
News, Updates, & More

Varner Family Genealogy

IN THIS ISSUE:

From the Administrator	1
Questions/News.....	1
Tuscumbia & Miller Co. History.....	2
George Varner of Missouri.....	6
Direct Line	
2015 Newton/Varner Reunion.....	6

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Waiting for winter to end.....

Copies of all issues of the newsletter are downloadable from the Varner Family website.

Varner Genealogy Website:

[http://home.kc.surewest.net/btvarner/
VarnerGenealogy.htm](http://home.kc.surewest.net/btvarner/VarnerGenealogy.htm)

Some files require a password to open. That password is: VarnerFamily (Case sensitive, no spaces). Please do not provide this password to anyone else. Send them to me so I can keep track of who might access the information.

QUESTIONS / NEWS

No questions or new news surfaced since the last newsletter.

Tuscumbia & Miller Co. History

Varner history runs through Miller County, Missouri so it is appropriate to occasionally delve into some general history. Doing this often provides a better feel for the social climate in which our ancestors lived.

Varner's lived in Miller Co. by sometime before 1860.

Newton's lived in Miller Co. by sometime before 1840.

Rigg's did business and lived in Miller Co. by sometime before 1840 and were apparently gone from the county after 1910.

Much of the following is quoted from the book "History of Cole, Moniteau, Morgan, Benton, Miller, Maries, and Osage Counties, Missouri"¹

...."The sources of information concerning Miller territory previous to 1830 are very meager, as the settlers previous to that date are all dead. The period before 1830 belonged chiefly to the Indians and white hunters. The two main floods of immigration were late in the 30's, 50's and during the present decade, succeeding the completion of the railway."²

¹ "History of Cole, Moniteau, Morgan, Benton, Miller, Maries, and Osage Counties, Missouri" published by The Goodspeed Publishing Co. Chicago, 1889

² History of...., page 529

...."Miller territory is the old hunting-ground of the Osages, but by 1830 they were here only on hunting expeditions. One noted chief has left his name on a creek, a cave and a township, Jim Henry. It is said the cave was a sort of headquarters..... About 1822 there was an Indian village on Tavern Creek, near the mouth of Barren Fork, on the bottoms near Wilson's Cave...."³



...."While the Indians were still here, white hunters and trappers came and went, and some settled. Among the first of whom information can be obtained was Seneca R. Y. Day, in 1815...."⁴

...." Land Entries.-Although a few settlers were in Miller territory before July 20, 1826, no land entries had been made before that time...."⁵

³ History of...., page 530

⁴ History of...., page 531

⁵ History of...., page 533

....” The entries during the 30's are here given, the figures indicating the year of the decade:....Calvin Riggs ('38), Owen Riggs ('38)....W. C. Newton ('37),....P. H. Berry ('34),⁶ Edward Riggs ('38),....⁷”

“Miller County has not been a part of many counties,... It was originally a part of Cole County, which began its career with the State, and so continued until its organization.

The Organizing Act.-On February 6, 1837, there was approved by the governor. An act to organize the county of Miller and to define the southern boundary of Cole. This was passed through the influence of William Miller and others,....”⁸ (*Someone needs to comb through the records of Cole County looking for pre-Miller County area information*)

“Early Industries.-After the real settlement began, in 1830, the population increased so rapidly that people were soon occupied with farming on a larger scale than is done where the settlement is gradual. Then, too, the Osage River through the center of the county gave an outlet for products. Before 1830, however, the few settlers were engaged mostly in hunting, for the abundance of game and honey made simple existence easy.

Stores, Towns, Postoffices, Etc.-The first store in Miller territory was no doubt in Spring Garden, and was owned by

Landsdown & Dixon in the early half of the 30's. Robert Simpson and Thomas Dean sold goods there later. Andrew Burriss' store at Pleasant Mount was not much later, and about 1836 J. P. Harrison & Bro. (J. B.) had a store at the right of the ferry landing, on the site of Tuscumbia. It was near 1838 that W. Pulliam had a store about the site of Iberia. These, of course, became the nucleus of these towns. There was no recognized town before the county seat in 1837-38, which was the first postoffice. Rocky Mount and Pleasant Mount were made postoffices about the same time, and Iberia was first on the south; Tom Price carried the mail over the old Little Piney and Versailles road.”⁹

“Public Buildings..... On March 4, 1857, Owen Riggs was made superintendent of a new court-house. The present one, which was to be a plain, two-story, gable-roofed brick, 56x40 feet, with court-room below and offices in front and above. The lowest bid was \$1,000, made by Robert McKim. It was completed the following year. In 1865 the present stone jail in the court-yard was ordered built, and in 1879 one cell of this was leased to the town as a calaboose.....”¹⁰

“....Miller County took the initiative in securing a railroad by voting \$1,000 (for stock) toward the preliminary survey, on May 2, 1871, of the Jefferson City,

⁶ History of..., page 534

⁷ History of..., page 535

⁸ History of..., page 537

⁹ History of..., page 536

¹⁰ History of..., page 541

Lebanon & Southwestern Railway; and with only that amount of aid given by the county the result in 1888 was eighteen and three-quarter miles of track in the county with property assessed at \$71,285.09,....”¹¹

“....The first liquor-law violation was against Calvin and Owen Riggs, in 1845.... The first murder case came up in 1853, against Boyd M. Roark (not guilty).”¹²

“MILITARY HISTORY.... The years 1862, 1863 and most of 1864 passed off with an immense amount of petty skirmishing and bushwhacking, guarding and guiding, and almost continuous militia service of a severe character. During 1864 a squad of militia were surprised on Curtman Island, in the Osage River, by the guerrilla Crabtree, who rendezvoused in a cave on the Tavern, and seven men were butchered.... In October, 1864, Price's army cut a broad swath across the north part of Miller County, pillaging as they went.... It has been estimated that about 1,000 men from Miller County took some part in the war, and of these nearly 700 took an active Federal part in militia or regular troops, and about 300 were of the Southern troops, or "bushwhacking" and State Guard companies.”¹³

“On February 21, 1866 shortly after the war was over, Union vigilantes attacked the Berry/Newton farm in Miller County. The Newton's had been Confederates during the war, and the women and children at home had sustained themselves by sometimes rustling pigs or sheep for food. On that night the armed riders entered the cabin, shot a woman, and a boy to death and set fire to the building. Two smaller children who had been outside ran into the woods and were found later unharmed.”¹⁴

The distance between the George Varner and Newton/Berry residences was only a few census families away from each other. George and Harriet are also said to have been bushwhacked. It should be noted that the Berry/Newton's were Confederate sympathizers while two of George Varner's children served with the Union Army.

“Reconstruction.--This period was passed, with its registration, oaths of loyalty, returns of soldier-citizens of both sides, more or less, etc., with comparative quiet. The negroes located as farmers, for the most part, in Richwoods, Saline and Franklin Townships, although some entered the Federal service and never returned.”¹⁵

ST. ELIZABETH....On 4/6/1869 Owen Riggs registered the original "Plat of the

¹¹ History of..., page 541

¹² History of..., page 546

¹³ History of..., page 556

¹⁴ Judge Jenkins' History of Miller County, Vol 2, published by Clyde Lee Jenkins, page 20

¹⁵ History of..., page 558

Town of St. Elizabeth". This was the first St. Elizabeth located on the shore of the Osage River. A scale drawing accompanied the plat.¹⁶

"TUSCUMBIA....Tuscumbia can boast of a considerable age, as the oldest laid-out town in Miller County, and her fortress-like court-house, overlooking from its heights the swift Osage and the tumbling bluffs around, seems to rest confident in its sway over both sides of the river for many other half-centuries to come, whether the town continues to rest about the foot of its bluff or not....It was in a very early day that two bachelors-J. P. and J. B. Harrison-built a log trading-post on the left bank of the "slough-mouth" near the old spring in the dense forest; it was quite early, too, that a white man in talking with an old Indian was assured that should he ever build at this point he ought to have his sills above a certain mark on the bluff-side, and overflows would never touch them....even the great overflows of 1844 and 1882 did not reach it, (Tuscumbia Court House) although other houses were almost covered."¹⁷

"Newspapers.-The Osage Valley Sentinel, by Lemmon & Hitchcock, was the first newspaper in the county; it was run from about 1871 to 1875, and moved to Richland, Mo. During 1871, also, M. W. Gustin started the Republican, with which he soon after

joined the Sun, another paper of his elsewhere, under the title Sun and Republican. In the fall of 1872 it was bought by Judge I. M. Goodrich, and one outfit sold to Linn Creek parties, and the other to J. P. Wright and J. H. D. Thompson, who started a religious monthly called the Gospel Proclamation. Meanwhile, about 1872, the Miller County Vidette began as a Republican paper. Editor R. Goodrich sold out in 1875 to A. Fulkerson, and in 1878 Judge I. M. Goodrich bought it and sold it to Linn Creek parties. About this time the Gospel Proclamation was changed to a weekly Republican county paper called the Vindicator, of which J. P. Wright assumed control about a year later. The paper has had a spasmodic career, both in policy and existence; it has championed both parties, prohibition, higher education and other subjects with vigor, and is now temporarily suspended on account of the ill health of Mr. Wright. (As of 1889) In 1876 the Helmet, by L. S. Hitchcock, began as a Republican sheet, but successively fell into the hands of A. Fulkerson, I. M. Goodrich and F. A. Goodrich, who ran it a few months as the Miller County Republican and then turned it over to the Vindicator. In 1885 the Autogram, by Mord. McBride, began its present solid career at Tuscumbia"¹⁸

MARY'S HOME "Mary's Home was properly started in 1882, when Morgan

¹⁶ Miller County, MO. Plat Book G, page 376

¹⁷ History of..., page 563

¹⁸ History of..., page 565

& Jenkins began a store, and at the same time the Catholic Church was erected, and the church and town grew on together. It was not until 1886-87 that a store was built by Peter Kaullen.

George Butzer has a lime-kiln and cooper-shop. Besides these there are two stores, a blacksmith and wagon-shop, and a physician.”¹⁹

George Varner of Missouri Direct Line DNA

Guess this summer I will be knocking on doors to find these folks.

George Varner (1789-1861)

Samuel Philip Varner (1846-1896)

Francis Logan Varner (1874-1939)

Norman Walter Varner (1912-1997)

Raymond Walter Varner (1942-200xs)

Mother Lela Corneett

Jason Raymond Varner (40)

Mother Christine Elizabeth Swillium

Micha? Dority Varner (38)

Mother Nancy Dority

Norman Fredrick (Butch) Varner (68)

Mother Alice Ethlene Brown

Michael Logan Varner (43)

Michael Lee Varner (36)

George Henry Varner (1880-1946)

Henry Edgar Varner (1919-2003)

James Varner (??)

William Varner (??)

Henry Lee Varner (55)

¹⁹ History of..., page 571

2015 Newton/Varner Reunion

The 2015 Newton/ Varner family reunion will again be held in Bolivar at the same facility. The event will occur on Saturday May 23rd. We will have the facility between 10am and 4pm. Most attendees arrive just before lunch.

Begin thinking about what you would like to have occur during the event.

The address is:

1850 W. Broadway St.

Bolivar, MO.

Please contact me with ideas for future newsletters.....

Bruce Varner