

Ballentine Branches

FAMILY NEWSLETTER FOR BALLENTINE, HUXFORD & CONNECTED FAMILIES

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Judge Folks Huxford (1893 - 1981)

By E. L. "Boe" Williams, Jr.

From being an eighth grade dropout to becoming a Fellow in the *American Society of Genealogists*, a select group of only thirty three of the most prestigious genealogists in the nation, and the only one below the state of Virginia, **Folks Huxford's** re-

markable lifetime achievements have encompassed many vocations.

He was born in present day Atkinson County on November 16, 1893, the son of **Calvitt Huxford**, formerly of Berkeley County, South Carolina and his wife, **Kansas Johanna Drawdy**, who was born at Trader's Hill, Georgia, an old river town on the St. Mary's River. At his birth there was much discussion about what to name him. Should he be named after his father's or his mother's family? It was finally decided to name him after all his kinfolk, hence the name, "**Folks.**" How appropriate.

At age 16, he went to work



Folks and Orie Lois (Kirkland) Huxford, Christmas 1960 in Homerville.

for **John Cobb Kirkland** in the clerk-of-court's office in Homerville, where the tone was set for his life's endeavors. When he was 19 years old he began to take notice of **Mr. Kirkland's** granddaughter, 15 year old **Orie Lois Kirkland**. She was the daughter of **David Edward Kirkland** and **Meddie Delphia Register**. She refused him the first time he asked her for a date. Undaunted, he asked her again the next day and she accepted. Three months later they were married. From this union came three children: two sons, **Iverson Harris**, now deceased, and **John Calvitt**, their daughter, **Mary Lydia**, who died in childhood.

F o l k s Huxford had a tremendous interest in history, particularly family history. He has been quoted as saying, "I've always loved history. When I was growing up my parents had to buy our schoolbooks. It didn't matter what kind of history I read about, Georgia, United States, English, every time I'd get a history book,

I'd have it read within 24 hours. I didn't open that book again for I knew it by heart and could tell you anything you wanted to know about it." **Huxford**, however, quit school in the eighth grade because, as he

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Disclaimer

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Judge Huxford

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told it, "they had something call algerbra."

With the help of his remarkable memory he was able to memorize all the sections of land given to early settlers of Clinch County. "I became intrigued with linking families together," he once said, "and although I was young, I took advantage of talking with old-timers who'd come to the courthouse on business, many of them Confederate soldiers. I started keeping notes and records of our conversations." **Huxford** also became familiar with law. So much so, that in 1920 he was able to take and pass the state bar exam. "They gave us a test with 50 questions," he once told a friend, "some requiring as much as five or six pages to answer. The test was given between the hours of 7 a.m. and midnight, and we could quit anytime we finished. I got through about 10 p.m. and made a perfect score."

In 1916, at the ago of 23, he published his first history of Clinch county, Georgia. He went heavily in debt but was certain, "everyone would buy them up like hotcakes." It didn't turn out that way. Only about 75 of the 500 copies were sold and only 15 were sold within Clinch County. One Clinch County citizen to whom Huxford tied to sell one of his \$1.75 books asked, "Son, what would I do with a history of Clinch County? I knew all about that before you were born." In recent years it has been reprinted with great success. While out of print, and much in demand, copies were sold for as much as \$75. Nevertheless, around 1922 he was contacted by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in neighboring Brooks County and asked to write a similar

county history for them. It took him 5 years to complete the Brooks County History, which also failed to rouse enough interest to sell but a few copies. Today, out of great demand, the books sell for \$25 per copy by Reprint Publishers, Spartanburg, SC. He also wrote the History of Upson County. These three books have become the standard for county histories.

In 1922 he was elected state representative from Clinch County. He served one term and decided not to run for another term because he had to sleep on a park bench while the legislature was in session. Times being what they were, he was paid \$6 a day per diem, and \$4 of that amount went for a room. "I couldn't afford to serve," he said. He also served a term as judge of the Superior Court of the Alapaha Circuit. Afterward, he returned to work in his former office of clerk of Superior Court of Clinch County. At other times, he was judge of the Court of Ordinary.

This multi-talented man was an ordained Missionary Baptist minister and evangelist. His efforts as a Christian leader kept several "country" churches from closing their doors. He also resurrected some extinct ones, Burnt Bridge Church being one of them.

Among his other achievements was his natural flair for music. He was a self-taught pianist, a trait inherited by his son, **Dr. John C. Huxford**, retired professor of music at Valdosta State University, and he could sing as well as he could play. His rendition of Amazing Grace, wherein he accompanied himself on the piano, is still remembered by some of the elder churchgoers as a song that brought tears to the eyes of many in his congregations.

In 1967, after more than 55 years of marriage, his wife **Orie** died. After her death, he married his first cousin, **Stella Carrick (Huxford) Russell Grady** of Moncks Corner, South Carolina. The two had been sweethearts in their formative years, but a budding relationship between them had been discouraged by her father. She was the daughter of **Joseph Huxford** and **Ida Diggs Wilder** and had been twice widowed. At age 74, **Huxford** went to Moncks Corner, South Carolina and proposed marriage to **Stella** and she accepted. After marriage, they lived in Homerville until her death in 1977.

His crowning glory was the 7 volumes of the critically acclaimed genealogical books entitled *Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia*, a treatise of biographical histories relating to the early pioneers of the area. No other section of the country has anything to compare with these books which gave him national recognition.

Judge Folks Huxford, in addition to his other duties, was publisher of the *Clinch County News*, ably assisted by his wife, **Orie**. He later turned the paper over to his oldest son, **Iverson**. However, his greatest lifetime achievement was in the field of local history and genealogy. He helped set up the Georgia State Archives in Atlanta. And, in 1961, he commenced publishing a magazine entitled *Georgia Genealogy Magazine*, which was one of the best periodicals of its type in the nation.

However, in 1971 he had to sell the magazine because of his failing eyesight (macular degeneration). At the time he had over a thousand subscribers and a house full of family records. "I had no idea what I'd do

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St. Stephen's Parish Church Featured on 2001 Heritage Ornament

Submitted by Berkeley Seniors, Inc.
Moncks Corner, SC



St. Stephens Parish Church

The Berkeley County Heritage Collection Ornament is a fundraising project with all profits benefiting senior services and programs for persons with developmental disabilities living in Berkeley County. It is sponsored by two non-profit organizations, Berkeley Citizens, Inc. and Berkeley Seniors, Inc.

Originally built as a center for worship for indigo planters and their families living in the Santee River basin of northern Berkeley County, St. Stephen's Parish Church continues today as an active parish with many in the congregation descended from the early planter population. Because of its rich and enduring history, St. Stephen's is the featured landmark of the 2001 Berkeley County Heritage Collection Ornament.

An act for establishment of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church was signed on May 11, 1754 and was soon followed by the arrival of the first rector, Rev. Mr. Alexander

Keith of St. Philip's in Charles Town. Among only 112 active Episcopal churches in the United States dating from colonial times, St. Stephen's has been described as "one of the handsomest country churches in South Carolina." The exterior of the church, which was completed in 1767, has been criticized because of the high gambrel roof considered too heavy for the structure. However, according to architectural historian Samuel Gaillard Stoney, "Any failure the church has in other respects are more than made up for by the virtues of its workmanship..."

In 1970, the church was designated a National Historic Landmark, a testimony to the dedication and craftsmanship of its builders.

The 2001 ornament is the sixth in a series depicting the heritage of Berkeley County. Previous ornaments have featured Mulberry Castle, the Old Santee Canal, Strawberry Chapel, St. James Goose Creek Church, and Medway Plantation. Each ornament is \$16 and is gift boxed with an insert card explaining the history of the historic location.

The 2001 ornament is for sale at Goose Creek City Hall, the South Berkeley Senior Center in Goose Creek, and in Moncks Corner at Delta Pharmacy, D's Jewelers, Martha Lynn's Fine Gifts, the Berkeley Museum, the Berkeley County Office Building, and at Berkeley Citizens.

The ornaments are about 3" by 3" or so and are 24k gold plated brass. Some are flat and others are 3-D cutouts. All are beautiful works.

Previous year's ornaments are only available at Berkeley Citizens, 1301 Old Highway 52, or by mail order. For more information or to place an order call 843-761-0316.

Congratulations! In Case You Haven't Heard.

Louise Rich reported in the December 26 issue of The Berkeley Independent that the St. Stephen Garden Club judged the Christmas decorations again this year. The winners have been decided.

We had two family members who came out winners. **Peggy (Mitchum) Ballentine** won Third Place and **Bob and Lillian (Keller) Ballentine** received an Honorable Mention. Great job, you guys! I bet you can win it all next year.

Families are like fudge . . . mostly sweet, with a few nuts.

Corrections

Well, looks like I made a couple of errors in last issue's cover story. Here are the corrections.

When I looked up a location for Atlantic Christian College, I accidentally read the listing for Atlanta Christian College. Atlantic Christian College is in Wilson, NC, not East Point, GA.

The sister is actually a half-sister and her name is **Novelle (Grady) Craig**, not **Huxford**. I apologize to Novelle, and to all who noticed my oversights.

I also want to add another comment to the article. **Ben** said about **Libby**, "She has touched so many lives with a positive example, and she has always been such a great inspiration and anchor for all of us."

Judge Huxford

(Continued from page 2)

with all those records,” he said. “All the historians were dying and their families were throwing their records away. I didn’t want that to happen to mine.”

Because of his advancing years, his failing eyesight, and realizing his own mortality, **Judge Huxford** wanted to make provisions for the preservation and use of his personal collection of genealogical materials, which were the result of a lifetime spent abstracting names, dates, and places of obscure people whose memory, except for his persistence, would have vanished into oblivion. His research covered Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and north Florida.

In addition, he had so much more information on his personal card files on over 5,000 families. Thus, on November 26, 1972, he called together a group of 35 interested friends for the purpose of forming a genealogical society. At the time he was 78 years old and had recently retired from public life. The idea became a project, and over his objections was named the *Huxford Genealogical Society*. “Never name anything after someone still living,” he was quoted as the reason for objecting to the name, “because you never know what they may do before they die. “His objection didn’t work. The love and respect these interested people had for him, as did many people around the south, overrode the judge’s objection.

The first years of the Society were difficult because of the lack of money, but under his brilliant leadership the society blossomed. Today it is one of the largest genealogical

organizations in the south with a membership of over 1500 members. It is a non-profit corporation headquartered at Homerville, Georgia, with a genealogical library of over 4000 volumes of books and booklets, and a large microfilm collection of United States Census schedules with a value approaching a million dollars. The book collection centers on state and local histories, lineage books of several patriotic societies (DAR, Colonial Dames of the 17th Century, etc.), marriage and death records, courthouse records, cemetery records, family histories, and various issues of genealogical periodicals. Of note, the Society publishes a quarterly magazine of genealogical source material and highlights biographical sketches of the early settlers of the wiregrass area. To date the Society has published volumes 8, 9, and 10 of *Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia* and volume 11 is being proofread for immediate publication. Thus, in a sense, **Judge Folks Huxford** has achieved immortality.

Possibly the most impressive talent the judge had was his astounding memory. It must have been photographic, because his recall of names, dates and places is impossible to exaggerate. In his final month of life his body became very feeble, but his mind and memory were as strong as ever. He was confined to the intensive care unit at the South Georgia Medical Center in Valdosta, Georgia. He was totally blind and so weak that he could not lift his arms, nor could he speak. His stepdaughter, **Stella Novelle (Grady) Craig**, discovered that he could write if someone would hold his hand and a notepad. The people in the unit were not even sure that he was conscious until a young male nurse asked if he wasn’t

“the man who wrote genealogy books.” He went on to say, “my mother’s people, the **Fenders**, are in one of those books.” **Judge Huxford** responded in his frail, weak scrawl, “**David Fender**, 1786-1886, Alapaha River, Volume 1”, which was correct. There were other related instances, and his son, **Dr. John Huxford**, has kept these notations as cherished possessions.

Judge Folks Huxford died on March 31, 1981, at which time, though blind, he was County Judge of Clinch County.

Thanks to **Mr. Boe Williams** who was kind enough to prepare this article. He was a close long time friend of **Cousin Folks** and is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Huxford Genealogical Society in Homerville. You can visit the site online at <http://www.huxford.com>.



Richard Brownlee “Dickie” Ballentine, Jr., 1942. Dickie was born August 17, 1941 son of **Richard Brownlee** and **Margaret Catherine (Powell) Ballentine**. He died January 29, 1998.

Off Duty - Sight Seeing in Egypt

Harlee Stafford Feagin, Jr. (front) is seen taking in the sights while off duty in Egypt. His buddy and he were there during WWII, when this was taken.



I guess they must have really enjoyed a break in the action. Stafford was a pilot in the Army Air Corps. He was born January 25, 1915, a son of **Dr. Harlee Stafford** and **Effie Mae (Long) Feagin**. He married **Ida Wilder Ballentine** on December 29, 1934. They made their home with their three children, **Harlee Stafford Feagin, III**, **Bruce Allen Feagin** and **Ida Long Feagin**, in Bonneau, South Carolina.



Beach Boys?

Harlee Stafford Feagin, III, son of **Harlee Stafford Feagin, Jr.**, above, is shown playing at the beach, probably in late 1939 or early 1940. He does look like he is having a good time!

**Remember -
half the people you
know are below
average.**

Births

None Reported

Deaths

DUNBAR

Madelyn (Huxford) Dunbar, 78, wife of **Lt. Col. (Ret.) Robert Samuel Dunbar** for 58 years, entered into eternal rest on the evening of November 10, 2001. She was born June 13, 1923 in Charleston, South Carolina, a daughter of **Harry and Florence "Florrie" (Jones) Huxford**. She is survived by her husband, a son, **Robert S. Dunbar, Jr.**, three grandchildren, two great grandchildren, four sisters, **Florence Kurtz, Janet Woodard, Wilma Diveley** and **Anne Middleton**, and one brother, **Harry Russell Huxford**. Burial was at Beaufort National Cemetery in Beaufort, South Carolina.

**February 14th
Don't Forget !**

**Happy
Valentine's Day**

We Are On The Internet, Too!

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~ballentinebranches>

Email:

gballentine@hotmail.com

If you have access to the Internet, take a moment and check out **OUR Ballentine-Huxford Family History Page** and **Ballentine Branches** websites above. I maintain these sites and am always updating. There are pictures and information about different branches of our tree. Information changes regularly, so check back often. Don't see what you want? ASK!

William Ballantyne, Businessman of Colonial Boston

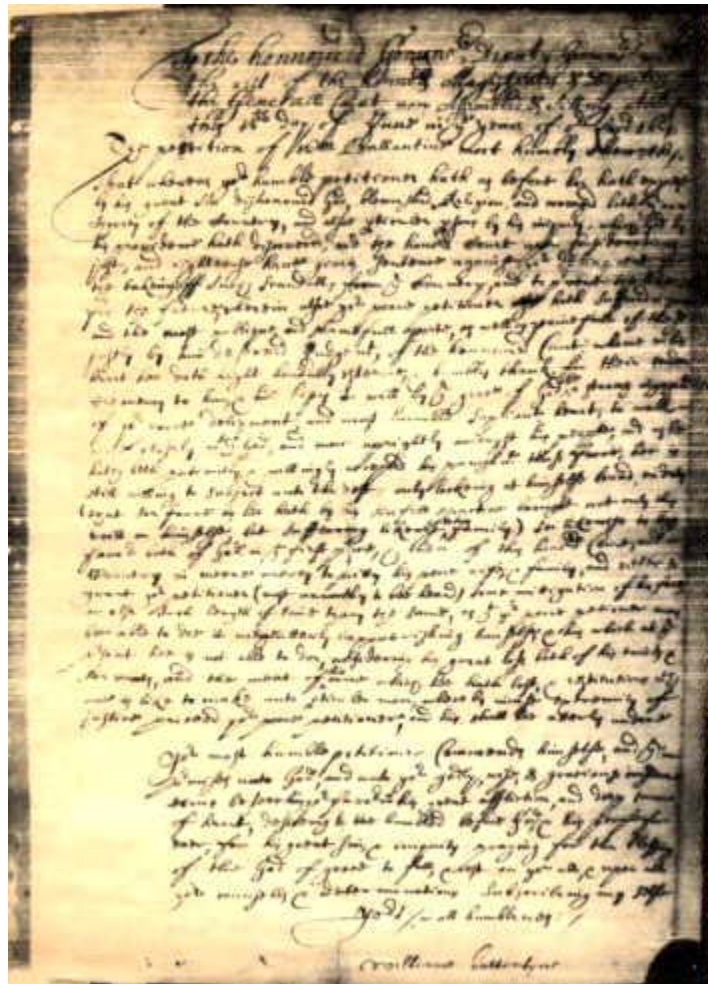
If you will recall from last issue, **William Ballantine** (spelling varies) had been charged with and found guilty of “conterfetting the seale of the packer.” Last issue featured the letter of his wife, **Hannah**, written to the Boston Court in his behalf. Below is the letter that he wrote on his own behalf.

To the honoured Governor, Deputy Governor, and the rest of the honoured Magistrates & Deputies of the Generall Court now Assembled & Sitting at Boston this 18th day of June in the year of our Lord 1661.

The petition of Wm. Ballantine most humbly Sheweth/.

That whereas your humble petitioner hath as before her hath expest by his great sin dishonour God, blemished Religion, and wronged both the authority of the County and also perticular persons by his iniquity, which God by his providence hath disfavoured, and the honoured Court upon considerations just, and righteous have given sentence against your delinquent for the taking of such scandalls from the Country, and to prevent the like for the future, wherein also your poore petitioner hath suffered in parte and the most publique and shamefull parte, as well as painefull of these justly by him diserved judgement, of the honoured Court: where in his heart hee doth right honorably esteeme, & humbly thank, for their tender Clemency to him, & hee hopes it will by the grace of God be a strong right of the poore delinquent, and most humble supliant heart, to walk more closely with God, and

more uprightly amongst his people, and as he hath both patiently, & willingly accepted his punishment thus offered, hee is still willing to subject unto the rest: only looking at himselfe bound in duty (that see favour as hee hath by his sinfull practice brought not only this evill on



himselfe, but suffering likewise to his family:) see likewise to begg favour both of God in the first place, & then of this honoured Court, and Country in meere mercy to pittie his poore wife, & family, and others to grant your petitioner (most unworthy to bee heard) some mittigation of his fine, or also some length of time to pay the same, as yet your poore petitioner may bee able to doe it without whouly impoverishing himselfe, & his which at the present be is not able to doe, considering his great loss both of his time, & servants, and the meat of his ware which he hath lost, & restitution which now is like to make unto perticular men, where by in case extremity of justice proceed your poore petitioner, and his shall be whouly undone.

Your most humble petitioner Commends himselfe, and the promises unto God, and your godly, wise & gracious consideration, beseeching your favors in his great affliction, and deep sorrow of heart, desiring to be humbled before God, & his people forever, for his geat sin, & iniquity: praying for the blessing of God of grace to fall, & rest upon you all, & upon all of your counsell & determinations. Subscribing my selfe,

Yours./: in all humbleness: /

William Ballantyne

Next issue will feature a letter from his friends on his behalf.

The National Society, Sons of the American Revolution

In the September/October 2001 issue (page 2) my article stated that I had applied for membership in the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). My application was approved on November 5, 2001.

My National number is 156837 and my Texas Society number is 8903. My official induction ceremony will take place January 12, 2002 where I will become a member of the Heart of Texas Chapter (#26) in Salado, Texas.

My acceptance opens another approved line from **Harlock Huxford**, through **Peter Huxford, Jr.** for relatives to join. My line is through **Joseph Huxford**.

Donations

Thanks to all who made donations since last issue. If you enjoy the newsletter and have not made a donation, please consider making one to keep our newsletter coming. Donations go only to the costs of printing and mailing the newsletter.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Goose Creek

Mary (Cross) Rodgers

Hodges

Charles & Dolores (Thomas) Watson

Please send donations to:

George H. Ballentine

2714 Phyllis Dr.

Copperas Cove, TX 76522-4311

(254) 542-7259

Rev. John Ballantine, Minister of Westfield, MA

If you were keeping up with the articles that I have written in past issues, you are aware that **Rev. John Ballantine** was a descendant of **William and Hannah (Holland) Ballantyne** of Boston, and kept a journal from 1737 until 1774. You may also know that I have been transcribing this journal for electronic publication.

My years of work are finally over. I have finished the transcription. The work will be published on CD-ROM in Adobe .pdf format by Heritage Books, Inc. in Bowie, Maryland. Each facing page will feature an image of the actual journal page on the left side and my line by line transcription on the right side. The actual number of pages will be just over 2,700. It will be fully indexed and searchable for every word in the work. According to Heritage Books, Inc., it will be several months before the work will be for sale. They have to have time for the artwork, advertising and actual production of the copies.

I look forward to seeing the finished product and hope that it will be of help to family researchers in that area of Colonial America.

Family Reunion - 1990



George Hugh Ballentine with son, Stephen Hugh Ballentine, Lara Renae and Janette Marie Yerges, daughters of Leslie Royce and Paula Marie (Huxford) Yerges and granddaughters of Carlton Tabor & Janet Marilyn (Huxford) Woodard.



2002

Coming Soon!

**Contributed articles from
family members,

family stories,

... and much more**

If you know of someone who is not receiving our newsletter, please send me their address and I will get them on the mailing list. They will receive the newsletter and be guaranteed of family reunion notification.

The document that appeared here last issue was not very readable. I thought it would come out better. Here is a line by line translation of what it says.

Charleston So. Ca. March 26, 1846. Received for Record the following Bonds & Mortgages.
viz.
Bond & Mortgage from **L. Cannon** to **Hugh R. McCants** }
Dated 18 March 1846. of Slave named **Dolly** } \$610.

Bond & Mortgage from **James Wiggins** to same. }
Dated 18 March 1846. of Slave named **Tom** } \$507.

Bond & Mortgage from **Peter Huxford** to same. \$856.
Dated 18 March 1846. Three Slaves, **Lish, Bob & Letty**.

Bond & Mortgage from **J. A. Hutson** to same.
Dated 18 March 1846. of Slave named **Jack** \$552.

Also received the recording fees, Twelve Dollars in full
say received from **A. J. Harvey, Esqr.** **Thomas S. Jones**
Deputy Secty. State

Ballentine Branches

2714 Phyllis Dr.
Copperas Cove, TX 76522-4311

**Family Newsletter For Ballentine, Huxford
& Connected Families**

George H. Ballentine
Editor

