



Genealogy Friends News

Genealogy Friends of
Plano Libraries

Genealogy Friends News
April 2019

P.O. Box 860477, Plano, TX, 75086-0477

[http:// www.genealogyfriends.org](http://www.genealogyfriends.org) <http://genfriends.blogspot.com/>

Email Address: genfriends@genealogyfriends.org Newsletter: Barbara Coakley newsletter@genealogyfriends.org

Phone 972-836-9436

Schedule of Events

Mark your calendars now for the exciting Genealogy Friends events in 2019. Meetings are held in the Program Room at the Haggard Library, 2501 Coit Rd., Plano, TX from 10:15 to 12:30 unless otherwise noted:

Today's Topic:

April 13, 2019—Note the date change due to early voting at the Library - "Courthouse Research" by Pat Gordon.

Future Events

April 15, 2019—**OneNote Users Group**—Group meets in the Genealogy Section of the library from 7:00 to 8:30 on the third Monday of each month.

April 23, 2019—**Legacy Users Group**—Group meets in the Genealogy Section of the library on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 1:30—3:30 pm.

May 1, 2019—**Dining Out, Two Rows**, Allen, TX, Burger & Grilled Chicken Buffet, cost is \$25 per person. Contact Jean Funk at Jeano25@aol.com to make reservations by April 30th.

May 18, 2019—"Westward Ho, Migration Routes of the US" by Judy Knight

June 15, 2019—"Dating Old Photographs" by Betsy Mills

July 20, 2019—"Techniques & Strategies for More Effective Searching Online" by Bernard Meisner

August 17, 2019—"BYU Family History Technology Lab" by Debra Hadfield

September 28, 2019—All Day Workshop—Speaker is Debbie Parker Wayne

Index

Genealogy Education	2
Tracing Our Roots	2
Flashback: Memories of Plano, 1957	3
Early Collin County— Quantrill and Collin County	6
Irish Names	7
Children in the Good Old Days	8

Publications for Sale

The following are available from Genealogy Friends:

Public Land Survey Systems	\$5
Plano Star Courier Index 1904-1910	\$20
Plano Star Courier Index 1911-1917	\$20
Cemeteries of Collin County, TX	\$40
Collin County, TX Voter Registration Index 1867	\$20
Place Names of Collin County, TX	\$10
Railroads in Collin County, TX	\$10

Genfriends Membership

Our membership year runs from October 1 to September 30. Individual memberships are \$30 a year and family memberships are \$50. Don't forget to renew your membership for next year.

The money we raise is used to purchase materials for the Genealogy Section at Haggard Library.

Download the membership form on our website <http://genealogyfriends.org/news/> send it in with payment to

Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries, Inc

PO Box 860477

Plano, TX 75086-0477

Genealogy Education

Save the Date—September 28, 2019 GenFriends is presenting an **All Day Workshop** that focuses on using DNA in your family history research. Our speaker will be Debbie Parker Wayne, co author of *Genetic Genealogy in Practice*. Details will be available soon.

NGS Family History Conference "Journey of Discovery" will be held in St. Charles, MO 8-11 May 2019 <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/>

Texas State Genealogical Society is hosting the **Texas Institute of Genealogical Research** June 10-14th at the Crowne Plaza Austin. Courses will be Texas Research Essentials and Advanced Southern Research Techniques. <http://www.txsgs.org/tigr-2019-registration/>

Collin College Class—Genealogy Getting Started will meet June 5-July 10 from 6:30-9pm at the Courtyard Campus. Instructor is Barbara Coakley. This class focuses on research methodology, planning and records including census, published records and vital records. <http://www.collin.edu/ce/>

FGS National Conference will be held August 21-24, 2019 in Washington, DC. <http://fgs.org/conferences/>

Tracing Our Roots Column

The Tracing Our Roots column published weekly in the Plano Star Courier (available on the paper's website) and written by Genealogy Friends' member Brenda Kellow, covers a different topic or subject each week.

In addition, Brenda announces national events, fee increases in everyday genealogical records, new records added to the Internet and to genealogists' favorite sites.

The past topics are available for several years. Access the site at http://starlocalmedia.com/opinion/blogs/blog_7/. Brenda will add your name to her weekly announcement when her column appears online if you request it by emailing her at bbkellow@verizon.net. You may also request topics for her to cover.

Flashback: Memories of Plano, 1957

By Brenda Burns Kellow

The Plano Star-Courier, Plano, Collin County, Texas

August 8, 1957, Volume 70, No. 13

Compiled by Brenda Burns Kellow, 2019

Tracing Our Roots weekly genealogy column http://starlocalmedia.com/opinion/blogs/blog_7/

Remember, this is an abstract of the newspaper. Not all names may be mentioned, i.e., obituaries, showers, and marriages may not have every name mentioned that were in the newspaper. For the complete content, look at the microfilm or find the copy in Newspapers.com.

This newspaper office received pencils for our collection from Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Eschol White and Nathan White.

Mr. and Mrs. Nathan White and sons Nathan Jr. and Larry, and Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Carpenter recently returned from visiting Port Aransas where they visited with Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Mathews, son of Mrs. Ruth Mathews.

Charles C. May, 21, son of Mrs. Betty [Dickens], received a serious back injury in an accident at Belt Line Road and Shiloh Road last Thursday at 5:30 a.m. and was taken to St. Paul Hospital. He will remain bedfast for the next six weeks. The other man injured in the accident was John L. Hughes, of Garland. He will undergo plastic surgery on his head at Garland Hospital. May's car caught fire immediately after the wreck and was a total loss. The damage to Hughes car was estimated at \$400.

Miss Nancy Uland, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Uland, wins a music scholarship given by Second District of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs of Dallas. She will attend NTSC this fall.

Plano Public Schools will open Tuesday, September 3, for the 1957-58 terms. Those teaching are: E. A. Sigler, T. H. Williams, Floyd Jolly, L. W. Cason, E. M. Clem, Miss Ruth Coldwell, Mrs. Douglas Frost, Mrs. Rex Hardison, Mrs. Jim Hickey, Miss Evelyn McElhany, Mrs. Harold Skaggs, Mrs. Claud Skinner, Frances H. Thompson, William J. Wilson, Mrs. Corrinne Carpenter, Don E. Duke, Miss Shirley Ann Hill, Miss Faye Hudson, Clarence M. Jones, Glen Rogers, Mrs. Homer Adams, Mrs. Betty Field, Miss Kate Holder, Mrs. Jim Hunt, Mrs. Floyd E. Jolly, Mrs. R. A. Minrany, Miss Margie Netherton, Mrs. Ella Page, Miss Leta Beth Ralls, Miss Hazel Rogers, Mrs. Loyd Rogers, Mrs. J. W. Stults, Gaston L. Walker, Mrs. T. H. Williams, Mrs. E. E. Wilson, Mrs. Frances H. Thompson, W. S. Turner, Beatrice Blackmore, Jesse DeShay, Doris Jones, Roy Lamb, Rubye L. Turner, and Tressie Wortham.

Plano's new Post Office open house was sponsored by the Plano Rotary Club members and President Claude Schexnayder. Those playing a part in the opening were George A. Gray, W. G. Carlisle, Forrest More, E. W. Roderick, F. L. Etheridge, R. S. McAdams, and Mayor David McCall. The Post Office has asked Congress to increase the cost of letter rate from three to four cents.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Kemp, owners of the Duchess Restaurant, recently purchased the Plano Courts and Filling Station from Mr. and Mrs. Gust Grey.

Bank Director Emmitt Clem announced the Plano Wildcat Band starts marching and playing practice Monday, August 12. Mr. Clem and Miss Linda Haggard attended TCU marching clinic last week. Teacher Jack Lee's Michigan University band was rated the best in the nation. Jim Jacobson of T. C. U. was also a teacher.

John Baxter Andrew, 81, of Rockwall, died last week. Those at the service are: his wife and two sons W. H. Andrew and Paul Andrew; four daughters, Mrs. Hester Huse, Mrs. Merle Kays, and Mrs. Johnnie Lebies, and Mrs. Louis Bourn; one brother, A. A. Andrew; sister, and Mrs. Charlie Bells. Those officiating were Rev. W. O. Bucy, Rev. J. W. Gordon Peterson, and Rev. Don Joy. Burial was in Rockwall Cemetery.

The Cub Scouts first game in baseball was well attended. Those playing were: Milrany, McCall, Cason, Qui-

Flashback: Memories of Plano, 1957

senberry, Perkins, Fondren, Hall, Holley, Henderson, Christie, and Howard.

Mr. and Mrs. Troy Miller moved from Sanger to Plano. Mrs. Miller's sister, Miss Diane Hughes, is visiting.

The Spradley Family Reunion will be held Sunday, August 13, at Finch Park in McKinney.

Mrs. Nannie Brown, 87, died last week and her services were held Thursday afternoon at the Allen Methodist Church. She is a native of Mason County, Tennessee, but came to Collin County 60 years ago. Survivors are: son, W. Brown; brother, John Angel of Allen; sister, Dora Howard of McKinney; and a grandson. Burial was at Allen Cemetery.

The Plano Bank open house last Saturday drew a large crowd. Those mentioned are: Mrs. Polly Crockett, 97, Deena Jan Webster, 2 weeks old, Mrs. Leslie M. McCreary, Cam F. Dowell, Jr., W. H. Goodman, Frank W. Beverly, E. R. Brown, M. R. Bullington, Allen Clark, Frank Parker, James W. Ashton, C. B. Sullivan, W. Stevens, Leland Dupree, A. Sandlin, W. H. Leatherwood, Blagden Manning, Harold DeMoss, Zeta Gossett, W. H. Caywood, T. W. Rutledge, Earl Jackson, W. B. Gilbert, John H. Head, H. M. Faulkner, and Fred Korth, Lloyd Thomas.

- p. 2 Charles H. Smith, 65 of Frisco, died last week. Conducting his funeral services were Rev. Kenneth Thomas and Rev. A. Bailey Duncan. Burial was in Rowlett Cemetery. Pallbearers were Dexter Elliott, Harry Gaby, S. W. Christie, Clyde Waddle, R. K. Hollas, and Kenneth Johnson. He was born August 14, 1892 in Limestone County. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. James Smith of Groesbeck. Survivors are his wife; one son Jimmy Smith; one daughter Mrs. Celeste Mayhew; 3 grandchildren, Mrs. Jimmy Lynn Oesch, Johnny Smith, and Mrs. Sue Holmes; one sister, Mrs. Nora Gandy; and step-mother, Mrs. James Smith.

Miss Lillie Beth Bryan is visiting her grandparents Mr. and Mrs. H. M. McCollom.

Thomas Cate in the Missile Battalion visited his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Cate.

Mr. and Mrs. Sholan Johnson and daughter, Linda Gail, spent the last weekend visiting in the homes of Dr. Baugh and Dr. Garam in Waco.

Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Westbrook and daughter Linda Ann, returned home after visiting with grandparents Mr. and Mrs. O. Tullis in Dumas, Texas.

Mrs. Glenn Rogers opens a Kindergarten in her home at 1515 15th Street.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Nichols and children visited in Plano this past weekend.

- p. 3 George R. Crane, son of Robert G. Crane, accepted a Regular Army Commission as second lieutenant, while serving at Fort Sam Houston.

Sarah Smith, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Bill Morgan Smith of Greenville, received a broken leg while the family vacationed in Estes Park, Colo.

- p. 4 Funeral Services for Mrs. Thelma Crawford, 52, were held Friday afternoon. Rev. Luke Bolen East Dallas Christian Church officiated. Burial was at Restland. Survivors include: daughter Mrs. George E. Griffin, Jr; her mother, Mrs. W. H. Crawford; and two grandchildren of Dallas. She was a niece of Mrs. Pearl Jackson of Plano.

Capt. and Mrs. Frank J. O'Brian, and daughter Christopher visited Mrs. O'Brian's parents Mr. and Mrs. Gus Shuffler in Plano. They attended the Shuffler reunion. Present were: Mrs. Gladys Wood, Harry Shuffler, Mrs. Inez Cornwell, John Netzer Shuffler, and Howell Shuffler. Unable to attend were: Mrs. C. C. Odell, Bill Shuffler, and Mrs. Leta Harvey.

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Lusk and daughter Karen and Sandra Dunn were weekend guests of Mrs. Vince Duke.

Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Sherrill and Linda Kay left Sunday for the Smoky Mountains.

Roy Carpenter thanks his friends and family for cards and letters while he was in the hospital.

- p. 5 Richard Sartain, stationed at the U. S. Navy at Coronado, Calif., arrived in Plano for a 15 day visit with his

Flashback: Memories of Plano, 1957

parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Sartain.

Mrs. Dick Loveless thanks her friends and family for their cards and letters while she was in the hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Everett O'Dowd and daughter Ann visited with Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Bagwill on Sunday.

Leslie Yarbrough and daughters visited her brother Ray Yarbrough Sunday as well as with Mr. and Mrs. Vince Duke.

Mr. and Mrs. Knox B. Moseley celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Mrs. Moseley is the former Miss Sylvia Lee Monroe of Sachse. Attending were: two daughters Mrs. J. T. Uland, Mrs. A. L. Hogge, W. T. Mosely, Dennis Mosely, Lonnie Mosely, Perry Mosely, and K. W. Mosely. They have 17 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Georgianna Hasford hosted the O. E. S. at her home Monday. Present were: Mrs. Annie Laurie Horton, and Miss Mary Virginia Wyatt.

Thomas Franklin Clark of Wylie died Thursday. Funeral services were at the First Christian Church and burial at Dallas Memorial Park. Surviving is: wife the former Myrtle Huff; five daughters, Mrs. Ray Hutcheman, Mrs. C. J. Bogue, Mrs. Dwayne Spruill, Mrs. James Skinner, Miss Patty Ruth Clark; four sons, Sgt. Wayne Clark, D. C. and Thomas Wayne Clark, Gary Frank Clark, Danny Glenn Clark; four sisters, Mrs. Bill Parker, Mrs. Gladys Smith, Mrs. E. R. Malone, Mrs. Lee Roney; brother, R. E. Clark.

p. 6 David Weaver, 69, died Friday at his home in Frisco. Survivors include: wife, the former Miss Flora Coker; three sons, Thurmond Weaver, Vernon Weaver, and Rev. Osby Weaver; one daughter Miss Lillie Jewel Ramsey; two sisters, Miss Pearl Rabow, and Miss Nora Gammons; and seven grandchildren.

Miss Pat Allman is spending a few weeks with her brother-in-law and sister Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Sicard in Fla.

Richard and Carl Grey, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Gust Grey, returned from a trip with relatives in Webb, Iowa.

Rev. Jack W. Landan announced services now in progress in the new St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Richardson at Belt Line Road and St. Luke's Drive in Richardson.

Pat Evans, son of Mrs. Katie Evans, visited her this past weekend.

p. 7 Mrs. Dick Loveless is home from St. Paul Hospital in Dallas.

Brother Raymond Gage, Grand Master of the I. O. O. F., State of Texas, will visit in Plano Aug. 12.

The Plano Chamber of Commerce is having an amateur hour, August 19 at 6:30 p.m. Those interested please contact David McCall or Leon Dugger.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Ramsey are vacationing in Carlsbad Cavern. Daughters Debbie and Pam stayed with Mrs. Ramsey's parents.

Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Gentry and his sister, Mrs. Archie Luellen returned from visiting Georgia and Alabama.

p. 8 Mrs. Louise Prince and Mrs. Janie Rogers, leaders, returned with the troop from Camp Gambill in Sumner, Tex.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Forman returned home after a week in Canada. They were accompanied by their son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Yandell.

Mr. and Mrs. Foy Lemons and Mrs. Frank Lemons returned home after visiting the Carolinas. Her sisters there are Mrs. Sadie Ferguson and Lennie Queen and brother is Eddie Bennett.

Vernon Robinson of the Post Office received painful injuries in a car crash but is recovering.

Early Collin County—Quantrill and Collin County

Many of us have heard of Quantrill and his Raiders during the Civil War. We may not know about his and their connections to Collin County. (Quantrill is also spelled with an “e.”) Feelings about him and his band of soldiers vary to this day depending upon which side of the conflict people identify with. The Confederacy promoted him to Captain. To many Confederate supporters he was a free-spirited, dashing hero in a war where the Confederates had few heroes. To the Union Army, he was an outlaw and a murderer.

Some say Quantrill’s Raiders was the most savage fighting unit in the Civil War. Its guerilla warfare tactics terrorized civilians and soldiers from both the North and South. The Raiders harassed Union soldiers, raided pro-Union towns, robbed mail coaches and trains and attacked Unionist civilians. Much of their fighting was done along the Kansas-Missouri border. When the Union Army ordered all captured guerillas to be shot, Quantrill gave the same treatment to his prisoners.

Quantrill’s Raiders answered to nobody - not the Confederate Army and not law enforcement. They did what they wanted; attacked whomever they wanted; exacted their own kind of revenge; and enforced their own kind of justice. Quantrill’s Raiders grew from about a dozen men to over 400 members. The Raiders included Jesse and Frank James, Cole Younger and his brothers, James Reed, who became the husband of Belle Starr; and “Bloody Bill” Anderson, who wore a necklace of Yankee scalps into battle.

After the retaliatory Lawrence Massacre at Lawrence, Kansas, in August of 1863 where the Raiders killed about 200 men and boys and burned and looted the town, the Raiders left for North Texas and Collin County to pass the winter. While en-route to Texas the Raiders encountered the 100-man headquarters escort of Union General James G. Blunt. During the attack they killed more than 80 men in what later became known as the Barter Springs Massacre.

Upon arrival in North Texas in October of 1863, Captain William Quantrill reported to Gen. Henry McCulloch at Bonham in Fannin County. Gen. McCulloch reassigned the Raiders to hunt down Comanches. They were not successful in that endeavor. Quantrill and his men were ordered to help round up the increasing number of deserters and conscription-dodgers in North Texas. The band captured a few but killed even more, whereupon McCulloch pulled them off this duty. In Collin County a Confederate soldier had returned home after his wife’s pleas to help harvest the crops for his starving family. Quantrill’s men hanged him for desertion. Most of the other deserters they found met the same fate.

At that time the Raiders consisted of about 400 men. During the winter of 1863/64 in North Texas, the Raiders divided into smaller groups. The groups continued with their raids and acts of violence against the local populace.

About the latter part of 1863, a group of men went to the home of an old couple named Lackey near the Kaufman (now Rockwall) County line near Millwood and demanded their money. They tortured the old man in front of his wife, trying to get him to tell them where his money was hidden. He never told them the location and was killed. The men ransacked the house looking for the money. The wife kept two twenty-dollar gold pieces in her ball of yarn. The men threw the ball around but never found the money inside it. [*Weekly Democrat Gazette*, August 15, 1929, “Millwood.”]

It was rumored that the men were part of Quantrill’s group and were staying in McKinney. In January 1864 Collin County Sheriff James L. Read, along with his cousin and former chief justice of Collin County J. M. McReynolds and Joseph E. Holcomb, rode into McKinney from the southwest with a posse of twenty-six men to find the killers of Lackey. Sixteen men supposedly of Quantrill’s army were on the porch of the Tucker Hotel, which was on the northeast corner of the McKinney square.

At that time there was no courthouse on the square. The old wooden courthouse had been moved to a side street around 1862. Great piles of stone had been heaped in the square for the new courthouse. The war started before the construction began. A gun battle ensued across piles of rock and stone in the square.

The sheriff’s posse was armed with shotguns while Quantrill’s men had long range rifles. Read’s men retreated to an old mill a few blocks down the street and barricaded themselves inside. During the night Sheriff Read, McReynolds, Holcomb, and Davis left for East Texas. They sought protection with the civil authorities in Tyler. They were turned over to Quantrill’s men and a mob instead.

After a kangaroo court, Sheriff James Read, J. M. McReynolds and Joseph E. Holcomb were ordered to be

Early Collin County—Quantrill and Collin County

hanged for being Confederate deserters or “Union sympathizers.” Sheriff Read had served in the Confederacy but he was considered a deserter anyway.

The mob had only one rope with which to hang the three prisoners. Sheriff Read was hanged first, cursing Quantrill to his last breath. McReynolds was second. Holcomb was third. Before Davis could be hanged, some of his relatives intervened on his behalf.

In southeastern McKinney around Finch Park was an overgrown area known as Jernigan’s swamp. It was a favorite hideout for deserters and renegades, who stole from the local residents. The residents appealed to Quantrill for help. He flushed forty men out of the swamp and hanged them on the courthouse grounds.

Around Christmas of 1863, a party was being held at Rhea Mills (Rheas Mill) by Union sympathizers. During the war the mill made wool cloth for Union uniforms. Quantrill’s men raided the party, stealing all of the food. They brought the food to the courthouse square for the local populace to enjoy. The people were too afraid of the Raiders to partake of the feast.

In March of 1864 Gen. McCulloch had Captain Quantrill arrested for murder. The Captain and his band escaped back to Missouri and resumed their lawlessness. Quantrill himself was shot in a battle in Kentucky and died June 1865 in a Kentucky prison camp. (There is a theory that he escaped, changed his name, and survived many more years.)

Several members of Quantrill’s gang frequented Collin County for many years after the war. They had relatives and friends from Missouri living in the county, who hid them and protected them from law enforcement. Jesse and Frank James took part in the riding and shooting events at the Collin County fairs. After the death of Jesse, Frank James reformed. At one time he worked at Sanger Brothers department store in Dallas.

Belle Starr was born Isabel Shirley and was related to the Shirley’s of Anna, Texas. She and her husbands were frequently in the Collin/Dallas area.

The Civil War was a turbulent time in American history. Many acts of violence and lawlessness continued into the 1870s. It took several years before peace and order could be restored to Texas.

Irish Names

By Barbara Coakley

Our speaker in March was Carol Beck, she gave us an informative talk on Names. She discussed origination of surnames and common nicknames for given names. When I got home from the meeting, I downloaded a handout “Finding Your Irish Immigrant Ancestors” by Juliana Szucs. <https://irishsig.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/finding-irish-ancestors.pdf>. Juliana discusses different sources to find the hometown of your Irish immigrant ancestors and tips for searching Irish records. There was a link to *Varieties and Synonymes of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland* written by Sir Robert E Matheson in 1901. It is available on Internet Archive <https://archive.org/details/varietiessynonym00math/page/n5>

One of the Irish families that I research is Sennott. Matheson’s book was a study of surnames in the vital records indexes for thirty-six years. He includes the evolution of the spelling of names, location specific information, the meanings of prefixes and suffixes, names that were pronounced and spelled very differently, the difference between English and Irish spellings, the meanings of names and the most frequent variations of names.

I looked up Sennott and it was not listed but some other spellings that have been found on records for the family were—Sinnott was the primary spelling and there were two alternatives—Sinott and Synnott. The records found in Ireland use Sinnott and Synnott. Those is the US vary. The records for the immigrant ancestors from the Catholic Church with an Irish priest are Sinnett. On the 1840 Census the name was spelled Senit. After 1850 Sennott is used consistently. This is an example of surnames that change when the ancestor immigrated to the US, it seems to be a gradual transition and supports what Carol told us about spelling of names not being important until the 1930’s when Social Security required people to prove who they were and their employers to record employees’ earnings to a specific individual.

Children in the Good Old Days

By Barbara Battocchio Brogdon

We've all heard those stories from our elders about how rough they had it as children; walking miles through the snow to get to school, endless chores, especially on a farm, having to select the switch that was to be used on one's backside as punishment for an infraction. Are they true? Or do the stories grow as the years pass?

Children in 2019 often have loving parents who provide a safe and healthy environment. They attend school, may participate in organized sports and / or music lessons outside of school. There are cell phones, video games, birthday parties and many other activities for their education and enjoyment. Not all children are able to have enjoy this lifestyle, of course. Illness, poverty and location, and other factors all may affect them. However, this is the lifestyle of many children in the 21st Century.

Let's look back to the times when our grandparents or great-grandparents were children. The years around the 1860s and 1870s were the days of the pioneers. "Root Hog or Die" was a common expression and also the approach to life for adults and children. Life was hard, illnesses such as measles, cholera and diphtheria could become epidemic and there were no cures, no way to stop them from wiping out entire families.

Children had chores and responsibilities at the earliest age possible because there was so much to do and so many children in one family. Each child learned how to take care of themselves and often made their own toys. Every little boy had his own knife. He could whittle and knew how to make a whistle by the age of seven. He carried this knife with him all the time, even to school.

Farming took precedent over school and education generally was provided only after crops were harvested. After age twelve, some students would travel to other towns for education and the child would walk, ride a horse, or possibly board with a relative if the school was a distance. Any unusual trait in a child was considered to be the work of the devil! Even something as common as near-sightedness could cause a child to be classified as dumb because he couldn't understand (or see!) what was being written on the blackboard.

There was fun, too, in those serious days. Playing hooky was frequent among the students and the time away from the three Rs was often spent hunting rabbits, exploring, and skating in the winter. In the 19th Century, exploring on your own was how one discovered the world. There were impromptu horse races, and picking a watermelon up off the ground without leaving the saddle was a favorite.

In today's world, knives are considered dangerous weapons and a child would not be allowed to have one in school. Maybe not even at home. Most of the diseases that claimed so many lives are no longer epidemic in the United States. Buses or carpools take children to and from school if they must travel far. But children still do their chores, go to school, and above all, will figure out a way to have fun.

Source: [The Horse & Buggy Doctor](#) by Arthur E. Hertzler, M.D.

