr. Alex A. Waldrop, III. Both Sue Forbes and Alex Waldrop received this Award for other endeavors. The unsung hero in this 4 year undertaking is Elsa S. Diamond and I am pleased to award the Claiborne T. Smith Award for her contributions to the mission of our group.”

Presentation of the Claiborne T. Smith Award by Susan W. H. Rura at the Richmond Reunion:

“The Claiborne Society gives the Claiborne T. Smith Award to a deserving individual who has done exceptional work toward the extension of the goals of our organization. Let me elaborate. Our organization is at a turning point. We have had a wonderful run of reunions and endeavors for 25 years. Beneficially, we are still getting new members. What are they coming to our group for? They are coming just as we did to find lost ancestors, uncover history, and contribute in a tangible way to our heritage. Our most exciting moments were when we were producing product...a book, a family tree, a DNA study, erecting a Claiborne marker, or contributing to efforts allowing excavation of a site containing historic artifacts.

Elsa S. Diamond
113 Barcroft Drive
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034

July, 28, 2014

Dear Officers and Board of the National Society of Claiborne Family Descendants:

Wow!! I was very surprised when I took the call from Susan Rura and learned that I was the recipient of *The Claiborne T. Smith, Jr. M.D. Award* that was to be given to me at the 14th Reunion of the National Society of Claiborne Family Descendants in Richmond, VA on Oct. 3rd – 6th. I am so sorry that I was not able to attend but I am very grateful and delighted to receive the award.

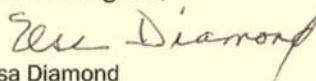
I enjoyed working on the **Special Publication Committee** with Sue Cliborn Forbes, Dr. Alex Waldrop, and Adele Claiborne Tallman. The work I did on *“The Claiborne Family Journal: Compiled by Dr. Christopher J. Cleborne, Rear Admiral USN”* was a labor of love. I am thankful for the recognition of my efforts and found inspiration in the tireless work of the officers and the board. I always think of the many Claiborne Clan members that have done so much for this organization and I appreciate them each and every day.

I would like to extend my thanks to: Patricia Clayborn (President), Susan Rura (Vice President), Corinne Middleton (Secretary), Diane Claiborne Clements (Treasurer), Ann Richardson Starr (Registrar), Dr. Alex A. Waldrop, III (Research), Duain Claiborne (Archives), Anne Claiborne Case (Publications), Dan Boylin (Webmaster) and Sue Cliborn Forbes (Chairperson of Special Publication Committee).

I offer a special thanks to Vera “Curly” W. Moore for all of the help she graciously provided when I needed advice and for all that she has contributed to the Claiborne Society for many years.

And thanks to Dr. Thomas Claiborne and his mother, Dorothy Claiborne, of Atlanta for recognizing the research value of *“The Claiborne Family Journal.”* They were able to have the Atlanta Historical Society make a photocopy of the original for the Atlanta Claiborne family.

With fond regards,


Elsa Diamond

Reading About Charleston, South Carolina

In the same way that we read James Michner's *Hawaii* before we went to Hawaii, we can read up on Charleston, South Carolina in preparation for the Claiborne Clan Reunion there in 2015. Our Secretary Corinne Middleton has sent a recommendation for any of the books by Margaret Middleton Rivers Eastman on Charleston. They are available on Amazon and on Barnes & Noble as e-books at \$9.99.

PLANNING OUR NEXT CLAIBORNE FAMILY REUNION CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

By Susan W.H. Rura

1. Overview. Charleston is hot and Charleston is expensive. But what a town!! The architecture and gardens are stunning. That is just the beginning. The history, seaside, and food will also bring exclamations. This is the prospect as we try to bring together the next meeting of the Claiborne Society in this town.

2. Architecture. The grand dame of architecture is Drayton Hall, aging in place, still showing its flourishes and good 'bones' after two and a half centuries. In town, walking along Meeting Street, "south of Broad", one can see residences with iron gates, Palladian windows, classical columns, as well as the Charleston-invention "single house", one room deep with double level piazzas facing the side, not the street, the better able to catch the sea breezes.



3. Gardens. The horticulture is lush with palm trees, billowing hydrangeas, tree-like camellias, and the exquisitely scented gardenias. A gardener can peer into high-pediment secret gardens and see spouting fountains, elaborate brick pathways, formal boxwood parterres, and even a statue or two.

4. Calamities. So how did Charleston get to be such a charming and mesmerizing place? This kind of great character, just as with people, only comes through great hardship and endurance. The bold strokes of adversity can be summarized with the bombardment at the time of Fort Sumter even to the end of the Civil War in 1865. Soon after, Charleston felt the

upheaval of the earthquake of 1886, which did shocking damage to facades and structure of classical buildings and pretentious homes. And always, there are the forces from the sea, the hurricanes. The last great hurricane HUGO, in



September 1889, 25 years ago, left destruction. With a storm surge of 20 feet and winds of 135 miles per hour, Charlestonians were again put to the test.

5. Preservation Society. Throughout Charleston's history, with so much in disarray, the only clear path was to preserve what had survived. And so Charleston was the first in the nation to pass a historic preservation ordinance. When prosperity did arrive and extensive rebuilding began, this preservation mantra stood them in good stead.

6. Step Back in Time. For the Claiborne Society as we study history and research our genealogy, we seek to know and understand the paths of our ancestors. Here in Charleston with its horses, carriages, mansions, river and sea trade, and agriculture production, we may more easily understand the life that our ancestor might have lived. Did he live in the city or in the country? Did he derive livelihood from his craft, professional skill, or land status growing rice, cotton, tobacco, or vegetables? In Charleston, we may be able to truly step back in time...

7. Claiborne Reunion themes. The 2007 Williamsburg reunion brought us to our New World beginnings with a return to Jamestown on its 400 year anniversary. At the 2009 reunion in Washington D.C., we delved into our American Revolution (1775-1781) ancestry. In New Orleans, Louisiana at the 2011 reunion, we learned what life was like for those ancestors who went west of the mountains to the new territory of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. Our 2013 reunion in Richmond, Virginia led us to those ancestors who fought or were enmeshed in the Civil War. We come now to Charleston, South Carolina to focus our interest on another historical period, the Ante-Bellum era, which ended with the start of the Civil War.

Ante-Bellum Charleston: Before the War

8. Planning status. Two immediate questions present themselves. In what month will we hold our reunion? Where do we stay? This is a balance between weather and monetary expense. Planning is already underway with the expectation of another happy gathering of our group.



Horse and Carriage on Meeting Street



Meeting Street

Meeting Street



East Bay Street

Greetings from Our “Pearl of Great Price”: Jill Price



Jill Price

Mary Ann Gilman has sent us notice of a message that she received from Jill Price, our wonderful King's Lynn connection. The Claiborne Clan was formed in 1985, when the late Mildred "Milly" Barker Johnson, the society's founder and president emeritus, and her husband traveled to England for a summer vacation. The couple made a stop in King's Lynn, where they arranged for a day tour. A town guide organization assigned an English couple, Jill and Huw Price, to meet the American tourists. The Johnsons soon learned that the Price couple was researching their own family genealogy as well as the lineage of the Claiborne descendants. Together, the Prices and Johnsons visited a number of Claiborne sites, including Guild Hall, where the town stores the ancient manuscript list of all its mayors. By day's end, the two couples were fast friends.

Today, Jill is doing well, and turns 83 years old in December. She states that she keeps fit, but has had two new knees – the first in October 2013, and the second last February. Her recovery went well and she now has a vast improvement in walking, although she still uses a cane. Sadly, she has retired from Guiding, and misses it very much, but the long periods of standing would be difficult. However, she has resumed most of her other activities and just needs some time to mend. She is in our thoughts, and we are hoping that she will consider coming to Charleston in 2015.



Notice of the Death of Jefferson Lyle Claiborne

From His Wife, Barbara T. Claiborne

Lyle died here at home in Dayton, Tennessee July 12, 2014. He was 86 years old and had been in deteriorating health for the last year. His professional career as Technical Development and Research Director for Dixie Yarns, Inc. for 47 years provided him with a venue for his chemical and mechanical inventiveness and hunger for travel.

His many patented textile processes and machinery gained him world renowned respect. For recreation, he attained his hundred-ton

passenger carrying vessel Coast Guard license for Western Waters and piloted the paddle-wheel steamboats Julia Belle Swain and Border Star, and tour boats Lake Queen and Sea Witch in Chattanooga. He was known up and down the Tennessee River as Cap'n Claiborne.

He was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee to William Anthony Claiborne and Lottie Lyle. William Anthony Claiborne was born to Confederate Veteran John Alexander Claiborne (1844-1918) and Elizabeth Adelaide (Taylor) Claiborne of Haywood County, Tennessee (1845-1895). They started their family in Arlington, Shelby County, and William Anthony Claiborne was their youngest child. He met Lottie Lyle through the Methodist Church, and they married in Chattanooga April 2, 1923. He was a plumber and pipe fitter by trade, and worked on the Rock Island project in Center Hill Tennessee, and then the Ocoee Dam.

Their son Jefferson Lyle Claiborne was born January 8, 1928. After U.S. Army service on Adak, Alaska he married Mary Leonore Ashley in Chattanooga, who died 2007. Their sons Ashley Lyle Claiborne of Spring City, Tennessee and Alex Taylor Claiborne of Chattanooga, Tennessee survive: also grandchildren Haley Claiborne, Kayla Claiborne and Cameron Claiborne, Stepsons Trey C. Jones, Keith L. Jones and Jason R Jones.

His greatest satisfaction in his last years was learning about his Lyle and Claiborne ancestry, although he was disappointed that his two trips to visit the "ancestral home" in Cleburn, England were wasted on mythical thinking. I miss him a hundred times a day, when I want to share another discovery. We got along fabulously after our divorce in 1995, living in separate houses but bonded forever.

Sincerely, Barbara Tynes Claiborne, Dayton, Tennessee

ORDER FORM for Transcribed 2003 Edition of Claiborne Family Journal

Dr. Christopher J. Cleborne's The Claiborne Family Journal was started in 1877 when he began the research by corresponding with various Claiborne families. His last entry appears to be about 1906. In the book Sue Forbes has written a page about the author and the Journal. George Mason Claiborne believed that Dr. C. J. Cleborne was recognized as the highest authority on Claiborne genealogy. The Claiborne Family Journal was 309 handwritten 11" x 17" pages, including about 67 pedigree charts of many Claiborne, Cleburne and Cliburne families and a 16 page Index. There are 5 introductory pages to the Journal. It has been transcribed and printed with a total of 145 (8 ½ x 11) pages. The Claiborne Family Journal was found in a secretary desk at an estate sale in 1950-1960's and was given to Dr. Thomas Claiborne's uncle, Randolph Royal Claiborne, Jr. of Atlanta, GA. Dr. Claiborne brought a copy to the Claiborne Clan Reunion in Williamsburg, VA in 1997. The original copy is at the Atlanta History Center in Atlanta, GA.

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<u>Book</u>	<u>Book Cover</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Donation</u>
Transcribed 2003 Edition			
<u>The Claiborne Family Journal</u>			
by Christopher J. Cleborne, MD	Clear Plastic Cover	_____	\$ 30.00
Handling & Postage	is \$5.00 per book	_____ Total	\$ _____

<u>CD</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Donation</u>
Transcribed 2003 Edition		
<u>The Claiborne Family Journal CD</u>		
by Christopher J. Cleborne, MD	_____	\$ 25.00

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1. Please fill in the total number of books and the total cost (including postage):

Grand Total \$ _____

2. Make check payable to: *The National Society of Claiborne Family Descendants*

3. Please mail completed order form to:

**Elsa S. Diamond
113 Barcroft Drive
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034**

If you have any questions, please call Elsa Diamond at (856) 428-5208 or E-Mail her at ESDiamond@comcast.net