
News, Updates, & More

Varner Family Genealogy

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September 2018

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Prior newsletters and other family genealogy information can be found on the Varner Family website.

<http://brucevarner.com/VarnerGenealogy.htm>

Please forward any suggestions so I can have additional topics from which to choose.

QUESTIONS / NEWS

No questions this month.

George Varner of Missouri Direct Line DNA

See main article.

Riggs/Varner Connection

See main article.

What Do Varner's Have to Do With Cole Co. Missouri?

I have put off doing some research in Cole County, Missouri for some time. I finally spent a day in Jefferson City last week. To be honest, I was also stuck and unable to come up with a subject for this month's newsletter. This visit resolved both problems.

Let me say up front that I found no smoking guns while looking through county records. But as is always the case, tiny bits of information did surface that might at a later date, be helpful.

As a side note, if you ever want to see an example of the correct methods for preservation, protection, and cleanliness of historical documents, the Cole County Recorder of Deeds office is it. Their old land documents are immaculate. It is obvious that the Recorder of Deeds office in this county has ALWAYS considered these documents important!

Unusual is the fact that in Cole County, historical court documents are not at the same locations as the land documentation. They are not even under the control of the same agency, or in the same building. Instead they are in the court house next door. Also unusual is the fact that as opposed to the Recorder of Deeds, the court clerk allows no one to comb through their documents at all!

I had to fill out a request, with the exact court information I was looking for, and submit that document to the court clerk. Then they, at their leisure, look for the information. I was given no timeline for a response, as such requests "Go to the bottom of the pile." Oh well.

I was told that the State Archives was in possession of many of the historical court document for the county, so I researched there also. The court clerk employee was careful to state however that not all records have been digitalized.

Why Cole County? There have never been known any records to indicate that George Varner of Missouri, or his early family lived in Cole County. There are however some records that show George Varner did have some connections with that county.

Over time several connections with Cole County have surfaced. Here is the basis of why I travelled to Jefferson City:

- On 05/05/1855 one of George Varner's several bounty land declarations was signed in Cole County. Not because the land was in Cole County, rather because witnesses were in that location. Such declarations were given by acquaintances of the former soldier requesting the bounty land, in order to validate the truth of the soldier's history. The two men who signed the statement swearing they knew

George Varner were: William Newman & George W. Russell, both living in the county of Cole.

- Again on 06/24/1856, for another one of George Varner's several bounty land declarations was also witnessed in Cole County. The land was not in Cole County, rather as before the witnesses lived in Cole County. The two men who signed this particular statement swearing they knew George Varner were: Thomas Meadows & George J. White, both men again resided in Cole County.
- In October of 1857, a Miller County civil court record shows George Varner bringing a civil action against a person named Browse. This single court mention of the action only says that the judge continued the proceeding and ordered it be moved to Cole County.

The information I found about the above individuals, plus any additional information located is provided below.

I was told that the documents signed by the four witnesses would have not been a court matter, and therefore no copies of those signings would have been recorded by the court. A Notary Public or justice of the peace would have likely been used.

I could find no marriage or land records that mentioned a **George Varner** during

that timeframe. No Cole County court records mentioning either George Varner or anyone with the last name of Browse was located at the State Archives. The only hope left is that the Cole County Court Clerk comes across documentation in her search that is not already available at the state archives. The Cole County Court House burned in 1918 and a small number of records were lost.¹

William Newman had the following records in Cole County.

> Commission from Alex D. McNair (Governor) to William Newman on 09/21/1824, Book A p. 121, commission as Justice of the Peace of Moreau Township. The main town being Russellville.

> Deed from Thomas W. Johnson to Wm Newman et al on 03/16/1838, Book D p. 144, All his real estate, goods, & chattels. (Apparently William Newman purchased & collected on a debt Samuel Short was owed by Johnson.)

1858 Marriage: William Newman to Casander Cleghorn

Moreau Township is located in the SW corner of Cole County, north and west of Marys' Home in Miller County.)

¹ Jefferson City, Mo., March 14, 1918 -- The Cole County courthouse was destroyed by fire this afternoon. The records which were in fireproof vaults were not damaged. The building was insured for \$70,000. The cost of replacing the structure, it was stated today would be \$100,000, though the original cost was \$59,000.

George W. Russell had no land deed, marriage, or court records in Cole County.

Thomas Meadows had the following records in Cole County.

> Deed from David Ely to Thomas Meadows on 03/04/1857, Book M p.17

> Deed from John Gordon to Thomas Meadows on 04/27/1857, Book M p. 18, E ½ SE, Section 34, Township 44, Range 13.

> Deed from Wm Hobbs to Thomas Meadows on 4/22/1857, Book M p. 20, NE NW, Section 1, Township 43, Range 13 & SE SW, Section 36, Township 44, Range 13.

> Deed from Jerimiah Meadows to Thomas Meadows on 02/27/1836, Book B p. 430, SW NE, Section 36, Township 44, Range 13.

1834 Marriage: Thomas Meadows to Adeline C. Brooks

These properties are located west of current Jefferson City.

George J. White had the following records in Cole County. George White had 43 different real estate entries between 1846 & 1869! Sheriff sales, Power of Attorney, Deeds, Atty's Deed, and Tax Deeds. It appears that Mr. White was a land speculator at the least, and possibly an attorney. Only two pieces of property were found to have been apparently for family use.

> Deed from G. H. Dulle to Geo. J. White on 01/03/1846, Book H p. 425, W ½ SW, Section 11, Township 43, Range 14.

> Deed from John Cheppell to Geo. J. White on 04/24/1857, Book L p. 610, Lots in Section 4, Township 44, Range 13. 1855 Marriage: George T. White to Adaline Bolton

These properties are located west of current Jefferson City.

On the surface I could not find any pattern behind the locations of these four men who knew our George Varner. Further research might reveal how or where each man originally knew our George Varner, but I am not sure that information would assist in future research.

While researching, I of course looked into records for other Varner's, Riggs, and any other associated family surname.

I did find another Varner in the area of that time. A William Varner.

Cole Co. Circuit Court Oct Term 1843

Book C, p. 114, Varner vs. Johnson
William Varner vs. John Johnson, Trespass. Continued.

Cole Co. Circuit Court

I neglected to capture the top of this page and therefore cannot say with certainty how the term is described.

p. 162-163?, Varner vs. Johnson

William Varner vs. John Johnson, Trespass.

Now at this day comes the parties aforesaid by their attorneys, and the

said plaintiff by his attorney say he will not further prosecute in this behalf and prays the court that the same may be amended, therefore it is commanded by the court that this cause be dismissed and that the each party pay their own costs in this behalf and that prosecution go through, five cents interest and also costs of suit, and that execution go through.

This case in and of itself is likely not important. What is important is that William Varner is the well-used Christian name given to many direct ancestors of our William Virgil Varner, the DNA match to our Billy Joe Varner.

No other contemporary mentions of a William Varner were found. A quick search of the census records did not find any William Varner in Cole County for either the 1840 or 1850 censuses. Is this one of William Virgil's ancestors passing through?

I did find an interesting mention of a Stapp family member. Unknown if there is any relationship with the Stapp's of our family lines.

Cole Co. Circuit Court Term 1845?

Book D, p. 81, Mary Stapp vs. SB Julia Mary Stapp vs. Steam Boat Julia, Trespass.

Now at this day come the parties aforesaid by their attorneys and thereupon cause a jury, to wit William Shaw, D. B. Shaw, Thomas Mills, Thomas Riggins, James xxxxxxxxxx, James Caffelt,

P. J. Miller, John Burton, Thos Scruggs, McDaniel Domiss, William H. Furguson, twelve good and lawful men duly elected and sworn, well and truly to try the issues between the parties upon their oaths, do say they find the issue for the plaintiff and accesses here damages at the sum of sixty six dollars and forty cents, therefore it is considered by the court (against the Steam Boat Julia & against xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx) that the plaintiff have and receive, as well as the sum of sixty six dollars and forty cents as her cost and charges in this behalf laid out and expended and that she have execution therefor.

As expected I found land records for the Riggs surname found several entries to Owen Riggs & two entries to a Romulus Riggs.

Several transactions are found in Cole County by Owen Riggs. All occurred in Sec. 23, Township 42, Range 12 and consisted of lots &/or small tracts of land. This location is in or about the town of St. Thomas in Cole County. St. Thomas is NE of St. Elizabeth, just into Cole County.

The transactions in the same area to a Romulus Riggs leads one to believe that this person might have been a relative of Owen's. This is not a Christian name I can recall coming across in studying the Riggs family.

> Assignment from R. A. Ewing Estate to Romulus Riggs on 09/10/1839 lots 595 & 596.

> Deed from F. Miller to Romulus Riggs on 10/10/1839 lots 595 & 596.

Several contemporary marriage records for the surname Riggs were found. I have no idea at this point if these individuals were related to Owen Riggs, and thereby Edmund Riggs, and us.

1837 – Susan Riggs / William Johnson

1841 – Mary Riggs / Lambert Thompson

1844 – Isaac Riggs / Thuresa Williams

1844 – Charles Riggs / Sintha McLaughlin

1846 – Isaac Riggs Jr. / Susanah Vaughn

1856 – Margaret J. Riggs / Joseph Griffin

1866 – Susan A. Riggs / John C. Odle

While none of the above information contain any bomb shells, more information is always better.

If anyone has additional information about any of these individuals, please let me know.

Enjoy the coming fall. Work on genealogy!

Bruce Varner