

OUR FAMILY STORY

Spring 2005

Hello everyone;

Welcome to the eleventh issue of our family newsletter. As the descendants of **Jerre' Moreland** and **Pearl Scruggs** we all share a common heritage. It is my desire to pass along to you and your families some of the chronicles that I am collecting on our ancestors. I hope that you will share it with your children so that they can also understand how firmly rooted we are into the history of our country.

May I remind you that the entire family can access our family tree on the internet. The database was uploaded to the World Connect site at Rootsweb.com. You may access our family tree by going to <http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com/>. On that page you will see on the left column a box entitled "jump to a specific tree". Type in *jemoreland* and click on "go" or just search for any name in the database and you will be taken to the record.

WHY AM I HERE TODAY?

One of the aspects I enjoy the most about my genealogy research is that the pursuit often provides me with valuable information that helps me to answer the question, "*Why am I here today?*". Each of us can look at ourselves and begin the process of peeling away the layers of our lives and the lives of our ancestors to uncover the many reasons for decisions made in the past that have ultimately brought us to where we are today. Sounds pretty complicated doesn't it? Well, it usually is. So allow me to provide you with an example. I once asked my sister Susan, "Why is it that you and Bill are living in Colorado". Her immediate answer was, "Because Mom was born here". "Ah yes", I replied. "But why was it that she was born in Colorado. We had no family history in Colorado until a few months before mother was born".

The story begins with the death of **Jeremiah E. Moreland** in 1901. Our father / grandfather **Jerre' F. Moreland** was but 2 years old. The Moreland family was living in Woodward County, Oklahoma at the time. Woodward County is located in the "panhandle" of Oklahoma where the land is flat, dry, and uninspiring to the eye. Jeremiah's widow **Mary Etta (Pinnell) Moreland** was left with at least three children at home and no support system except her married daughter Pearl. Unfortunately for Mary Etta, Pearl passed away in 1909 when she was only 29 years old. By 1914 her older sons **Ira, Guy, and John** had grown and moved on to California. California was a likely place for them to go because their Uncle William Pinnell had relocated there some years earlier. Thus Mary Etta was left alone in Oklahoma with her youngest son Jerre'. Thus it was time for Mary Etta to move on to a location closer to her family for the support that she needed to survive. In those days the only means of transportation for the widow and her son was by railroad. And in order to get to California from the area around Woodward County, Oklahoma one must take a train to Denver Colorado where a ticket further west could be obtained. It is doubtful that young Jerre' Moreland had ever been outside of Oklahoma in his life. So it is easy for one to imagine the effect the Rocky Mountains had on a young man who had only experienced the

flat, dry prairie land around Woodward County. This train ride would forever change Jerre's life and for that matter the lives of his descendants.

Of all the towns and cities in California Jerre and his mother chose to travel to was the small town of Porterville. "Why Porterville?" you may ask. Well Porterville was a decision made by our great-uncle William Pinnell. An important decision indeed because if it wasn't Porterville then Jerre' Moreland would never have met and married **Pearl Scruggs**. But they did meet and both graduated from Porterville High School in 1920. From there they both chose to attend what is now the University of Southern California where they continued their relationship. I remember seeing several "dance cards" my grandmother had saved from those days at USC. Most of the spaces set aside for dance partners were filled with the name of Jerre' Moreland. Yes indeed they were in love. In fact so much so that my mother Eleanor was conceived sometime in the fall of 1922! As Jerre' and Pearl had not yet married this did not go over well with the Scruggs clan who probably still thought of themselves as a proper "Southern" family



Jerre' F. Moreland and Pearl E. Scruggs c.1923

roots in the Porterville area. Now what was the young couple to do? Fortunately for us they decided to marry and keep the yet unborn child. Apparently neither Jerre' or Pearl could, or would entertain the option of returning to Porterville. I guess they both knew it would be best if they moved on to some new place to start their family. After a very low-key wedding ceremony at the University they did leave California for Colorado. A place Jerre' had not forgotten. My mother Eleanor was born in Boulder on June 25, 1923, (which is also Jerre's 24th birthday). Later Geraldine and Floyd would also be born in that state. The family would live in Colorado until 1936 when they would move east.

Yes, my sister Susan does live in Colorado because our mother was born there. But as you can see there is so much more to the story.

DID YOU KNOW??? !!!

Our family tree has been researched back 17 generations. There are now a total of 1,972 individuals listed under 463 different surnames. The average age span of these persons is 61 years 6 months.

A QUOTE TO NOTE

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love."

---Hamilton Wright Mabie

Always open for suggestions as to what you might want to look for in future issues of "Our Family Story".

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