

# Under the Walnut Tree



## The complete version

Revised Feb. 2023

*In the beginning, there was the Big Bang. Time began. Time passed.  
Species evolved.*

The story of the Waller family begins with the Normans. You might assume that our name came from the trade of brick or stone masons, but it didn't. In Normandy we were **de Valers**, "of the valley". Normans weren't simply French, but Norsemen from Scandinavian countries. They had developed skill at military conquest, but once they had moved into a new area, they easily blended into the local culture and often proved their value to the locals by defending them from other invaders, such as the Vikings, who preferred to attack and pillage coastal areas.

In Normandy, they soon began to combine their own language with French, and switched their religion from Norse gods to Christianity. William the Conqueror, was originally known as William the Bastard because he was the illegitimate son of Robert, Duke of Normandy and Herleva, his mistress. We don't know if he would have been considered a bastard in

the other meaning of the word, but he may have been. Ambitious, ruthless men usually are. He became Duke while still a child, and a chaotic period followed. As William became older, he proved his ability to take control.

The Norman Conquest was not exactly a case of a foreign force conquering England. The Normans and the British had relations and interactions for some time. William believed he had been promised the English throne, back in 1051 by Edward the Confessor. When Edward died in January of 1066, Harold was crowned instead. William decided to use force.

Though they had only about 20 miles of channel to cross, William needed to bring an army of 7000, horses, armor, weapons, and even prefab wooden castles. He recruited workers who built hundreds of ships, and by September the invasion was ready.

Alured De Valer was one of the invading Normans. Wherever they conquered, settled, or involved themselves, Normans were adept at merging their culture with the one already there. In a few generations, as the cultures and languages merged, de Valers became Wallers.

*The “de”, of course, means “of” or “from”, and that often served as a surname until family names became more formalized. Sometimes people had both. Though surnames were being used in the 1000’s, they were not used to denote inheritance until the 1400’s. Some of the Norman nobility used “de” to denote areas of which they were lords, and some of these changed that name to their new English holdings.*

*Our ancestry is not just the identified 28 generations of Valers and Wallers, but is composed of more than 600 known family names. In 28 generations, we each have over 268 million ancestors. We’ll never know all their names. This narrative will not include the entire tree; just the Wallers and those directly connected.*

*Ancestry of the Waller Family works its way back 40 generations, covering every known ancestor I have found.*

*Although the majority of these ancestors come from Britain, Normandy, Germany, and Ireland, DNA testing has revealed genes from India, Asia, and Native American individuals not yet identified.*

*England at the time was a land of immigrants. A variety of ethnic groups, Britons, Anglo-Saxons, Celts, Danes, Jutes, and others had settled there. Romans had invaded, and some remained, affecting the local cultures. It was divided into 7 kingdoms until 927, only 139 years before the Normans arrived.*

**Alured**, born in Normandy in 1040, son of Alfred, born in 1010, was granted land as a reward for his service in the invasion and conquest; his name is listed in the Domesday Book. He married Adelina de Hockerton (1050-1118); they named their son Alured in 1080.

**Alured #2** had a son **Alured #3** (1125-1183) , who wed a younger Adelina de Hockerton (1135-1167)

Their son, **John De Valer** was born 1165 in Newark Nottinghamshire, England. He had a brother named Milo. He, sired Henry around 1200.

**Henry**, born in Hockerton, Nottinghamshire, England, had a son named Vilhelm.

**Vilhelm** married Agatha and had **Walter** in 1260. Walter's wife was Elyas Mortimer. They had two sons, **Henry** (1295) and David (1293). Henry married Alicia De Mortimer and had 3 sons, **Thomas (1330)**, John, and Richard.

## Groombridge

In 1239 William Russell and his wife Haweis were motivated to build a small moated castle at Groombridge.



In the mid 14th century, the lands were held by Sir John de Clinton, whose grandson, Lord Clinton and Saye, sold Groombridge to Thomas Waller of Lamberhurst, "*whose family was possessed of good estates in this county and Suffex, and bore for their arms, Sable, three walnut tree leaves, or, between two cotizes argent.*" in 1360

Thomas wanted to sound more English, and become **Waller**. He purchased Groombridge from Lord Clinton in 1360, and married *Christina Chalfunt* in 1364. He and Christina had two sons, *John* (1365) and Thomas (1367).

John Waller married *Margaret Lansdall* and begat *Richard* in 1395.

**Richard** became famous for his role in the battle of Agincourt in France, fought on October 25, in the 4th year of Henry V, (1415). It has been called "*the greatest victory that ever was, or perhaps ever will be, obtained by this nation, England.*"

*It is likely that some of the accounts exaggerated the numbers of French troops the English army had to overcome. Some claim there were 60,000 or more, while others estimate 12 to 30 thousand, versus 6000 to 9000 on the English side. It was still an impressive win.*

*"The king's army amounted only to 9000, and those sickly and greatly harrassed; whereas the French were 150,000 men, in health and unfatigued. The battle lasted from*

*ten in the morning till five in the afternoon. There were slain on the side of the French, one archbishop, three dukes, six earls, ninety barons, 1500 knights, and 7000 esquires or gentlemen. The loss of the English was very inconsiderable, not more than four hundred, of every degree."*

*When the battle was over, Richard Waller discovered, under a heap of dead bodies, Charles, Duke of Orléans, commander of the French army, still alive, and took him prisoner.*

***Sir Richard took the duke back to England and confined him at Groombridge for 24 years, until the French finally ransomed him. The duke was treated kindly, and before long the two became good friends.***

*He was honored for his accomplishment by the addition of a walnut-tree, with the motto, "Hœ fructus virtutis", (the fruit of virtue) to his crest.*

*(Considering the kind of tree, it might have said "the nut of virtue")*

*For somewhat different reasons, I would also honor Richard. Finding an enemy still alive at the end of a bloody battle, he might have simply killed him. And being so kind to the prisoner of war that they became friends shows an unusually good character.*

***The Wallers held Groombridge Place for over 200 years until it was sold in the seventeenth century.***

#### **"The Secret Garden**

The gate to the secret garden leads to a tiny hidden corner where a tiny stream tumbles into the moat. It was here that Philip Packer was sitting reading a book in the sunshine when he died. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the owner of Groombridge Place, Richard Waller, fell in love with [Cicely Neville](#) who was known for her beauty. She was the wife of [Richard of York](#) and mother of [Richard III](#). Legend claims when she died in 1495 she was buried in Groombridge churchyard and Waller planted a hawthorn tree over her grave. In 1900 a branch was taken in an attempt to strike new growth but the attempt failed. A piece of Waller's love-tree still resides in the Secret Garden in a box on the wall.

Sadly this theory is untrue. Historical evidence doesn't support it, and Cicely Neville is buried in [Fotheringhay](#), Northamptonshire; also there was no churchyard at Groombridge till the 1630's"

***Richard married Margaret Sylvia Gulby, who was actually his half-sister. (Margaret Lansdall and William Gulby had an affair; their daughter was Margaret Silvia Gulby, born in 1406). Their children were John,1416, William, 1420, Alice, 1424, and Richard Jr.,1433.***

Richard's son John married Johanna Whetenhall and produced Richard in 1458, William in 1470, and John Jr. in 1475

Richard married Anne Symmonds and sired Robert. In 1483.

Other children were Thomas, Henry, John, Mary, and Anne.

*1483 was the year King Edward V was to be crowned at age 12, replacing his father Edward IV, who died. He never had the chance; he and his brother Richard, 9, were murdered in the Tower of London, probably by his uncle who had himself crowned as Richard III instead. He lived only two more months before dying in battle.*

Robert married Elizabeth Fryer, and later married Elizabeth Duncomb. They had Edmond. (1536) and Catherine, William, and Clara Jane

Edmond and Cecily Ball bore Robert Thomas Waller in 1560 in Coleshill, Warwickshire. (also 13 other children)

Robert Thomas married Anne Hampden, having 8 children, including **Edmund the poet**, born in 1606, and John D. Waller in 1617, born just after his father's death in 1616. Anne lived until 1653, 93 years old. The other children were:

Dorothy, Mary, Cicely, Griffith, Robert, Stephen, Ursula, Ellen, and Anne.

*Edmund Waller(1606-1687) , the poet, son of Robert Thomas Waller and Anne Hampden, was moved to Beaconsfield as a child, about 25 miles northeast of London. On July 5, 1631, Edmund Waller married Anne Banks, the wealthy heiress of a London cloth merchant. The Court of Aldermen were her legal guardians, and they disapproved. They charged him in the infamous Star Chamber, where legal rules were arbitrary and decisions were often unjust and abusive. King Charles personally intervened, and Edmund was released upon payment of a fine. Anne Waller died in October, 1634, after bearing a son and a daughter.*

*Edmund became a member of The Club (also known as the Great Tew Circle) of Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland, an intellectual association of many of the most advanced thinkers of the time. Edward Hyde, Ben Jonson, Thomas May, and possibly Thomas Hobbs were some of them. Their views tended toward Socinianism which later evolved into Unitarianism, and favored Latitudinism , and Irenicism. They advocated moderation, tolerance, peace, and an undogmatic approach to religion. They were the progressive and rational thinkers of their time.*

*As a young man he tried to woo the lady Dorothy Sidney, daughter of the earl of Leicester, who he called Sacharissa, using all his poetic talent. Sadly, she rejected him, but perhaps it was for the better of the verse.*

*During the English Civil War, Edmund the poet was accused of a conspiracy known as Waller's Plot, suspected of trying to aid the King, who had helped Edmund out of a jam before.*

*The poet claimed he was actually trying to negotiate peace and compromise between the two sides. He was fined £10,000 in 1644, imprisoned, and then banished to Bermuda. Later he moved to Paris, and was able to return to*

*England in 1651, when his banishment was revoked. He returned to Beaconsfield, where he lived quietly until the Restoration. After the restoration he was welcomed back to court.*

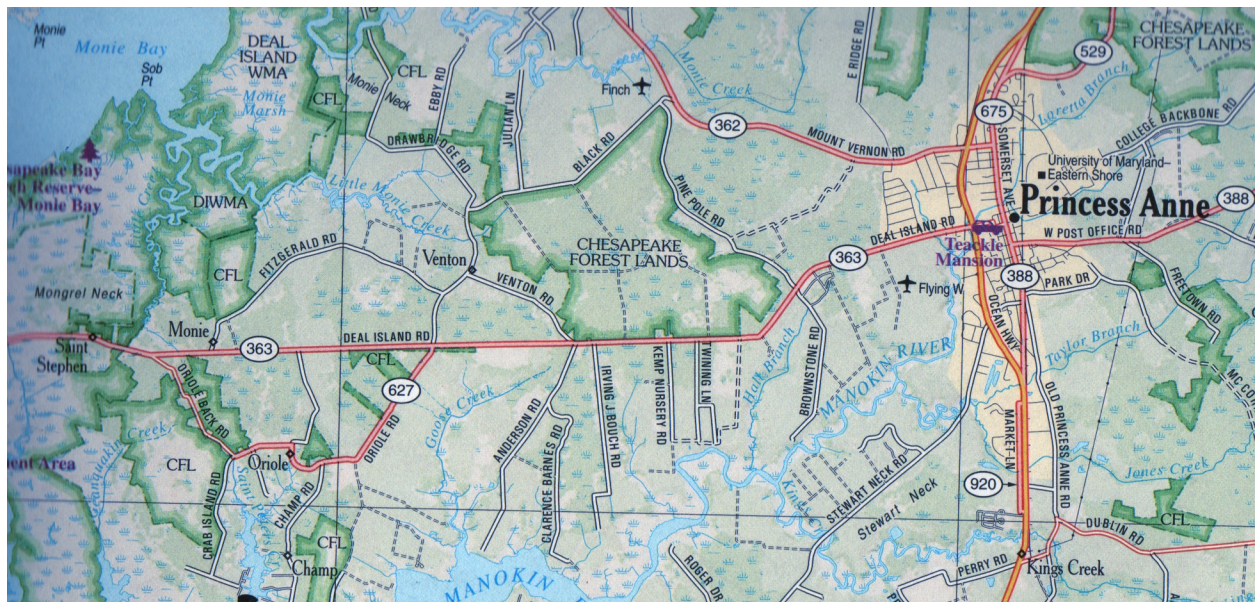
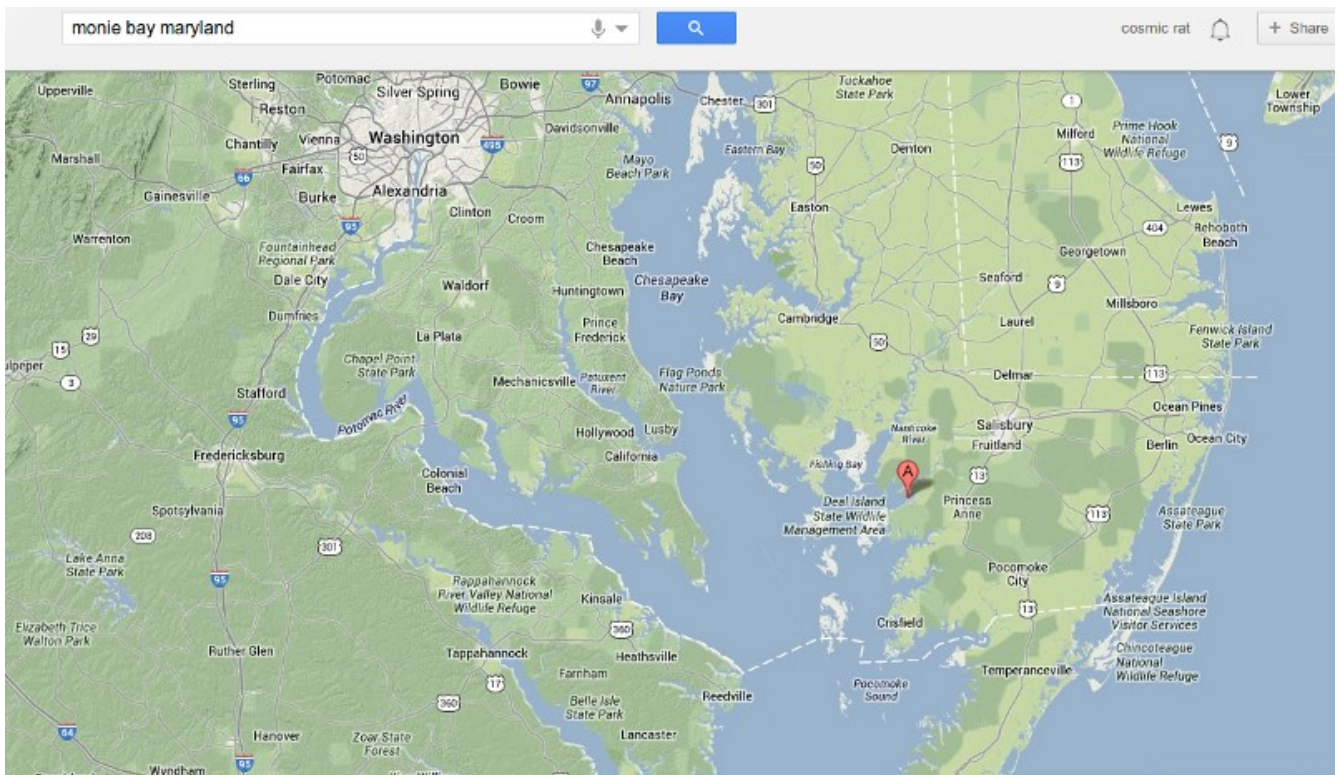
*On the other side, Sir Hardres Waller was a major-general in the parliament army against king Charles I. and one of those responsible for his execution. After the restoration, he was tried and condemned, but the King pardoned him.*

*A branch of the Waller family was located at Newport Pagnell, Buckingham. Some of them moved in the 17th century to Virginia, where they became involved in early Virginia affairs. Benjamin Waller, clerk of courts, read the Declaration of Independence from the Williamsburg courthouse steps on July 25, 1776.*

**It was John D. Waller, Edmund's youngest brother, born about 1617, who sailed to the New World, seeking adventure.** "Waller's Adventure" was his new farm on the Chesapeake Bay, at a place called Little Monie, Somerset County, Maryland, about 60 miles north of Accomack, Virginia.

*Burke's Landed Gentry states that "John Waller (1617-1688) of Newport, Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, youngest brother of Edmund Waller, the celebrated poet, . . . left England and settled in New Kent County, Virginia, July 4, 1635."*

Additional land, "Friends Advice", 45 acres, was purchased June 7, 1700, on the south bank of Little Monie adjacent to Waller's Adventure.



*John was the founder of my branch of the American Wallers.*

*He was not the only Waller to come to the New World, however. One of Edmund's sons, Benjamin, ended up in the West Indies. His son John, who was born there, had several children including Henry, born in 1774. Henry ran a coffee plantation called "Waller's Delight" in British Guiana. Later he and his wife, Melinda Gordon Ver Plank, bought a place on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay near Pooles Island, Fairlee Creek in Kent County, a 308 acre*

*farm, from Colonel James Lloyd.*

*During the War of 1812, the British, on the way to attack Washington, fired rockets that burned his house and cornfields and killed some of his livestock. One of the British Marines wrote that he admired the 2-story farmhouse, calling it "elegant", and also noted that after the attack it was "burning furiously." After the war, in 1829, Henry hired Francis Scott Key as his attorney and sued the government for \$8000 for the damages. He won the lawsuit. Henry sold the farm to Richard Frisby.*

*One of the Congreve rockets that burned Henry's farmhouse on August 28, 1814, is displayed at the museum at Ft. McHenry in Baltimore. It was Lt. Henry Crease of the Royal Marines who ordered the rocket attack. One rocket failed to launch and nearly caught the ship afire, but was thrown overboard. Marines returned later and did most of the fire damage.*

**John D. Waller married Alice Major in 1660 (daughter of John Major and Matilda Lorimer) and had a son William Dec 26 1661.** They also had 3 daughters, Eliza (1660), Major (Marjorie) (1664) and Alice (1666).

(Alice Major had previously married Daniel Walker)

*Major Waller married Arnold Elzey, and they later deeded to Anne, Queen of England, one acre of land at Almodington on the Manokin River for an Episcopal Church. The church has long since disappeared; now lies at the bottom of the Manokin River. Arnold and Major had 8 kids:*

*Sarah, Major, Ann, Alice, Robert, John, Arnold, and Elizabeth*

**Alice Waller married Richard Crockett and had 5 little Crocketts: John, Robert, Richard, Nehemiah, and Jane**

**William married Bridget Nelson** in 1680, daughter of John Nelson and Katherine Bozeman. She was born in 1665.

By 1689, William and Mary were on the throne in England, and colonists were asked to sign a "loyalty oath". It said, "wee resolve to continue (by the grace of God) in the Profession and defence of the Protestant Religion and your Majesty's Title and interest against the French and other Papists that oppose and trouble us.." William Waller signed it.

***William and Bridget had 13 children, including Thomas Waller, born on February 20, 1696. William's other 11 children were:***

*John (1682),  
Major (1685),  
Nathaniel (1687),  
Elizabeth (1689),  
Alice (1692),  
Jane Ann (1698),  
William Jr. (1699),  
Bridget (1702),  
George (1704),  
Nelson (1707),  
Katherine Washington Waller (1698-1708).  
Washington Waller 1709*



**Thomas married Mary Threlkeld in 1715.** Their first son, Thomas J., was born a year prior, in 1714. They had 9 more:

*Priscilla: 1715,  
Richard: 1716.  
Nathaniel,: 1717,  
John: 1718,  
Sarah: 1720,  
William Lyle Waller: 1722,  
Amy: 1723,  
Ellinor: 1724, and  
Mary Elizabeth: 1726*

**Thomas J. married Jane Calloway** on February 4, 1733. Jane had 2 children with him, Joshua and Jane, in 1733 and 1735. Then Thomas married **Mary Elizabeth Dabney**, *though it isn't clear that Jane left.* They may have enjoyed a polyamorous relationship. Mary Elizabeth became the child-bearer, producing:

*[3] John (1739)  
[4]. Elizabeth (1740.)  
[5]. Mary (1742).*

**[6] Thomas (1745)**

*[7]. Priscilla (1747).  
[8] Richard (1748), who moved to Pennsylvania, then to Sumner County, Tennessee.  
[9] Joseph (1752)*

Jane Calloway later had 2 children with Nathaniel Waller, Thomas's brother:

Nathan (1750), and  
Elijah (1755).

Perhaps Waller's Adventure was getting a little crowded. **Thomas (1745), and his wife Sophia Gaithner**, had 9 children;

**Richard (1774),**

Mary (1776),  
Sophia (1777),  
Anna (1778),  
Arrie,  
Elizabeth (1779),  
Cornelius (1781),  
Eleanor (1786), and  
John (1794)

Then they moved to Kentucky.

*In their fathers will, Cornelius and John each inherited 104 acres of land. Richard was left only one dollar. We don't know what he may have done or said to earn his father's disapproval. In every generation, there seems to be at least one Waller who questioned authority-- who wanted to follow a different path.*

**Richard married Elizabeth Leet**, and had a son named Thomas Harrison Waller on June 15, 1801. They also had Catherine 1803, John 1815, and Elizabeth 1812.

*Thomas Jefferson had just been elected as the third President of the United States. In 1803, he made the Louisiana Purchase, adding 828,000 square miles to the nation's territory. As the news of this spread, some farmers began to dream of traveling places barely settled, with new fertile land to farm, and adventure to be had.*

Richard might have had such dreams, but lacked the means to pursue them. It would be up to his children to fulfill that destiny.

Sophia married William Griffith, and Elizabeth married William Poe. Her first marriage ended, and four years later she married James Fields. They had two children, Berry and Angeline. James was diagnosed with "consumption", from which he died in 1855, and Elizabeth needed help. Her brother Thomas adopted Berry, and John adopted Angeline, taking the children with them to Missouri. Angeline was born in 1835; Berry in 1837. They were quite young for the trip.

## **Off To Missouri**

**The Land Act of 1820 reduced the price of federal land in the Northwest Territory and Missouri Territory to \$1.25 acre, with a minimum purchase of 80 acres and a down payment of only \$100. It gave squatters the right to purchase the land even more cheaply if they had made improvements: building homes, fences, or mills.**

It was this Act that enabled Thomas and John to acquire land in Macon County in 1840. Their certificates were signed by President Van Buren. In those days, in addition to the calendar date, the number of years (64) since Independence in 1776 was included. Thomas obtained 9 parcels of land altogether.

Dolly Reynolds was born 1814 in Hustonville, Lincoln County, Kentucky. In 1817 her family moved to Missouri. Thomas met and married her there in March of 1840.

In 1841, John William Waller was born. He grew up and married Mary Perkins, became a farmer, and raised horses and sold them to the cavalry.

Thomas's other children were Sarah Elizabeth, Catherine James Thomas, Sophia Ann, Margaret Jane, Richard, Permelia, Harrison, George, Daniel, and Leet.

Living nearby was the Lyle family. Sarah married Jack Lyle , Catherine married Richard Lyle, , Margaret married Martin Lyle, , and Permelia married Union Missouri Lyle. If Sophia hadn't died when she was 4 days old, she probably would have married a Lyle, too, if there was another one to marry.

Thomas Jr. became a shoemaker, and eventually moved to Joplin. Richard, who was to become my great grandfather, started a school and became its teacher. Leet was a blacksmith and furniture maker as well as a farmer. He, George, and Daniel stayed on the Waller family land and farmed it together. Harrison died of pneumonia at the age of 18. George and Daniel never married.

As time went on, more of the family needed to seek other occupations besides farming. A large farm family may have the advantage of plenty of labor, but when the children grow up, marry, and have their own children, they either need to get land of their own or find another way to earn a living.

## Other Wallers

**There was another Thomas Waller, too, who acquired his name as a slave. He fought for the Union in the Civil War. He could have been related; slave women were often impregnated by their enslavers, but we don't know. He was a member of the 117th Regiment, United States Colored Infantry, and his name is listed on the African-American Civil War Memorial.**

We don't know which Waller owned him as a slave. We can be sure, though, that he wanted very much to be free.

*Veterans are often said to have fought for freedom, though in most wars that is only a myth of propaganda. The Civil War was indeed a fight for freedom, and this soldier literally did fight for his own liberty and that of his fellow slaves. War is the worst way to decide anything, and most of them are tragic and unnecessary, but **slavery was an evil that had already been tolerated for too long.** It had to be stopped, even at the cost of a bloody and divisive war.*

## Slavery and the Civil War

Of all the designated slave states, Missouri had the second fewest slaves. In 1860 they were less than 10% of the total population. The majority of them were concentrated in the counties along the Missouri River, where conditions were best for growing hemp, cotton, and tobacco. North of there, including Macon County, the land and climate was better for corn and wheat. The 1860 census counted only 660 slaves in Macon County, and 200 slave owners.

When the Civil War started, Missourians were divided in their sentiments. The original decision was to remain neutral and send no troops to either side, but there was a faction that wanted to join the South, resulting in considerable warfare within the state.

The original county seat of Macon County was Bloomington. Because that town was pro-Southern, the seat was moved to Macon, rather than the alternative plan, which was to burn Bloomington to the ground. Macon became of strategic importance to the Union. The North Missouri and Hannibal & St. Joseph railroads intersected there, and the town became the location of over 7000 Union troops.

The *Macon Gazette*, beginning in January 1862, left no doubt to the leanings of the newspaper and the editor and owner Francis Taylor, "As for politics, it is sufficient at the present time to say, that I am a Union man, and that the present gigantic efforts of the National Government for its preservation have my earnest and unaffected sympathies." The Gazette was full of articles and stories related to the war.

Macon County may have been spared much of the fighting and disruption that took place in other parts of the state.

Thomas would have been 60 in 1861, and probably would not have fought in the war.. John William, born in 1841, might have been involved, but we don't know. The other sons of Thomas would have been too young.

## Richard Waller

Richard, who was probably the smartest one of the family, grew up to become a teacher as well as a farmer. His wife was Georgiana. Originally her surname was Myers, though when she married Richard she gave her name as Georgiana Bryant. Spelling varied. She was one of 3 children that her mother, Mary Myers, had before she married John Bryant, so she could have gone by either surname.

They proceeded to procreate, having Mollie, Daniel Edward (Eddie), Richard Arthur, *Alonzo Thomas*, Dolly (who died at age 2), and John Myers.

***Thomas Jefferson's vision of America was a nation of free independent farmers working their own land. He also wanted citizens to be educated, with free public schools and state universities like the University of Virginia that he founded.***

***In the mid 1800's public schools were not yet a widespread reality. Those who established schools in their communities, like Richard Waller were pioneers of learning. Determined to share his knowledge with the next generation in the small farming town of Macon, Missouri. teachers like him did far more for the new nation than those who amassed wealth or fought in wars.***

Sadly, Georgiana died in 1890, four days after her last child, John Myers Waller, was born. She was only 30 years old, and Richard seems to have taken her death very hard. They had been together since she was 15; she had their first child, Mollie, at 16. Perhaps Richard tried for a while to raise the children by himself, as well as farming and teaching school, but things were never the same after that. He seems to have traveled some.

His son Daniel Edward, who went by Eddie, got married to Leticia Reynolds when he was

barely 18. She was 4 years older. Richard disapproved. To marry without permission, Eddie claimed that he was “abandoned”, though that was untrue.

Eddie and Lettie moved to California where he worked as a laborer. Then, in 1900, he was arrested for burglary and sentenced to San Quentin prison. Letticia then divorced him (she later married 3 more times).

Eddie spent less than 5 years in prison, returned to Missouri and married Anna Lyle, his cousin, in 1905. They moved to Kansas and had a daughter named Ruth. His father, Richard lived with them for a time, both working as shoemakers.. When Richard died in 1921 at the age of 71, he had returned to Macon. In 1920, after 15 years, Eddie and Anna were divorced. Eddie married his 3<sup>rd</sup> wife and moved to Sulphur Springs, Texas.

## **Alonzo Thomas Waller**

My grandfather, Alonzo Thomas Waller, was born January 25, 1883. He was only 7 when his mother, Georgiana, died. What his life was like for the next 10 years is hard to say. Richard Arthur, another of Richard's sons, lived with “family and friends”. He began working at the local bakery in 1901, and purchased it, in 1907. The family operated the bakery for thirty eight years. John Myers Waller also became a baker, but he died of typhoid when he was only 26.

When Alonzo was 17, in 1900, he was listed on the census living with the Emmett Halley family, listed as a servant, and working as a millhand. Sometimes in those days children that couldn't be cared for were “bonded out”, and the result could be cruel and hard, a kind of indentured servitude. However, Halley had married into the Lyle family, four of whom had married Waller girls, so there was relativity involved.

He grew up learning to work hard. He soon found a girlfriend, Sarah Susan Goodrich, the woman who would become my grandmother. He called her Susie. With a little imagination, I can see them, not as the old couple I knew as a child, but young, fun-loving, and excited about one another and their future together. Like his grandparents once had, they set off for new horizons, the city by the Mississippi, Hannibal, Missouri, 60 miles away, leaving Macon behind.

## **The Goodrich Family**

The discovery of a book, “The Goodrich Family In America”, available as a free ebook on Google, has provided lots of information on both the genealogy and historical background of this family, and is well worth reading.

William Goodrich and his brother John were born in England and settled in Connecticut. William married Sarah Marvin in 1648. Their son William, born in 1661, married Grace Riley and had Benjamin in 1688, who married Grace Kilbourne and had a son Benjamin in 1717. That Benjamin married Sarah Dewey, producing John in 1754, whose wife was Abigail Price, resulting in Levi in 1782, who married Nancy Taylor and had another Levi (*yes, that means we have Levi genes*).

***Abigail's mother was Martha Grant. She was the daughter of Noah Grant, and the sister of Noah Grant II, who was the father of Noah Grant III. His son was Jesse Root Grant. (That was 3 Noahs and a Jess.)***

*Jesse's son grew up to become President of the United States, after becoming the General who won the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant. That makes him my 3<sup>d</sup> cousin 4<sup>th</sup> removed.*

*He was born as Hiram Ulysses Grant, but when a friend of his mother wrote a recommendation for his admission to West Point, he gave his name as Ulysses Simpson Grant. Rather than explain the error, the young Grant decided he liked the new name better.*

*Despite being a West Point graduate, Cousin Ulysses did not care for war or military life. He served in the war with Mexico, which he felt was an unnecessary conflict. Before the Civil War, he had left the army. Convinced that the Union must be saved, he rejoined, and fought ferociously and well. When he became President, he tried to avoid war. He used policies he hoped would reduce the need for force against Native Americans. Then, as now, one can't take success for granted, but he did his best.*

Levi Goodrich Jr., a farmer born in 1812, and his wife Elizabeth Byers raised several children in Jackson County, Ohio. One of them was Azariah Zebulon Goodrich.

Azariah married Mary Jane Currier in Ohio in 1856. They had 6 children before she died. He moved to Macon County, Missouri, in 1875 and married Sarah Rogers. She died less than a year later.

*Becoming a mother, even once, could be a dangerous undertaking, especially in the days before modern medical care, yet women were expected to repeat it time after time, creating huge families, or die trying. It seems today to have been a primitive custom. Men planted seeds in their wives just as they did in their land, and took pride in bountiful crops from both. There seems to have been no thought of restraining the human crop, out of consideration for the woman's well-being. There are many ways to interpret the drive to procreate at all costs, but it clearly led to some tragically short lives. It is not known whether Levi was related to Benjamin Franklin Goodrich, who founded the rubber company.*

Azariah married Catherine Lister three years later and proceeded to father 6 more children, 3 of whom survived. One of them was my grandmother, Sarah Susan Goodrich, born Oct. 28, 1885.

## Hannibal

Alonzo and Sarah first appear in the Hannibal directory in 1907, after getting married in January that year in Macon. He got a job with the Burlington Railroad. A year later, my father, Nolan Alonzo Waller, was born.

My grandfather worked on the railroad for 3 or 4 years, then the cement factory for a year or two.

On the 1910 census, he said he was an insurance agent. That may have been a sideline that he continued until he eventually combined it with real estate 8 years later.

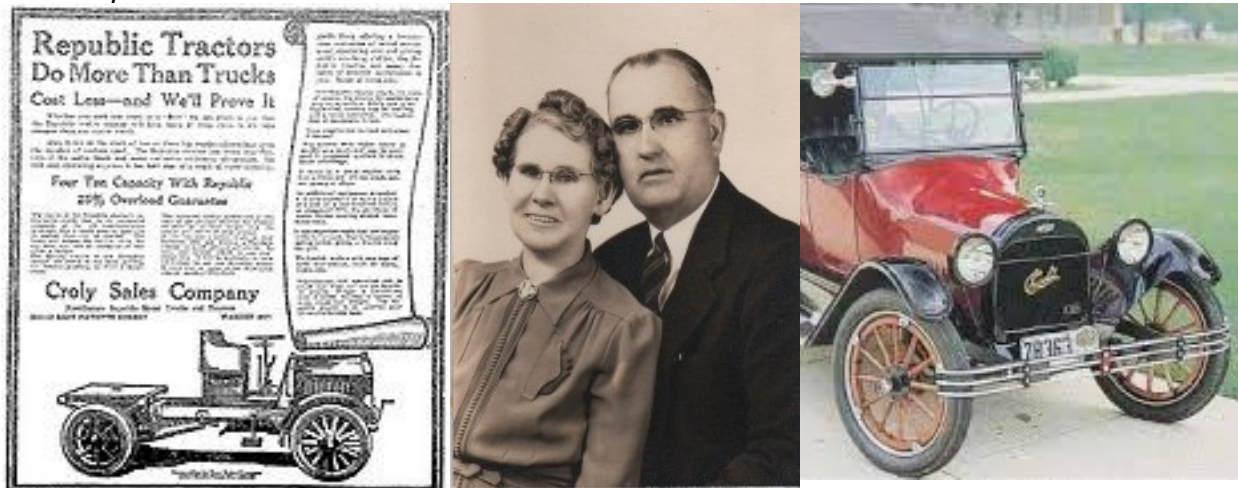
In 1911, they had a daughter, Wilma.

Lon, or L.T., as he now preferred to be called, didn't mind hard work, but naturally he hoped for something better. Saving what he could of his hard-earned wages, he and Sarah moved to Lindell Ave. in 1912 and started a small grocery, operating out of their home. They seem to have done all right with that, since they were still doing it 4 years later. He had to register for the WW 1 draft in 1917, but wasn't drafted.

By 1918, however, he had become the manager of the Hannibal branch of the Clough-

Riehm Motor Company at 114 North 3rd and lived at 1702 1/2 Market.

Mr. Clough had built a dealership at 1738 Broadway, Quincy, in 1912 "a spacious business structure of reinforced concrete, 50 by 100 feet in dimensions, two stories in height." In 1914 Charles L. Riehm became a partner. They specialized in Chevrolet cars and Republic "Tracks"



Sarah and L.T. Waller

One might think the car and "track" business would be a golden opportunity in 1918. It was the year that GM bought Chevrolet. Perhaps the company didn't pay well enough. By 1920, L.T. had left Clough & Riehm and listed his occupation as "traveling salesman" in the city directory, residing at living at 2002 Chestnut. The 1920 census said he was a grocer, living at 905 Liindell Ave., Clough & Riehm later moved its Hannibal location to 327 Broadway by 1922.

In 1922, L.T. opened a grocery store at 2228 Market Street, separate from his residence at 1706 Broadway. The following year he became partners with Ova Lawson, forming Lawson & Waller's Feed, Fuel, Hay, and Grain, located at "the foot of Broadway". The store's phone number was "5". The business had previously belonged to Ida Lawson, selling coal and feed.

In 1925, L.T. Gave horseless carriages another try, this time as his own business.

**L. T. WALLER GARAGE  
AUTOMOBILE REBUILDING  
MACHINE WORK A SPECIALTY  
ACCESSORIES-TIRES-SUPPLIES  
GASOLINE-OILS  
STORAGE**

**3607 MARKET ST (Oakwood) PHONE 1113**

It had formerly been the Gould and Hardwick Garage.

It was clear that self-propelled vehicles were the wave of the future, and that they would need frequent repair and service. Cars were selling by the thousands, and businesses were springing up nationwide to make money off them. The First Motel (Motorists Hotel) opened in San Luis Obispo, California, in 1925. My father was 17; his sister was 14. The family had moved to 911a Church St.

Aside from the potential for profit, my grandfather did not have a personal interest in automotive repair and service. Getting greasy and turning wrenches didn't appeal to him.

In 1926, his occupation changed to "real estate agent". He opened an office at 108-A North 3rd Street, offering Real Estate, Insurance, and Loans. By 1929 L.T. had moved the business to the Holmes Building at 102 North 6th Street, Rooms 13 and 14, then to 306-A

Broadway in 1935.

The 1930 census showed the family living at 300 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St, a house they rented. Wilma, 19, lived with them. Nolan was living and working in Chicago.

In 1940, the census listed L.T. at 520 Center St, owning the home valued at \$6000. Wilma had left, but Nolan, 32, was back home.

In 1942, L.T., at 59 years old, had to register for the draft. So did Nolan, of course, at 32, but he joined the Navy.

In 1950, the address was still 520 Center, and Nolan, back home from Florida with his son, Michael, was living there too. The phone number was 613.

In 1952 my grandfather applied for Social Security at 69 years old.

### Homes in Hannibal

In the 30 years from 1907 to 1937 L.T. Waller and his family moved frequently. Whenever they could find a better or more convenient place, L.T. took the opportunity. It would seem that buying and selling houses may have been profitable, and eventually that became his full-time business. Some of the houses are no longer there, and one of the streets, Lindell Avenue, where he lived from 1913 to 1916, has been mostly replaced by Warren Barrett Blvd. The houses at 2002 Chestnut (1920) and 1706 Broadway (1922-23) are empty lots now.

Their last home, 2618 Bird Street, is now a part of the Mark Twain School playground.

<b>1907</b> -- 824 Union St.	<b>1910</b> --1065 Fulton Ave.
<b>1912</b> -- 1113 Fulton Ave.	<b>1913</b> --1024 Lindell
<b>1916</b> --905 Lindell	<b>1917</b> --129 Magnolia
<b>1918</b> --1702 ½ Market	<b>1920</b> -- 2002 Chestnut
<b>1925</b> -- 911 Church Street	<b>1926</b> --3301 St. Charles
<b>1927</b> --111 North Maple	<b>1929</b> --2501 Broadway
<b>1930</b> -- 300 N. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	<b>1931</b> --1900 Broadway
<b>1937</b> --3508 West Ely Rd.	<b>1940</b> -- 520 Center St.
<b>1952</b>	2816 Bird St.



**1907: 824 Union St. The first known address in Hannibal**





**1909-1912: 1113 Fulton Ave.**



**1912-13 1024 Lindell (empty lot- the church is 1018)**



**1916: 905 Lindell**

**1918: 1702 ½ Market (No picture)**



**Clough-Reihm Motors' 1918 location 114 N 3rd Street**



**1925: 911 Church Street**



**1926: 3301 St. Charles**



**1927: 111 North Maple**



**1929: 2501 Broadway**



**1931: 1900 Broadway**



**1937: 3508 West Ely Road**



**520 Center St. (now a parking lot) 1940-1952**

## **Nolan Alonzo Waller**

Nolan graduated high school in 1926, and in the fall, started college at William Jewell in Liberty, Missouri. It was, and still is, a respected 4-year college, but it was owned and run by the Southern Baptists. Perhaps he had expected a freer educational experience than it was prepared to provide. He might have run afoul of some rule dictated by its administration's religious dogma.

On the application for admission to William Jewell, he was required to “*Agree to observe the regulations of the college, and, in particular, not to drink intoxicating liquors or to engage in any form of gambling or to loaf about the streets, stores or hotels.*”

Or maybe he was just restless for something other than studying. After the first year, he didn't go back.



He went to work in Chicago. So did three of his friends, Roger, Robert, and Whaley. They shared an apartment at 5809 West Lake Street, and got jobs with an electric appliance company as clerks. The rent was \$115 a month, \$28.75 for each of them. Chances are they were hired before the crash in 1929, when employment got much harder to find. As it was, their pay was probably about \$1000 a year: \$83 a month. After rent, that left them over \$50 a month for food, clothes, and entertainment.

As the economic depression worsened, though, and demand for products dropped, companies had to lay people off. Perhaps that ended the young men's carefree lives in the big city, or they may have decided it was time to return home and try something else. Layoff or not, chances of advancement were probably slim.

Roger Hibbard went back to school, married a doctor's daughter, and eventually became Hannibal's city attorney. Robert Lake sold tires, and Whaley Larrison later joined the Army. Nolan worked at a Standard Oil station in 1935, and by 1937 he owned the Waller Service Station at 921 Broadway in Hannibal.

And, he met Hazel. I imagine that she drove into his station and said "Fill me up and check my oil, please." They soon moved in together and were married on September 12, 1936. Originally from a small town in Illinois, Hazel had attended the State Teacher's College in Kirksville, then moved to Hannibal. She worked at Suzanne's dress shop.

There were problems, though. Hazel's brother owned Scoville's Tavern, and Nolan's Southern Baptist parents disapproved of drinking. On top of that the Scovilles were Catholic, and their tavern was known as a "Catholic" bar. As odd as it seems today, there was a strong sectarian divide in those days between Protestants and Catholics. They weren't bombing each other's houses, but they didn't associate socially, either.



So, Nolan's parents didn't approve of Hazel or of Nolan's marriage to her. Perhaps Hazel's relatives disapproved of Nolan, too, or at least resented the attitude of Nolan's parents toward her. Even today it can be difficult to have a relationship when families are not supportive. In the 1930's, the concept of tolerance was much less developed. There may have been other reasons as well, but on December 1, 1939 they were divorced. Hazel and three sisters eventually retired to Sun City, Arizona.



**Wilma Waller**

Nolan's sister, Wilma, graduated high school in 1929. Soon she began working in L.T.'s office as a bookkeeper, and moved out of her parents' house to 216 Division Street, where

L.T.'s former partner in the feed and grain business, Ova Lawson, lived.

With the experience she gained in her father's office, Wilma got a bookkeeping job with the Singer Sewing Machine Company by 1935. By then, Nolan was back in town, and the whole family moved to a house on West Ely Road.

Around 1938, she met Herman G. Kreitner and married him. They moved to Springfield, Illinois, where she got a job as a file clerk for a motor company. He worked for the Illinois Secretary of State's office as a supply clerk.

We can only hope their marital happiness was blissful and intense while it lasted, because tragically, she died in 1939, only 28 years old.

## **World War Two**

In September, 1939 Germany invaded Poland. Though the US did not immediately become involved in the mostly European war, Roosevelt knew we would need to eventually, and American manufacturers began producing weapons and equipment on a large scale to supply the Allies effort. The American people were not inclined to favor another war, having been propagandized into entering World War One to protect US bankers' investments, and understandably wary of another one.

Weapons production was beginning to fully restore the economy that had been so severely damaged by the twin impacts of capitalistic collapse and the huge and long-lasting drought in the midwest and western states. Most people would have preferred to enjoy the growing prosperity and remain at peace.

Still, Hitler needed to be stopped, and it was looking like the US would need to help do that. FDR began to manipulate and incite the Japanese, who were aggressively building their Asian empire, to attack us, since it was unlikely the Germans would do it soon enough. War with Japan meant war with Germany. Sure enough, the expected attack came on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

Nolan didn't want to be drafted into the Army, so he enlisted in the Navy in 1942. He served on PT Boats. He called them "submarine chasers".



Nolan and L.T. Waller



Sarah and Nolan Waller

## **OWENS FAMILY**

James Owens and 3 sons (Michael, Patrick, and James Jr.) were born in Ireland and caught a ship to New York.

Michael Owens married Mary Boyle, moved to Wisconsin and raised 6 children. The oldest,, Thomas Owens married Ellen G. Clark, and their son, Frank J. Owens, who married Mynette Mallaney, became my maternal grandfather.

Mynette Faleste Malaney was the daughter of James F. Malaney, born 7/20/1858, son of John Malaney and Margaretha Mattimore. He was a steam heating plumber

Her mother was Theresa Schmidt, born in 1860 in Madison, daughter of George Schmidt and Frances Konle, who came from Württemberg Germany.

Theresa was 25 when she had her first child, Mynette, in 1885 She had two more children, Sarah in 1889 and John in 1894. Her husband, James, died in 1903, when she was 43, Mynette was just 17.

Four years later Mynette married Frank Owens. In 1910, Frank and Mynette were living with his parents, and had just had their first child, Joseph, who later became a podiatrist.

My mother, Virginia T. Owens, was born on Valentine's Day, 1913 in Madison, Wisconsin. James Owens was born about 1916 according to the 1930 census. He worked as a bartender.



In 1918 Frank was registered for the draft. He was 32, 5 feet 9 inches tall, and working as a tailor at 312 State Street in Madison.

The 1930 census found the family in Chicago. Frank was 44, Mynette 43, and Joseph was 20, and James was 14.

Virginia was 17, and attending Hyde Park High School in 1930, as shown by her yearbook, called the Aitchpe ("HP"). She was a member of several clubs, and had planned to enter the University of Illinois. Whether she did, we don't know. Hyde Park had over 4000 students.

In 1942 Frank Owens again had to register for the draft, at 56 years old. He was working for Bell Telephone, at 131 North Franklin.

In 1937, Virginia had a son, Keith, with Herman Dehmer. They lived together, along with her parents and James, in Chicago, at 6417 Kenwood Avenue but Virginia was not yet ready to marry him. Herman worked as a construction helper for the power company. By 1940, she decided to leave. Mynette, Virginia, and her son Keith began traveling.

In May 1940 when the census was taken, the three of them were counted in Chicago, along with Frank, Herman, and James, but Virginia wasn't really there. She had met Arthur Robert Bretschneider in Sarasota, Florida, and on March 30, 1940, she married him. He was a sign painter, born in Ohio, living with his parents, Sidney and Edna, and his younger sister Ellen. He was 21, although he gave his age on the marriage license as 24. She was 27. Virginia soon became pregnant with a daughter, Sheila who was born around 1941.

It was not a relationship destined to last. Perhaps it was the age difference, or that he was not ready to be a father to two children. In 1941, She divorced Arthur and married Herman Dehmer, a marriage which lasted about 3 years.

In 1944 she divorced Herman and married my father, Nolan Waller, on March 29. A county judge performed the ceremony.

## **Nolan and Virginia**

The Second World War was drawing to a close, and Nolan was stationed around Miami, Florida, soon to be discharged from the Navy. They probably met in Miami, where Virginia got her divorce from Herman. Nolan was discharged in October of 1945. A young man just out of the service; a beautiful dark-haired woman; a semi-tropical paradise with balmy breezes and ocean beaches; a world again at peace. It should have been the beginning of a long romance.

It is likely that I was conceived on New Year's Eve, a seed sown in celebration and joy. The months to come must have been happy, full of love and hope and future plans. By May they had moved to St Petersburg, and she had seen a doctor. It is not clear whether complications could have been anticipated.

On September 8, 1946, I was born. Four hours later, my mother died, at 33 years old.



Her body was sent to Chicago, where a funeral was held at St. Cyril's Church. She was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery. Her grave had no marker. Many years later, when I discovered that, I bought her a gravestone.

The more I learn about my mother's life, the more fascinating a person she seems to have been. For most of my life I've known only that she was a beautiful woman that my father loved, who died the day I was born, and that she had two children by different fathers before me. The story I have discovered is one of a free-spirited woman, living in an era when traditions and society's expectations pressured one to conform far more than they do today.

Conflict was inevitable, but I see in her a joyful exuberance and a determination to seek the love and the life she wanted, not settling for what others wanted for her. I would like to think she found that at last when she met my father. I have never forgotten, in all my years, that she once lived, and that she died far too young. Can I miss a mother who I never met? Absolutely.

Yes, it makes me sad to think that I could never get to know her, and she could never get to know me, and that my father lost the woman he loved.

If I could, I would want to know the sound of her voice; to hear her laugh, to call my name. I wish my father could have, when I was old enough to understand and remember, told me stories of her, how they met, what she was like; words she had said. But as it is, fairly recently I have gained a little more insight, bits of knowledge on which I can speculate. On that day of birth and death, I would like to think that every second, and every bit of knowledge they had was being used to try to save her. Even today, though more is known, sometimes it isn't enough.

## Back in Hannibal

My father and I moved to Hannibal. I wasn't consulted about the decision, and anyway I was too young to speak, but for him, Hannibal was home, and my grandparents could help take care of me. My memories of the early days are a little hazy. *Learning to crawl. Sunbeams through high windows making bright spots on dark hardwood floors. Screen doors.*

Nolan joined his father in his real estate and insurance business. Soon my grandfather had renamed it "L.T. Waller and Son".

I knew nothing of time, but years were passing. Changes were coming. The first hint of that was when my father would come home from work and say, "Let's go to Sue's place." Before long, he married her.

Then, on weekends, we would take trips outside of town and walk through fields of Jimson weeds taller than I was. My father bought the place, 27 acres and a long-vacant old house. He and Sue worked hard to make it livable. It had gas lighting, no plumbing, a cistern for water, and desperately needed a new roof and paint. They did it all- wired it for electricity, installed a gas furnace and stove, fed by a big LP gas tank in the yard, drilled a deep well for water drawn by an electric pump, installed an indoor toilet and plumbing, a septic tank, a new roof, and much more. By the time they were done, it was as modern and pleasant as a house in town.



**This is the old Black Walnut Tree under which I grew up,  
as I played in its shade. It still stands.  
It remembers my youth, and I remember its age.**



On November 4, 1952, Nolan was elected to the position of Administrator of Marion County, MO, a post that L.T. Waller had held before him. The Administrator handles the affairs of those who have been judged unable to care for themselves. His tenure in office lasted only 24 days. My father died on November 28.

## **The Strodes and Glascocks**

The Strode family had been in England for many generations. The first family to come to Virginia in 1697 was that of Edward Strode II, having fled due to religious persecution of Heugonots. Edward himself died enroute on the ship.

By 1821, Jeremiah Surplus Strode had moved from Virginia to Ralls County, Missouri, having a son Edward who became a doctor. Edward was the grandfather of Charles Edward Strode.

The Glascocks have quite a family history. They were early immigrants, arriving in Virginia, becoming tobacco planters. An ancestral mansion, Indian Banks, built in 1699 by Thomas Glascock, still stands. Thomas and his wife Jane arrived in Virginia in 1643 and acquired the land in 1652.

On November 5, 1723, Thomas Glascock's grandson, also named Thomas, fatally stabbed Dr. William Forrester, who had arrived at the home for a house call. The motive was never determined, and Thomas was never caught because he fled for parts unknown. His son, Gregory, helped him depart, but returned later.

Peter, Gregory's youngest brother, was the ancestor of Alberta. Peter had 9 children with Jane Fishback, who he married in 1735, and 7 more with Mary Rector after 1760, a total of 16. One of the first 9 was Gregory M. Glascock, born 1739, who married Jemima Dulin.

They were the parents of Dr. Daniel Glascock in 1775, who married Ulry Drake, producing James Daniel Glascock in 1804. James Daniel married Mary Ann ("Polly") Hayes. *(Mary Ann's mother was Mary Ann Glascock, who was Dr. Daniel Glascock's sister)*

They had Jacob M. Glascock in 1838, then moved from Virginia to Ralls County, Missouri. Jacob married Susan Hickman, and bore Alberta in 1877.

*( Alberta's mother, Susan, was also descended from Peter Glascock through his son John.)*

*Dr. Daniel Glascock also had a son Thomas W., born in 1800, who was the owner of "Glascock's Ben", the slave who was convicted of a rape and double murder of Susanah and Thomas Bright in Hannibal in 1849. Samuel Clemens was 14 at the time, setting type at the local newspaper. Hearing of the crime affected him greatly, and he never forgot it.*

Charles Strode was born in Ralls County, Missouri on April 4, 1878 to James D. Strode and Anna Dodd. He married Alberta Glascock in 1900, and they moved to Hannibal in 1904. They had a daughter who lived only 4 days, and another who died at age 3, before having Susan Leona in 1912.

Susan Leona Strode was the daughter of Charles E. Strode and Alberta Glascock. They also had two sons, Charles Jr., born in 1913, and Lloyd, born in 1919.

\* \* \*

Charles Strode went into the coal and wood business. Charles and Alberta

had a daughter, Anna Madeline in October of 1900, but she died 4 days later. In 1903, they had another daughter, Helen Frances, who lived only 3 years. Susan Leona Strode was born in 1912,

In 1914, he joined Louis Wilhelm's grocery business, making it Wilhelm & Strode, at 1300 Broadway.

By 1916, however, he had started his own grocery with Ollie C. Glascock, a brother to Alberta. They called it Strode and Glascock, at 1300 Market St.

Charles' next business venture came in 1918, when he rejoined Wilhelm, but this time in automobiles. It was the Wilhelm-Strode Motor Co., at 806-810 Broadway, and he was its vice-president. The Secretary was F.V. Hedges. When he registered for the draft in 1918, he was living at 2202 Broadway, next door to the Wilhelms.

#### CHARLES E. STRODE.

Mr. Strode was born in Ralls County, Missouri, April 24, 1878. He is a son of J. D. Strode, a contractor of Ralls County. Our subject began attending school in Ralls County and finished his education in Hannibal in 1897. Upon leaving school he became engaged at farming until April 1, 1904, when he removed to Hannibal. Since removing to this city Mr. Strode has retained his farm and still supervises its management, in connection with his business interests here.

Mr. Strode's mother died when he was quite young. whereupon the late J. W. Dood, of Ralls County, took upon himself his care and education.

On July 1, 1904, Mr. Strode established his present business in this city and by continual hard work and persevering effort, has built up what is to-day one of the most important and extensive businesses of its character in this section. Throughout his residence and business experience in Hannibal he has impressed all with whom he has come in contact with his strictly honorable principles and conservative methods of business. At all times courteous in his treatment of patrons and associates and possessed of a pleasing personality, Mr. Strode has made hosts

January 17, 1900, he was married to Miss Alberta Glascock, daughter of J. M. Glascock, a retired farmer, now residing at No. 507 North Seventh Street. Their union has been blest by the birth of one child, a daughter, named Helen Francis, at this writing two years and one month old.

Mr. Strode is an earnest follower of the Christian Church, having united with that organization at Ocean Wave March, 1891. In politics our subject has always been a Democrat and aided to the best of his ability, at all times taking an active part in the development and progress of his adopted city.



Charles E. Strode

He continued in that enterprise until 1923, when Charles and Hedges started their own company, selling tires at 115 Broadway. Charles Strode also entered politics that year, getting elected as a city Alderman from the 6th ward. He held that office through 1925. In 1926 he was appointed Hannibal's City Clerk, the position he occupied until June 4, 1929, when he suddenly died on the job. The front page of the Jefferson City Post-Tribune reported:

**HANNIBAL CLERK DROPPED DEAD**  
**C.E. Strode Had Just Been Elected For New Term.**

*Ten minutes after he had been reappointed City Clerk of Hannibal in the city council chamber last night Charles E. Strode, 51, dropped dead. He had been city clerk for two and one half years.*

*Physicians said that Strode's death was due to a cerebral hemorrhage. He had been ill Sunday but was in his office all day yesterday preparing for the council meeting last night at which Mayor J.B. Robinson and the new city council were inaugurated.*

*Strode had resided in and near Hannibal all his life. His widow, 3 children and two sisters, Mrs. John S. Wood, St. Louis, and Mrs. Morris Anderson, wife of a former Hannibal mayor, survive.*



**2202 Broadway Next door was 2200, the Wilhelm residence**

Susan Strode, born March 30, 1912, was only 17 when her father died. As the oldest of the 3 children, it was her task to help support the family. She soon became a physician's assistant, working for Dr. W.F. Francka for 22 years. She remained dedicated to taking care of her mother, until April 15, 1948, when Alberta Strode died.

Her brother Charles Jr. ran a coal business. He married Hester Webb and had two daughters. They also had one son, Charles III, who did not survive. Lloyd sold tires, and married Frances Hopkins. Both their sons became doctors of osteopathy.

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In 1951, Susan married my father, Nolan Waller. On November 4, 1952, Nolan was elected to the position of Administrator of Marion County, MO, a post that L.T. Waller had held before him. The Administrator handles the affairs of those who have been judged unable to care for themselves. His tenure in office lasted only 24 days. My father died on November 28. He was 44.

Before his death, Nolan fathered a daughter, Patricia Sue. She was born in March, 1953. Patricia married Gary Crow. They divorced, and she married Robert Ungerer. They had a daughter, Ruth, who did not survive infancy, and a son, Robert Cole Ungerer, who graduated from the University of South Florida, and is now an accountant.

## **Michael Owens Waller**

**Though I am both narrator and a character in this multi-century story, my role is not its climax. I am just another brick in the Wallers; another knot in the vast web to which we all connect.**

At the tender age of 21, in 1967, I got married to a woman I met while working at McDonald's when she ordered a hamburger. It was an over-the-counter encounter; a hamburger meet. Her name was *Dorothy Kay Snow*. We moved to the Promised Land: the Golden State. *On January 26, 1975, my son, Geoffrey Rock Waller, was born.*

This is by no means the end of the story. It has no end, and the beginning is so far back in



prehistory that it will never be known. A surname traced backward is only part of the story. Every generation back, the number of direct ancestors doubles. A family tree is the reverse of a real tree. It does not start at the trunk, growing branches, but starts with many branches to grow a trunk

**Our ancestry does not separate us from the rest of the world, but shows us how we are connected to all of humankind.**

**--By *Michael Owens Waller*, 2013, updated February 2023**

***A more complete story of my life can be read in the Cosmicrat Chronicles,  
The full description of all my known ancestors is available in Ancestry of the Waller Family.  
You might also enjoy On My Mother's Grave***