George Keen

of

Johnston County, N.C.

His Ancestors and Descendants

By James E. Keen

NC Ref
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K26

George Keen

of Johnston County, North Carolina

His Ancestors and Descendents

Compiled, Edited
and Published

By

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DEDICATED TO:

Esther Keen Brewer

&

Chester Edward Keen

twin children of (6)George Daniel Keen
Celebrating their 80th birthday
29-Jul-1992

Twins Chester and Esther Keen

Photo from Esther Brewer

The George Keen Line

(1)George Keen b.? in Virginia? d.? in Bertie Co.
md Unknown b.? in Virginia? d.? in Bertie Co.

(2)George Keen b.? in Bertie County? d.ca.Oct-Nov,1797 in Johnston Co
md 1st Unknown b.? in Bertie Co?, d.ca.1791/93 in Johnston Co.
md 2nd (28-Jan-1793) Catherine Goodrach b.? in Johnston Co?, d.? in Bertie Co?.

(3)George Keen b.12-May-1786 in Johnston Co, d.3-Aug-1847 in Johnston Co.
md Betsey "Polly" Unknown b.8-Jun-1796 in Johnston Co?, d. ? in Johnston Co.

(4)George William Keen b.10-Mar-1820 in Johnston Co, d.8-Jun-1891 in Johnston Co.
md (6-Feb-1850) Sarah "Sally" Lassiter b.21-Dec-1823 in Johnston Co, d.22-May-1882 in Johnston County

(5)George William Keen b.11-Jun-1855 in Johnston Co, d.23-Feb-1920 in Johnston Co.
md 1st (23-Jan-1880) Virginia Idelia Lassiter b.3-Feb-1863 in Johnston Co, d.31-Aug-1901 in Johnston County.
md 2nd (7-May-1904) Maggie Lee b.12-Aug-1862 in Sampson Co, d.22-Feb-1932 in Johnston County.

(6)George Daniel Keen b.28-Aug-1884 in Johnston Co, d.31-Jan-1955 in Johnston Co.
md (14-Feb-1907) Ida Jane Creech b.10-Oct-1887 in Johnston Co, d.23-Oct-1962 in Johnston Co.

(7)George William Keene b.9-Mar-1925 in Johnston Co.
md (21-Dec-1957) Shelba Jean Creech b.17-Aug-1936 in Johnston Co.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tracing the heritage of the Keen family is a time-consuming pastime for several Johnston County, North Carolina people. As only a compiler and editor of information tirelessly gleaned from the public records by the people listed below, I am greatly in their debt. If I have failed to give credit where due, I apologize in advance.

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I have made use of materials obtained from a very extensive series of articles based on the Keen family, written by James Bryan Creech, for the "Four Oaks History" series published, February to December, 1982 in **The Four Oaks News.** Credit has been given where direct quotes were made, however much biographical information from these articles has been paraphrased.

Special Thanks to my wife, **Jacqueline Baker Keen**, for the many nights and days she watched and helped while I worked on my genealogical pastime. Her patience is enormous.

Your Name

You got it from your father,
It was all he had to give;
So its yours to use and cherish,
For as long as you may live.
If you lose the watch he gave you,
It can always be replaced;
But a black mark on your name, Son,
Can never be erased.
It was clean the day you took it,
And a worthy name to bear,
When he got it from a father,
There was no dishonor there,
So make sure you guard it wisely,
After all is said and done.
You'll be glad the name is spotless,
When you give it to your son.

Unknown.

Introduction

This book is **NOT** about a person named George Keen, but about the **seven identified successive George Keens**. Their ancestors, descendants, origins, and experiences make an important and interesting story that I have tried to relate.

Tradition and research indicates that the Johnston County Keen family has origins in England and southeastern Virginia; however the true identity of the origins of the first George Keen in Johnston County is unclear. Family researchers believe that a George Keen in Bertie County is the father to the first George Keen in Johnston County. Using this Bertie County George Keen as the first, then the George Keen that appears in Johnston County would be the second of seven people named George Keen in successive generations.

This interesting occurrence of seven George Keens in an unbroken line has become the theme of this book. We know that this line ended in the current generation in what I call (7)George William Keene; but were there other George Keens in our early history? The person that I refer to as (1)George Keen may well not have been the 1st. There well might be several others in an unbroken line.

I have chosen to identify the George Keens with a number in parenthesis at the beginning of the name. Thus (1)George Keen was the 1st, (2)George Keen the next in succession, etc. This is simply a device to help in the identification of specific individuals. This scheme is used in this book and other publications that I have authored. I hope that this scheme is satisfactory to all readers.

KEEN, KEENE, KEAN and KEANE are four spellings encountered in public records. Officials often spelled names as they heard them and not as they should have been. In identifying members of the family, the spelling of the name most normally recognized is used, with the original spelling in public documents or nicknames used shown in quotes.

Another example of the way family names change is in an interesting story about my immediate family. As children, members of the (6)George Daniel Keen family collectively decided that KEEN was an adjective meaning sharp. KEENE should be the correct spelling of the family name, they reasoned. They began using this new spelling in their daily affairs. The two girls, Esther and Thelma, married and ended their daily usage of the Keene name by adopting their husband's name. Chester became tired of having to use one spelling on personal records and another spelling for official records. He simply abandoned the modified spelling and returned to using "Keen." The youngest child, (7)George William Keene, however, entered the U.S. Air Force and used his new spelling on official records. He therefore became officially known as "Keene," rather than the traditional "Keen" and continues to use that spelling today.

I am blessed in being able to use a computer database for compiling information during my research of the Keen family. My database now contains more than 3,800 names and data about people related to the Keen family. Over 1,250 of these are direct descendants or spouses of the original (1)George Keen and are included in this publication.

Information included in my database and this book was compiled from any source that I found or were offered to me; often without any extraordinary attempt at verification. However, many individuals familiar with the Keen family history have seen these records and have offered corrections and additions. Therefore, I feel confident in the information included. I am sure that there are corrections to be made that have not been discovered. If I were to delay publication until I was assured that the record was complete and accurate, I could never make this information available to you.

Negative information about a family survives longest because of the tendency of governments to keep such records. Death notices survive because of their being published in the newspaper and researchers find it easy to access this information by the date of death. Good information, while it may exist in the newspaper, is hard to find unless the researcher finds a date elsewhere that will allow access to the newspaper. I have certainly not published all the negative information about our family; however, I have published some well documented historical negative information where it enhances the proper relating of that story. My aim is not to offend anyone but to tell the complete story. I have tried to publish positive information where I am aware of its existence.

A family history is NEVER complete. New information is constantly being discovered; new additions are constantly being made through births, deaths, and marriages. I invite you to submit corrections or additions that you have. A future revision of this work is anticipated.

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Chapter 1
The Search for George Keen

Johnston County, North Carolina was carved from Craven County on 28-Jun-1746 after earlier divisions into Carteret and New Hanover counties. George Kean first appears in official Johnston County records almost 40 years later when he purchased 200 acres of land on the North side of Mill Creek from William Ballenger on February 24, 1784. He appears again on October 20, 1786 purchasing 300 acres on the North side of Mill Creek from Mary Ballenger. In 1774 and 1799, he bought a few hundred more acres to add to his holdings. Deed records in 1789 and 1795 in adjacent land transfers on Middle Juniper Creek again show a George Keen or Kean. In the 10-Feb-1982 issue of **The Four Oaks News**, James Bryan Creech explains in his series "Four Oaks History", that (2)George Keen (and possibly a son) purchased 1500 or more acres of land "described generally as lying north of Hannah's Creek, then called Mill Creek, and along and between Little Juniper and Big Juniper." The article further explains that:

> "the Keen holdings extended from Four Oaks on both sides of the Keen road to Keen's Crossroads and southeast past Buelah Hill Church to the Dicey Dunn Cemetery. That cemetery was originally a Keen burying ground; Gideon Keen (1823-1896) is buried there. To the south the Keen land was bounded by the Stanley plantation (Gideon got his wife, Sally Stanley, from that farm); to the north the Keen land was bounded by the Adams plantation. The Adams also married into the Keen family. (Creech, 1982)"

These first appearances of George Keen fail to tell the full story. Where did he come from? When was he born? Who were his wife and family members?

LOOKING FOR OTHER GEORGE KEENS

In a **Smithfield Herald** report (3 Jan 1956) of the death of John William Keen (1859-1956), he is credited with saying that "his grandfather, George Keen, came over from England and settled in Johnston County with a grant of 1,000 acres. The same land I was born and raised on." The riddle of the identification of the first George Keen begins here. John William Keen's father was Gideon Keen (1823-1885); his grandfather was George Keen, Sr. (1786-1847). Since the early land transfers were to George Keen in 1784 and 1786, they must have been made to an earlier George Keen; certainly not to the grandfather of John William Keen. Records documenting a land grant to a George Keen have not been found to date. Family researchers offer the explanation that the (2)George Keen (?-1797) referred to in the original land purchases in Johnston County was the father of the (3)George Keen (1786-1847) referred to by John William Keen.

Considerable time has been spent tracing the origin of this (2)George Keen and indirect evidence indicates is that he came from Bertie County, near Windsor, NC. **North Carolina Taxpayers 1679-1790** (Ratcliff) shows only one George Keen in Bertie County in 1774. This is possibly the (2)George Keen that is believed to have came to Johnston Co around 1784. His father might have received a land grant in Bertie County; not Johnston County as reported by John William Keen. (2)George Keen left Bertie County, probably after the death of his father and the division of the estate among his children. This would have caused the transfer of land to the children without official records being created. Others suggest that (2)George may have left Bertie county because of his close ties to the English government, an unpopular stance after the

recent revolution and creation of the new Union. He possibly received cash or other property from the estate of his father, the land going to other children or relatives. Accompanied by his wife, and (possibly) his mother, and children, (2)George Keen then migrated to Johnston County around 1784 where he settled and began to purchase land. The 1790 US Census shows the Alice Keen household, possibly (2)George Keen's mother or the widow of his brother, with 2 males under 16 and 3 white females; possibly young children of the original (1)George Keen in Bertie County. This same census shows (2)George Keen with 1 white male under 16, 6 white males over 16, and 1 white female (his wife?).

(2)George Keen's 1st wife (unidentified) died after the 1790 Census and he married his second wife Catern Goodrach (Catherine Goodrich) on 28-Jan-1793. Further support of this argument is that several female Keen children are later named Catherine (Katherine), probably in honor of this 2nd wife of (2)George Keen who raised his children after his death between October and December, 1797. Catherine Keen later married W.M. McGloghorn in Bertie County (which strengthens the argument of a Bertie County link) and returned there to live with relatives.

This argument appears to make a great deal of sense. One problem does exist. If our (2)George Keen came to Johnston County in about 1784 and is indeed the George Kean listed on the 1789 State Census, then who is the George Keen listed on the Johnston County 1790 Census, along with a George Kean. Is this simply a double listing of the same person or were there indeed two George Keens living at this time?

Tracing this second George Keen, we find that he married on 1-Mar-1814 Melbrey (Betsey) Godwin and left the county to resettle in Anson County, N.C.

The other Keens listed on the 1790 Johnston County Census are Alice Keen, whom researchers assume is (2) George Keen's mother (or possibly wife of a deceased brother), and John Keen, whom we assume is a relative, possibly his brother. Later on, there appears a Sasser Keen and an Issac Keen, both living in the northern part of the county. If they are relatives, why didn't they choose to live in Ingrams Township like (2)George? The only connection between these people and our (2)George Keen appears when a George Keen witnessed the will of Sasser Keen on 1-May-1817 as listed in **Johnston County Will Abstracts 1746-1870**, page 60. Was this our (2)George Keen that witnessed Sasser's will? Another connection is that a Walston witnessed the same will and (3)George Keen had a Polly Walston living in his household later, possibly as a child of a deceased relative or an indentured servant.

A researcher born in Texas has traced a relative John Keen back to Georgia, and earlier to Sampson County and then Johnston County, N.C. Is this the same John Keen that we see in the Johnston County Census records? Is this a relative (brother?) of (2)George Keen. If so, then an unrecognized group of relatives may exist in Sampson County, N.C., Georgia, and Texas.

Although researchers have contributed much to solving the George Keen riddle, much more work needs to be done to confirm these findings and establish more links to Bertie County and other areas.

Census Records Listing the Keen, Kean, or Keene Name

The following was extracted from various census records that contain information about Keen relatives. Information about all Keens is presented for the 1784-1787 Census but only information from Johnston County has been presented for the remaining years. It should be noted that the 1890 Census was destroyed by fire and therefore is not available. The 1920 Census has recently been released but is not generally available to researchers.

State Census 1784-1787

	WM 21-60	WM <21>60	WF	Blacks 12-50	Blacks <12 >50	(Register, 1973)
(Johnston Co 16-Mar-1787)						
George Kean	1	4	1	0	0	Capt. John Bryan's list
Sasser Keen	1	1	2	0	0	Capt. William Talton's Co.
John Keen	1	0	3	0	0	Capt. William Talton's Co.
(Surry Co February, 1787)						
John Keen	1	0	1	0	0	Capt. Wright's Dist.
(Gates Co 30-May-1786)						
James Keen	1	1	2	0	0	
Lamuel Keen	1	0	3	0	0	

US Census 1790

(Johnston County)	WM Under16	WM Over16	WF	Other	Slaves
Alice Keen	2	0	3	0	0
John Keen	1	1	3	0	0
George Keen	1	6	1	0	0
George Kean	1	5	1	0	0

US Census 1800 (Johnston County)

John Keen, page 753, listed with 1 white male 10 years-16 years, 1 white male 16-25 years old, 3 white females under 10 years, 2 white females 10-16 years old, 1 white female 16-25 years old, 1 white female over 26-45 years old, and no slaves.

Isaac Keen, page 753, listed with 1 white male 16-26 years old, 1 white female under 10 years old, 1 white female 10-16 years old, 1 white female 26-45 years old, 1 white female over 45 years old, and no slaves.

US Census 1810 (Johnston County)

George Keen, page 222, listed with 1 white male 16-26 years old, 2 white females under 10 years old, 1 white female 26-45 years old, 1 white female over 45 years old, and no slaves.

Isaac Keen, page 234, listed with 1 white male 26-45 years old, 1 white female under 10 years old, 1 white female 10-16 years old, 1 white female 16-25 years old, 1 white female 26-45 years old, and no slaves.

Saper Keen, page 234, listed with 1 white male under 10 years old, 1 white male over 45 years old, 3 white females under 10 years old, 2 white females 10-16 years old, 1 white female 16-25 years old, 1 white female 26-46 years old and no slaves.

US Census 1820 (Johnston County)

George Keen, page 275, listed with 1 white male 26-45 years old, 3 white females under 10 years old, 2 white females 10-16 years old, 1 white female over 45 years old, and no slaves.

Sasser Keen, listed with 1 white male 16-18 years old, 1 white male 18-26 years old, 1 white male over 45 years old, 1 white female under 10 years old, 3 white females 10-16 years old, 4 white females 16-26 years old, and 1 white female over 45 years old.

John Keen, listed with 1 white male 26-45 years old, 3 white females under 10 years old, and 1 female 26-45 years old.

Judith Keen, listed with 1 female 16-26 years old.

US Census 1830 (Johnston County)

George Keen, page 105, listed with 2 white males 5-10 years old, 1 white male 10-15 years old, 1 white male 40-50 years old, 1 white female under 5 years old, 2 white females 10-15 years old, 2 white females 15-20 years old, and 1 white female 50-60 years old.

Patience Keen, page 105, listed with 1 white female 10-15 years old, 1 white female 15-20 years old, and 1 white female 40-50 years old.

US Census 1840 (Johnston County)

George Keen, page 269, listed with 2 white males 15-20 years old, 1 white male 50-60 years old, 1 white female 10-15 years old, 1 white female 20-30 years old, and 1 white female 50-60 years old.

US Census 1850 (Johnston County)

Martha Keene, page 46, 7th Dist - listed as 9 years-old living with the James Corbet family.

Council Keene, page 64, 9th Dist - listed as 15 year-old farmer living with Isaac Boyette family.

Phiribak Keene, page 61, 9th Dist - listed as 35 years-old, no occupation given. Classey Davis - 25, and Salley Davis - 3 are listed as residents with Pheribak.

Willie Keene, page 63, 9th Dist - listed as a 11 year-old living with the Allen Watkins family, a 74 years old farmer, Lucy Watkins - 43, and Perry Flowers - 7, a mullato child.

George Keene, page 90, 13th Dist - listed as a 29 year-old farmer with wife Sally - 26 who is listed as illiterate.

Gideon Keene, page 89, 13th Dist - listed as a 25 year-old farmer with wife Sally -21, and children George-1, and boarder William Strickland, 8 years-old.

US Census 1860 (Johnston County)

George Keen - Elevation Twp - listed as a 27 year-old merchant from Machetchuttes living with Vine Ivey, a 39 year-old farmer.

James Keen - Elevation Twp. - listed as a 32 year-old day loborer born in NC with wife Charlotte - 40, and children Isaac - 12, Nancy - 9, and Frusey - 1.

George Keen - Newton Grove P.O. - listed as a 30 year-old farmer born in NC with wife Sarah - 25 and children Falsia, John, George, Alfred, Helen, and Elijah.

Gideon Keen - Bentonville P.O. - listed as a 38 year old farmer born in NC with wife Sarah - 29, and children George - 10, Mussaline - 7, Sarch - 6, Nancy - 4, and John - 8/12. Living with the Gideon Keen family was William Strickland - 18 and Elizabeth Lee - 15, listed as "serving."

US Census 1870 (Johnston County)

George Keen - Ingram Township, Page 400. - listed as 49 year-old farmer with wife Sarah - 46, children John - 18, George - 16, Helen - 14, Alfred - 13, Elbert - 12, Cathen - 9, Edith - 6, and Preston -2.

Milley Keen - Beulah Township, listed as 59 year old housekeeper for the Turner Joyner family.

Gideon Keen - Ingram Township, listed as 46 year old farmer with wife Sarah -40, and children George -21, Marseline -18, Sarah E. -16, Nancy -14, John -11, Joel -9, Susan -6, and Charley -2.

US Census 1880 (Johnston County)

Milly Keen - Beulah Township - listed as 64 year old mother in the Cinthia Watkins household,

Alfred Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 23 year old farmer with wife Delia -27.

George Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 59 year old farmer with wife Sarah -56, and children Helen -22, Elbert -20, Cathran -18, Eadea -16, Preston -12, and Ella -9.

George Keen, Jr. - Ingrams Township - listed as 24 year old farmer with wife Virginia -17.

Giddian Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 56 year old farmer with wife Sally A. -49, and children Sarah E. -25, John W. -20, Joel G. -17, Susan A. -14, Charley C. -10, James R. -8, Mary I. -6, and Sally C. -5.

John Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 27 year old farmer with wife Mary -22, and children Albert -2, and Annie -8/12.

Willis Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 29 year old farmer with wife Annie -27, and children Condala -6, and Rebeca -4, and John Baker -24 year old farm laborer.

US Census 1890 (LOST)

US Census 1900 (Johnston County)

Addie L. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 19 year old stepdaughter living with the Joseph A. Adams family.

Alfred R. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 43 year old farmer with wife Idelia -48, and children Mittie T. -19, David H. -17, Ira W. -15, Lizzie L. -13, Sarah E. -12, Susan -9, Seth -8, and Lewis -5.

Ava Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 32 year old daughter living with Bright Williams, a 66 year old farmer.

Charlie Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 2 year old brother-in-law living with the George King family.

George W. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 44 year old farmer with wife Delia -36, and children James W. -19, Sallie -17, George D. -15, Lucy E. -13, Cora -11, Robert -8, Johnnie -4, and Charlie -5/12.

James H. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 1 year old son living with the Jarmon G. Johnson family.

John C. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 47 year old farmer with wife Mary E. -42, and children John A. -22, Annie B. -20, Minnie F. -18, May E. -13, Martha S. -11, Lonnie C. -8, Nathan H. -5, Ila M. -3, and Jesse M. -1.

John W. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 40 year old farmer with wife Lou -26, and children William R. -17, Bettie I. -14, Pearl -7, and Ray H. -4.

Mary F. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 24 year old cook for the Jarmon G. Johnston family. Also listed in family is James H. Keen, 1 year old son.

Paul G. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 18 year old stepson living with the Joseph A. Adams family.

Tommy C. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 16 year old stepson living with the Joseph A. Adams family.

US Census 1910 (Johnston County)

Carl Keen - #2 Elevation Township - listed a 11 year old boarder in the Charlie West family.

William Keen - #2 Elevation Township - listed as a 29 year old farmer with wife Bell -25 and daughter Florence -1 8/12.

Addie L. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as 26 year old stepdaughter living with the Joseph A. Adams family.

Alfred R. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 53 year old farmer with wife Delia -55, and children Mittie -29, Lizzie L. -23, David -27, Sarah -22, Seth -18, and Lewis -15.

George D. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 25 year old farmer with wife Ida -23, and daughter Thelma - 1 10/12.

George W. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 54 year old farmer with wife Maggie -50 and children Corah -23, John R. -14, and Katie N. 9.

Ira Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 24 year old merchant boarder with the Soloman W. Brown family.

John E. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 15 year old nephew living with the Elijah F. Strickland family.

John C. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 56 year old farmer with wife Mary W. -53, and children Minnie F. -28, Mary E. -23, Martha S. -20, Lonnie C. -18, Nathan H. -15, Ila M. -13, and Jesse -11.

John W. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 50 year old farmer with wife Lounette -36, and children Pearl -17, Roy -14, Rupert -9, and mother-in-law Hepsy Tyner -57.

Paul G. Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 26 year old clerk with wife Rosella -26 and children Ruby -3, and Violet -7/12.

William Keen - Ingrams Township - listed as a 28 year old merchant with wife Hellen -28 and children Ronald -3, and Edward -1 6/12.

Chapter 2

Virginia and Bertie Co., NC Roots

In looking for ancestors of (1)George Keen, one generally turns North. Our KEEN ancestors probably came to America through Virginia, although many landed in more northern states and others entered through Wilmington. In **Seventeenth Century Colonial Ancestors (1976)** compiled by Mary Louis Marshall Hutton, a John (1657-1723) and Richard (1623-1675) KEENE appears in Maryland, and Matthew (1659-1730/31) and Thomas (1593-1662/63) KEENE appears in Virginia. As most of the migration into North Carolina was from southeastern Virginia, a quick review of official records indicate two pockets of KEENs in this area. In **Virginia Wills & Administrators 1632-1800** (Torrence), families with KEEN and KEENE names appear in Amelia, Fairfax, Loudoun, Louisa, Northumberland, Stafford, York, and Lancaster Counties. One George Keen appears in a 1683 estate inventory in Lancaster County. Could this be the father of our (1)George Keen? Did this Keen family, and others, descend from Alice Kean, listed as a local inhabitant in James Island on 16-Feb-1623 and again as Alice Keen in 1624? Were George and other Keens related to the Lieutenant Rich. (Richard) Kean who was massacred by Indians on 22-Mar-1622 at Martins-Hundred, some seven miles from James Cities, Virginia. Both of these events are listed in **Ship Passenger Lists - The South (1538-1825)** (Boyer, 1979).

An examination of other records of colonial North Carolina indicates others named Keen. For example, **North Carolina Taxpayers 1679-1790 Vol 2.** by Clarence E. Ratcliff lists a Monez Keen in Halifax County in 1783, a Nicholas Keen in Orange County in 1779, a Sam Keen in Gates County in 1789, Sion Keen in Sampson County in 1784, as well as a George Keen in Bertie County in 1774. Were these sons of the (1)George Keen in Bertie County that left to seek their fortunes in the largely uninhabited wilderness western counties of North Carolina? In **North Carolina Taxpayers 1701-1786**, Ratcliff mentions a James Keen in Gates County in 1786, a John Keen in New Hanover County in 1743, and a John Keen in Onslow County in 1769. At this point, I cannot offer any evidence that the George Keen in Bertie County in 1774 is the father of our (2)George Keen in Johnston County in 1784. Our (2)George Keen might just as easily have come from one of the other Keens mentioned above in other counties. However, with the indirect links that we can document to Bertie County, we make the assumption here that George Keen in Bertie County is our ancestor that I call (1)George Keen.

How (1)George Keen came to Bertie County is unknown. Most residents traveled to Bertie County on river boats from southern Virginia, settling around old Indian fields that could be plowed and reused immediately. This plan allowed the settlers to quickly clear the old fields and plant their crops before turning their attention to permanent houses and the clearing of new fields. It is assumed that (1)George Keen did the same.

The only Bertie County land transfer referring to (1)George Keen is in **The Bertie Index; 1720 - 1875** (Dunstan, 1966). In section III, Index for Grantor Deeds, 1720-1800, page 80, Keen, George (Grantee) is listed, in 1772, in a transfer from Robert Cake (Grantor) in Deed Book M, page 118. On page 23, Cake, John is listed as grantee from Cullen Pollick in 1744 in Deed Book F, page 534. This could be the same land as he later sold to George Keen. Tracing earlier transactions, Cullen Pollock is listed as grantee from the Lord Proprietors (Grant) in Book D, page 128 (1730). This series of transactions is the closest link yet discovered to a grant to George Keen from the Lord Proprietors. Why don't land sales appear when (2)George left Bertie County? Family researchers think that the land was transferred by will from (1)George Keen to daughters that did not require public documents evidencing the transfer. Tax records do not show Keens paying taxes in Bertie which strengthens the argument that the land went to married female children.

The **Bertie County, NC Court Minutes, 1763-1771, Book III** has several listings of George Keen in the period 1766 to 1774 as follows:

#758-399 Ordered Georg_ Keen be appointed overseer of the Road in the Room & District of Lazirus Summerlin (1766).
#810 Ordered that King Freeman be appointed overseer of the road in the Room and District of George Keen (1768).
#875-50 4th Tuesday in Sept, 1769 Ordered George Keen to serve as Pettit Juror for Court.
#953 4th Tuesday in March 1771 Ordered George Keen to serve as Grand Juror for Court.
#967 4th Tuesday in June 1771 Ordered George Keene to serve as Grand Juror for Court.

The Bertie County Court Minutes, 1763-1774, Book IV.

#3 4th Tuesday in March 1772 Ordered George Keen to serve as Grand Juror for Court.
#89-40 2nd Tuesday in August 1774 Ordered George Keen to serve as Grand Juror for Court.
#109-50 August Court 1774 Proved a deed from Robert Cake to George Keen by the oath of Thomas Whitmer Junr. and ordered to be registered.

(1)George Keen b. ? in Virginia? and d. ? in Bertie Co, NC. md.UNKNOWN UNKNOWN. Many court records in Bertie County refer to a George Keen, assumed here to be (1)George Keen.

Children of (1)George Keen:

(2)George Keen b. ? in Bertie County d. ca. 1797 in Johnston Co, NC md. 1st UNKNOWN UNKNOWN, 2nd (28-Jan-1783) Cathern (Catherine) Goodrach

Other children unknown

Chapter 3

The First Johnston Co. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: Unknown
FATHER: (1)George Keen
Child: (2)George Keen (?-1797)

(2)George Keen left Bertie County after the death of his father and the division of the estate among his children. He probably received cash or other property from the estate of his father; the land going to other children or relatives. Accompanied by his wife, possibly his mother, and children, (2)George Keen then migrated to Johnston County around 1784 where he settled in the area now known as Ingrams Township and began to purchase land. The 1790 US Census shows the Alice Keen household, possibly (2)George Keen's mother or widow of a brother, with 2 males under sixteen and 3 white females; possibly young children of the original (1)George Keen. This same census shows (2)George Keen with 1 white male under sixteen, 6 white males over sixteen, and 1 white female (his wife?).

Another George Kean is listed in the same census with one white male under sixteen, 5 white males over sixteen, and one white female. Which of these Georges is our George? Could these be duplicate entries for the same person? These questions have not been answered. Which of the sons listed is our (3)George? He has to be the son listed as under sixteen since his birth date is 13-May-1786.

Several other Keen families appear on the 1790 Census, apparently from the northern Johnston County area around Watson Swamp and Black Creek. Where these families relatives or sons of (1)George Keen? The only connection that I have been able to find between these two groups of families (Ingrams Township Keens and the northern Johnston County Keens) is a will of Sasser Keen, witnessed by a George Keen on 1-May-1817. Families headed by John Keen, Isaac Keen, Sasser Keen, Patience Keen, appear in various records. Patience Keen was the wife of Sasser Keen and appears as head-of-household in the 1830 Census, Sasser Keen disappearing after appearing in the 1810 Census. Ms. Rose Parks from Avery, TX has traced a John Keen to Sampson County and Johnston County. This John moved to Georgia and then his relatives spread to Texas. Could this be the same John Keen? No connection has been made between John Keen and our (2)George Keen yet. Issac Keen married Judith (Kerby?) and died in 1814, his will made on 23-Sep-1814.

Apparently all of the sons of (2)George Keen left the area except one, our (3)George Keen. Where did they go? In the 1800 census, (2)George Keen does not appear since he died in 1797. His widow Catherine raised the children before returning to Bertie County and marrying W.M. McGloghorn on 23-May-1814. Where was our fourteen year old (3)George Keen at the 1800 Census? Since he would have been only eleven years old at the time of his father's death in 1797, he could have returned to Bertie County with his mother. This could explain why the widow Catherine does not appear on the 1800 census; however if this is the case, who looked after the plantation in Johnston County? How did (3)George get back to Johnston County and regain ownership of the plantation so as to appear on the 1810 Census? Did some of his brothers stay in Johnston County, later leaving for better lands and far off areas or dying and turning the plantation over to the youngest child of (2)George Keen? A better theory is that Catherine remained on the plantation, caring for the children and watching them leave, one by one, until the youngest (3)George Keen assumed ownership of the plantation as evidenced in the 1810 Census. This riddle will probably never be solved with certainty.

The exact location of (2)George Keen's home in Ingrams Township is unknown although the area around the intersection of the present Highway 96 and Keen Road is a likely candidate. Highway 96 follows the old Fayetteville Road which existed as a trail at the time that (2)George settled here. It is likely that he followed the early practice of settling close to the trail.

The death date of (2)George Keen is unclear, although he was alive on 30-Aug-1797 when he and Catherine Keen sold land to John Blackman. Catherine Keen, widow of George Keen, petitioned the court on 29-Nov-1797 to resign her right to administer (2)George Keen's estate. Records of the sale of his estate exist dated 1-Jan-1798 as well as an inventory of his estate on that same date. Therefore, (2)George Keen must have died in 1797, between 30 August and 29 November.

Although the first U.S. Census (1790) shows that (2)George Keen had six boys, ages 21 to 60, only (3)George Keen is known. Making his home at an unknown location on land in Ingrams Township that his father gave him, (3)George Keen raised eight children and farmed during his lifetime. Two sons who reached maturity, (4)George William Keen and Gideon Keen, are the fathers of most of the Johnston County Keen family that survive today.

From **Johnston County Record of Estates** (CR.056.501.3 in N.C. Archives), the following is noted:

Page 194-196 - Record of Inventory and Sale of Personal Assets of George Keen. The only relative listed is Caty Keen (his wife) when she purchased 9 items (among 58 items sold), including 2 beds and steads, small quantity of corn and iron pot, 2 chairs and table and 1 horse and bridle.

Page 323-324 - Estate Record of George Keen.

Debts-	87.04.5 (Eighty-seven Pounds, 4 Shillings, 5 Pence)
Sale of Personal Property	62.17.6 (Sixty-two Pounds, 17 Shillings, 6 Pence)
Sale of 226 acres of land	27.16.0 (Twenty-seven Pounds, 16 Shillings, 0 Pence)
Total Assets	90.13.6 (Ninty Pounds, 13 Shillings, 6 Pence)
Debts	87.04.5 (Eighty-seven Pounds, 4 Shillings, 5 Pence)
Amount Submitted to Court	03.09.1 (Three Pounds, 9 Shillings, 1 Pence)

Official deed records mentioning George Keen:

200 acres from William Ballenger, 1784, Book 2, page 175.

From Johnston County, **North Carolina Abstracts: Deed Books E-1, Vol II.** by Weynette Parks Haun.

#673 Mary Ballenger to George Keen 300A. on NS Mill Cr. 20-Oct-1786.

#645 George Keen and William Ballenger witnessed transfer of 200A. from Jesse Purvis to Abner Peebles on 17-Sep-1791.

#648 George Keen and William Ballenger witnessed transfer of 100A. from Charles Russell to Abner Peebles. Feb. Ct. 1791.

Official Court records mentioning George Keen for the period 1778-1846:

From **Johnston County, North Carolina Court Minutes, 1778-1786, Book III** by Weynette Parks Haun.

Item 280-15 (Tue 2-Sep-1784) 500 acres From Shadrak Vining to George Keen, proved by Josiah Barnes.

Item 331 (Tue 28-Nov-1786) Mary Ballenger to George Keen, proved by Josiah Barnes.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1787-1792, Book IV,** by Weynette Parks Haun.

Item 33 - Ordered that Vinson Walker, a base born child of Catherine Walker, be bound apprentice to George Keen until he arrives to the age of twenty-one year, he being nine years old the 28th day of February, 1788.

Item 144 (Tue. 1-Mar-1791) Jesse Purvis and (Charles Russell) to Abner Peobles, proved by oath of George Keen.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1773-1797, Book V.** by Weynette Parks Haun.

Item 123 (Wed 26-Nov-1794) George Keen to Drury Bynum sold 100 acres - acknowledged by George Keen.

Item 172 (Tue 26-May-1795) George Keen to Henry Massengill acknowledged by George Keen.

Item 360 (Tue 29-Aug-1797) John Rosser vs. William Standley: George Keen and Elijah Baker Bail in Said Suit for the Defendent came into Court and surrendered him in discharge of themselves when he was ordered in custody of the Sheriff, and at the same time David Ivy and Henry Massengill came into Court and acknowledged themselves special Bail for the said defendent in said suit.

Item 364 (Wed 30-Aug-1797) George Keen and Cather Keen sold to John Blackman 100 acres, proved by the Oath of Arthur Blackman.

Item 390 (Wed 29-Nov-1797) Katherine Keen, widow of George Keen decd. came into court and resigned her right of administration of said decd. estate. Therefore, ordered that administration of the estate of the said decd. be granted to Robert Gulley Jun. who came into court and entered into bond in the sum of two hundred pounds current money with Matthias Handy Esq. and John Killingsworth Jun. his securities and qualified agreeable to Law. Ordered that Letters issue.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1812-1815, Boox IX,** by Weynette Parks Haun.

Item 145 (Wed 2-May-1814) Melbrey Godwin, single woman of this county, having sworn a base bourn child to George Keen by him begotton to her body, whereupon was ordered by the Court that the said Melbrey Godwin be allowed the sum of L5 (5 pounds) for expense of child birth and also the sum of L5 (5 pounds) a year for the space of 5 years to commence from this time, who came into Court and entered into Bond as the Law directs. (apparently this was the George Keen who later moved to Anson County, N.C. - not our (2)George Keen - ed.)

Item 256 (Wed 29-Nov-1815) Ordered that George Keen be appointed Overseer of the road and district of John Rhodes.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1819-1922, Book XI,** by Weynette Parks Haun.

Item 205 (25-Feb-1822) Ordered that the ear mark of George Keen be recorded to wit a crop - the right ear and a half moon under it and a shallow fork in the left. (George is registering his livestock mark with the Court - ed.)

Item 214 (Mon 25-Feb-1822) Was exhibited in open Court for probate the Last Will and Testament of Sasser Keen, decd., which was duly proven in open Court by the Oaths of George Keen and Josiah Sasser, two of the subscribing witnesses, and ordered to be recorded when Patience Keen, one of the Executors therein named, came into Court and qualified agreeable to Law.

Item 227 (Mon 26-Aug-1822) George Keen served on the Jury.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1823-1826, Book XII,** by Weynette Parks Haun.

Item 71 (Wed 25-Feb-1824) Ordered that William W. Canada, a base born child of Polly Canada, be bound an apprentice to George Keen until he arrives to the age of twenty-one years, he being seven years old the 27th October 1923 to learn the business of farming.
Item 118 (23-Aug-1825) Ordered that George Keen serve on the Jury at the next Court.
Item 126 (Tue 29-Nov-1825) George Keen served on the Grand Jury.
Item 161 (Mon 27-Nov-1826) Andrew Collins to George Keen which was duly proven in open Court by the Oath of Elijah Baker.
Item 167 (Tue 28-Nov-1826) George Keen served on the Jury.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1827-1830, Book XIII,** by Weynette Parks Haun
Item 1 (Mon 26-Feb-1827) Ordered that George Keen, a witness in behalf the State vs. Jesse Evans, be allowed one Dollar and ten Cents for his attendence as such.
Item 4 (Mon 26-Feb-1827) Joshua Johnson to George Keen which was duly proven in open Court by the Oath of John Wood.
Item 37 Ordered George Keen, a witness in behalf of the State vs. Jessee Evans be allowed one Dollar for his attendence as such.
Item 50 (26-May-1828) Ordered George Keen (and others) as inspector and poll keepers for election of Members of Assembly to our next legislature in the several districts.
Item 52 (27-May-1828) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 54 (28-May-1828) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 92 (25-May-1829) Ordered George Keen (and others) as inspector and poll keepers for election of Members of Assembly to our next legislature in the several districts.
Item 131 (26-May-1829) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 147 (22-Nov-1830) Ordered that the Sheriff Summon the following persons to attend as Jurors at next county Court - George Keen.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1831-1834, Book XIV,** by Weynette Parks Haun
Item 8 (1-Mar-1831) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 69 (26-Nov-1832) Ordered George Keen as Juror as next Court.
Item 81 (26-Feb-1833) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 108 (25-Nov-1833) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 117 (25-Feb-1834) George Keen served as Juror,
Item 149 (26-Nov-1834) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 150 (26-Nov-1834) George Keen served as Juror.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1835-1838, Book XV**, by Weynette Parks Haun.
Item 20 (24-Aug-1835) Ordered George Keen as Juror at next Court.
Item 30 (24-Nov-1835) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 45 (23-May-1836) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 143 (28-May-1838) George Keen served as Juror.
Item 160 (27-Aug-1838) George Kean (Keen) served as Juror.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1839-1842, Book XVI,** by Weynette Parks Haun.
Item 136 Ordered George Keen as Juror at February, 1842 Court.
Item 152 (1-Mar-1842) George Keen served as Juror.

From **Johnston County Court Minutes, 1843-1846, Book XVII,** by Weynette Parks Haun.
Item 6 (27-Feb-1843) George Kean served as Juror.
Item 63 (26-Feb-1844) George Kean served as Juror.
Item 86 (28-May-1844) George Kean served as Juror.

Item 88 (28-May-1844) George Kean registered stock mark. Crop of the right ear and a nick under it.

Item 142 Returned by George Kean adm, of George Kean ded. an a/ct.? of his Guardianship which is ordered to be recorded.

Item 160 (24-Feb-1845) Ordered that Wright Blackman, John Stanly, George Kean, and Thomas Ingram be appointed patrols for Ingrams District for the ensueing year.

Item 222 (23-Feb-1846) Ordered George Kean Juror at May Term.

Item 255 (25-May-1846) George Kean served as Juror.

Item 269 (34-Aug-1846) George Kean served as Juror.

Item 272 George Kean to Gideon Kean proved by Elijah Stanly.

Item 285 (23-Nov-1846) Ordered that Needham Ingram, George Kean, and Starling Massengill be appointed a Committee to audit and settle the accounts of John W. Stanly as administrator of Sir William Stanly, deceased, and report to next Court.

Item 289 (23-Nov-1846) Georg_ Kean served as Juror.

Item 292 (23-Nov-1846) Ordered that Needham Ingram be appointed overseer of the road from Black Creek to the uper end of the Strait in the room of George Kean and the usual hands work under him.

Johnston County tax records give a picture of who was in the county during each year. The following tax records show that George Keen was present in the years shows. The fact that he is missing from some years could mean that those records are missing or it could mean that he was not present during that year. The apparent double listing of George Keen is consistent with the fact that a second George Keen did live in the county during the period, leaving for Anson County, N.C. at a later date.

Official Tax Records Mentioning George Keen:

From **Johnston County Taxable, 1784-1820, Parts 1,2, & 3** by Weynette Parks Haun.

1784- Item 1115 Capt John Whitley's Company - 300 acres.

1807- Item 325 Capt John William's District - Rayals, William, Sr., not given in said to be five hundred acres of land belonging to heirs of George Keen, decd., not given in.

1810- Item 382 Capt William W. Bryan's District. - George Keen - no land.

1811- Item 431 Capt Harry Bryant's District - George Keen - no land - no poles.

Item 451 Capt Cullen Talton's District - John Keen - 241 acres - no pole tax (the same for George Keen).

Item 825 Capt Harry Bryan's District - George Keen - no land - I pole.

Item 841 Capt Cullen Talton's District - John Keen - 241 acres - no pole (do for George Keen)

1812- Item 876 Capt Cullen Talton's District - George Keen - 100 acres - 1 pole

Item 516 Capt Cullen Talton's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.

1813- Item 533 Capt Cullen Talton's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.

Item 563 Capt Josiah Adam's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.

Item 564 Capt Josiah Adam's District - Evans, Jesse not given in five hundred and fifty acres of land belonging to the heirs of George Keen, decd.

Item 892 Capt Josiah Adam's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.

Item 894 Capt Josiah Adam's District - Jesse Evans not given in 550 acres of land belonging to the heirs of George Keen, decd.

Item 915 Capt Cullen Talton's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.

1814- Item 629 Capt Josiah Adam's District - George Keen - 550 acres - 1 pole.

Item 664 Capt John Gerald's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.
Item 931 Capt Josiah Adam's District - George Keen - 550 acres - 1 pole.
Item 954 Capt John Gerald's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.
1815- Item 576 Capt Harry Bryan's District - George Keen - no land - 1 pole.
Item 601 Capt John Gerald's District - George Keen - 120 acres - 1 pole.
1816- Item 686 Capt John Gerald's District - George Keen - 120 acres - $120 -1 pole.
Item 700 Capt John Eason's District - George Keen - 100 acres - $100 - 1 pole.
Item 972 Capt John Eason's District - George Keen - 100 acres - $100 - 1 pole.
Item 987 Capt John Garralls District - George Keen - 120 acres - $120 - 1 pole.
1817- Item 1018 Capt John Gearrald's District - George Keen - 120 acres - $120 - 1 pole.
Item 1025 Capt Sterling W. Temple's District - George Keen - 200 acres - $200 - 1 pole.
1818- Item 1036 Capt Sterling W. Temple's District - George Keen - 200 acres - $200 - 1 pole.
Item 1057 Capt John Gearald's District - George Keen - 120 acres - $120 - 1 pole.
1819- Item 1075 Capt Sterling W. Temple's District - George Keen - 200 acres - $200 - 1 pole.
1820- Item 757 Capt Sterling W. Temple's District - George Keen - 170 acres - $170 - 1 pole.

The net effect of these land transactions is that (2)George Keen owned a 1,000 acre plantation when he died in 1797.

(2)George Keen b. ? d. ca-Oct-Nov-1797 md. 1st UNKNOWN UNKNOWN md. 2nd (28-Jan-1783) Cathern Goodrach (Catherine Goodrich).

Catherine later married W.M. McGloghorn on 23-May-1814.

1. (3)George Keen b. 12-May-1786 d. 3-Aug-1849 md. 1st Betsey "Polly" UNKNOWN b. 8-Jun-1796 d. ?.

2. Unknown male child.

3. Unknown male child

4. Unknown male child

5. Unknown male child

6. Unknown male child

Chapter 4

The (3)George Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (1)George Keen
FATHER: (2)George Keen (?-1797)
Child: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)

(3)George Keen b.12-May-1786 in Johnston County (Ingrams Township), N.C. d. 3-Aug-1844 in Johnston Co, md. 1st Betsey "Polly" UNKNOWN b. 8-Jun-1796. d. ?.

(3)George Keen continued the occupation of the 1,000 acre (2)George Keen plantation to which he added 558 acres in 1827 making a total of over 1500 acres. Apparently he was the sole heir, the remaining five sons apparently dying or leaving the area. The location of his home site is unknown. Some researchers assume that he continued to live in his father's home near the Keen Crossroads at Highway 96. There is evidence that he lived in later years in the field behind the house of (4)George Keen on the present day Smithfield Road, next to the Keen Cemetery. Many early Johnston County farmers buried their dead in their yards, not far from their homes. Relatives relate stories about wooden headstones existing in the present Keen Cemetery, opening the possibility that the Keen Cemetery was used before (4)George Keen (the traditional founder of the cemetery) began to use it to bury his dead after the Civil War. If this is true, (3)George Keen's home was probably close.

The identity of his wife is unclear. Many believe that she was a Watson, the daughter of Stephen and Nancy Watson. Researchers in that family history indicate that this is not the case. We only know for certain that she was referred to as Betsey and Polly.

Five girls and two boys were raised by (3)George and Polly for a total of 7 children. The youngest girl, Suzanne, has disappeared from the records as many female children have done. It is likely that she died young or married and moved from the area.

The first and second girls, Matrecy and Ridley both married the same man, Lewis Stanley. Matrecy married him first, in 1837, and apparently died later. Ridley married him on 4-Nov-1846 and apparently lived with him until after 1891 when a newspaper article in that year featured the "old man and his wife."

The third girl, Betsy, married Henry Azel Clifton and lived with him on a small 50 acre farm in Pleasant Grove Township in western Johnston County. The land on this farm was very poor yet Henry chose to live here. Why did they not live on the 100 acre farm that Betsy inherited from her father? The land was certainly much better. Why did she sell her 100 acre farm to Gideon Keen for $42.50? Was there trouble between Henry Clifton and the Keen family or did they simply prefer to live close to his family?

The fourth child, Patricia is unknown to this researcher. There has been some speculation that she also married Lewis Stanley, however this cannot be proved at present.

The sixth and seventh child of (3)George were his two boys, (4)George and Gideon. These two eventually ended up with all of (3)George's land; the girls selling their land shares to Gideon. (4)George got land west of the Keen Crossroads (and probably the homeplace) that continued west along both sides of the Keen Road to the location of the present day railroad and Four Oaks. Gideon got land east of (4)George's land, including all four corners of the Keen Crossroads and continuing east past the Buleah Hill

Church and the Dicey Dunn Cemetery. Both boys carried on the tradition of farming and became the fathers of the present day Keen descendants in Johnston County.

Polly Walston apparently lived with the (3)George Keen family as an indentured servant or boarder and has been mistaken as a child. She later married Clem Baker.

From **Johnston County Record of Estates** (CR.056.501.20 in NC Archives) the following is noted:

Page 85-88 - Record of Estate and Inventory of George Keen. Administrated by George Keen, dated 24-Feb-1845, sold on 17-Dec-1844. Gideon Keen, Lewis Stanley, Lewis Stanley, Jr., Ridley Keen, and Susan Keen are listed as frequent purchasers of assets of the estate which was sold for $944.00 cash and $27.00 credit of six months.

Page 379-380 - Record of Estate of George Keen.

Assets	$1,341.26
Disbursements	228.13
Net Estate	$1,113.13

Signed Starling Massengill, Robert T. Massengill, & Thomas F. Sanders, August Term 1846, Thomas Bagley, Clerk.

Children of (3)George and Polly Keen:

1. Martrecy "Terecy" Keen b. 28-Oct-1809 d.? md. (1-Dec-1837) Lewis Stanley.

2. Ridley Keen b. 28-Apr-1813 d. ? md. (4-Nov-1846) Lewis Stanley b. ca-1819.

3. Elizabeth "Betey" Keen b. 28-Dec-1815 d. ca-1890 md. (12-Jun-1839) Henry Azel Clifton b. ca-1815 d. ca-1877.

4. Patricia "Patsy" Keen b. 31-Aug-1818 d. ?

5. (4)George William Keen b. 1-Mar-1821 d. 8-Jun-1891 md. (6-Feb-1850) Sarah "Sally" Lassiter b. 21-Dec-1823 d. 22-May-1882.

6. Gideon Keen b. 25-Nov-1823 d. 3-Feb-1896 md. (3-Feb-1848) Sally Ann Stanley b. ca-1829.

7. Suzanne "Susan" Keen b. 1-Sep-1826 d. ?. **Not Traced.**

GRANDFATHER:	(2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER:	(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
1nd Child:	**Martrecy "Terecy" Keen**

Martrecy "Terecy" Keen b. 28-Oct-1809 d. ?.md. (1-Dec-1837) Lewis Stanley

From Page 202, **Johnston County Marriage Bonds**, Genealogical Society of Utah.
Lewis Stanley to Terecy Keen, 1-Dec-1837, Bondsman Silas Webb, Witness Wm. H. Watson.

1. Betsey Stanley b. ca-1839
2. George Stanley b. ca-1841
3. Mary "Polly" Stanley b. ca-1843

GRANDFATHER: (2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)
2nd Child: **Ridley Keen**

Ridley Keen b. 28-Apr-1813 in Johnston Co. d. ?. md. (4-Nov-1846) Lewis Stanley b. ca-1819.

Lewis Stanley first married Ridley Keen's sister Tercey Keen. Lewis was a farmer.

From Page 201, **Johnston County Marriage Bonds**, Genealogical Society of Utah.
Lewis Stanley to Ridley Keen, 4-Nov-1846, Bondsman Gideon Keen, Witness Thos. Bagley.

From **The Smithfield Hearld**, Saturday 22-Aug-1891:

"Last Saturday evening some unknown person entered the house of Lewis Stanley, an old man about 80 years of age, who lives about a mile and a half from Four Oaks, and stole two pocket books which contained between $7 and $8 in money. Mr. Stanley was not at home at the time but his wife who is also very old was and had had several of her neighbors to visit her during the evening and they sat in the back yard most of the time. Who the party was is unknown but is supposed to have entered the house from the front while they were in the backyard. The old man and his wife are unable to work and the loss falls quite heavily on them. This information was given by a neighbor of the old man."

1. Nancy Stanley b. ca-1852

2. George W. Stanley b. ca-1862 md. Sarah UNKNOWN b. ca-1837.

    a. Lotta Stanley b. ca-1874.

    b. Aultiney R. Stanley b. ca-Jul-1879.

GRANDFATHER:	(2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER:	(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
3rd Child:	**Elizabeth "Betsey" Keen**

Elizabeth "Betsy" Keen b. 28-Dec-1815 in Johnston Co. d. ca-1890 in Johnston Co. md. (12-Jan-1839) Henry Azel Clifton son of Joel Clifton and Edith UNKNOWN b. ca-1810 in Johnston Co. d. ca-1877 in Johnston Co..

Henry and Betsy Clifton settled on a small 50 acre farm in the Pleasant Grove township close to the western Johnston County border. Why they chose to live on this marginal farm instead of the 100 acres of good land that Betsy inherited from her father is unknown. The desire to live close to Clifton relatives or possibly a disagreement between the Henry Clifton family and the Gideon Keen family could have been the answer.

Their first son died during the Civil War at Meadow Bluff, West Virginia and their second son died of pneumonia shortly after he married. No grand-children were born, ending this Keen line.

In his 1877 will, H.A. Clifton made provision that his farm, after the death of his wife, be sold and a school fund be set up in the township. In a period of few public schools, the gesture was welcomed. The poor farm brought $240 at the sale with additional funds gained from the sale of his personal property. The small amount of money would hardly finance a new school building, but, it did finance two six-week summer school sessions in 1892 and 1893 at the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church next to the Clifton farm. Approximately 125 students benefited from each summer session. A monument to H.A. Clifton stands today in the yard of the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church in the Pleasant Grove Township.

Elizabeth Keen Clifton is buried in the Keen Cemetery on SR1178 east of Four Oaks.

The Smithfield Herald - Tuesday, July 2, 1946

JOHNSTON PHILANTHROPIST GAVE ALL HE OWNED FOR SCHOOLS

By Tom Lassiter

Sixty-nine years after his death, Pleasant Grove township citizens have launched a movement to erect a monument to the memory of H.A. (Azel) Clifton - so much a friend of education that he willed everything he possessed for a public school in an age when public education was scarcely in its infancy.

The Clifton will - one of the truly unique documents in Johnston county annals - was probated in July, 1877.

'Item 1 made provision for support of his wife during the remainder of her life.

Item 2 read: "My will and desire is that, after the death of my wife and self, all and every parcel of my estate that may be left at our decease may be converted into a school fund for the use of District No. 4, now in Pleasant Grove township, except that none of my relations shall be debarred from said school from whatever locality."

Modest Holdings

Azel Clifton was a land owner of modest holdings. After his wife's death in the late eighteen eighties, his 50 acre farm adjoining the Fellowship Primitive Baptist church grounds was sold for $240 and sale of personal property brought in additional funds.

There was enough money to finance two six-week summer school sessions - one in 1892 and another the following year. The school was conducted at Fellowship church by Elder J.A.T. Jones, an outstanding Primitive Baptist preacher and one of the pioneer educators of Johnston county. Miss Lyda Jones assisted as a teacher the first year, but she married and Miss Maggie Stephenson took her place the second year. Approximately 125 pupils were enrolled each session.

L.Y. Stephenson, Mc. D. Langdon and Willis A. Coats had been named in the will to serve as a committee to guide use of the school fund.

The idea of a monument to Azel Clifton's memory was hatched in the mind of R.F. Coats, who today resides on the Clifton farm. It was his father - J.T. Coats - who purchased the land after Mrs. Clifton's death.

R.F. - a former school teacher - was one of the 125 pupils who took advantage of the educational opportunity provided by the Clifton generosity.

Marker Fund Proposed

His plan is for those who attended the Clifton school, or any others, to contribute to a memorial marker fund. The marker would be erected in the church yard at Fellowship with inscriptions telling of Azel Clifton's philanthropy. It would also convey the information that the body of the benefactor is buried a quarter of a mile south of the church.

Azel Clifton was no James B. Duke with millions at his command for the creation of a great university. But no man ever had a more humanitarian spirit and no educational history of Johnston county will ever be complete that does not relate the story of this modest philanthropist who left no less than all he owned for public education.

Deed transferring 100 acres to H.A. Clifton & wife from George Keen

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
JOHNSTON COUNTY

To the worshipful, the Justice of the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions August Term 1847.

We the undersigned Commissioners in Obedience to an order to us directed from the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions of last May Term to lay off and allot unto Henry A. Clifton & Elizabeth his wife their proportional share in severalty of the land that descended to them as Heirs at law and tenants in common with Tercy, wife of Lewis Stanly, Ridley, Gideon, & Susan Kean to the land that descended to them by the death of George Kean - Proceeded on the 3rd of August, 1847 to go on the premises and survey the same ground to be about five hundred and five acres the one sixth part seems to belong to the Petitioners which in point of valuation amounts to one hundred acres, which we have cut off and appropriated in manner and form as follows viz:

Beginning at a stake in the corn field not far from a old house in George Kean's line & runs his line South 82^{o} West 100 poles to a small pine Henry Guven's(?) corner on the East side of the Middle Juniper, thence his line South 166 poles to a pine on the West side of the Middle Juniper Henry Guven's(?) corner, thence his line East 96 poles to a small red oak, Gideon Kean's corner, thence his line North 170 P. to the beginning containing one hundred acres - all of which is respectively submitted.

Robert Massengill (Seal)
Needham Ingram (Seal)
Henry Lee (Seal)

Johnston County Court
February Term 1848

This was the forgoing report returned in Open Court and ordered to be recorded & registered.

Thomas Bagley Clk.

From **The Smithfield Herald**, March 31, 1892: "Some time ago Mr. Franklin West bought a mattress at the sale of the late Mrs. Betsy Clifton and in repairing it he found $25 in gold wrapped in a lot of old rags."

Children of Elizabeth and Henry Azel Clifton:

1. Joel Clifton b. ca-1842 d. 9-Nov-1861 at Meadow Bluff, WV during the Civil War. Joel was a member of Company I, 24th N.C. Regiment. **No Issue.**

2. George W. Clifton b. ca-1846 d. ca-Oct-1869 in Pleasant Grove Township of pneumonia md. (1-Apr-1869) in Johnston Co., Sarah J. Stephenson daughter of Osborne Stephenson and Aramanta Plesant. **No Issue.**

GRANDFATHER:	(2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER:	(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
4th Child:	**Patricia "Patsy" Keen**

Patricia "Patsey" Keen b. 31-Aug-1818 in Johnston Co.

Information about Patricia is unknown.

GRANDFATHER: (2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)
5th Child: **(4)George William Keen**

(4)George William Keen b. 10-Mar-1820 d. 8-Jun-1891 md. (6-Feb-1850) Sarah "Sally" Lassiter b. 21-Dec-1823 d. 22-May-1882.

SEE CHAPTER 5.

GRANDFATHER:	(2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER:	(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
6th Child:	**Gideon Keen**

Gideon (Gydeon) Keen b. 25-Nov-1823 d. 3-Feb-1896 md. (3-Feb-1848) Sally Ann Stanley b. ca-1829.

SEE CHAPTER 16.

GRANDFATHER:	(2)George Keen (? - 1797)
FATHER:	(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
7th Child:	**Suzanne Keen**

Suzanne "Susan" Keen b. 1-Sep-1826 d. ?.

Susan must have died early because she disappears from the census records.

Not Traced

Chapter 5

The (4)George William Keen Family

(4)George William Keen b. 10-Mar-1820 d. 8-Jun-1891 md. (6-Feb-1850) Sarah "Sally" Lassiter b 21-Dec-1823 d. 22-May-1882.

(4)George William Keen
Photo from Dorcas Taylor

Born as the fifth child and first son of (3)George Keen, (4)George Keen grew up at his father's home probably located near the present Highway 96 and Keen Road intersection and possibly later at a home in the field back of the Keen Cemetery on the Smithfield Road. The Keen plantation totaled more than 1500 acres, stretching from the present railroad at Four Oaks on both sides of the Keen Road to well past the Keen Crossroads and the Buleah Hill Church. Growing up with six sisters and his brother Gideon, (4)George learned his craft of farming well.

In 1850, at the age of 29, (4)George married Sara "Sally" Lassiter, daughter of William "Uncle Billy" and Lucy Stevenson Lassiter and granddaughter of Elijah Lassiter of Elevation Township in western Johnston County. This marriage united two of the county's oldest families. Sarah received $500 in lieu of land in the will of her father.

(4)George was the last of the children in the family to marry, with his four older sisters all marrying earlier, as did his younger brother Gideon. His younger sister, Susan probably died young as she disappears from the census records.

(3)George gave both of his sons large farms to the east and west of his homeplace. Gideon got the land east of the Fayetteville Road (Hwy 96) while (4)George got the land west of the road. The girls all got land also, apparently all selling their land later to Gideon.

Sarah Lassiter Photo from Dorcas Taylor

The railroad and Four Oaks did not exist when (4)George built his home on the Smithfield Road (next to the present day Keen Cemetery). The Keen Road and the Smithfield road were probably not much more than a farm path, yet the Smithfield Road was important in that it led to the county seat. It was more than 36 years later that the railroad and Four Oaks was built along the western edge of(4)George's land.

Both Gideon and (4)George became important plantation owners and operators. (4)George became a Justice of the Peace and conducted much official business including many

local marriages. He was well known and respected in Smithfield as a spokesman for Ingrams Township. (4)George was a Justice of the Peace in Johnston County from approximately 1856-1968.

As the Civil War approached, (4)George joined other prominent Johnston County men on December 22, 1860 at a mass meeting of "Friends of the Union." Held in Smithfield to oppose succession of the state from the Union, the meeting passed a resolution urging calm during a time of political unrest. Dr. John B. Beckwith led the group of 14 men, representatives of each Johnston County township, in signing the document. (4)George was the Ingrams Township representative.

The Beckwith Committee included: Dr. Jno Beckwith, S.A. Smith, Wm H. Jernigan, L.H. Sanders, Abram Dixon, Wm H. McCullers, Jr., Wm A. Smith, E.J. Holt, Dr. Jno Thompson, Phariah Richardson, Wm H. Joiner, Wm H. O'Neal, Wiley Wellons, and George Keen. The resolution, dated December 22, 1860, was written, discussed, and passed by the committee and then sent to the Legislature in Raleigh, N.C. urging that body to vote against succession and try to work things out..

Mrs. Ben Matthews (Jackie Matthews) sent a copy of the actual resolution which I quote here:

1. **Whereupon** a crisis has arrived in the affairs of our country threatening it's existence as a united and national confederacy under which we have grown to be a great, prosperous and happy nation, enjoying alike the admiration and envy of the world, when it behooves everyone to speak out and declare his sentiments upon the questions now agitating the country and let it be known where he stands - therefore be it **resolved** by the people of Johnston County, in mass meeting assembled, that we are opposed to dissolving the union, for existing causes, until our northern friends have had a reasonable time to redress our grievances, and that we look upon separate state secession as no remedy for those grievances, but a great aggregation of them all.

2. **Resolved** that while we heartily deplore the election of Abraham Lincoln and Hannable Hamlin to the offices of President and Vice-President, and abhor the sectional principles on which they were supported, yet having been elected according to the prescribed forms of the constitution, it becomes every good and loyal citizen to acquiesce in the result until some unconstitutional act against our rights that will not or cannot be redressed under and according to the constitution shall have been committed. When that shall be the case, then we shall be ready to unite with all in the formation of a new government, but not until then.

3. **Resolved** that we are in favor of having settled now permanently all questions between the North and the South upon the subject of slavery, and we have a confident reliance that there is sufficient conservatism and patriotism in this country to do it, if not prevented by the precipitant action of selfish, hot headed, ill advised, and crazy politicians (the word "crazy" was marked through).

4. **Resolved** that a convention of the people ought to be called by the Legislature to consider and determine what the interest and honor of North Carolina requires her to do.

5. **Resolved** that the Legislature ought to invite a conference of all the states to establish unity of feeling and resolve all differences and restore national harmony.

As the Confederacy was formed and the war begun, the Beckwith Resolution and the signers both proved to be quite unpopular among the county residents. Quoting Jackie Matthews, "It is said that George Keen's life was rather unhappy in his latter years due to the reaction of his neighbors and acquaintances to his stand taken on secession. They would turn their heads or cross to the other side to keep from speaking to him as he drove his buggy down the street. His wife Sally returned to Elevation Township, where her parents were, to visit a new church which had been formed (apparently to escape harsh treatment in her own church). George attended with her once, but had such a cold reception, never went again."

(4)George apparently did not serve in the Confederate Army, yet his brother Gideon reluctantly did so during the final months of the war. At the beginning of the war, (4)George was 41 years old with six children under 10 years of age and a seventh child on the way. In addition to his opposition to succession, (4)George probably felt his age and family responsibilities precluded his serving. Four years later, in March 1865, soldiers going to the Battle of Bentonville burned Gideon's Grist Mill and other local property, yet the home of (4)George was apparently spared. On April 12, 1865, exactly four years after the start of the war, Union troops in Smithfield received word of the end of the war.

Following the war, (4)George and Sally had three other children making a total of ten - five boys and five girls. Life was normal for a while with (4)George resuming duties as Justice of Peace and Squire of a large plantation until the railroad and Four Oaks were constructed along the western edge of (4)George's plantation in 1886. A sleepy rural community suddenly had a booming town and a railroad that connected them to the world.

When Sally died in 1882, (4)George used the old burying ground next to his house and then used it again to bury his son Elijah Elbert in 1888. (4)George himself was buried there in 1891. Today, this place is known as the Keen Cemetery. Sally's tombstone carries the epitaph "Our Mother. In God's own morn her orb will rise once more a star of Paradise."

Most of the plantation had been earlier divided among the children of (4)George with only the homeplace of 47.5 acres remaining at his death in 1891. Oral family history indicates that family members wanted the homeplace to remain in the family. Alfred Remus indicated a desire to buy the homeplace and other family members deferred to him and reframed from bidding against him in the estate auction of (4)George. Alfred was the successful bidder and immediately sold the farm and homeplace to Nathan Cole for the $1,206.40. The newspaper article of the event only records only the event, not the price paid by Alfred Remus at auction. Hard feelings apparently festered for years over this transaction, apparently spurred by Alfred Remus's desire for profit rather than a desire to preserve the land among family members. The Upchurch Trailer Park presently occupies part of the homeplace with the remaining 27 acres owned by Mrs. Martin Williams. Charles Upchurch later lived in the (4)George homeplace.

W.W. Allen and John Calvin Keen were administrators of (4)George Keen's estate.

From **Johnston County Record of Estates** (CR.056.501.32 in NC Archives) the following is noted:

Page 91-96 - Inventory and Account of Sale of Assets of George Keen by W.W. Allen and J.C. Keen, 10-Jul-1891. Sale of Assets -$428.14.

Page 122-123 - Inventory and Account of Sale of Estate of George Keen, 4-Jan-1892. Various items are listed.

Page 124 - Account Current of Estate of George Keen, 9-Mar-1892.

Cash	$923.87
Disbursements	249.46
Balance	$671.27

Children of (4)George William Keen and Sarah Lassiter:

1. Felicia "Phelicia" "Sis" Keen b. 12-Nov-1851 d. 3-Nov-1916 md. (22-Sep-1868) Julius Eldridge Allen b. 9-Apr-1846 d. 13-Jul-1905.

2. John Calvin Keen b. 23-Apr-1853 d. 30-Apr-1924 md. (8-Apr-1877) Mary Elizabeth "Elizer" Lee b. 9-Oct-1857 d. 5-Jun-1915.

3. (5)George William Keen b. 11-Jun-1855 d. 23-Feb-1920 md. 1st (23-Jan-1880) Virginia Idelia "Delia" Lassiter b. 3-Feb-1863 d. 31-Aug-1901, 2nd (7-May-1904) Maggie Lee b. 12-Aug-1862 d. 22-Feb-1932.

4. Alfred Remus Keen b. 5-Dec-1856 d. 21-Nov-1924 md. (10-Dec-1897) Sarah Idelia Stephenson b. 22-Sep-1851 d. 13-Apr-1932.

5. Elizabeth Helion Keen b. ca-1856 d. 9-Oct-1918 md. 1st (29-Jun-1881) William Hawkins Allen b. 10-Jan-1834 d. 3-Mar-1894, 2nd (18-Nov-1896) Jonas Reaves b. ? d. ca-Jan-1919.

6. Elijah Elbert Keen b. 12-Apr-1860 d. 20-Jul-1888 moved to Alabama... drowned at age 28.

7. Sarah Catherine Keen b. 18-Apr-1862 d. 7-Nov-1910 md. (30-Nov-1882) Kincheon Larkin Barbour b. 8-Feb-1849 d. 23-Feb-1920.

8. Edith H. Keen b. ca-1864 d. ca-1887 md. (6-Apr-1882) George Preston Dunn b. ca-1861 d. ca-1926

9. James Preston Keen b. 14-Aug-1870 d. 5-May-1928 md. (28-Nov-1889) Ava Williams and md. 2nd (23-Feb-1900) Lula Myrick b. 5-Jul-1881 d. 20-Aug-1930 in Alabama.

10. Mary Ella Keen b. 15-Sep-1871 d. 29-Jan-1937 md. (19-Mar-1899) Horace B. Williams b. 24-Feb-1873 d. 16-Sep-1914.

Chapter 6

The Felicia Keen Family

GRANDFATHER:(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
1st Child: **Phelicia"Sis" Keen**

Phelicia "Sis" Keen b. 12-Nov-1851 d. 3-Nov-1916 md. (22-Sep-1868) Julius Eldridge Allen son of A.M. Allen and Ridley UNKNOWN, b. 9-Apr-1846 d. 13-Jul-1905

Julius and Sis lived on a farm near Allen's Crossroads and raised seven children plus Edith Dunn, daughter of her sister, Edith Keen. Oral tradition indicates that Julius "was a man of spotless character."

Phelicia Emmaline Keen Allen
Photo from Dorcas Taylor

1. John Allen b. 2-Feb-1872 d. 2-Aug-1897

   John never married and is buried in Juniper Church Cemetery.

2. Lucy Emma Allen b. ca-1874 d. ca-1895 md. (10-Apr-1895) Marion "May" Parker son of J.B. & E.E. Parker b. 1-May-1872.

   a. Mary Addie Parker md. Unknown Massengill

      (1) Royie V. Massengill

3. Betty Tomelia Allen b. 3-Feb-1877 d. 13-Jun-1932 md. (24-Nov-1895) Isiah "Doc" Parker son of J.B. & Elizabeth Parker b. 11-Sep-1874 d. 26-Sep-1936.

   Doc and Betty are buried at Juniper Church Cemetery.

   a. Mary Addie Parker b.2-Mar-1897 d. 2-Dec-1980 md. Les Massengill b. 28-Mar-1895 d. 7-Oct-1964.

      (1) Herbert Massengill b. ca-1918 d. ca-1964.

      (2) Roy Massengill b. ca-1918 d. ca-1964.

   b. Hezekiah Karl Parker b. 17-Apr-1899 d. 14-Dec-1949 md (27-Apr-1920) Emma Parker

   c. Bettie P. Parker b. ca-1900 md. (6-Jan-1918) Percy B. Massengill

d. Joseph B. Parker, Jr. b. ca-1902 d. ca-1939 md. (25-Nov-1928) Golda Dunn b. ca-1902 d. ca-1970.

e. Callie E. Parker b. 1-Sep-1903 d. 25-Sep-1935 md. Harvey Barbour

f. Leola M. Parker b. ca-1906 md. 1st Monroe Parker md. 2nd Wallace Pearce.

g. Young Junious Parker b. 22-Sep-1909 d. 19-Feb-1966 md. (10-Oct-1931) Maude Allen

h. Pearl Parker

i. Jeff Parker md. Vida Moore

j. Everette Parker md. Thelma Capps

k. Cartha Parker md. 1st Unknown Blackman md. 2nd Lawson Barefoot

4. Aggie Zoleta Allen b. 3-Feb-1879 d. 26-Apr-1945 md. 1st (6-Jan-1897) Y. John Hockaday son of W.L. and R.W. Hockaday b. 4-Jul-1873 d. 5-Sep-1919 in Johnston Co, md. 2nd Rev. A. D. Johnson of Coats, N.C..

From May 1, 1945 **Smithfield Herald**
Mrs. A. D. Johnson

"FOUR OAKS - Mrs. A. D. Johnson, 67, died Saturday afternoon at the home of a daughter, Mrs. H. C. Pender, following a stroke of paralysis suffered on Thursday morning. She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Julius Allen of Four Oaks."

"She was married to Y.J. Hockaday in 1896 and after his death she was married to the Rev. A. D. Johnson of Coats. She was a member of Hannah's Creek Primitive Baptist Church."

"Funeral services were conducted Monday afternoon at the home of her daughter, Mrs. H.C. Pender of Four Oaks Route 3, and burial followed in the Four Oaks cemetery. Elder Xure Lee, her pastor, officiated, assisted by the Rev. H.K. Shepard, pastor of Barbour's Chapel Advent Church."

Surviving are five sons, Daniel L. Hockaday, Y.J. Hockaday of Four Oaks, Route 3; J.F. Hockaday of Benson, Route 1; E. T. Hockaday of Baltimore, Md., and Capt. Golden Hockaday of Fort Sill, Okla.; two daughters, Mrs. W.W. Morgan of Middlesex and Mrs. H.C. Pender of Four Oaks, Route 3, and a sister, Mrs. Florence Lee of Four Oaks."

a. Pou Hockaday md. Unknown Unknown

b. Fulton Hockaday md. Cora Belle Moore

1. Fulton Odell Hockaday, Jr. md. Dixie Lane

(a) Jeffrey Hockaday

(b) John Hockaday

(c) Danny Hockaday

2. Billy Odell Hockaday md. Doris Jean Allen

3. Christina Hockaday md Jerry Myatt

c. Ruth Hockaday md. Vester Pender

d. Daniel L. Hockaday md. Nola Baker

e. Mattie Hockaday md. W.W. Morgan of Middlesex, N.C.

f. Jason F. Hockaday of Benson, N.C.

g. Captain Golden Hockaday

5. Julius "Bud" Eldridge Allen b. 18-Aug-1886 d. 20-Nov-1934 md. (6-Feb-1910) Dellie E. Adams daughter of D.B. and Pherby Adams b. ca-1889 d. ca-1976

a. David Elton Allen md. Irene Dunn

b. Pheobe Emmaline Allen md. Vernon Cole

(1) Mary Belle Cole md. Shelton Knowles

(a) Cynthia Marie Knowles

(b) Christopher Scott Knowles

(2) Vernon Cole, Jr. md. 1st Maxine Stanley md. 2nd Ann Unknown

(a) Ronnie Allen Cole

(b) Jimmy Russell Cole

6. Lissie Florence Allen b. 12-Mar-1886 d. 28-May-1959 md. (5-Mar-1919) Ira Lee son of James B. and Sarah Lee b. ca-1869.

a. Eloise Lee md. Leon Johnson

(1) Carolyn Johnson

(2) Keith Johnson

(3) Kay Johnson md. Jackie McLamb

(4) Debbie Johnson md. Danny Barbour

b. Melba Lee md. David Stanley

c. Truman Lee md. Allene Moore

7. Sarah Emma Allen b. ca-1880 d. 10-Oct-1927 md. 1st (30-Mar-1899) Jeremiah Parker md. 2nd (22-Nov-1911) J. E. Moore.

Chapter 7

The John Calvin Keen Family

ANDFATHER:(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
2nd Child: John Calvin Keen

John Calvin Keen b. 23-Apr-1853 d. 30-Apr-1924 md. (8-Apr-1877) Mary Elizabeth "Eliza" Lee daughter of John "Jackie" Lee and Anne Elizabeth Lassiter b. 9-Oct-1857 in Johnston County, d. 5-Jan-1915 in Johnston County.

J.C. & Mary Lee
Photo from Avis Bouldin

As a farmer and large landowner, John Calvin installed a steam engine around 1880 to operate a Saw Mill, Grist Mill, Shingle Mill, Cane Mill and Cotton Gin on 100 acres of land given to him by his father located just east of the present (7)George Keene residence. John built a log cabin while clearing his land and raised five of his nine children in it. In 1889, he built a frame house on the Keen Road just to the east of I-95 and (7)George Keen's residence. Beside farming, John was a land surveyor and county commissioner. John installed a sawmill on South Main Street in Four Oaks and supplied lumber for area builders including houses he built for his daughters. Charlie Stroup bought the Main Street mill and ran it for several years.

John and friends built the first Primitive Baptist Church in the area. He also built one of the earliest schools in the county located on his land just back of the present (7)George Keene residence. The building still remains, although the last classes were taught around the turn-of-the century. Many of the early local children went to this one-room school, including Jesse Milton Keen. John Albert Keen and Jesse Milton Keen were named executors of John Calvin's estate, copies of which are on file at the N.C. Archives in Raleigh, NC.

John and Mary are buried in the Keen Cemetery on SR 1178 east of Four Oaks. On the tombstone of J.C. and Mary Keen the epitaph reads "On thee our fond and tender thoughts will ever dwell."

The Smithfield Herald, Tuesday May 6, 1924.
J. C. KEEN PASSES TO GREAT BEYOND
Succumbs After Lingering Illness; was a former member of Board of Commissioners
FATHER COUNTY AUDITOR

News of the death of Mr. J.C. Keen, father of our townsman, Mr. J.A. Keen, county auditor, which occurred Wednesday at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Martha S. Lassiter of near Four Oaks will be received with sadness by all who knew him. Mr. Keen, who was seventy-one years old, had been sick for three or four weeks, infection from a burn on his leg sustained a number of years ago, causing his death.

Mr. Keen was born and reared in Ingrams township and lived there all his life. He married Miss Mary Lee, also of Ingrams, who preceded him to the grave in 1915. To this union were born ten children, eight of whom survive. One child died in childhood and another, Mrs. R. A. Bain, passed away in 1918. Other sons and daughters living are: Messes J.A. Keen of this city; L.C. Keen and N.N. Keen of Four Oaks; and Jesse M. Keen, lineman for the Western Union Telephone Co., Mrs. W.A. Massengill, Mrs. D.C. Lassiter, Mrs. Martha S. Lassiter, and Mrs. Jefferson Lassiter of Four Oaks. Mr. Keen also leaves one sister, Mrs. H.H. Williams of Four Oaks, and two brothers, Mr. A.R. Keen, who lives near Four Oaks, and Mr. J.P. Keen of Alabama.

Daughters of J.C. Keen. L. to R. Martha, Annie, Illa, Ella, & Minnie. Photo from Peggy M. MacDonald.

The deceased was a fine citizen, always interested in the upbuilding of his community. He was a member of the Board of Commissioners from 1908 to 1912 serving his county well in this capacity.

He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church of Four Oaks having been a member for a number of years.

The funeral was preached at the home Thursday afternoon, the service being conducted by Elder Doll Jones of Coats, assisted by Rev. D. H. Tuttle, paster of the M.E. Church of this city. Interment was made in the family burying ground, there being a large crowd of relatives and friends to pay a last tribute of respect.

Ila Keen Lassiter, Ella Keen Lassiter, and Martha Keen Lassiter, daughters of John Calvin Keen. Photo from Cara Lee Smith

Children of John Calvin Keen and Mary Elizabeth Lee:

1. John Albert Keen b. 10-Mar-1879 in Johnston Co. d. 10-Aug-1955 in Johnston Co. md. 1st Molly MacPherson b. ? in Darlington, SC, d. ? Darlington, SC., 2nd Alice Harrington b. 2-Jul-1872 in Hartsville, S.C. d. 26-May-1962 in Fayetteville, NC.

John Albert Keen
Photo from Avis Bouldin

Albert went to Hartsville, SC as a young man to become manager of a department store. He found his wife Molly MacPherson there and after her early death married Alice Harington, also of Hartsville. Upon returning to Four Oaks, Albert opened a dry goods store and later served as county auditor. He also sold burial insurance for the Joe Overby funeral homes. In the latter years of his life, he traveled the county selling **The Raleigh Times** often taking payment in chickens, eggs, and cured meat which he sold to the local merchants. Albert built a home on Tucker Street that was later owned by Sherwood Parker.

Albert and Alice raised Ransom Bain, son of Albert's sister Minnie Keen Bain who died in the influenza epidemic of 1918. Their own son was known as "little Albert", a name he carried as long as his father lived. John and Alice are buried in the Keen Cemetery.

A. Mary Ruth Keen b. 2-May-1905 in Darlington, SC d. 14-Aug-1905 in Four Oaks and is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

B. Albert Harrington Keen b. 22-Sep-1910 in Four Oaks, NC, d. 10-Mar-1971 in Fayetteville, NC. md. (7-Aug-1938) Alta Johnson of Benson, NC b. 27-Aug-1914.

Albert was employed as a pharamicist in Dunn and later in Fayetteville. Alta is a beautician and owned and operated a shop in Fayetteville.

1. Barbara Keen b. 29-May-1940 md. (31-Aug-1959) Delbert Ray Brooks b. 6-Feb-1938.

   a. Katherine A. Brooks b. 25-May-1960

   b. Delbert Ray Brooks, Jr. b. 28-Jul-1963

2. Charles Keen b. 21-May-1944 md. (21-Jun-1967) Emily Jones b. 17-Jun-1947

   a. Brian Scott Keen b. 24-Jun-1968

   b. Stephen Charles Keen b. 8-Jun-1971

3. Katherine Annette Keen md. (3-Jul-1980) Michael Allen Hill

a. Christopher Alan Hill b. 6-May-1982 in Frankfort, Germany.

2. Annie Bessie Keen b. 6-Oct1879 in Johnston Co. d. 4-Oct-1974 md. (5-Feb-1902) Willard Alfred Massengill, son of Willis Edward Massengill and Martha Lassiter b. 10-Nov-1878 d. 19-Mar-1961.

Willard Massengill was a merchant in Four Oaks for more than 50 years, operating a hardware and grocery store with his son Hubert. He was also involved with farming while Annie earned a reputation as an excellent seamstress in taking in sewing in the home. Willard and Annie are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery. The Massengill home stood on Church Street, between the home of Wilbur Austin and their son Hubert.

Willard A. Massengill Family. L. to R. Hubert, Willard, Bessie, Norwood with curls and Annie, standing.
Photo from Peggy MacDonald

The following article was written by Mary Koustenis in 1973 and submitted by Mrs. William P. McDonald, her niece.

"Willard Massengill moved from his father's farm home one mile west of Four Oaks, at the age of 21, with $150.00 to open a little soda shop, where Barnes Furniture store now stands next to Hwy. 301 and the present W.A. Massengill Hdw, store. There were only a few stores and the town had open saloons, and ladies just didn't go downtown at night. Daddy purchased the house which still stands as of 1973, which consisted in part of a big bedroom, dining room, and kitchen in 1900."

"He lived there for 3 years as a bachelor and met Mama (Annie Bessie Keen - daughter of John Calvin Keen) at a church singing, courting her for 3 months and marrying her, Feb. 6, 1902 at her home one mile from Four Oaks.They were married by a Justice of the Peace. Mama made her dark grey wedding dress. Waiters (ushers) were Claude Bandy and Charlie Wellons. Mama had a supper for the wedding party. The newlyweds spent the night at the Bride's home and the next day Daddy put Mama's trunk on the back of his buggy and they drove to Four Oaks and that has been her home for 70 years."

"They had a happy life, adding more rooms to the house. Daddy worked hard, his little soda shop progressed. He added ready made cotton dresses, china bric-a-brac, then finally hardware, furniture, stock feed and supplies. He was in Hardware which is now Sander's Hardware store, then (moved) to the present building. Mama worked as a Milliner (sewing flowers and lace on hats), for Mr. Jim Creech at his store on Main Street to help Daddy with expenses."

"Daddy worked very hard all his life and was very active in church and raised a family of four children (Hubert, Norwood, Bessie,

and Mary), the first born (Lola Mae) having died at the age of three months. Daddy stayed active in the store after making Hurbert part owner in 1927. In the winter of 1961 (Jan. 19), he was at the store and decided to go to the bank to make a deposit in the early afternoon. The front doors being closed, he went to the side door of the bank, stepped on a small patch of ice, slipped and fell, breaking his hip joint. He came through the operation fine, the joint healing and one Sat. night as Mama was fixing his bath water, getting out of the chair he told Mama he was cold. He then fell, went into a coma and passed away on March 16, 1961. Mama still continued to live at home, spending her nights with Hubert, also visiting Bessie and myself. In 1972, at the age of 92, she decided to close her home and spend her remaining years at the homes of Hubert and Mary."

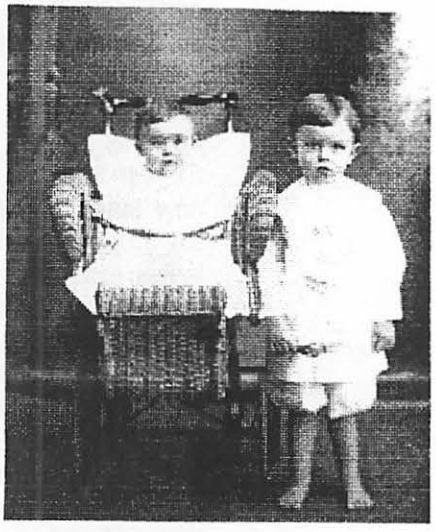
"Update, 1975"

"Mama passed away Oct. 26, 1974 at the age of 95. Besides the four children they raised, they have nine grandchildren, eighteen great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild."

a. Lola May Massengill b. 6-Sep-1903 in Johnston County d. 10-Nov-1903 in Johnston County and is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

b. Hubert Wilburn Massengill b. 5-Sep-1907 md. (10-Jun-1937) Helen Brown b. 20-Sep-1908 in Selma, NC.

Hubert operated the hardware business started by his father on South Main Street until he retired. He remains active as a Director of The Bank of Four Oaks and member of the Baptist Church.



Norwood (in carriage) and Hubert, sons of Willard and Annie Massengill.
Photo from Peggy MacDonald.

(1) Alfred W. Massengill b. 12-Mar-1939 md. Gloria Montgomery b. ca-1944.

Alfred and Gloria made their home in Maryland.

(a) Willard Alfred Massengill, II b. 21-Aug-1969 d. 21-Aug-1969 buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

(b) Nathan Massengill, b. 5-Mar-1970

(c) Amanda Massengill b. 8-Oct-1976

(d) Jason Alfred Massengill b. ca-Aug-1972

c. Norwood Livingston Massengill b. 20-Nov-1909 d. 24-May-1959 md. 1st Bettie Lillian McLemore b. 5-Oct-1912 in Rocky Mount, NC, md. 2nd Blanche Lassiter

Norwood operated a radio repair shop in Four Oaks. Norwood and Lillian are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

Norwood Livingston Massengill at Age of about 20. Photo from Peggy MacDonald.

Children of Norwood and Lillian McLemore:

(1). William Willard Massengill b. 21-Nov-1935 md. (30-Jun-1957) Linda Lee

(a) William Willard Massengill, Jr. b. 5-Oct-1958

(b) Sandra Massengill b. 24-Jan-1962 md. Unknown McQuade

(c) Gail Lee Massengill b. 31-Mar-1963

(2). Peggy Ann Massengill b. 30-Jul-1931 md. William Percy . MacDonald, Jr.

Peggy Anne and William make their home in Fayetteville, N.C.

Peggy Ann with Grandmother Annie Keen Massengill.
Photo by Peggy M. MacDonald

(a) Lilliam Ruth MacDonald b. ca-1952 md. Wayne Clayton Bailey b. ca-1953.

(1) Michael Andrew Bailey b. ca-1975

(2) Sarah Ann Bailey b. ca-1976

(3) Marianne McBride Bailey b. ca-1980

(b) Mary Ann MacDonald b. ca-1956 md. 1st Unknown Hiatt md. 2nd Michael Fleming b. ca-1950.

Mary Ann and Mike live in Fayetteville, N.C.

(1) James William Hiatt b. ca-1977

(2) Peggy Ruth Fleming b. ca-1985

(c) David William MacDonald

David makes his home in Wilmington, N.C.

d. Bessie Hilda Massengill b. 5-Mar-1912 md. (1-Dec-1937) M. Brennon Holt, died in Albertson, NC.

Brennon and Bessie made their home in Greensboro, N.C.

(1). Linda M. Holt md. 1st (ca-1961) Morris L. Sutton md 2nd O.H. Brown.

(a) Dawn Suttom b. 27-Apr-1962

(b) Kevin Sutton b. 10-Sep-1971

(2). Janice R. Holt md. Ken L. Page

(a) Jennifer Page b. 27-Oct-1970

(b) Julie Page b. 10-Jul-1973

(3). Phyllis M. Holt md. Royal J. Adams, III

(a) Anna M. Adams b. 7-Sep-1980

e. Mary Margaret Massengill b. 2-Aug-1914 md. (4-Jun-1935) George Koustenis b. 17-May-1916 in Washington, DC d. 12-Nov-1991 in Tarpon Springs, FL.

(1). Annie Christine Koustenis b. 28-Sep-1936 md. James Trout b. 9-Jun-1936.

(a) Charles William Trout b. 30-Oct-1957 md. (24-Aug-1980) Pamela J. Wheeler.

1. Samuel Edward Trout b. 21-Jul-1982

(b) Jamie Ann Trout b. 3-Jul-1965

(c) Sandra Lee Trout b. 26-Jul-1967

(2). William George Koustenis b. 7-May-1938 md. Nora Lee Keck

(a) Kimberlee Lynn Koustenis b. 28-Apr-1959

(b) Kandis Mary Koustenis b. 7-May-1965

(c) Kelee Ruth Koustenis b. 4-Jun-1968

(3). Charles Phillip Koustenis b. 4-Jul-1940 md. (25-Mar-1967) Terrie Lee Sears

(a) Kendra Lee Koustenis b. 2-Aug-1971

3. Minnie Florence Keen b. 25-Aug-1881 in Johnston County. d. 19-Oct-1918 md. (21-Aug-1912) Ransom A. Bain, Sr. b. 9-Nov-1874 d. 17-Mar-1953.

Ransom and Minnie lived in a two story frame home that her father, John Calvin Keen, built for her on South Main Street., later owned by Charlie Woodall who lived there during his lifetime and then owned by Clay Brown. When Minnie died in the influenza epidemic of 1918, her oldest son Hallie moved to Benson, while the young son Ransom was raised by her brother Albert. Minnie and Ransom are buried in Four Oaks Cemetery.

a. Hallie Bain b. 27-Aug-1913 in Four Oaks d. 6-Sep-1980 in Benson, NC md. Verl Creech.

Hallie is buried in the Benson NC Cemetery.

(1) Michael Bain

b. Infant Bain b. 29-Feb-1917 d. 29-Feb-1917 buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

c. John Ransom Bain, Jr. b. ? in Four Oaks md. Aldene "Dean" Boggs b. 9-Oct-1916.

John was raised by his mother's brother, Albert. He later married and made his home in Bowie, Md. where he was employed by the Federal government in Washington, DC. He is now retired and living in Florida.

(1) John Douglas Bain b. 6-Nov-1956

4. Sarah Caldona Keen b. 17-Jun-1884 in Johnston County d. 2-Nov-1885 in Four Oaks and buried in the Keen Cemetery.

5. Mary Ella Keen b. 13-Jul-1886 in Johnston County d. 29-Mar-1979 in Four Oaks md. (18-Oct-1817) David Calvin Lassiter b. 27-Apr-1877 in Johnston County d. 2-Apr-1967 in Four Oaks.

David was a general foreman with the Atlanta Division of the Western Union Company. David and Ella lived in a house her father built for them on South Main Street, later owned by Mr. and Mrs. Kermit Vinson. The Lassiters also lived in Raleigh until David retired when they built a new home on his farm on the Old Averasboro Road south of Black Creek near Lassiter's Dairy which was later owned by Albin Lassiter. Childless, David and Ella raised Carrie Lee Lassiter, daughter of Ella's sister Martha Lassiter. David and Ella are buried in a Four Oaks Cemetery crypt.

6. Martha Stella Keen b. 23-Jan-1889 in Johnston County d. 31-Oct-1976 in Four Oaks md. (2-May-1912) Chester Lassiter b. 4-May-1886 in Johnston County d. 13-Dec-1920 in Four Oaks.

Chester operated a general merchandise store that sold furniture, clothing, shoes, gift items, as well as groceries. Martha and Chester are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery

a. Mildred Elizabeth Lassiter b. 10-Apr-1913 in Four Oaks d. 15-Apr-1934 in Raleigh, NC md. Roy Cates b. ? in Edenton, NC d. in Edenton, NC.

Roy was a bridge construction engineer. Mildred is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

b. Roy Gardner Lassiter b. 2-Oct-1914 in Four Oaks d. 24-Nov-1990 in Cary, NC md. (1-Jul-1944) Ruby Overstreet b. 4-Apr-1923 in Bedford, VA. d. ca-Jul-1944.

Roy spent most of his life in Roanoke, VA employed by Tom's Snack Company. He retired and lived in Benson and Cary, NC. Roy is buried in Four Oaks Cemetery.

Roy G. Lassiter Photo from Cara Lee Smith

c. Cara Lee "Carrie" Lassiter b. 22-May-1916 in Four Oaks md. (21-Mar-1937) Junius Haywood Smith b. 5-Jul-1913 in Durham, NC.

Cara Lee worked in the NC Health Department and later spent 23 years with the NC Retail Merchants Association where she retired in 1986. Haywood started work as a clothing salesman with Lewis Sporting Goods and later with Martin's, Inc. James B. Womble and Haywood bought out Martin's and renamed the store Womble, Inc. When Womble retired, James Coleman bought out the firm and changed the name to Coleman-Womble. After retirement, Haywood continued to work on a part-time basis with Barrett and Edwards until 1985.

Haywood and Cara Lee Lassiter Smith
Photo from Cara Lee Smith

Family of Junius Haywood Smith: L to R. Haywood, Cara Lee, LTC Richard, Marie, Ellen, Harriet, and Kimberly Smith Photo by Cara Lee Smith

(1) Lt. Col. Richard Haywood Smith b. 21-Apr-1944 in Raleigh, NC md. Ava Marie Coates b. 9-Apr-1943 in Clayton, NC.

Richard graduated from N.C. State University before joining the U.S. Army where he served in Korea, Italy, Indiana, N.C. and Virginia during his service. His last assignment as Secretary of the Army Chief of Staff at the Pentagon. He also served on the Reivew Board.

(A). Ellen Marie Smith b. 10-Nov-1969 in Fayetteville, NC.

(B). Harriet Ann Smith b. 17-Feb-1974 in Raleigh, NC.

(C) Kimberly Ruth Smith b.1-Apr-1977 Williamsburg, VA.

d. Martha Ruth Lassiter b. 24-May-1918 in Four Oaks md. Robert Ross "Bob" Hodges b. 14-Feb-1913 in Hamlet, NC. d. 29-Feb-1980 in Raleigh, NC.

Bob was a Seaboard Railroad conductor and is buried in Montlawn Cemetery in Raleigh.

Ruth Lassiter Hodges
Photo from Floy Durham

e. Floy Madeline Lassiter b. 27-Feb-1920 in Four Oaks md. Carlie Durham b. 14-May-1915 in Four Oaks, NC d. 4-Dec-1967 in Four Oaks, NC.

Carlie farmed while Floy worked with Austin Ready-to-Wear Store in Four Oaks for many years. Carlie is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

Floy Lassiter Durham

(1) Jerry Dennis Durham b. 20-Oct-1940 md. Ann Carol Sanders b. 10-Mar-1940.

Jerry attended N.C. State University where he studied argiculture. He owns and operates a farm two miles west of Four Oaks. Ann is a primary school teacher in Four Oaks.

L to R. Jerry, Ann, Dennis and Keith Durham
Photo from Floy Durham

A. Jerry Dennis Durham, Jr. b. 26-Sep-1966 in Four Oaks.

B. James Keith Durham, III. b. 21-Feb-1971 in Four Oaks.

7. Lonnie Calvin Keene b. 1-Feb-1892 in Johnston County d. 17-Jul-1976 md. (27-Dec-1917) Alma Pierce b. 1-Nov-1892 in Kenly, NC. d. 25-Dec-1984 in Four Oaks, NC.

Lonnie was a farmer, Alma a teacher. Alma was a member of the United Methodist Church in Four Oaks and taught Sunday school there for many years. Both Lonnie and Alma are buried in Four Oaks Cemetery.

In a May 19, 1982 column "Four Oaks History" in **The Four Oaks News,** James Bryan Creech is quoted:

"Lonnie was called for army service near the end of World War I and did not do overseas service. While his regular occupation was farming on his land south of I-95 at the Keen Bridge he also at one time worked at local livery stables buying and selling horses and mules."

"Mrs. Lonnie Keen is the former Alma Pierce, a school teacher of the Kenly area. Her half sister, Helen, was Mrs. Will Keen. Will Keen was a descendent of John Williams and Gideon Keen. Mrs. Alma Keen still resides at her home on the Keen farm." (She died 25-Dec-1984. ed.)

While corresponding with Ms. Alice F. Keene, she related the following story about her grandfather, Lonnie Calvin Keene:

> "One of my favorite memories as a child was spending time with my grandfather Lonnie Calvin Keene. He was a farmer as you have indicated, but he also worked at Henry Johnson's Food Store and also at his stables. He was responsible for looking after the horses. He also bought and sold horses. I can remember riding with my grandfather when I was very young. He had a beautiful horse that was black and white. He could make this horse kneel down on both front legs. I often wished that I could have come along a few years earlier when my grandfather rode horses more. I think that I would have learned a great deal about horses from him. He was very much an outdoors person. He loved to farm, to raise pigs, to hunt, to fish, and just to enjoy nature. In looking back I think I learned much of my love and appreciation for nature from him."

Children of Lonnie and Alma Keene:

a. Joseph Carlyle Keene b. 2-Dec-1920 in Johnston County md. Betty Pearl Allen b. 9-Mar-1932 d. 15-Aug-1978.

Carlyle farms on the Keen Road in Johnston County. Betty is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery

b. James Otis Keene b. 2-Dec-1921 in Johnston County d. 22-Feb-1981 md. Josephine Young.

Otis is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

(1) Infant Son Keene b. 22-Dec-1947 d. 22-Dec-1947

(2) Alice Faye Keene b. 23-Dec-1950.

Alice is a graduate of East Carolina University with a Masters Degree. She is employed by the Pitt County School System and lives in Greenville, NC.

(3) James (Jim) Wilton Keene b. ca-1952.

Jim is a graduate of N.C. State University and is employed by the state in the Department of Human Resources. Jim lives in Raleigh, NC where he is an accomplished pianist and organist. .

c. Larry Clifford Keene b. 6-Feb-1923 in Four Oaks d. 17-Feb-1974 in Four Oaks and is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery..

d. Jack Hooks Keene b. 16-Apr-1927 in Four Oaks d. 15-Aug-1928 in Four Oaks.

Jack died as an infant and is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

e. John Horace Keene b. ca-1934 in Four Oaks md. Catherine Moore b. ca-1940.

Horace is Senior Vice President of The Bank of Four Oaks.

(1) John Calvin Keene b. 5-Jan-1962.

John graduated from the Gupton-Jones College of Mortuary Science in Georgia and has been employed by the McLaurin Funeral Home in Clayton and the Southeastern Mortician Service in Raleigh, NC. He presently operates Keene Monuments in Four Oaks.

(2) Joseph Clifford Keene b. 28-Nov-1963.

Joseph lives in Four Oaks and works with Johnson Controls.

(3) Paul Earl Keene b. 16-Jul-1967.

Paul is a paramedic in Surf City, N.C.

(4) Phillip Ray Keene b. 16-Jul-1967.

Ray is a paramedic in Surf City, N.C.

f. Infant Keene b. 7-Mar-__.

8. Nathan "Nat" Henry Keene b. 10-Jul-1894 in Four Oaks d. 28-Jun-1956 in Four Oaks
   md. Ruth Berkholtz b. 24-Nov-1900 in Richmond, VA. d. 17-Feb-1977 in Johnston Co.

In a May 19, 1982 column "Four Oaks History" in **The Four Oaks News**, James Bryan Creech is quoted:

"From his childhood, Nathan showed little interest in farming. Grassing cotton and plowing corn was drudgery of which he had to be driven. His delight was in helping his father run the steam engine which powered a sawmill, cotton gin and shingle mill on the Keen farm. All of his active working life was spent doctoring engines of all types - steam, diesel, gasoline, and electric."

"Before the First World War, Nathan went to Richmond, Va. to work for the Snyder Pump and Well Company. When he went into the army in WW1, he was an airplane engine mechanic with the 1099 Aero Squardron. He was in the group of men who assembled the first American aircraft engines in England and later he saw service in France.

Nat Keen in 1943
Photo from Avis Bouldin

Ruth Berkholtz Keen in the 1970s
Photo from Avis Bouldin

After the war Nat worked briefly for the pump and well company and then returned to Four Oaks. He installed the big Diesel engine which powered the J.W. Sanders cotton gin (Star Gin Company) through the 1920s and 30s. In these years when he was the top gin mechanic in the town, he also installed water systems and worked on truck, auto, and boat engines."

Nat and Ruth are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

a. Avis Lillian Keene b. 19-Sep-1923 in Four Oaks md. Joseph Edwards Bouldin b. 23-Mar-1920 d. ca-Feb-1968.

Avis Boudin with daughters. Left to right, Bonnie, Jane, Avis, Ruth, Sarah, & Lillian. 1970.
Photo from Avis Bouldin

Avis graduated from Atlantic Christian College and is a retired high school and primary school teacher and makes her home in Buie's Creek, N.C.

(1) Avis Lillian Bouldin b. 2-Mar-1946 in Smithfield, NC. md. 1st (12-Feb-1966) Charles "Chuck" Lloyd Lindsey of Ohio md. 2nd (30-Apr-1990) Charles David Wrench, Jr. b. 13-Jul-1958 in Dunn, NC.

(A). Joseph Edmunds Lindsey b. 22-Jan-1965

(B). Avis Lillian Lindsey b. 12-Apr-1967 md. Thomas Birchenbaugh b. Calcuim, NY.

(1.) Scott Thomas Birchenbaugh b. 8-Apr-1987 in Chapel Hill, NC.

(2.) Jeffrey Doyle Birchenbaugh b. 23-Oct-1989 in New York.

(3.) Casey Nichole Birchenbaugh b. 20-Apr-1992

(C). Michael Wayne Lindsey b. 3-Sep-1970 md. Jennifer Unknown

(1.) Shawn Michael Lindsey b. 13-Jan-1992.

(D). Doris Faye Lindsey b. 28-Aug-1973

(1.) Michael Lindsey b. 25-Aug-1990

(2.) Amanda Lindsey b. 19-Oct-1991

(E). Merle Nadine Lindsey b. 23-Aug-1974

(2) Sarah Elizabeth Bouldin b. ca-1949 in Oxford, NC md. 1st (23-Jul-1970) W. R. Beal md. 2nd (13-Apr-1982) Steve Webb.

(A). Troy Allen Beal b. 15-Feb-1974

(3) Littlie Ruth Bouldin b. ca-1951 in Oxford, NC md. Donald Neil Gill

(A). Cyrus Neil Gill b. 22-Aug-1976

(4) Mary Jane Bouldin b. ca-1952 in Oxford, NC. md. Donald Curtis Strother.

(A). Donald Worley Strother b. 11-Feb-1982

(B). Litha Avis Strother b. 11-Feb-1982

(5) Bonnie Keen Bouldin b. ca-1956 in Oxford, NC.

b. Worley Harr Keene b. 5-Jul-1928 in Four Oaks md. Mary Smith Henderson b. 11-Jul-1932 in Smithfield, NC.

Worley is a graduate of Atlantic Christian College and has a Masters Degree from East Carolina University. He served as assistant principal at South Johnston high School and later as head of the Science Department. Mary taught in the same school. As a retired high school teacher, Worley purchased and remodeled the Alton Massengill home on Main Street where he and Mary make their home. Mary is a nurse and teacher. Mary had two children by a previous marriage that lived with Worley and Mary as their own.

(1) Sandra Margaret Henderson b. 7-Sep-1959 md. Jose Felipe Mahiquey.

Sandra and Jose make their home in Benson, NC. where Sandra works in primary school.

(a) Mary Heather Mahiquey b. 30-May-1991

(2) William "Bill" Thomas Henderson, II b. 30-Mar-1965.

Bill is an optometrist in Dallas, TX

9. Ila Mae Keen b. 15-Dec-1896 in Four Oaks d. 14-Jan-1979 in Four Oaks md. (4-Mar-1920)Jeff Lassiter b. 16-Nov-1894 in Four Oaks d. 9-Sep-1965 in Four Oaks.

Quoting the May 19, 1982 article by James Bryan Creech, "Ila, the youngest daughter, married Jeff Lassiter who saw service in the First World War. In the 1920s and 30s, Mr. Lassiter farmed on land north of Four Oaks given him by his father, Part Lassiter, and land inherited by his wife from her father, John Calvin Keen. Mr. and Mrs. Lassiter also bought a share of the Keen farm inherited by her brother Nathan. The Lassiters built a house on the Keen road south of U.S. 301 on land that was once a part of the Charlie Grady farm."

"Later Jeff Lassiter and his son, Earl, operated a market and grocery in a building Mr. Lassiter built on North Main Street in Four Oaks (two doors north of Hockaday Sign Co.)."

"I remember Mrs. Ila Lassiter for her bright smile and love of flowers. The yard of her home bloomed with flowers of many varieties and she shared them with her friends Sunday by Sunday by bringing them to the Four Oaks Baptist Church. Mr. Lassiter died in 1965 and Mrs. Lassiter in 1979. Both are buried in the old part of the Four Oaks cemetery.

a. Infant Lassiter b. 27-Aug-1920 in Four Oaks d. 27-Aug-1920 in Four Oaks and is buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

b. Jesse Earl Lassiter b. 9-Jan-1922 in Four Oaks md. Esther Grey Jones b. 1-Nov-1926 in Smithfield, NC daughter of B. D. Jones of Smithfield, NC..

Earl operated a market and grocery in Four oaks with his father.

(1) David Earl Lassiter b.21-Jul-1946 in Four Oaks.

David is unmarried and employed by the Dixie Block Co. of Four Oaks, NC..

(2) Joan Andrea Lassiter b.26-Jun-1952 in Four Oaks.

Joan is unmarried and worked for many years with Johnston Memorial Hospital.

9. Jesse Milton Keen b. 11-May-1899 in Johnston County d. 15-Jul-1989 in Four Oaks md. (27-Dec-1934) Esther "Eva" Maynard b. 1-Oct-1909 in Wade, NC. d. 30-Nov-1990 in Four Oaks, NC. daughter of James P. Maynard and Eva Cotton of Wade, NC.

From a May 26, 1982 article in "Four Oaks History" in **The Four Oaks News,** I quote James Bryan Creech in an article about his good friend Jesse Keen.

"In 1922 Jesse Keen left Four Oaks to work with the Atlanta division of the Western Union Company. His brother-in-law, David Lassiter, was a general foreman in the Atlanta division which included 10 southern states. Jesse worked in more than half of these states setting poles and pulling wire at a time when most of the work was done by manpower rather than machinery. Some of the

worst work he remembers was setting poles in Florida swamps during the land boom there in the mid 1920s."

"The boom in Florida real estate collapsed, the national economy staggered to a halt and the Western Union Company laid off hundreds of men. Jesse was an assistant gang foreman when his job disappeared in 1933. He returned to Four Oaks to stay, a move which has suited him well for almost 50 years now."

"Shortly he married Eva Maynard of Wade, and they set up housekeeping in the house he inherited from his father. The Keen homeplace near Keen's crossroads is now the home of Kenneth Jackson who recently remodeled it. In 1958 Mr. and Mrs. Keen bought the William Sanders house on East Sanders Street in Four Oaks and have lived there since that time."

"After coming back to Four Oaks in 1933, Jesse worked with his brother-in-law, Willard Massengill, in the Massengill hardware and grocery business.

Later, he worked with Tom Sanders in the D.H. Sanders hardware business. Reaching retirement age, Jesse came out of the stores and took on some jobs that suited his nature which is somewhat like that of his brother, Nathan Keen. He likes to put things together. He gets satisfaction from building things, restoring things, repairing things. In the past 15 years we have worked together on several projects including building new houses, repairing houses, building the town library, working on the Baptist church building, and restoring a log house. We also cooperate every year in spraying apple and peach trees. Both of us are regarded as neighborhood handymen and when one of us can hide or talk his way out of these endless jobs the other is sure to be caught."

"Mrs. Eva Keen, a primary teacher who worked in the Four Oaks school for 16 or her 25 years of service, had retired. Mr. and Mrs. Keen are active in the Four Oaks Baptist Church. He is a former deacon and church treasurer. She is a member of the choir, a former Sunday school teacher, and youth organization leader."

"At the rear of the Keen home is a reminder of the George Keen who in the 1790s began to buy land on Big Juniper and Little Juniper Branches southeast of Four Oaks. It is a farm bell that sounded over the Keen plantation. The bell is not nearly so old as the farm but it is a link to the land where so many Keens have their origin."

Jesse and Eva are buried in the Keen Cemetery.

a. Mary Maynard Keen b. 26-Sep-1937 in Four Oaks md. Edward Shepherd Lassiter b. 31-Jul-1935 in Four Oaks son of Shepherd Ramson Lassiter and Annie Barnes.

Shepherd is a graduate of N.C. State University where he majored in animal husbandry. After their marriage, Mary and Shepherd lived in New Bern and later Kinston before moving to Dunn to manage the Dunn Division of Murphy Farms. Mary is a graduate of East Carolina University and is an elementary school teacher. She taught at Parrott Academy in Kinston and primary school in Harnet County. They live at Route 3, Four Oaks, NC.

(1) Edward Keen Lassiter b. 30-Sep-1963 md. Vonda Bass.

Edward graduated from Dunn High School and attended Wake Forest University.

(2) Mary Leigh Lassiter b. 26-Sep-1966.

Mary graduated from Dunn High School in 1983.

b. Jessie Margaret Keen b. 9-Mar-1946 in Four Oaks md. Richard "Dickie" Martin Sumrell b. 9-Mar-1946 in Oxford, NC son of F. Martin Sumrell of Snow Hill, NC.

Jessie graduated from East Carolina University, majoring in history, a subject she teaches today at J. F. Webb High School. Richard graduated from NC State University, majoring in agronomy and is employed as Area Distribution Manager for Eastern United States Wayne Feed Division of Contentinental Grain Company. He is a Major and serves as Operations and Intelligence Officer for the 113th Field Infantry Brigade in Greensboro, N.C. Jessie and Dickie make their home in Oxford, N.C.

(1) Margarget Elizabeth "Beth" Sumrell b.27-Aug-1976.

(2) Jonathan Martin Sumrell b. 22-Feb-1981.

Chapter 8

The (5)George W. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER:(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
3rd Child: **(5)George W. Keen**

(5)George William Keen b. 11-Jun-1855 in Ingrams Township, Johnston Co., NC d. 23-Feb-1920 md. 1st (23-Jan-1880) Virginia Idelia "Delia" Lassiter, daughter of James O. Lassiter and Eleanor Johnson who lived about 5 miles west of Four Oaks, NC. b. 3-Feb-1863 d. 31-Aug-1901, md. 2nd (7-May-1904) Maggie Lee b. 12-Aug-1862 in Sampson Co, daughter of R.C. and Elizabeth Lee, d. 22-Feb-1932 in Johnston Co, NC.

(5)George William Keen was the third child and second son of (4)George William Keen, born just six years before the beginning of the Civil War. He grew up as the son of a respected Johnston County plantation owner whose 10 children probably received better than average education and attention. (4)George was also a Justice of the Peace and respected Ingrams Township representative, although his stand for the preservation of the Union made him extremely unpopular during and after the Confederate Years.

Of the five sons of (4)George Keen, Elijah Elbert moved to Texas in May, 1886 and later to Alabama where he drowned in July, 1888, while John Preston ran afoul of the law and quickly left Johnston County in 1893 to settle in Alabama. The remaining three sons, John Calvin, (5)George, and Alfred Remus eventually divided the plantation and became farmers. John Calvin received the land bounded on the east by Highway 96 and Gideon Keen's land and extended west to the residence of the present (7)George William Keen on the Keen Road. (5)George Keen's land bordered John Calvin's land and extended west to just past the present Highway I-95. Alfred Remus received the balance of the land bordering (5)George's land and extending west to the railroad. (4)George retained 47 1/2 acres around his homeplace on the old Smithfield Road. This land was later sold at auction at his death.

(5)George built his home on the south side of the Keen Road just west of the present Highway I-95 within sight of his father's home. Six years before the railroad and Four Oaks were built, (5)George married Virginia Idelia "Delia" Lassiter, daughter of James O. Lassiter, Jr. and Eleanor Johnson. Delia gave (5)George ten children, four boys, four girls, and two infants who died young. In 1901, Delia died leaving 20 year-old William (the oldest) and seven other children down to Katie (the youngest) who was less than a year and a half old. Faced with a house full of young children, (5)George soon married 42 year old Maggie Lee of Sampson County who became an excellent mother to the children. (5)George and Maggie never had children of their own.

Farming occupied all of (5)George's 64 years of life. Dividing his land among his four sons, three of them built homes within sight of the homeplace. Only Robert chose to live in Four Oaks and become a merchant. During his lifetime, (5)George witnessed the Civil War, the building of Four Oaks and the railroad, building of a new concrete Highway 301 to accommodate automobiles (replacing the old Smithfield road as the main North/South road), and installation of electricity in his home. These improvements transformed his farm from an isolated Ingrams Township farm to a suburb of a small booming rural town, well connected to the world with the railroad and a modern concrete highway.

(5)George died in 1920 of influenza and pneumonia some 12 years before Maggie. (5)George and both wives are buried in the Keen Cemetery. A large obelisk monument contains notations for (5)George, Idelia, and Maggie. Epitaph are as follows: (5)George - "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.", Idelia - "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall inherit eternal life.", and Maggie - "Just as I am, thou wilt receive welcome pardon, cleanse relieve."

William and George Daniel Keen were estate administrators for (5)George Keen's estate, which is on file in the N.C. Archives in Raleigh, NC.

The Smithfield Herald, February 24, 1932

MRS. G.W. KEEN DIES

Mrs. G.W. Keen, 70, died quietly Wednesday afternoon, February 24 at the home of her son, G.D. Keene, in Four Oaks. Death came after a lingering illness of nearly four months brought on by the infirmities of old age.

Funeral services were conducted Thursday afternoon at three o'clock from the Baptist church where the deceased had been a member for a number of years. Rev. A.L. Brown of Benson, pastor the church, officiated. From there the remains were taken to the family cemetery near Four Oaks and she was laid to rest beside her deceased husband. In the midst of a very large crowd of relative and friends the last rites were witnessed. Lovely floral designs carried by the grand-daughters and nieces of the deceased covered the newly made grave. The pallbearers were: J.A. Keene, L.C. Keene, S.W. Brown, Clay Brown, S. M. Boyette and Bert Barefoot all of Four Oaks.

Mrs. Keene was originally from Sampson county, being the daughter of the late R.C. and Elizabeth Lee. On May 7, 1904, she married G.W. Keene of Four Oaks and has resided there since that time. Being the second wife of G.W. Keene, she had a number of stepchildren. Nevertheless, she was always a devoted mother to their every need. And this devotion to her family, neighbors and friends will forever linger as a fragrant memory. As a granddaughter, I knew and loved her for her many superior qualities. During the last two years she has lived in our home. This intimacy caused us to love her more which made it even harder to give her up. Yet God's voice called and we must be comforted.

Surviving are the following children: W.M. Keene, G.D. Keene, R.A. Keene, and J.R. Keene of Four Oaks; Mrs. R. E. Barbour of Benson; Mrs. G.W. Wood, Mrs. Alonzo Johnson and Mrs. Dllas Allen of Four Oaks.

--A granddaughter.

The Smithfield Herald, June, 1920

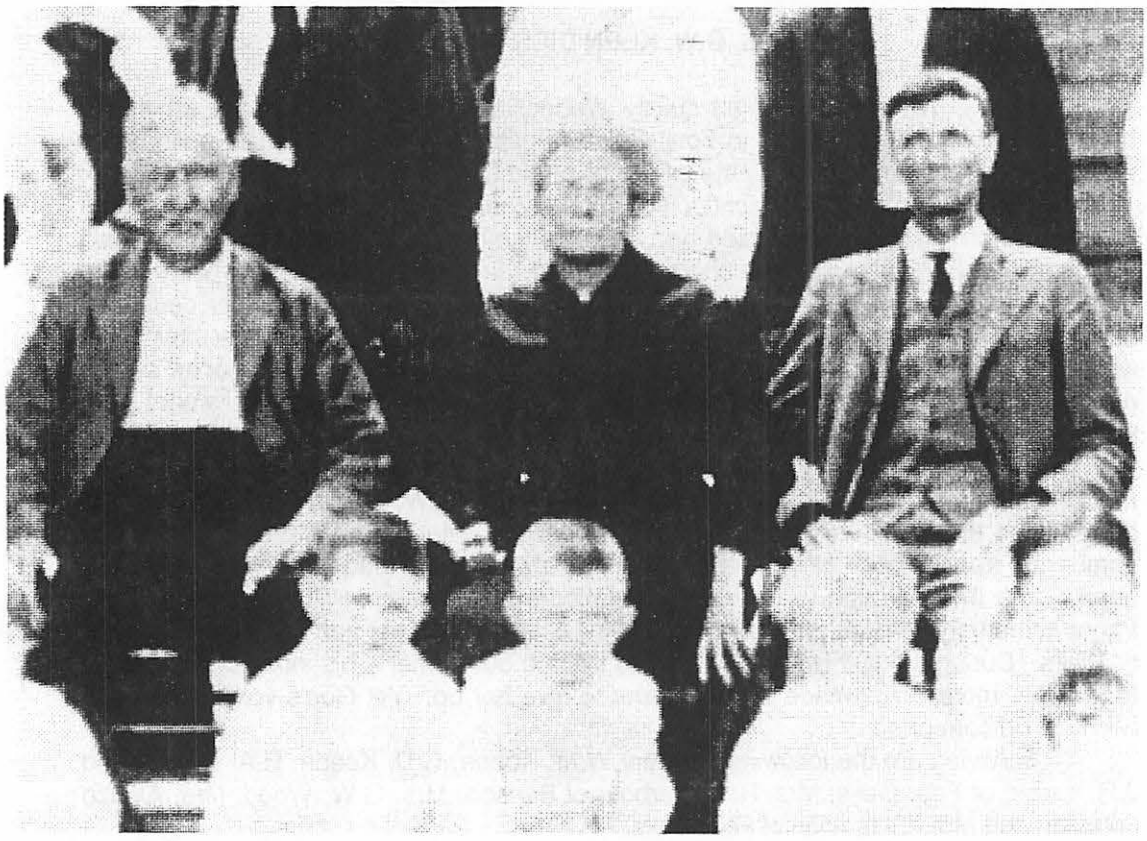
IN MEMORIAM

On Monday morning, February 23, about five o'clock, the spirit of George William Keen of Four Oaks took its flight to the great beyond. He was taken one week prior to his death with influenza, pneumonia following. He was afflicted nearly all his life but was able to be up until the last week of his life, which was spent in intense agony. He was born June 11, 1855, and died February 23, 1920, making his stay on earth sixty four year, eight months and twelve days. He was twice married, first to Miss. Virginia Ideliah Lassiter, and to this union was born ten children as follows: Messrs William, G.D., R.A., and J.R. Keen, Mrs. R. E. Barbour, Mrs. G.W. Wood, Mrs. Cora Johnson and Mrs. Kattie Allen.

Their mother and two children preceded him to the grave several years ago. He later married Miss. Maggie Lee who survives him. He never united with any church but was a strong belieber in the Primitive Baptist faith.

Thou art gone, our precious father,
Never more can'st thou return;
Thou shalt sleep a peaceful slumber
Till the resurrection morn,
When we shall meet to part no more
In that home beyond the sky.

A DAUGHTER.



A large picture of the gathering of the (5)George William Keen Family was taken in June, 1920. Too large for my scanner, I have enlarged a center portion of the picture to show L. to R. (5)George William Keen, Maggie Lee, and Elder Exue Lee Grandchildren down front are Theron, Marvin, Unidentified, and Raymond Keen. Photo from Dorcas Taylor

Children of (5)George William and Delia Lassiter Keen:

1. James William Keen b. 8-Apr-1881 d. 7-Nov-1958 md. 1st Bettie Florence Lassiter b. 17-Mar-1885 d. 19-Apr.-1948 daughter of John William Lassiter and Elizabeth "Betsey" Francis Hardee, 2nd Nettie Dupree.

2. Sallie Ann Keen b. 22-Mar-1883 d. 22-Aug-1935 md. Robert Elijah Barbour b. 22-Aug-1877 in Elevation Township in Johnston Co. d. 22-Nov-1963.

3. (6)George Daniel Keen b. 28-Aug-1884 d. 31-Jan-1955 md. (14-Feb-1907) Ida Jane Creech b. 10-Oct-1887 d. 23-Oct-1962.

4. Lucy Ellen Keen b. 28-Nov-1886 d. 21-Dec-1968 md. (30-Nov-1904) George Washington Wood b. 22-Jun-1890 d. 11-Jul-1960.

5. Vessie Cora Keen b. 7-Jan-1889 d. 13-Oct-1946 md. Alonzo "Lonnie" Johnson b. 5-May-1880 d. 10-Apr-1936.

6. Robert Almon Keen b. 28-Sep-1891 d. 20-Nov-1950 md. 1st (19-Jun-1911) Violet Kate Lassiter b. 17-Jan-1895 d. 22-Jul-1926, md. 2nd Francis Lee Boyette d. 8-Aug-1969 , md. 3rd Laura UNKNOWN, and md. 4th Lois Cabag Carnes.

7. John Richard Keen b. 8-Jun-1896 d. 27-Feb-1960 md. 1st Eula Martha Lassiter b. 10-Nov-1903 d. 16-Jun-1935, 2nd Gladys Creech.

8. Katie Florence Keen b. 21-Apr-1900 d. 8-Apr-1952 md. Dallas "Toby" Allen b. 30-Aug-1897 d. 23-Feb-1971.

9. Infant Keen died young and buried in Keen Cemetery.

10. Infant Keen died young and buried in Keen Cemetery.

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
1st Child: **James William Keen**

James William Keen b. 8-Apr-1881 in Johnston County d. 7-Nov-1958 in Four Oaks md. 1st Bettie Florence Lassiter b. 17-Mar-1885 d.19-Apr-1948 daughter of John William Lassiter and Elizabeth "Betsey" Francis Hardee, 2nd Nettie Parker Dupree.

William made his home in Four Oaks and in later years, in his grandfather (4)George Keen's house on the old Smithfield Road, next to the Keen Cemetery. William was a farmer. William and Bettie are buried at Clement Church in Elevation Township on SR 1334 about 5 miles from Four Oaks.

From **The Smithfield Herald,** 9-Nov-1958.

"William Keen, 77, died Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the home of his son, Theron Keen of Four Oaks, after a lingering illness."

"A funeral service was conducted Sunday afternoon at 2:30 at Clement Primitive Baptist Church on Route 3, Four Oaks, of which he was a member. Elder T. Floyd Adams of Willow Springs officiated, Elder Shepherd Langdon, pastor, assisted. Interment followed in the church cemetery."

"Surviving in addition to his son are his wife, Mrs. Nettie Parker Keen; two other sons, Raymond Keen of Four Oaks and Earl Keen of Wilson's Mills; two daughters, Mrs. H.W. Creech of Four Oaks and Mrs. Louis Bryan of Corpus Christi, Texas; one brother, John Keen of Route 1, Four Oaks; one sister, Mrs. George Wood of Route 2, Four Oaks; and several grandchildren and step-grandchildren."

1. Hubert A. Keen b. 14-Aug-1904 d. 17-Jan-1906 died young and is buried at Clement Church Cemetery.

2. William Keen b. 6-Sep-1906 d. 9-Jan-1907 died young and is buried at Clememt Church Cemetery.

3. Florence Keen md. Hervie W. Creech. They live in Four Oaks.

4. James Theron Keen b. 11-Jun-1910 d. 4-Jan-1976 md. Mildred Keen b. 14-Jan-1914 d. 10-Apr-1963 daughter of Robert Almon Keen and Violet Kate Lassiter.

    a. Rev. Billy Keen

    b. Ann Keen md. Unknown Hargis

    c. Charles Keen md. Eloise Johnson

    d. Edward Keen

    e. Shirley Keen md. Unknown Parker

5. Thomas Marvin Keen b. 24-Jul-1912 d. 15-Feb-1949 md. Callie Mae Strickland

Marvin is buried at Clement Church Cemetery.

a. Unknown Keen md. Y. B. Stanley

6. Raymond Keen b. 2-Jun-1915 d. 30-Mar-1983 md. Estelle Blackmon

Raymond is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

a. Marlene Keen md. James H. Johnson of Smithfield, N.C.

(1) Bridget Lynn Johnson md. (1-Oct-1988) Ricky Eugene Pense son of Peter O. Pense.

7. Ruth Keen b. 3-Jun-1915 d. 26-May-1916 died young and is buried in Clement Church Cemetery.

8. George G. Keen b. 3-Aug-1917 d. 13-Mar-1919 died young and is buried at Clement Church Cemetery.

9. Earl Wilson Keen b. 18-oct-1919 d. 24-Feb-1973 md. Betty C. Coats b. 27-Jun-1920.

Earl made his home in Wilson's Mills, N.C. and is buried at Knowlwood Cemetery near Smithfield, NC.

a. Nelson Keen

10. James Keen b. 23-Dec-1921 d. 23-Dec-1921 died young and is buried at Clement Church Cemetery..

11. Alma Keen b. 26-Aug-1923 d. 31-Dec-1924 died young and is buried at Clement Church Cemetery.

12. Margaret Keen b. 27-Oct-1926 md. Louis Bryan and lives in Corpus Christie, Texas and Virginia Beach, VA.

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
2nd Child: Sallie Ann Keen

Sallie Ann Keen b. 22-Mar-1883 d.-22-Aug-1935 md. Robert Elijah Barbour b. 20-Aug-1877 in Elevation Township son of Robert C. Barbour and Louenza Lassiter of Elevation Township of Johnston Co d. 22-Nov-1963.

Robert and Sally made their home in the Elevation Township near the community called Barbourtown. Robert was a farmer and rural mail carrier before World War I. Robert died at the home of his daughter Mrs. Vessie P. Johnson of Dunn, N.C. at age 88. Robert and Sally are buried in the Barbour Cemetery near the homeplace north of Black Creek on the Wilmington-Raleigh Road (SR 1330).

1. Alice Barbour b. ca-1904 in Johnston County md. 1st Ira Allen md. 2nd John Lee

   Alice and Ira are buried in the Barbour Cemetery.

   a. Ira Allen Jr.

   b. Narron Lee b. 9-Mar-1909

2. Pansy Barbour b. ca-1909 in Johnston County md. Henry M. Johnson

   Henry was a Johnston County commissioner for several years and made is home in Four Oaks. They are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

3. Mabel Barbour b. ? in Johnston County md. David Lassiter of Johnston County.

   Mabel and David lived in Dunn, NC.

4. Louie Barbour b. 22-Jun-1913 in Johnston County d. 12-Jul-1963 in Johnston County md James Wright Stephenson b. 30-Sep-1914 d. 11-Oct-1964.

   Louie and Wright are buried in Sunset Memorial Cemetery in Smithfield, NC.

   a. Billy Stephenson

5. Vessie Inez Barbour b. 20-Jul-1915 in Johnston County md. 1st Claude Peters, 2nd Blake Johnson

   Vessie lived in Dunn, NC. Claude is buried in Barbour Cemetery.

6. Mary Catherine Barbour b. 22-Nov-1918 in Johnston County md. Sam Barefoot of Sampson County.

   Mary and Sam live near Dunn, NC.

7. Robert Leon Barbour b. 10-Oct-1920 in Johnston County d. 27-Oct-1977 md. Grace Coats of Four Oaks, NC.

   Robert is buried in the Barbour Cemetery.

8. James Almon Barbour b. 28-Sep-1922 in Johnston County md. Geraldine Lowery of Johnston County.

   James and Geraldine live in Four Oaks.

   a. Cathy Barbour md. Steve Westbrook

      Cathy and Steve live near the homeplace.

9. Joseph D. Barbour b. 6-May-1927 lived in the homeplace and operated a store in Barbourtown.

   Joseph never married.

GRANDFATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
3rd Child: **(6)George Daniel Keen**

(6)George Daniel Keen b. 28-Aug-1884 in Johnston County d. 31-Jan-1955 in Johnston County md. (14-Feb-1907) Ida Jane Creech daughter of Albert Sidney Creech and Mary Francis Boyette b. 10-Oct-1887 in Johnston County d. 23-Oct-1962 in Durham, NC.

Daniel built his home on the south side of the Keen Road, east of I-95 on land given to him by his father. He married Ida Jane Creech, daughter of Albert Sidney Creech and Mary Francis Boyette, and raised four children. Ida lost an eye while chopping wood and had a glass eye during most of her adult life. The second and third children were twins, Chester and Esther, the first set of twins to finish high school in Four Oaks. Daniel built a home for Esther and her husband on the northeast corner of the intersection of Keen Road and I-95. At age 70, Daniel was killed on the busy Highway 301 South of Four Oaks in front of his brother Robert's service station. Daniel and Ida are buried in the Keen Cemetery.

George Daniel and Ida Creech Keen
Photo from Esther Brewer

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 1-Feb-1955.
Wreck Hurts Fatal To George D. Keen

"George D. Keen of Route 2, Four Oaks, 70-year-old prominent Ingrams Township farmer, died in Rex Hospital at Raleigh Monday morning at 2:30 of injuries sustained in a wreck last Wednesday night at 8 o'clock on Highway 301 just south of Four Oaks."

"Mr. Keen was the third person to be fatally injured in a motor vehicle accident in Johnston County this year. The county last year went without a wreck death until July 4."

"Mr. Keen, who lived approximately a half-mile from Four Oaks, was the son of the late George William and Virginia Lassiter Keen of Johnston County. He was a director of the Johnston County Farm Bureau and a member of Four Oaks Methodist Church."

"He had served for three years on the Johnston County committee of the Farmers Home Administration and for years as a county committeeman of the old AAA."

"A funeral service for Mr. Keen was scheduled to be conducted at 3 o'clock this (Tuesday) afternoon at Four Oaks Methodist Church by the pastor, the Rev. J. L. Joyce, and Elder T. Floyd Adams, with interment on the Keen cemetery near Four Oaks."

"Surviving are his wife, the former Miss Ida Creech; two sons Chester E. Keen of Goldsboro and George W. Keen of Dunn; two daughters, Mrs. W. Robert Johnson of Goldsboro and Mrs. Esther Brewer of Four Oaks; two brothers, William and J.R. Keen of Four Oaks; and one sister, Mrs. George Wood of Four Oaks."

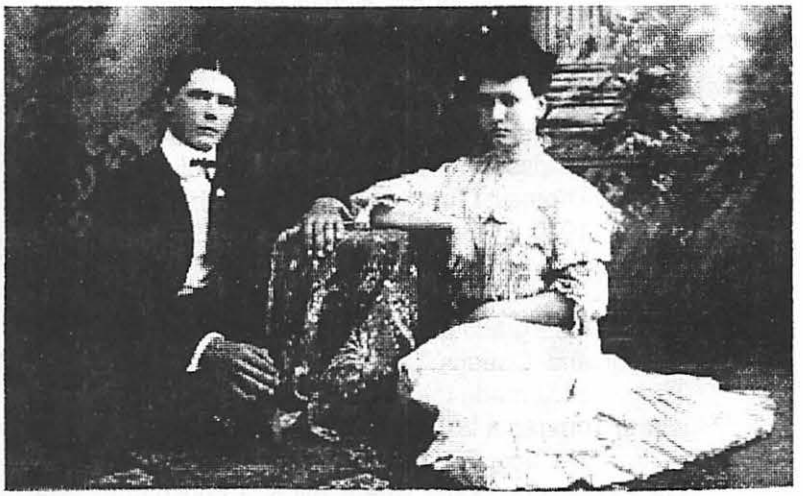
"Johnston County Coroner V.J. Underwood, who is ill in the local hospital with flu, reported that no inquest would be held into the death of Mr. Keen. Coroner Underwood explained that the investigation of the accident by Highway Patrolman J.P. Carter

indicated that no blame is to be placed on the driver of the car which struck the vehicle driven by Mr. Keen."

"Mr. Keen, driving a 1951 Plymouth, entered the highway from a service station into the path of a 1940 Ford operated by Hubert J. Tew, 44, of Route 3, Four Oaks, reported Patrolman Carter. The front of the Ford struck the left side of the Plymouth, he added."

"Mr. Keen sustained broken ribs and a severe head injury."

"Two other persons were hurt. Tew suffered a cut on the mouth and internal injuries. John Stevens of Route 3, Four Oaks, 65-year-old Negro and passenger in the Ford, sustained bad cuts on the face and mouth and had some teeth knocked out. Tew and Stevens were taken to the Johnston County Memorial Hospital here for treatment."



George Daniel and Vessie Cora Keen sometime identified as Ida Creech Keen
Photo from Esther Brewer

1. Thelma Mae Keen b. 30-May-1908 in Johnston Co. md. (26-Dec-1932) Dr. William Robert Johnson son of Thomas Edward Johnson and Katie Woodall b. 28-Feb-1906.

Thelma graduated from Four Oaks High School and attended Woman's College at Greensboro, N.C. and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC. She taught in Johnston County schools until her marriage to Robert.

Robert graduated from Four Oaks High School and UNC in Chapel Hill, N.C. After building their first home in Four Oaks, Robert and Thelma moved to Fuquay Springs, NC where Robert worked with Proctor Barbour Company.

Dr. W. Robert and Thelma Keen Johnson

worked with Proctor Barbour Company. Moving to Goldsboro, N.C. in 1941, Robert and Floyd Sherman started a farm machinery business, Johnson Sherman Company.

Both Robert and Thelma have been extremely active in Saint Paul United Methodist Church in Goldsboro where Robert has been Chairman of the Administrative Board and Thelma has taught Sunday school and served as local President and District officer of the United Methodist Women. Thelma is a National Amateur Flower Show judge and has taken courses in flower show arranging and horticulture. Robert has served on the Executive Board of Methodist College in Fayettville, NC and as President of the North and South Carolina Farm and Power Equipment Dealers Association as well as President of the Goldsboro Lions Club.

Robert received an honorary Doctor of Hummanities Degree from Methodist College for his "significant influence in the establishment of the college and the dedicated service rendered to the institution and its students throughout its history."

a. Ida Elizabeth Johnson b. 19-Jun-1940 in Goldsboro, NC md. 1st (7-Jul-1962) Thomas "Tom" Stokes Neal b. 7-Jun-1940 in Burlington, NC, md. 2nd (15-Sep-1984) Bill Spada.

Ida graduated from Goldsboro High School and Queens College in Charlotte, NC. Tom and Ida made their home in Burlington, NC. where Tom ran a hosiery mill with his father.

Ida and Bill Spada continue to live in Ida's Burlington home where Bill is a consultant for a printing company.

Bill and Ida Johnson Spada

1. Elizabeth "Lisa" Boyette Neal b. 6-Nov-1965 in Burlington, NC.

Lisa graduated from Williams High School in Burlington, NC and UNC in Chapel Hill, N.C. Lisa currently makes her home in Charleston, SC where she is attending the College of Charleston studying for a Masters Degree in Marine Biology.

Robert & Lisa Neal - 1992
Photo from Ida Spada

2. Robert Stephen Neal b. 23-Dec-1970 in Burlington, NC.

Robert graduated from Burlington High School and attended the College of Charleston in Charleston, SC for three years studying Marine engineering. Robert will continue his studies in the Fall of 1992 at the University of New Orleans where he will complete his engineering degree and earn a concurrent physics degree.

2. Chester Edward Keen b. 29-Jul-1912 in Johnston Co. md. (1-Jun-1939) in Micro, NC. Ilamae Fitzgerald daughter of Alonza Ernest Fitzgerald and Lillie Bagley of Bagley, N.C. in Johnston County b. 2-Feb-1914.

Chester & Ilamae Fitzgerald Keen

Chester attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC and graduated later from Kings Business College in Raleigh before returning to Four Oaks to work as a clerk and later bank teller and Vice President of The Bank of Four Oaks. After marrying Ilamae in 1939, they moved to Clinton, NC where he was Chief Clerk in charge of the Clinton, NC office of the Agriculture Adjustment Administration. Returning to Four Oaks during World War II, he delivered agricultural lime and served a term as Mayor. Following the war, he moved the family to Goldsboro to work with his brother-in-law, Robert Johnson. Chester later became a partner in the firm Johnson-Sherman Co., retiring from active daily participation in the business on January 1, 1983. His son, Jerry, became a partner and managing partner in the firm at the active retirement of Chester and Robert.

Ilamae graduated from Micro High School and East Carolina Teachers College with an A.B. in Elementary Education and started her teaching career at the Four Oaks Consolidated School. She met Chester there where he was an Assistant Cashier in the Bank of Four Oaks.

Chester has held many positions in Saint Paul United Methodist Church in Goldsboro where he and Ilamae have been members since 1946. A member of the Administrative Board for many years, Chester has been invaluable in keeping his meticulous records of the church. Elected Lay Person of the Year in 1985, Chester always is ready for service in any manner.

As a member of the Lions Club since 1949, Chester has served most club jobs including President and Treasurer. He has served on the annual "broom sale" for many years, keeping records with his usual meticulous style. Chester recently was named a Melvin Jones Fellow, an award honoring outstanding local club members.

Ilamae served as President of the United Methodist Women and many other jobs in her active service of the church. Ilamae and Chester have both been a member of the "Couples" Sunday School Class since joining the church.

Chester and his sister Esther are twins and the persons this book is dedicated to. Chester's children Jerry and Judy are also twins.

a. James "Jim" Edward Keen b. 31-May-1942 in Clinton (Sampson Co.), NC md. 1st Page M. Montgomery b. in Durham, NC. md. 2nd (3-Aug-1968) Jacqueline Margaret Baker daughter of Robert Wallace and Beulah Baker of Atlanta, Ga. b. 15-Nov-1946 in Indianapolis, IN.

Jim & Jackie Baker Keen in 1992

Jim graduated from Goldsboro High School and attended N.C. State University before serving in the US Army and later graduating from Atlantic Christian College with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. Jim met Jackie there where both were active in the Drama Club. At graduation, they moved to Raleigh where Jim worked with Ernst & Ernst, CPA Firm. They later lived in Cary, NC, and then Sanford, NC where Jim was Controller of a large regional construction company. Moving to Tarboro, NC, Jim worked as Plant Controller and Data Processing Manager for an apparel company. He later became an instructor at Edgecombe Community College, teaching business and computer subjects, before returning to East Carolina University to earn a Masters Degree in Business Education

Jackie graduated from Lilburn High School in Lilburn, GA before graduating from Atlantic Christian College (Barton College) in Wilson, NC. with a teaching certificate in Math Education. Jackie taught eighth grade math in Raleigh before having a family. Raising two children, Jackie was active in all phases of their existence. When the children left home, Jackie taught math at East Carolina University and Edgecombe Community College, while earning her Masters Degree in Math Education.

Jim served as Sunday school teacher, President and Treasurer of the United Methodist Men at Saint James United Methodist Church as well as member of the Administrative Board and Finance Committee.

As Troop Committee Chairman for Boy Scout Troop 96, Jim helped to revitalize the troop where his son David became an Eagle Scout.

Jackie sang for many years in the Choir at Saint James and taught Sunday school.

1. Robert David Keen b. 4-Mar-1970 in Raleigh, NC md. (25-Apr-1992) Laura Gail Bradshaw daughter of Hobert Bradshaw and Relma Houston Bradshaw of Connelly Springs, NC. b. 4-Apr-1967 .

David and Laura Bradshaw Keen at their 1992 wedding Photo from Laura Keen

David graduated from Tarboro High School and was an active participant in Boy Scout Troop 96 where he became an Eagle Scout. He attended N.C. State University and presently makes his home in Tarboro, NC, where he plans to continue his education at East Carolina University , majoring in English Literature.

Laura graduated from East Burke High School in Icard, NC. and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she attended on a National Merit Scholarship. In addition to earning a BS in Business Administration, Laura took graduate classes in accounting and taxation and was active in the UNC Entrepreneur's Club.

2. Jennifer Dianne Keen b. 13-Nov-1972 in Raleigh, N.C.

Dianne Keen in 1992

Dianne attended Tarboro High School and graduated from the School of Science and Math, a resident high school in Durham, NC. She is presently attending Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. majoring in Biology/Pre-Med. She is on the Carnegie Mellon Swim Team, photographer for The Tartan (school newspaper) and doing undergraduate genetics research at The Mellon Institute.

b. Jerry Andrew Keen b. 6-Oct-1943 in Smithfield, NC md. (10-Mar-1968) in Nahunta, NC. Dorothy "Dot" Mooring Sullivan b. 15-Oct-1943 in Wilmington, NC. daughter of Charles Arron Sullivan and Dorothy Elizabeth Mooring.

L. to R. Kelly, Dottie, Jerry, & Shannon Keen in 1991

Jerry graduated from Goldsboro High School and Methodist College in Fayetteville, NC and served in the US Navy in Korea and Washington, DC. Jerry is the managing partner of Johnson-Sherman Co. in Goldsboro, NC. following in his father's footsteps. Jerry is active in Saint Paul United Methodist Church, serving in various leadership capacities at the church and district level. Jerry also serves on the Alumni Board of Directors of Methodist College in Fayetteville, NC.

Dot grew up in the Nahunta Community of Wayne County and graduated from Charles B. Aycock High School there. Raising two daughters, Dot participated in all phases of their growth. Dot is an excellent cook and flower gardener and is active in Saint Paul Methodist Church.

Jerry utilizes his free time working on MG sports cars and boating at Swansboro, N.C.

1. Shannon Rebecca Keen b. 26-Sep-1972 in Goldsboro, NC.

Shannon graduated from Goldsboro High School and is presently a student at Methodist College in Fayetteville, NC. where she enjoys driving her MG sports car, restored by her father.

2. Kelly Sullivan Keen b. 26-Nov-1975 in Goldsboro, NC.

Kelly is a student at Goldsboro High School where she is an active participant on the Soccer team, an excellent student and enjoys driving her MG sports car, restored by her father.

c. Judy Anne Keen b. 6-Oct-1943 in Smithfield, NC md. (9-Oct-1965) Dr. James "Jim" Oscar Farmer, Jr. b. 30-May-1943 in Rocky Mount (Nash Co.), NC. son of James Oscar Farmer, Sr. and Hula Banes Leach of Rocky Mount, NC.

Dr. James O. and Judy Keen Farmer with Beth and Erin. Photo from Judy Farmer

Judy graduated from Goldsboro High School and attended Meredith College before graduating from East Carolina University. Judy raised two girls while holding various jobs outside the home in Greenville, NC, Florence, SC and Lancaster, SC. Judy held an executive secretary position for Bowater Paper Corporation in Lancaster, SC. until she followed Jim to his next teaching assignment in Akin, SC.

Jim graduated from Rocky Mount High School and East Carolina University where he did his undergraduate and Masters work. Later he earned a Ph. D. in history from the University of South Carolina. Jim is a history professor, serving at East Carolina University and the University of South Carolina at Florence, Lancaster, and Akin, SC.

1. Elizabeth "Beth" Baines Farmer b. 18-May-1974 in Lancaster, SC.

   Beth graduated from Lancaster High School and is an excellent musician looking forward to a college education in music at Converse in Greenville, SC..

2. Erin Fitzgerald Farmer b. 1-Jan-1977 in Lancaster, SC.

   Erin is a student at Lancaster High School.

3. Esther Virginia Keen b. 29-Jul-1912 in Johnston Co. md. (26-Dec-1941) William "Bill" Lewis Brewer, Sr. son of Charlie Curtis Brewer and Deborah Cooper of Chatham County, NC. b. 21-Oct-1912 d. 2-Jan-1951.

Esther Virginia Keen Brewer in 1991

Esther attended East Carolina College in Greenville, NC and Kings Business College in Raleigh, NC. She worked for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in Smithfield before marrying Bill and moving to Newport News, Va for two years during World War II where Bill worked in the shipyards as an electrician. Returning to a home built on land given to Esther by her father, Bill worked for a construction company as an electrician while Esther became the lunchroom manager for the Four Oaks school, a post she held for 27 years. Bill was killed in a fire that did substantial damage to the house. Esther raised the three young children by herself, working as a dietitian. Esther retired in 1977 and spent several years traveling and camping with her brother Chester and his wife, Ilamae and Esther's good friend Margaret Lee Walker. Esther is a lifetime member of Four Oaks United Methodist Church where she has been financial secretary. She enjoys genealogy and spends much time working on the Keen and Creech families.

Esther and her twin brother Chester are the persons this book is dedicated to.

Bill is buried at The Four Oaks Cemetery.

From **The Smithfield Herald**, Jan , 1951:
FOUR OAKS MAN BADLY BURNED AT HOME
Negro Fighting Fire Suffers Cuts

Bill Brewer, Four Oaks electrician, was severely burned when a fire broke out Monday at ? p.m. at his home three-fourths of a mile east of Four Oaks on a rural paved road.

Brewer was unconscious when he was removed from the furnace room of his house where the fire originated. The Four Oaks man was rushed to Johnston County Memorial Hospital in Smithfield and then transferred to Duke Hospital in Durham.

Dr. L. A. Davidian, who examined the burned man here, said Brewer was suffering from shock and had bad burns on his face and body.

Mrs. Esther Brewer and her two children managed to flee from the blazing house unharmed.

Joe Haley, Jr., Four Oaks Negro, was badly cut while fighting the blaze. Haley attempted to catch a window thrown from the house. His hands and wrists went through the window glass and suffered serious cuts. Haley was taken to a Dunn hospital where 27 stitches were required to close the cuts.

Hugh Sanders, who directed the volunteer firemen in their successful efforts to extinguish the blaze, reported the fire originated in the heating room which housed a floor furnace. He said he had not been able to discover the cause for the blaze.

Smithfield's volunteer fire department answered the alarm, but the fire had already been extinguished when the local truck arrived. Smithfield Fire Chief Ed. L. Woodall praised the fine work of the Four Oaks firemen in putting out the blaze.

The ceiling of the five-room frame house was almost demolished and some of the walls were damaged. All of the household furnishings were saved.

Sanders commended several Negroes who aided the firemen to combat the blaze.

Mrs. Brewer and her children are now residing with her people.

a. William "Bill" Lewis Brewer, Jr. b. 27-Jan-1943 in Newport News, VA. md. 1st (16-Oct-1965) Alice Gerain Gregory b. 11-Oct-1946, daughter of Ross C. Gregory and Elizabeth Lassiter, md. 2nd (2-May-1975) Mittie Sue Patterson daughter of Thomas William and Oleta Honeycutt Patterson of Sampson County b. 9-Oct-1953.

Bill graduated from Edwards Military Academy in Salemburg, NC and attended Campbell College before graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. As an active Jaycee in Garner, NC, Bill directed the 1971 Miss Garner Pageant that produced the 1972 Miss North Carolina, Miss Patsy Gail Wood of Johnston County, NC. Bill served as the 1972-73 State Vice President of the North Carolina Jaycees. Bill worked for North Carolina National Bank, N.C. Department of Justice, Town Manager for Clayton, NC. and later became a representative for New York Life Insurance Company.

L to R. Mittie Sue Patterson, Courtney, and Bill Brewer. Photo from Esther Brewer

Mittie Sue works with Miles Lab and is a Girl Scout Leader.

Bill and Mittie Sue make their home in Clayton, NC, where both are active in church and community.

From **The Garner News,** Wednesday October 27, 1971, Page 10.

Bill Brewer of 607 Wakeland Drive, Garner is listed in the publication "Outstanding Young Men of America" a publication which in the past has included such personages as Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, John Glenn, and other well known personalities.

Mr. Brewer's selection as a recepient of this award is based on his work in Jaycee organization as well as his participation in church and community affairs.

The twenty eight year old man was born in Newport News, Virginia but spent most of his life in the Four Oaks Community of Johnston County where he attended school prior to attending

Edwards Military Institute. In Edwards he was Cadet Captain and Cadet Major Executive Officer and was awarded the Outstanding Military Cadet Scholarship for two years.

Following his completion of military Mr. Brewer attended Campbell College and here he was Day Student Respresentative to the Student Government.

Since 1965 this energetic young man has been associated with the North Carolina National Bank and is presently Manager of Indirect Lending, Consumer Credit Department.

Even before becoming active in the Jaycees, Mr. Brewer was involved in community affairs - he was a scoutmaster from 1961 until 1968 and worked in the campaign for the United Fund.

He is very much a part of Hayes Chapel Christian Church here where he served as Sunday School Superintendent, Chairman of the Christian Board of Education and on the Usher Board.

In the Jaycee movement he has been Rookie of the Year, Spoke of the Year, Top Ten Spoke of the North Carolina Jaycees, Jaycee of the Year, Spark Plug of the Year, Top Ten Spoke of the North Carolina Jaycees, Jaycee of the Year, Spark Plug of the Year, winner of the Spark Award, winner of the Speak Up Jaycee Award, Leadership in Action Award, Jaycee of the month of two occasions, assistant treasurer of the local chapter, treasurer, first vice president, state director and assistant director of the Miss Garner Pageant and then Director of the Miss Garner Pageant this year.

Mrs. Brewer is as active as her husband and is a supporting force in her husband's accomplishments. She is the former Gerain Gregory of Four Oaks.

Garner's newest addition to "Outstanding Young Men" is the son of Mrs. William Lewis Brewer, and the late Mr. Brewer.

1. William "Will" Lewis Brewer, III. b. 1-Mar-1972 in Raleigh, NC.

   Will graduated from Garner High School and is presently a rising Senior at N.C. State University where he has a Caldwell Scholarship. He has spent the two past summers in England studing for a medical career and plans to continue his medical education at Duke University. Will is an Eagle Scout.

Will and Courtney Brewer in the early 1980s. Photo from Esther Brewer

2. Courtney Caroline Brewer b. 10-May-1979 in Raleigh, NC.

   As a rising 8th grader, Courtney has been active as school spelling bee winner in the sixth grade, Vice President of the Student Council, cheerleader for two years, and participant in the TIP program sponsored by Duke University.

b. George Curtis Brewer b. 26-Mar-1945 in Johnston Co. md. (20-Dec-1969) in Garner, NC. Pamela Bruce Ayscue, daughter of Robert Bruce Ayscue and Edith Ellington of Garner, NC b. 20-Jul-1951.

L. to R. Leigh Ann, Pam, Curtis and George Brewer in 1992.
Photo from Esther Brewer

George graduated from Four Oaks High School and attended Wayne Community College in Goldsboro, NC. He served in the U.S. Army in Fort Bragg, NC, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, Germany, and 1st Cav. Div. in Vietnam. While in Germany, George returned to marry Pam who then followed him to Nuremberg, Germany. George is employed by Stone Heavy Vehicle Equipment Company of Garner, N.C. where he is a diesel mechanic. George serves as Assistant Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 391 where his son Curtis earned his Eagle Scout Award.

Pam graduated from Garner High School and has taken courses at Johnston Technical College. Pam serves as Office Manager for Reeves Towing and Recovery. As Girl Scout Troop Leader for Junior Troop 397 and Cadette Troop 802, Pam is also a Wake County Girl Scout Trainer-Apprentice and is the receiptant of Pines of Carolina Silver Pine Cone Award for Girl Scout service.

George and Pam make their home in Garner, NC.

1. Robert Curtis Brewer b. 17-Sep-1975 in Raleigh, NC.

Curtis is a rising Junior at Garner High School where he is a member of Jets, SADD, and the Spring Track Team. Curtis has been extremely active in Boy Scout Troop 391 in Garner where he received his Eagle Scout Award in 1991 with 65 merit badges (only 21 are required) and his God & Country Award. Serving as the 1990-92 Chapter Chief of Tsungani Chapter of the Order of the Arrow (an honorary Boy Scout Organization), Curtis also received the 1992 Outstanding Order of the Arrow Chapter Chief Award. A member of the Order of the Arrow Ceremony Team, Curtis also served as NOAC delegate for Occoneechee Lodge. In addition to his scouting activities, Curtis also is active in the United Methodist Youth Fellowship at Saint Andrews United Methodist Church.

2. Leigh Ann Brewer b. 30-Mar-1979 in Raleigh, NC.

Leigh Ann is a rising 8th grader at East Garner Middle School where she is an Honor Roll student, member of the Beta Club and FHA. As a seven year Girl Scout member, Leigh Ann received her Silver Award

as a 1st year Cadette Girl Scout, an award given to honor Cadettes. As a Girl Scout, she received her God and Country Award and Leadership Award. Her remaining time is spent as an active member of the UMYF at Saint Andrews United Methodist Church and as a member of the Dixie Dew Cloggers of Raleigh.

c. Albert Sidney Brewer b. 5-Aug-1946 in Johnston Co, NC. md. (26-Aug-1966) in Garner, NC. Peggy June Lowery b. 5-Jun-1947 in Johnston Co daughter of Charles Everette Lowery and Hilda Langdon.

L to R. Albert, Al, Peggy, Holly, and Charles Brewer in 1991.
Photo by Esther Brewer

Albert graduated from Four Oaks High School and worked with Coca-Cola Bottling and Bobby Murray Chevrolet in Raleigh, NC. Peggy graduated from Four Oaks High School and Hardbargers Business College in Raleigh. Albert and Peggy operated a NAPA Auto Parts dealership in Four Oaks and later an auto restoration business in the same location and later on the Brewer Road. As a member of the Chamber of Commerce since 1975, Albert has been active in town affairs, including serving on the Town Planning and Zoning Board since 1977. Peggy presently works at Decon Jones Buick Pontiac Dodge Chrysler Plymouth in Smithfield.

1. Albert "Al" Sidney Brewer, Jr. b. 17-Jun-1968 in Smithfield, NC. md. (11-Aug-1990) Holly Abernethy b. in Canton, Ohio.

   Al was a math contest participant in the 9th - 11th grades and went to Boys State before graduating from South Johnston High School and attended N.C. State University in Raleigh, NC majoring in mechanical engineering. Holly has a Degree in Meteorology and is presently seeking a nursing degree.

2. Charles Eric Brewer b. 19-Apr-1972 in Raleigh, NC.

Charles graduated from South Johnston High School in 1986 where he was a good math student and included in the Duke University TIP program. He participates in photography, drawing, working on cars and trucks, and enjoys customizing cars. He works with his father's auto restoration business.

4. Erma Keen b. 28-Aug-1914 d.12-Mar-1915 lived just six months and 12 days. Erma is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

5. (7)George William Keene b. 9-Mar-1925 in Johnston Co. md. (21-Dec-1957) in Pine Level, NC Shelba Jean Creech b.19-Aug-1936 in Johnston Co. daughter of Henry Preston Creech and Victoria "Vic" Peedin.

George graduated from Four Oaks School and Edwards Military Academy in Salemburg, NC in 1945. He served in the U.S. Air Force in Texas, Mississippi, and Flordia. He graduated in 1949 from Coyne Electric School in Chicago, IL. and was employed by Page Electric Co. in Dunn, NC. until his father's death in August, 1955. He then returned home to live with his mother and tend the family farm. He was a dealer for the **News and Observer/Raleigh Times** during this period. George worked for Sylvania Electric Co. in Smithfield until the plant closed 1982. He later worked for Fieldcrest, where he retired in 1988. George continues to farm.

L. to R. George, Shelba, Danny & Neal Keene in 1991

Shelba graduated from Pine Level High School and attended Atlantic Christian College. She has been employed for several years by **The Four Oaks News.**

George and his sister, Thelma, decided that Keen was an adjective and Keene was the proper name. Both adopted Keene as their last name, with George's name becoming permanent during his service in the US Air Force. The legacy of consecutive generations named George Keen came to an end in this generation.

a. Daniel "Danny" Preston Keene b. 27-Jan-1959 in Raleigh, NC.

Danny graduated from South Johnston High School and Johnston Technical College with an A.A. Degree in electrical engineering and later graduated from Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount, NC. with a B.S. Degree in Business. He is working with Data General in Apex, NC.

b. Neal Patrick Keene b. 19-Feb-1966 in Raleigh, NC.

Neal graduated from South Johnston High School in 1984 and the University of N.C. at Chapel Hill in 1989. Neal works for PDR Information Services in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
4th Child: **Lucy Ellen Keen**

Lucy Ellen Keen b. 28-Nov-1886 d. 21-Dec-1968 md. (30-Nov-1904) George Washington Wood son of Frank and Susan Wood of Johnston County b. 22-Jun-1890 d. 11-Jul-1960.

George and Lucy lived on the Wood-Mahler Road near Blackmon's Crossroads where George was a farmer. George and Lucy are buried at Blackmon's Grove Baptist Church.

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 23-Dec-1968.
After Illness - Mrs. Lucy Wood Succumbs at 82.

"Mrs. Lucy Keen Wood of Route 2, Four Oaks, died Saturday morning in her home following a long illness. She was 82 years of age."

"Mrs. Wood was a daughter of the late George William and Delia Lassiter Keen."

"She was a member of Blackmon's Grove Baptist Church and Blackmon's Grove Home Demonstration Club."

"The funeral was conducted at 3 o'clock Sunday afternoon in Blackmon's Grove Baptist Church. The Rev. Joe Puckett officiated. Burial followed in the church cemetery."

"Surviving are two daughters , Mrs. Yetive Lee and Miss. Avis Lenols Wood, both of Route 2, Four Oaks; a son, Woodrow Wood of Route 2, Four Oaks; five grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren."

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 13-Jul-1960.
George Wood Dies at 80.

"George W. Wood, 80-year-old retired farmer of Route 2, Four oaks, died Monday morning around 9 o'clock at his home after a period of declining health."

"He was a son of the late Frank and Susan Wood of Johnston County."

"The funeral services was scheduled for Tuesday afternoon at 3 o'clock at Blackmon's Grove Baptist Church with the Rev. Troy E. Jones officiating and interment following in the church cemetery."

"Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Lucy Keen Wood; two sons, George C. and Woodrow Wood, both of Route 2, Four Oaks; two daughters, Mrs. Elmon Lee and Mrs. Avis Lenols, both of Route 2, Four Oaks; one brother, Charlie Wood of Route 1, Four Oaks; one sister, Mrs. Minnie Johnston of Route 2, Four Oaks; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren."

1. Yettive Wood b. ca-1904 md. Elmon Lee

Yettive lives on Route 2 near Strickland's Crossroads in Johnston County, NC.

a. Harold Wood Lee

2. George Cleon Wood b. 28-Sep-1909 d. 17-Nov-1963 md. (28-Dec-1938) Lessie Mae Lee b. 4-Jun-1917

George and Lessie Mae made their home on Route 2, Four Oaks, N.C.

A. Wilson L. Wood md. Sue Messer

(1) Debra Wood md. Unknown Weaver

(2) Wendy Lynn Wood

(3) Michael Lee Wood

3. Herman Wood b. 29-Oct-1911 died as an infant.

4. Avis Lenols Wood b. 14-Sep-1913

Lenois never married and lived on Route 2, Four Oaks, N.C..

5. Woodrow Wood b. 29-Jan-1916 md. (17-Nov-1938) Rena Blackman

The Woods made their home on Route 2, Four Oaks, N.C.

A. Unknown Wood md. Carl D. Adams

(1) Randy Wood Adams md. Joseph David Massey

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
5th Child: **Vessie Cora Keen**

Vessie Cora Keen b. 7-Jan-1889 d. 13-Oct-1946 md. Alonzo "Lonnie" Johnson b. 5-May-1880 d. 10-Apr-1936.

Lonnie and Vessie built a home at the corner of the old Smithfield Road and Keen Road on land given to her by her father (5)George Keen. Lonnie was a farmer. Both are buried at the Four Oaks Cemetery.

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 14-Oct-1946.
Mrs. Cora Keen Johnson, 57, Dies.

"Funeral services for Mrs. Cora Keen Johnson, 57, of Four Oaks were conducted at the home on Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock by the Rev. Shepard Langdon of near Four Oaks, and the Rev. L. E. Godwin of Micro. Interment was in the Four Oaks cemetery."

"Mrs. Johnson, widow of Alonzo Johnson, died at the Johnston county sanitarium Saturday afternoon following a long illness. She was the daughter of the late George William and Delia Lassiter Keen."

"Surviving are two sons, G.W. Johnson of Newport News, Va., and Leo Erwin Johnson of Four Oaks; two daughters, Catherine Johnson of charlotte and Mrs. Vernie Hargiss of Raleigh; four brothers, William, G.D., R.A., and J.R. Keen, all of Four Oaks, and two sisters, Mrs. G. W. Wood and Mrs. Dallas Allen, both of Four Oaks."

1. Catherine Johnson lived in Charlotte, N.C.

2. George Welch Johnson b. 5-Sep-1917 d. ca-1982 md. Vennie Weeks

   George lived in Newport News, VA. and Morehead City, N.C. and is buried in Morehead City, NC. Vennie lives in Four Oaks, N.C.

   a. Nancy Johnson md. Carl Langdon

      (1) Vernie Langdon farms in Four Oaks.

      (2) Melissa Langdon is a sophomore at Duke University.

3. Leo Erwin Johnson b. 2-Sep-1924 d. 19-Jul-1963 md. Annie Hargis

   Leo and Annie lived in Four Oaks and are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

4. Virginia Johnson b. 25-Aug-1927 md. Vernie Hargis

   Virginia lives in Wake County.

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
6th Child: **Robert Almon Keen**

Robert Almon Keen b. 28-Sep-1891 d.20-Nov-1950 md. 1st (19-Jun-1911) Violet Kate Lassiter b. 17-Jan-1895 d. 22-Jul-1926, md. 2nd Francis Lee Boyette d. 8-Aug-1969 , md. 3rd Laura UNKNOWN, md. 4th Lois Cubag Carnes.

As a successful Four Oaks merchant, Robert operated a general store, a service station on Highway 301 South, and a mule and fertilizer business on the site of the present Four Oaks Post Office. He frequently visited and lived for a while in Hot Springs, Ark. where he was treated for arthritis. He owned and operated a general store there and married two women from the area, bringing them back to Four Oaks.

An October 15, 1915 article in **The Smithfield Herald** indicated that R.A. Keen sold tobacco at Center Brick Warehouse; 210 lbs. @ 9 1/4 cents, 36 lbs. @ 11 1/4 cents, and 82 lbs. @ 13 cents per pound.

Francis is buried in Oakland Heights Cemetery in Smithfield, NC. Robert and Violet Kate are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

From **The Smithfield Herald,** 21-Nov-1950.
R.A. Keen, 60, Four Oaks, Dies.

"Last rites for R.A. Keen, 60-year-old Four Oaks merchant, were slated to be conducted at 3 p.m. today (Tuesday) at Overby's Funeral Chapel in Smithfield by the Rev. Fletcher Ford, pastor of Four Oaks Baptist Church, of which Mr. Keen was a member. Burial was set for Four oaks Cemetery."

"Mr. Keen died at his home Monday at 1 a.m. following a brief illness. He was a son of the late George W. and Delia Lassiter Keen and was born and reared in Four Oaks,"

"Surviving are his wife, the former Mrs. Lois Cubag Carnes; three sons, Almond Keen of Macon, Ga., and Joseph and Hugh Keen of Hot Springs, Ark.; two daughters, Mrs. Theron Keen of Four Oaks and Mrs. Albert Dunn of Route 2, Four Oaks; two stepsons, W.H. Carnes of Hot Springs, Ark., and E. E. Carnes of Marion; three brothers, William and G.D. Keen of Four Oaks and J.R. Keen of Route 1, Four Oaks, and two sisters, Mrs. G. W. Wood of Route 2, Four Oaks, and Mrs. Dallas Allen of Route 1, Four Oaks."

1. Hugh Keen b. ca-1913 went to Hot Springs, Arkansas.

2. Mildred Keen b. 14-Jan-1914 d. 10-Apr-1963 md. James Theron Keen son of James William Keen and Bettie Florence Lassiter b. 11-Jun-1910 d. 4-Jan-1976.

   Mildred and Theron are buried in the Keen Cemetery.

   a. Rev. Billy Keen

   b. Ann Keen md. UNKNOWN Hargis

   c. Charles Keen md. Eloise Johnson

d. Edward Keen

e. Shirley Keen md. UNKNOWN Parker

3. Almon Keen b. ca-1916 in Johnston Co. d. 11-Oct-1974 in Georgia md. (ca-1946) Janie Jones b. 21-Sep-1911 in Cochran, GA and moved to Macon, Georgia.

a. Infant Keen d. young and buried in Keen Cemetery.

b. Bill Keen

c. Ricky Jones Keen b. 19-Feb-1950

4. Durwood Keen b. ca-1918 was killed while serving in the armed service.

5. Joseph Wright Keen b. 13-Aug-1920 d. Hot Springs, AK md. Ethelee Hall

(a) Joseph Wright Keen, Jr. b. 16-May-1941 in Hot Springs, AK.

6. Norma Lee Keen md. 1st Albert Dunn, md. 2nd Lt. Col. Lud N. Fourqurean

Norma lives in Goldsboro, NC.

a. Brenda Lois Dunn b. 31-Aug-1941 md. George Patrick

b. Robert Dudley Dunn b. 16-Dec-1943 md. Mary Elizabeth Unknown

c. Sandra Lynn Dunn b. 20-Nov-1945 md. Donald Kael Stehle

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
7th Child: **John Richard Keen**

John Richard Keen b. 8-Jun-1896 d. 27-Feb-1960 md. (7-Dec-1921) 1st Eula Martha Lassiter daughter of Edgar S. and Katie Barbour Lassiter b. 10-Nov-1903 d. 16-Jun-1935, md. 2nd Gladys Creech of Johnston County.

As a farmer on original Keen land given to him by his father, John married Eula Lassiter, sister to Violet Lassiter who married his brother Robert. His home stood at the site of the present service station at the intersection of Keen Road and I-95 across the road from his father's house. His brothers Daniel and William bought his land when he died. John and Eula are buried at the Keen Cemetery. Their tombstone epitaph reads "There shall be no night there."

John married 2nd Gladys Creech, nurse to his invalid daughter Ruth Marie. Oral family history speaks highly for the loving care that nurse Gladys gave to Ruth Marie and indicates that everyone fell in love with her, including John. Gladys had previously married Billy Powell and had two children by that marriage.

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 29-Feb-1960
John R. Keen, Route 1, Four Oaks, Succumbs

"John Richard Keen, 63, retired farmer of Route 1, Four Oaks, died Saturday morning in the Veterans Hospital in Fayetteville."

"The funeral service was conducted Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock at Pauline Baptist Church with the Rev. Billy Godwin, pastor, and the Rev. P.E. Jones, a former pastor, officiating. Interment followed in the Keen Family Cemetery near Four Oaks."

"Surviving are his wife, the former Gladys Creech; one daughter, Mrs Thomas Hayes of Richmond, Va.; two stepsons, Billy Powell of Goldsboro and Bobby Powell of Raleigh; and one sister, Mrs. George Wood of Route 2, Four Oaks."

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 18-Jun-1935
Death Claims Mrs. J.R. Keen

"Mrs. John R. Keen died at her home at Four Oaks Sunday morning at seven o'clock following a severe attack of asthma. Mrs. Keen had been in poor health for several years. She was 32 years of age."

"The funeral was held from the home yesterday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock, conducted by Elder Xure Lee. Interment took place in the Keen Cemetery near Four Oaks."

"Surviving are her husband and a two-year old daughter, Ruth; her parents, Mr. and Mrs Edgar Lassiter, and several brothers and sisters."

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 30-Apr-1954
Miss. Ruth Marie Keen Dies at 22

"A funeral service for Miss Ruth Marie Keen, 22, of Route 1, Four Oaks, was slated to be conducted at 3 o'clock this (Friday) afternoon at the chapel of Underwood Funeral Home here by the Rev. P.E. Jones, assisted by the Rev. Billy Morris, with burial in the Keen family cemetery near Four Oaks."

"Miss Keen died Thursday afternoon at the home of Paul A. Johnson near Smithfield."

"Surviving are her father, John R. Keen of Route 1, Four Oaks; her stepmother, Mrs. Gladys Creech Keen of Route 1, Four Oaks; and a half-sister, Delia Virginia Keen of the home."

Children of John Richard and Eula Martha Keen:

1. Infant Keen b. 6-Apr-1926 d. 8-Apr-1926 died as an infant.

2. Infant Keen b. 16-Mar-1927 d. 16-Mar-1927 died as an infant.

3. Ruth Marie Keen b. 2-Mar-1932 d. 29-Apr-1954 was an invalid.

   Ruth Marie lived her life in a baby crib as a severely handicapped child and is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

Children of John Richard and Gladys Keen:

4. Delia Virginia Keen b. 27-Oct-1939 lives in Richmond, VA.

GRANDFATHER:(4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
FATHER: (5)George W. Keen (1855-1920)
8th Child: **Katie Florence Keen**

Katie Florence Keen b. 21-Apr-1900 d. 8-Apr-1952 md. Dallas "Toby" Allen b. 30-Aug-1897 d. 23-Feb-1971

Toby was a farmer on the land by the Devil's Race Track east of Four Oaks. Childless, Toby and Katie are buried at Piney Grove Church on US 701.

The following is excerpted from **The Smithfield Herald**, 28-Mar-1950 by Herman D. Lawson:

"Progress is placing its stamp in the form of hard-surfacing on the Devil's Race Track, a section of the Smithfield-Clinton road in Ingrams Township. The section of road begins near the fork at Stewart's store and extends about one mile westward in the direction of Smithfield. The Devil's Race Track is just a portion of a 13-mile road now being prepared for pavement through Governor Scott's $200,000,000 road bond issue."

"...The name, Devil's Race Track, is almost as old as the country. It was a well-established road during the Revolutionary War, and British soldiers used it as they retreated from the defeats of the Southern campaign to the surrender at Yorktown. They even camped on a hill near the road. Contrary to a fixed local opinion, Cornwallis himself did not travel this stretch."

'In very early times, bold men from far away places, both north and south as well as the local gentry, met at this place and made a great playground of it. Rude camps were established and days and weeks were spent there when the weather was clement."

"Many games and much deviltry were enacted. The chief feats of entertainment were boxing bouts, cock fighting, horse racing, gambling, gander pulling and shooting matches. Naturally, there was some drinking and harmony did not always prevail."

"At length the meeting place came to be called "The Race Track." Meantime gaming and gambling became rougher and many tragic acts and deeds came to pass - so many indeed that the name of the place underwent a change."

"Somebody called the road the Devil's Race Track - and the name has stuck until this very day...."

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 10-Apr-1952
Mrs. Katie Allen, 52, Succumbs

"Mrs. Katie F. Allen, 52, of Route 1, Four Oaks, died Tuesday after a fall in her home earlier in the day. She was the daughter of the late George and Delia Keen of Johnston County."

"A funeral service was conducted Wednesday at Piney Grove Church by the Rev. P.O. Jackson and the Rev. D. A. Hardin. Burial was in the church cemetery."

"Surviving are her husband, Dallas Allen: three brothers, William and J.R. of Route 1, Four Oaks, and G.D. Allen (should be Keen.-ed.) of Route 2, Four Oaks; and one sister, Mrs. G. W. Wood of Route 2, Four Oaks."

NO CHILDREN:

Chapter 9

The Alfred Remus Keen Family

GRANDFATHER:(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
4th Child: **Alfred Remus Keen**

Alfred Remus Keen b. 5-Dec-1856 in Johnston Co. d. 21-Nov-1924 in Johnston County md. (10-Dec-1879) Sarah Idelia Stephenson b. 22-Sep-1857 d. 13-Apr-1932 daughter of Moore Stephenson and Zilpha "Zilla" Coats.

From "Four Oaks History" published in 1982 in **The Four Oaks News**, James Bryan Creech is quoted:

"The Alfred 'Squire' Keen farm lay on both sides of the old Smithfield Road east of Four Oaks and extended across present day US 301 to the property on which Mrs. Seth Keen now lives. The Squire Keen house still stands near the house of his grandson, Harold Keen. Harold is the son of Lewis Keen, whose home was across the road from the Squire Keen homeplace."

Alfed and Sarah were members of the Primitive Baptist Church.

Three of Alfred and Sarah's children died of tuberculous, Mittie T., David Henry, and Sarah.

Alfred and Sarah are buried in the Keen Cemetery on SR 1178 east of Four Oaks. Their tombstones read, respectively, "He was loved by God and Man." and "She now sweetly rests."

1. Mittie Thagard. Keen b. 15-Feb-1881 in Johnston Co. d. 7-Dec-1910 of tuberculous in Johnston Co. Mittie is buried in the Keen Cemetery - **No children.**

2. David Henry Keen b. 14-Nov-1882 d. 14-Jun-1926 of tuberculous.

David Henry was committed to State Hospital in Raleigh on 31-Jan-1914. **No children.**

3. Ira Walter Keen b. 30-Aug-1884 in Four Oaks d. 19-Jun-1941 in Four Oaks md. (14-May-1919) Sarah "Lou" Lufrieze Stroup Williams b. 14-Mar-1892 in Fallston, NC d. 28-Jul-1972 in Dunn, NC.

Lou had two children, Alene and Harry Williams, by a previous marriage when Ira married her in 1919. Lou was originally from near Shelby in Cleveland County.

Ira Walter Keen.
Photo from Mary Keen Remsburg

Quoting James Bryan Creech in "Four Oaks History", published in **The Four Oaks News,** "In the bad farming years around 1930, Ira sold his farm and his house to his younger, unmarried brother, Lewis. Near the house still is a section of split rail fence of the type that once surrounded the Alfred Keen farm. The rails were split by Alfred and his sons, David Henry and Ira."

"When the Keen family lived in Four Oaks and Ira clerked in a local store his wife worked for a while at the J.B. Creech and Son dry goods stores and other businesses in Smithfield, Raleigh, and Selma. In the 1930s he moved his family to Dunn where he worked in a merchantile establishment and his wife worked in the Belk's store there."

"Ira died in 1941 in Dunn and is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, He was 56 years of age. Mrs Keen lived until 1972. She is buried beside her husband."

"Alene and Harry Williams are children by Lou Stroup Williams' previous marriage. Alene, who married J. W. Garner, has retired from her career as a Registered Nurse at Franklin Square Hospital, Baltimore, Md. Harry, an electrical engineer, has retired from the U.S. government. He lives in Chesapeake, Va."

Sarah Lou Stroup Williams Keen
Photo from Mary Francis Remsburg

a. Margaret Lou Keen b. 13-Mar-1920 md. (23-Oct-1940) Robert "Buz" Barnes Godwin b. 14-Jul-1914.

Buz worked with the NC Food Distribution Service until his retirement and lives in Raleigh, NC.

L. to R. Margaret, Robert and Mattie Margaret in 1982.

1. Mattie Margaret Godwin b. 11-Dec-1941 md. Gregory Kew.

b. Infant Son Keen b. 23-Apr-1922 d. 24-Apr-1922 buried in the Keen Cemetery.

c. Ira Walker Keen, Jr. b. 15-May-1923 md. (23-Feb-1946) Therese Eva Rouillard b. 28-Feb-1927.

Ira, Jr. lives in Myrtle Beach, S.C. as is a retired Certified Public Accountant.

Children of Ira and Sara Keen. L to R. Ira Walter Keen, jr, Margaret Lou Keen Godwin, and Mary Francis Keen Remsburg. Picture made 1968.

(1.) Bruce Walter Keen b. 2-Jun-1947 md. (09-Sep-1984) Ann Hsiao b. 5-Jan-1945.

(a). Brendan Hsiao Keen b. 31-Jan-1988

(2.) Stephen Robert Keen b. 7-Jun-1949 md. (29-Aug-1980) Eileen "Bunnie" Killen b. 27-Mar-1954.

3.) Cynthia Marie Keen b. 14-Nov-1957 md. 1st Frank Pilon, md. 2nd Steven John Martinez

(a). Zachary Pilon b. 15-Apr-1980

(b). Steven John Martinez, Jr. b. 23-Apr-1987

(c). Therese Katherine Martinez b. 18-Apr-1989

(d) Alfred Julian Martinez b. 1-May-1992

d. Mary Francis Keen b. 18-May-1927 in Four Oaks md. (19-Dec-1948) Robert "Bob" Lewis Remsburg, Jr. b. 18-Feb-1926 in Dunn, NC.

Mary grew up in Dunn, NC and graduated from Dunn High School in 1944 and Meredith College in 1948. She spent college summers working in Dunn, Fōrt Bragg, Library of Congress in Washington, DC and then taught business at Campbell College. In 1948, she married Bob Remsburg, Jr. and moved to Charlotte in 1950 where she taught in business schools there. She then moved to Raleigh, NC in 1955 and then to Winston-Salem in 1964. She took graduate classes at UNC-Greensboro and Winston-Salem State University. She began in 1978 a 13 year career as interpreter for Old Salem, Inc. and continued in this job until retirement in 1991.

Robert attended Davidson College, Campbell College, and UNC-Chapel Hill where he obtained a BS in Commerce. He retired in 1991 as Senior District Service Officer, North Carolina Division of Veterans Affairs. Bob is a veteran of foreign service and WWII.

(1.) Infant Daughter Remsburg b. 7-Apr-1953 d.7-Apr-1953.

(2.) Sarah Clark Remsburg b. 29-Sep-1954 md. (14-Jun-1986) Thomas Evans Fix b. 10-Jun-1943.

Sarah teaches advanced placement students in Calculus and Computer Science at the Career Center, Winston-Salem, NC.

(3.) Robert Lewis Remsburg, III. b. 2-Dec-1961 md. (7-Apr-1990) Tammi Sue Sellati b. 2-Jun-1964.

Bob is Operations Manager for Reed Gold Mine Historic Site, North Carolina Department of Archives and History. Bob is a former teacher and lives in Locust, NC.

4. Lizzie L. Keen b. 2-Aug-1886 in Johnston Co. d. 25-Oct-1914 in Johnston Co. No issue.

5. Sarah Keen b. 8-May-1888 d. 10-Oct-1918 of tuberculous md. (1-Sep-1918) E. D. Adams. No issue.

6. Susan "Sudie" Keen b. 10-Jul-1890 in Johnston Co. d. 16-Jan-1951 in Johnston Co. md. (23-Dec-1908) Soloman Walker Brown, Sr. b. 11-Jul-1890 d. 21-Nov-1949 in Four Oaks.

Soloman was a telegraph operator and depot agent in Four Oaks for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad in the days when three operators kept the station open 24-hours a day. Later he was Johnston County Treasurer (1928-1930). In the 1930s, he operated the Esso service station which was located on the site of Q.W. Grady's Exxon station. In the last years of his working life, he ran a Shell station on the site of the First National Bank. Sudie and S.W. made their home

on the site of the old Red & White store on U.S. 301. Sudie and S.W. are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

a. Kenneth W. Brown b. ca-1910 d. 17-Aug-1987 md. (ca-1937) Margaret Stroud b. ca-1917 d. 20-Dec-1986.

Kenneth worked for Virginia Electric Company in the Norfolk, Virginia area and later lived in Greenville, N.C.

(1.) Kenneth W. Brown, Jr. b. ca-1947 md. (ca-1971) Jane B. Brown b. ca-1950.

(a.) Hilary Brown b. ca-1982.

(b.) Dana Brown b. ca-1984.

(2.) Vicky Brown

b. Carl "Dunk" Brown b. 19-Jun-1914 d. 7-Nov-1914 md. (25-Oct-1936) Ruth Pike

Carl worked for the Virginia Electric Power Company and at one time operated a street car in the Norfolk area. Carl made his home in Virginia Beach, VA.

c. Mabel Marie Brown b. 29-Mar-1917 d. 3-Jun-1933 at the age of 16.

d. Solomon Walker Brown, Jr. b. ca-1926 d. ca-1978 md. Emmaline UNKNOWN.

S.W. , Jr. was in the auto parts business in Norfolk, VA.

7. Seth Keen b. 11-May-1892 in Johnston Co. d. 15-May-1961 in Johnston Co. md. (28-Mar-1937) Ethel Doris Barnes b. 24-Jan-1915 in Selma, NC.

In a December 8, 1982 article of "Four Oaks History" in **The Four Oaks News,** James Bryan Creech wrote;

"Seth served in the army in World War I. His photograph in uniform accompanies this column. In 1925, after the death of his father, Seth received from his father's estate a farm (it included the homeplace) which extended from the old Smithfield highway to the railroad. Charlie Grady owned the land on the west side and Carson Adams the land on the east. Shortly, U.S. 301 was built through the farm and a small part of the farm was left between the new highway and the railroad. A few years after Seth married Ethel Doris Barnes of Selma in 1937, they built a house on that section of the farm between U.S. 301 and the railroad northeast of Four Oaks. Seth died in 1961. Mrs Ethel Keen continues to live in the house on U.S. 301."

The 1920 Census lists Seth as a Salesman for Grocery Store, age 27 and living at home of his parents.

Seth and Ethel are buried in the Keen Cemetery east of Four Oaks.

a. Ethel Louise Keen b. 7-Jun-1938 md. (31-Aug-1956) Thomas Lanier Beasley b. 24-Dec-1933.

Continuing to quote the James Creech article, "Seth and Ethel Keen have one daughter and two sons. Ethel Louise married Thomas Beasley, and the Beasleys live across U.S. 301 from the Seth Keen home. Thomas who worked for Roses Stores, Inc. and later for Pope's Variety Stores for more than 20 years. He is now employed by Gurley's Inc. of Selma. Ethel Louise earlier worked with the Reidsville City Schools cafeteria and a Roanoke County, Va. school cafeteria and later for the Jerold corporation. Presently she works for Goodmark Foods in Garner. Their son, Michael Thomas works for Blue Flame Gas of Kenly."

(1.) Debroah Louise Beasley b. 20-Feb-1960 md. (18-Nov-1984) John Kirk Jernigan b. 28-Jan-1964

(a.) John Paul Jernigan b. 22-Dec-1982.

(b.) Crystal Nicole Jernigan b. 21-Jun-1987

(c) Chasity Faith Jernigan b. ca-1982

(2.) Michael Thomas Beasley b. 3-Apr-1958 md. (9-Jun-1990) Karen Rene Rasnick

b. Seth Keen, Jr. b. 7-Jan-1940 d. 4-Sep-1991 md. (14-Feb-1970) Mavis Parrish b. 7-Mar-1929 d. 4-Oct-1991

Continuing to quote the James Creech article, "The oldest son of Seth and Ethel Brown Keen, Seth, Jr. married Mavis Parrish and the couple now resides in Glen Rose, Texas where Seth, Jr. is working as an electrician on a nuclear plant. They have no children."

c. James Franklin Keen b. 20-Jun-1943 md. (10-Jul-1966) Shelia Ann Morgan b. 3-Mar-1948 in Benson, NC.

Continuing to quote James Creech, "Seth's second son, James Franklin Keen, is married to Shelia Morgan of Benson and they live near the Alfred Keen homeplace on the old Smithfield Road opposite the Lewis Keen home. James works for the state at its new oil refinery at Garner. Shelia works for IBM in Raleigh. There are two children, April Lynette and Share. Both are students at Four Oaks School."

(1.) April Lynnette Keen b. 10-Jul-1969 md. UNKNOWN UNKNOWN.

(a.) Christopher Bryan Keen b. 14-Apr-1989

(b.) Johnathan Tyler Keen b. 4-Apr-1991

(2.) Eric Shane Keen b. 28-Feb-1974

8. Lewis Keen b. 23-Sep-1894 d. 11-Feb-1981 md.(1-Aug-1941) Rena Sessoms b. 3-Dec-1912 in Sampson Co. d. 15-Aug-1963 in Johnston Co.

Lewis served in World War I from May, 1918 until June 6, 1919. Trained at Camp Jackson, S.C. and serving in France, he returned to Four Oaks to become an independent insurance agent, a position he held for 57 years. Lewis was one of the founders of the Four Oaks American Legion Post and the Four Oaks Rotary Club where he served as President in the late 1950s. A member of the Four Oaks Baptist Church, Lewis served on the Board of Decons as well as other positions.

The 1920 Census lists Lewis, age 25, as express office clerk living at parents home.

Rena taught for several years in the Four Oaks school.

Lewis and Rena are buried in the Keen Cemetery east of Four Oaks where their tombstone reads "Gone of mansions of rest."

a. Russell Lewis Keen b. 1-Aug-1943 md. (3-Jul-1966) Linda Lassiter b. 5-Dec-1942

Russell is an electrical engineer with Northern Telecom and lives in Raleigh, N.C.

(1.) Phillip Russell Keen b. 6-Sep-1969

(2.) Deanna Lee Keen b. 7-Dec-1972

b. Aubrey Alfred Keen b. 18-Aug-1944 md. Brenda Vaughn b. 19-Oct-1948

Aubrey owns and operates a personnel agency in Charlotte, N.C.

(1.) Sharon "Sherry" Heather Keen b. 15-Jan-1966

c. Harold Thomas Keen b. 28-Apr-1948 md. (14-Aug-1976) Barbara Catherine Allen b. 8-Nov-1951

Harold has been an officer of the Smithfield Savings and Loan and makes his home East of Four Oaks.

(1.) Rena Catherine Keen b. 21-Jun-1983

(2.) Matthew Thomas Keen b. 16-Nov-1986

Chapter 10

The Elizabeth Helion Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
5th Child: **Elizabeth Helion Keen**

Elizabeth Helion Keen b. 17-Oct-1858 in Johnston Co. d. 16-Oct-1918 in Harnett Co. md. 1st (29-Jun-1881) William Hawkins Allen son of James Gideon Allen and Ridley Johnson Allen b. 10-Jan-1834 d.30-Mar-1894, 2nd (18-Nov-1896) Jonas Reaves son of William and Clara Reaves b. 27-May-1854 in Harnett Co. d. ca-Jan-1919 in Wilson Co.

Bill "Hawk" Allen was 52 years old and had a family of nine children when the 23 year old Helion married him. Helion and Hawk had two more children. When Hawk died, Helion married a 42 year old widower Jonas Reaves who had children by his first marriage and lived in Harnett County between Benson and Coats. Helion took her children George and Jason to live with her in Harnett County where they were raised with her children by Jonas Reaves. Helion died in 1918 at age 60, victim of the world influenza epidemic. Her husband Jonas died within six months. Helion and Jonas are buried at Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Chruch cemetery close to Benson, NC in Harnett County. Jonas's tombstone reads "An honest man is the noblest work of God." Helion's tombstone reads "A loved one from us is gone. A voice we loved is still. A place is vacant in our home that never can be filled."

Elizabeth Helion Keen Allen Reaves and Mary Ella Keen Williams. Photo from Dot Taylor

From "Four Oaks History" in **The Four Oaks News,** June, 9, 1982, James Bryan Creech reports the sad fate of Jonas Reaves.

"After Helion's death in the fall of 1918, Jonas Reaves remained despondent and did an uncharacteristic thing - he advertised in a local paper for a wife. A woman in the Wilson area answered him and invited him to visit her home. On January 27, 1919 Mr. Reaves drove his car from his home to Wilson and disappeared. His automobile evidently was recovered because the news story (from **The News and Observer**) does not mention it again. His son, William, attempting to trace his father's route, found that he stopped for directions in the neighborhood of the woman he intended to visit but he never reached her home. Mr. Reaves never came to see her she said."

"On March 22, 1919, two boys seeking for a place to fish in Toisnoit Swamp near Wilson found a body in shallow water. Jonas Reaves wallet with more than five dollars was still in his pocket as was his gold watch. The mayor of Wilson believed that the body had been 'violently handled' and asked for a coroner's inquest. The coroner's jury returned a verdict of suicide."

"The body of Jonas Reaves was brought back to Bethsaida Church and buried beside Elizabeth Helion (on the tombstone the name is Helen - in the Four Oaks community it was Helion.) He Lived less than six months after his wife died. His son, William, settled the estate. William and his brother, Luther, continued to live at the homeplace for a while after their father died. The house was big enough for two young families. The house finally went to William who lived out his life there (He died in 1948). His widow lived there until a few years ago when she went to live with a daughter in Sumter, S.C., where she died about a month ago (June, 1982). The Reaves home is now locked and abandoned."

The News & Observer, 23-Mar-1919
BODY OF JONAS REEVES IS FOUND IN SWAMP
Dead man had been missing since January 31; Suicide, Coroner's Verdict

(Special to the News & Observer)

Wilson, March 22 - The partially decomposed body of Jonas Reeves, 55, was found submerged in Toisont Swamp near here this morning, and a coroner's jury this afternoon returned a verdict of suicide. The dead man had been missing since January 31.

One of the sons stated here today that his father had been ailing mentally since last June. Early in January he advertised in a local paper for a wife, and entered into correspondence with a woman here. He came to the city January 31 in a machine, and disappeared. He had on his person when found today something over five dollars and his gold watch.

Marks found on the body led the mayor and others to believe Reeves was handled violently. The body was found by two boys, looking for a place to fish. Reeves' home was near Benson.

Children of Helion and Hawk Allen

1. George E. Allen b. 11-Jun-1882 in Johnston Co. d. 18-Feb-1953 md. 6-Aug-1903 Lillar May Ryals b. 1-Mar-1884 d. 19-May-1973.

    A. Stonewall Allen b. ca-1905 d. 16-Jan-1976 md. (21-Aug-1926) Bessie Surles

    B. Willie Young Allen b. ca-1908 md. (24-Dec-1927) Lattie Hawkins Parker

    C. George E. Allen, Jr. b. 15-Jul-1915 d. 16-Sep-1967

    D. Betty Helen Allen b. 15-May-1925

    E. Joseph Worth Allen b. 12-Jan-1930

2. Jason Allen b. 10-Oct-1891 d. 3-Aug-1947 md. (26-Oct-1919) Effie F. Smith b. 10-Nov-1889 in Harnett Co.

    Jason and Effie are buried at Bethsadia Primitive Baptist Church.

A. Marthie Varena Allen b. 20-Nov-1919

B. Infant Allen b. 12-Jul-1920 d. 12-Jul-1920

C. Jason Lee Allen b. 31-Oct-1922 d. 12-Mar-1943

D. Randall Eldridge Allen b. 14-Apr-1924

E. Florence Mozelle Allen b. 12-May-1926

Children of Helion and Jonas Reaves

3. Sally P. Reaves b. 24-Aug-1899 d. 14-Nov-1961 md. Ennis B. Bridges 15-Dec-1889 in Harnett Co. d. 17-Jan-1949

   a. Corbitt Bridges

   b. Howard E. Bridges

   c. Pearl Bridges md. UNKNOWN DeMartino

4. Jonah Elmond Reaves b. 18-Nov-1901 d. 25-Nov-1951

5. Walter James Reaves b. 31-May-1903 d. 17-Feb-1956 md. Roena Norris b. 4-Jul-1900 d. 12-Nov-1974.

   a. Junious Preston Reaves b. 27-Nov-1922 d. 3-Jan-1923

   b. Alice Mae Reaves b. 22-Apr-1929 d. 27-Nov-1929

   c. Annell Reaves b. 2-Dec-1925 d. 3-Sep-1926

   d. Margaret Irene Reaves b. 2-Dec-1926 d. 13-Feb-1932

   e. Annette Reaves

   f. Gladys R. Reaves b. 11-Feb-1928 d. 28-Feb-1930

   g. Elise Gertrude Reaves b. 17-Feb-1936 d. 24-Jun-1937

   h. Ottis Leon Reaves

   i. Jonas Floyd Reaves

Chapter 11
The Elijah Elbert Keen Family

GRANDFATHER:(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
6th Child: **Elijah Elbert Keen**

Elijah Elbert Keen b. 12-Apr-1860 d. 20-Jul-1888

Elijah Elbert moved to Alabama where an uncle had earlier moved. Elijah Elbert drowned at aged 28 and his body was returned to be is buried in the Keen Cemetery. His tombstone reads, "Though thou art gone, fond memory clings to thee." He was never married.

From the July 28, 1888 issue of **The Smithfield Herald.**

MR. ELBERT E. KEENE, A FORMER RESIDENT OF JOHNSTON COUNTY LOOSES HIS LIFE BY DROWNING AT BIRMINGTON, ALA., IN THE LAKE THAT HE HELP TO BUILD WITH HIS OWN HANDS.

Information was received here last Saturday, the 21st inst., of the drowning of Mr. Elbert E. Keene, son of our esteemed countryman, George Keene, Esq., in a lake in Charles Lynn Park, at Birmingham, Ala.

Mr. Keen was born in Ingrams township this county and moved to Texas two years ago last May. He went from Texas to Alabama where he engaged in the railroad business. He was 27 years old; a young man of high prospects, with a promising future before him, and his death was a great shock to his numerous friends and relatives in this county. We clip the following from the Birmingham **Age** concerning Mr. Keenes death:

"The big Democratic rally and barbecue at East Lake was a success in every detail, and had it not been for the sad death of Mr. E. E. Keene by drowning, there would not have been the slightest cause to say all was not decidedly pleasant. After hearing the speeches, quite a number of men and boys had left the barbecue grounds and taken to the water for a swim. Among those was the above named E. E. Keene, who seemed to be a good swimmer and attracted considerable attention."

"He swam out into the channel of the lake and suddenly cried, 'Help! Help! I'm drowning!' The lake was covered with small boats, one within a hundred feet of him, but the occupants, a young couple, as well as all the others, thought the man was fooling, and no one made any attempt to rescue him, until he went down the second time. Suddenly all realized the fact that he was in earnest, and several attempted to reach him, but it was too late. Keene went down a third time and remained on the bottom of the lake."

"By that time the shores of the lake were crowded, every boat was engaged, and the bathers all hurried to the spot where the unfortunate man had disappeared. Some dived to the bottom in the effort to find the body, while others poked about with poles and oars, trying to find the drowned man."

"It was almost an hour before anyone found the body. Pat Haggarty, a pressman was the first to find it. Pat's foot touched the dead man's stomach, but he was afraid to bring him to the surface so C.P. Nunnelly went down and brought poor Keene up. Haggerty then took hold again and together with Daniel Parr, Nunnelly, and Thomas Maloy, all fine swimmers, the body was taken to the pavilion. It was almost useless, but

in hopes that some spark of life may have yet remained, they worked with him for half an hour. It was to no avail, however, and all that remained of Keene, was wrapped up in a blanket and carried back to the bath house again, where it remained until taken to the city."

"E.E. Keene, was a contractor, unmarried, and well-to-do. He came here from North Carolina over a year ago, and among other work he did since, was to help build the dam for the very lake in which he was drowned. He resided in Village Springs, and yesterday morning went to East Lake with S.P. Massey, whose acquaintance he had just made. Massey was very much broken up over the affair and sent to the deceased's only relative, a cousin. named Parrish, who lives at Bayles Gap, notifying him of Keene's death."

"Keene's remains reached Four Oaks Monday night and were buried at his old home near that place."

From **Johnston County Record of Estates** (CS.056.501.31 at N..C. Archives), the following is noted:

Page 455-458 - Record of Inventory and Sale of Estate of Elijah Elbert Keen. A.R. Keen was the administrator of the estate and filed an account of inventory and sale of the Estate of E.E. Keen on 1-Mar-1889 totaling $48.57 in sales. Over two and one half pages of items are listed including many books and clothes, a violin, saw and hammer, gun, and bed and saddle. He also had four notes due from A.R. Keen for $100 each, due 1-Nov-1888, 1889, 1890, and 1891. The estate proceeds were split three ways, with 1/3 to J.P. Keen, 1/3 to Mary E. Keen, and 1/3 to Erastus and Edith Dunn. J.C. Keen, guardian, received the $222.12 total proceeds for his charges.

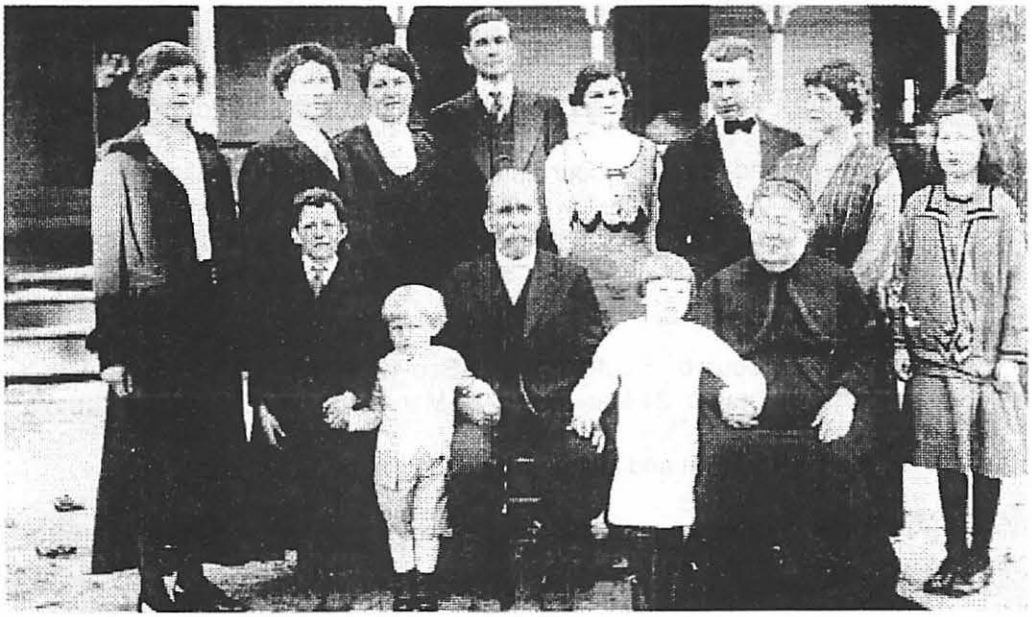
Chapter 12

The Sarah Catherine Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
7th Child: **Sarah Catherine Keen**

Sarah Catherine Keen b. 18-Apr-1862 in Johnston Co. d. 7-Nov-1910 in Four Oaks, NC md. (30-Nov-1882) Kinchen Larkin Barbour son of Larkin Barbour and Wilcy Ellen Massengill b. 8-Feb-1849 in Elevation Township in Johnston Co. d. 23-Feb-1920 in Four Oaks, NC.

Sarah Catherine married Kinchen Larkin Barbour and lived in the oldest house in the present Four Oaks, located in the oak grove beside the post office. The famous oak tree, the 1886 namesake of Four Oaks, stood at the back door of the Kinchen Barbour house. In 1883 Kinchen bought 66 1/2 acres from Isaac Evans for $332.50. This land adjoined the George William Keen farm. Kinchen built a house for his new bride in an oak grove that became known as "Barbour's grove", the site which contained in 1886 the famous "Four Oaks" tree.



The Barbour Family in 1915. L to R. Front Row: Ralph, son of Ellen, Wilson, son of Sally, Kinchen, Catherine, daughter of Ellen, Ella Keen Williams; Back Row: Martha, Sally, Ellen, Will, Mary, Ed Mathews, Neva, Ruth, daughter of Ellen. Photo from Dot Taylor

When the railroad was built beside their home, Kinchen sold twenty acres of his farm to the railroad. Company surveyors laid off six blocks north of the railroad right-of-way which became six blocks of northern Four Oaks. Barbour's Grove, where the present Four Oaks Park is located, was used as a camp for the railroad crew. Visiting the camp, the president of the railroad noted the unusual oak tree and decided to name the town "Four Oaks" in honor or the unusual four stemed oak tree with a single lower

ten foot trunk branching out into four upper trunks. The tree, having been cut down by Aaron Wallace during a possum hunt around 1850 and later sprouting the upper four branches, survived until the early 1900s.

Members of the Rehobeth Primative Baptist Church, Kinchen was the first postmaster of the new town.

From "Four Oaks History" published in **The Four Oaks News**, James Bryan Creech writes:

"Mr Barbour's remaining land was not incorporated when the town was incorporated in 1889, the line ran along Baker Street. The Barbour stock barn stood on the site of Mrs. Alma Pearson's home on East Sanders Street and the Barbour orchard was behind his house on a piece of land now split by Tucker Street. About 1910 Mr. Barbour widened Sanders Street through his farm, laid off Tucker and Maple Streets through his cotton patches and offered building lots to local residents and prospective citizens."

Kinchen Larkin Barbour and Sara Cartherine Keen Barbour with daughter Martha Ila Barbour.
Photo from Dot Taylor

"Inside the old town limits on the site of the post office and the old fire station Mr. Barbour had a blacksmith shop in which he worked on wagons, buggies and farm equipment. The grove surrounding the Barbour home served as the town square or park. Political speakings, tent revivals and a merry-go-round moved into the Barbour yard in the first quarter of this century."

"Kincheon and Sarah Barbour were regarded as the 'First Citizens of Four Oaks' because they were here when the town was established."

In 1989 during the Four Oaks Centennial Celebration, Mrs. Dot Stanley Taylor, granddaughter of Kincheon Barbour, donated the land in the oak grove to the town as a park.

1. Wilcy Ellen Barbour b. 5-Jul-1884 d. 7-Sep-1923 md. 1st (20-Dec-1903) Sidney Metrous Barbour b. 24-Mar-1880 d. 21-Mar-1913, md. 2nd Millays Durham

Wilcy Ellen and Metrous are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery.

A. Liddie Ruth Barbour b. 1904 d. 1992 md. Isaac Hayes b. 1907 d. 1981

(1) Ellen Rose Hayes b. 1930 md. Murray Ray Wilson b. 1928

(a) Michael Ray Wilson b. 1955 md. Marsha Ann Dunn b. 1959

1. Michael Jonathan Wilson b. 1979

2. Brandan Zane Wilson b. 1986

(b) Fredrick Steve Wilson b. 1958

(c) Cathy Darlene Wilson b. 1959 md. William Wood Sanders, Jr. b. 1959.

1. William Wood Sanders, III b. 1984

2. Kathryn Elizabeth Sanders b. 1986

(2) Isaac George Hayes b. 1942 d. 1957

B. Willie Ralph Barbour b.1907 d. 1977 md. Onie Massengill b. 1909 d. 1986

(1) Ralph Barbour, Jr. b. 1925 md. Lucille Barbour b. 1922

(a) Timothy Jacob Barbour b. 1949 md. Terry Ann Raskins

(b) Cynthia Lucille Barbour b. 1953 md. Harold Owen Wilkins

1. Justin Owen Wilkins b. ca-1983

(c) Priscilla Joy Barbour b. 1956 md. C. Alton Worsham

1. Cameron Allen Worsham b. 1989

(2) Donald Ray Barbour b. 1938

(3) Elinor Ruth Barbour b. 1940 md. Billy Corbett

(a) Diane Corbett b. 1959

(b) Edgar (Eddie) Dewey Corbett md. Linda Wilson

(4) Willis Kinchen Barbour b. 1941 md. Maylon West

(a) Willis Kinchen Barbour, Jr. md. Unknown Unknown

1. Christopher Barbour b. 1984

2. Amanda Barbour b. 1989

(b) Dennis Keith Barbour md. Maye Strickland

1. April Barbour b. 1986

2. Holly Barbour b. 1988

(c) Willie Anderson Barbour b. 1973

C. Catherine Elizabeth Barbour b. 24-Jul-1911 md. Sylvester Burdett Welch b. 7-Dec-1910 d. 26-Sep-1990.

(1) Sylvester Burditt (Buddy) Welch, Jr. b. 4-Oct-1938 md. 1st Sue Clarkson md. 2nd Patricia Ann Sowell Cobb

1. Burditt William Welch b. 2-Jun-1968

2. Barton Thomas Welch b. 15-Aug-1970

(2) Sydney Barbour Welch b. 18-Jan-1942 md. Norma Copeland b. 1943

1. Shawn Welch b. 1966

2. Stephania Welch b. 1970

D. Metrous Alden Barbour b. 1909 d. 1910

2. Willie "Will" Elbert Barbour b. 6-Sep-1888 in Johnston Co. d. 12-Sep-1956 md. (20-Dec-1903) Clara B. Banks b. 1889 in Knoxville, TN. d. 1986

A. Willie Elbert "Bill" Barbour, Jr. b. 26-Nov-1919 d. 1990 md. Ellen "Mickey" Stapleton

(1) William Michael Barbour

(2) Timothy David Barbour

(3) Christopher Joseph Barbour

B. Anna Burks Barbour b. 1922 md. Dana Grindy b. Lexington, VA.

(1) Albert Leonard Grindy, II b. May, 1957

C. John Kinchen Barbour b. 17-Aug-1926 md. (11-Aug-1947) Martha Hodges b. 1927

(1) Nancy Ann Barbour b. 18-Sep-1948 md. 1st Steve Pouncey md 2nd Allen Blosser

(a) Patricia Alison Pouncey b. 15-Jan-1968

(2) Martha Margaret Barbour b. 15-Sep-1951 md. (1976) John Cox

(a) Catherine Margaret Cox b. 14-Dec-1979

(b) Kimberley Ann Cox b. 28-May-1981

(3) Cynthia Lou Barbour b. 26-May-1953

(4) John Burk Barbour b. 29-Aug-1955 md. Mary Rollison

(a) Jessica Lynn Barbour b. 22-Nov-1986

D. Jessie Mae Barbour b. 1930 md. Lt. Col John Fleming b. Glenn's Ferry, ID d. 30-Sep-1990 in Glenn's Ferry, ID.

3. Sally Helon Barbour b. 17-Jun-1890 d. 18-Apr-1959 md. (26-Dec-1911) Ned Hamilton Barbour b. 30-Nov-1889 d. 22-Apr-1947

A. Woodrow Wilson Barbour b. 1913 d. 1968 md. Mildred Castello b. 1913

(1) Henry H. Barbour b. 1943 md. Elaine Simon

1. Michelle Barbour b. 1976

(2) Elaine Barbour b. 1947 md. Bruce McQueen

1. Allison Barbour b. 1980

2. Evan Barbour b. 1984

B. Jessie Mae Barbour b. 17-Oct-1916 d. 4-Apr-1919.

C. Norman Horace Barbour b. 27-Feb-1921 d. 14-Apr-1940

D. Robert Glen Barbour b. 26-Aug-1923 md. (26-Jul-1947) Susan Sanders b. 31-Mar-1925

Glen and Susan live near Smithfield, NC.

(1). Robert Glen Barbour, Jr. b. 1948 md. Kathy Tart

1. Andi Marie Barbour b. 1977

2. Traci Lynn Barbour b. 1980

3. Charli Katherine Barbour b. 1982

(2). Ann Barbour b. 1950 md. Shane Nolan

(3). Jessie Barbour b. 1951

(4) John Thomas Barbour b. 1953 d. 1987

(5). Sarah Barbour b. 1954 md. Bobby Wayne Birdsong

1. Samantha Birdsong b. 1978

2. Clifton Glen Birdsong b. 1980

(6). Frankie Barbour b. 1957 md. William D. Davis

1. Elizabeth Marie Davis b. 1980

2. Frances Ann Davis b. 1982

(7). Regina Barbour b. 1960

(8) Charles Kevin Barbour b. 1968 d. 1977

E. Mary Jean Barbour b. 1926 d. 1988 md. (1948) Robert L. Maxey

Jean and Robert made their home in Rock Hill, SC.

(1). Jeanette Maxey b. 1949 md. 1st David E. Wallace md. 2nd Unknown Clark md 3rd Garron Eaker

(A). David Wallace, Jr. b. 1969

(2) Robert Linwood Maxey, Jr. b. 1951 d. 1981

(3). Grace Maxey b. 1952 md. Jim Funderburk

(A). Charlie Funderburk b. 1976

(B). Linwood "Woody" Funderburk b. 1980

4. Neva Florence Barbour b. 4-Sep-1892 d. 7-Sep-1972 md. (23-Mar-1915) Opal Edgar Matthews b. 15-Sep-1890 in (Banner Township) Johnston Co. d. 30-Jul-1949 in Johnston Co.

Neva Florence was an accomplished homemaker and seamstress. She also painted evening bags and gowns, shawls, etc. as well as oil paintings on canvas. She wed Opal Edgar Matthews of Benson, NC. whom she met when he came to Four Oaks as a telegraph operator with the Atlantic Coastline Railroad. Neva and Ed lived in Smithfield and are buried at Elevation Methodist Church Cemetery.

A. Opal Edwin Matthews, Jr. b. 25-Aug-1916 in Four Oaks md. (2-Feb-1941) Ruby Lellon Daughtry b. 13-Sep-1921 in Johnston Co.

Ed served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He and Ruby made their home in Smithfield, NC.

(1) Thomas Edwin Matthews b. 26-Oct-1943 in Portsmouth, VA d. 9-Jul-1959

(2) Jerry Linwood Matthews b. 9-Aug-1945 in Smithfield, NC md. (22-Jun-1969) Niki Timms b. 18-Oct-1949

Jerry served in the Marine Corps in the Vietnam War and received three Purple Hearts.

(A) Tracy Christan Matthews b. 12-Jan-1968

(B) Angel Arlinda Matthews b. 29-Jul-1970 md. Timothy Adams

B. Neva Madlin Matthews b. 17-Aug-1917 in Dillon, SC. md. (6-Sep-1936) Clyde Lorane Futrell of Pine Level, NC.

Madlin was a pioneer woman photographer for newspapers in N.C., first for The News and Observer and later for the Department of Archives and History in Raleigh, NC. She and Lorane made their home in Cary, NC.

(1) James Clyde Futrell, II. b. 13-Jan-1938 md. (25-Jun-1961) Barbara Wells of Raleigh, NC. b. 8-Dec-1942, md. 2nd Sue Brewer.

(A) Wendy Diane Futrell b. 10-Sep-1966 md. (2-Feb-1980) James Saunders b. 24-Oct-1960

[1] Melissa Ann Saunders b. 18-Aug-1980

C. Ben Joe Matthews b. 27-Apr-1919 in Smithfield, NC. md. (11-Oct-1943) Jackie Geneva Patton b. 11-Oct-1923 in Lansing, NC.

Ben served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He and Jackie made their home in Portsmouth, VA.

(1) Sharon Ellen Matthews b. 1-Oct-1944 md. 1st (25-Aug-1962) James Robert Suttle of Portsmouth, VA. b. 7-Nov-1942 d. 20-May-1978, 2nd (7-Dec-1985) Timothy Richard Cowan

(A) Rhonda Michelle Suttle b. 14-Jun-1964 in Rossiers En Haye, France.

(B) Dana Siree Suttle b. 3-Feb-1969 in Lundsthul, Germany.

(C) Janna Suzanne Suttle b. 13-Jul-1972 in Portsmouth, VA.

(2) Peggy Celia Matthews b. 29-May-1949 in Long Beach, CA md. 1st (8-Mar-1968) Russell Haynes Long, Sr. of Portsmouth, VA. b. 29-Dec-1946 md. 2nd Donald Edward Sharer.

(A) Kelly Celia Long b. 10-Nov-1968 in Portsmouth, VA.

(B) Amy Ellen Long b. 13-Mar-1971 in Portsmouth, VA.

(C) Russell Haynes, Long, Jr. b. 13-Mar-1971 in Portsmouth, VA.

(3) Monty Joe Matthews b. 8-Jan-1952 md. (28-Jun-1975) Pamela Lynn Epps b. 27-Dec-1950

Monty and Pamela were married in historic Flint Hill Baptist Church, Fort Mill, SC.

(A) Kendall Moss Matthews b. 15-Jan-1980 in Richmond, VA

(B) Lacey Patton Matthews b. 14-Dec-1981 in Concord, NC.

D. Kathryn Keen Matthews b. 20-Aug-1923 in Smithfield, NC d. 11-Feb-1990 md. (7-Jan-1950) Cicero Farrar "Buddy" Talley of Youngsville, NC. b. 29-Oct-1921.

(1) Karen Faye Talley b. 3-Oct-1950 md. (6-Jul-1978) Robert Glenn "Chip" Stark, II. b. 4-Apr-1949

(A) Robert Glenn "Chipper" Stark, III. b. 18-Feb-1986

(B) Parker Keene Stark b. 25-Sep-1990

(2) Thomas Farrar Talley b. 18-Oct-1951 never married.

(3) Nancy Kathryn Talley b. 10-Dec-1953 md. (31-Dec-1973) Ronald Bruce Mann b. 16-Dec-1950 in Hialeah, FL.

(A) Lance Emerson Mann b. 1-Dec-1976

(B) Garrett Marcus Mann b. 19-Feb-1979

(4) Matthew Winston Talley b. 6-Dec-1961 in Fuquay Varina, NC and never married.

E. Larkin "Bobby" Barbour Matthews b. 16-Jun-1935 in Smithfield, NC. md. 1st (10-Jun-1961) Edna Jones b. 6-Jul-1941 in Cary, NC., md. 2nd (19-Mar-1976) Pauline Ann Orlowski b. 22-Feb-1941.

Bobby served with the US Air Force in the Korean War. Bob made his home in Portsmouth, VA.

Children of Bobby and Edna Matthews:

(1) Teresa Ann Matthews b. 4-Jan-1963 in Portsmouth, VA. md. (21-Sep-1986) Dwight Wayne Oliver of Greensboro, NC.

(A) Brittany Dawn Oliver b. 3-Jun-1989.

(2) Trude Lynn Matthews b. 12-Dec-1966 in Portsmouth, VA. md. (2-Jan-1987) Kevin Barbour of Clayton, NC.

(A) Morgan Leigh Barbour b. 27-Feb-1990.

(3) Larkin Barbour "Larry" Matthews II b. 11-Feb-1969 in Portsmouth, VA.

Children of Bobby and Pauline Matthews:

(4) John Larkin Matthews b. 24-Aug-1976

Children of Pauline Cooper Matthews, Stepsons of Bobby Matthews:

(5) Hugh Steven Cooper Matthews b. 2-Dec-1965

(6) Joseph John Cooper Matthews b. 28-Jan-1967

5. Mary Inez Barbour b. 11-Mar-1895 d. 18-Sep-1967 md. 1st (25-Dec-1916) William Augustus Runge b. 22-Mar-1890 d. 9-Dec-1920 md. 2nd Norman Penny md. 3rd Charles Mengle

A. Mary Leigh Runge b. 18-Dec-1917 d. 18-Sep-1991 md. Cade Brooks

Maryleigh and Cade made their home in Fayetteville, NC until their divorce in 1960 when she moved to Santa Rosa, California, returning to Smithfield, NC in 1982.

(1) Leigh Brooks md. Roger McCaulay

a. Chris McCaulay

(2) Emma Brooks md. Dave Weeks

a. Cindy Weeks

b. Chelsea Weeks

6. Martha Ila Barbour b. 16-Aug-1897 d. 12-Oct-1969 md. (30-Jun-1920) William Jesse Stanley b. 1899 d. 1949

A. Dorcas Gray Stanley b. 1923 md. Kenneth McNeill Taylor b. 1923

(1) Stephanie Barbour Taylor b. 1952 md. Gary Bordogna

a. William Allan Bordogna b. 1984

b. Martha Carmen Bordogna b. 1988

(2) Kenneth McNeill Taylor, Jr. b. 1954 md. Susanne Reney

a. Daniel Adolphus Taylor b. 1987

b. Katherine Kelley McNeill Taylor b. 1989

c. David Stanley Taylor b. 1991

(3) Sarah Elizabeth Taylor b. 1957 md. Robert J. Parker, Jr.

(4) William Stanley Taylor b. 1960

7. Lillie Ruth Barbour b. 18-Mar-1900 d. 14-Sep-1900 as an infant and is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

8. George Larkin Barbour b. 22-Aug-1901 d. 22-Aug-1901 as an infant and is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

9. Paul Vinton Barbour b. 9-Dec-1902 d. 19-Apr-1903 as an infant and is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

10. Lucy Cathon Barbour b. 1-Oct-1905 d. 3-Oct-1906 as an infant and is buried in the Keen Cemetery.

Chapter 13

The Edith H. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER:(3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
8th Child: **Edith Keen**

Edith H. Keen b. ca-1864 d. ca-1887 md. (6-Apr-1882) George Preston Dunn son of Amos Dunn and Eliza Lee b. ca-1861 d. ca-1926.

Amos Dunn, Preston Dunn's father, enlisted on July 11, 1862 as a private in Company D, Fifth Regiment, N.C. Infantry and was wounded and captured at Cedar Creek, Virginia. After recovering from a minie ball wound to the face, he was paroled on February 10, 1865 and exchanged, along with 2,050 fellow prisoners, at Coxes Landing on the James River, Virginia. When he returned home, he found a radically different life.

Amos found that his wife had died during his absence and that his son Preston had listened to the gunfire at nearby Bentonville Battlefield. Preston hardly remembered the ragtag man who introduced himself as his father. Amos soon remarried and fathered 12 new children, making a total family of 14.

Preston and Edith lived on his farm on the south side of Hannah Creek, northeast of Allen's Crossroads. Edith died early leaving two small children. The daughter Edith was raised by her aunt Felicia Keen Allen, who lived on an adjoining farm. John Calvin Keen, Edith's older brother, was appointed guardian of Edith's children who received their mother's share of her father George Keen's estate. Erastus and Edith each received $421 in settlement of the estate. Preston later married Thenia Lee and started a new family. He bought more land and enlarged his farm which today remains in the Dunn family.

Edith and George are buried in the Robbin Massengill cemetery near Juniper Church.

1. Alexander Dunn b. 16-May-1883 d. 16-Jul-1883. Died in Infancy.

2. Edith Dunn b. 29-Jun-1887 d. 20-Jul-1923 md. (29-Jun-1910) Jesse Adams b. ? son of David Benton and Phebia Adams of Johnston Co. d. 4-Aug-1923

Edith was but a few weeks old when her mother, Edith, died. She was raised by her mother's sister, Felicia "Sis" Keen, the wife of Julius Allen. The Adams were having a house built when Edith was struck down by typhoid fever and six months later, Jesse died of the same disease. Both are buried in the David Benton Adams cemetery.

J.C. Keen was guardian for Edith Keen and filed many Account Currents for the guardianship, all listed in Johnston County Record of Estates (CR.056.501.__ in the N.C. Archives).

a. Leon Adams md. 1st Mattie Taylor, md. 2nd Hattie Taylor.

Leon was a World War II veteran and was wounded in the June, 1944 D-Day invasion and remained in the Army for several years. He

returned to Roanoke Rapids, NC where he lived and worked in an ice house.

b. Cleo Adams d. ca-1985 md. Eva Everette

Cleo farmed on the David Benton Adams homeplace until his death in 1985.

(1). Edith Adams md. Thomas Moore

c. Edith Pearl Adams d. ca-1955 md. Milton Lee

(1). James Allen Lee

d. Minnie Ferrell Adams md. Douglas Browning

The Browning family makes their home in Wilmington, NC.

e. Lois Adams md. William Tart md. 2nd Osborn Ennis

(1). Edna Earl Tart md. William Sutton

The Suttons live in Newton Grove, NC.

(2). Edith Tart md. Willie Parker

(3) Ray Tart. Died in Infancy at age 7.

(4). Roy Tart md. Pat Lassiter

(5). Bonnie Tart md. Norman Dunn

(6). Keith Tart md. Joyce Hayes

(7). Roger Tart md. Annette Allen

3. Erastus R. Dunn b. 2-Sep-1888 d. 16-Sep-1958 md. (7-Mar-1907) Louie Ella Adams

At the death of his mother, Erastus (and his sister Edith) was placed under the guardianship of J.C. Keen who filed many Account Currents of his guardianship in the Johnston County Record of Estates (CR.056.501.__ in the N.C. Archives).

a. Della Dunn b. ca- 1908 d. ca-1923 at the age of 15.

b. David Dunn d. ca-1985 md. 1st Ida McLamb, 2nd Hettie McLanb.

c. Velma Dunn md. Carson McLamb

(1). Gladys Faye McLamb md. Unknown Stanley

(2). Katie McLamb

(3). Alice McLamb md. Billy Capps

d. Bevie Dunn md. Erastus Lee

e. Clara Lee Dunn md. 1st Everette Surcēy, 2nd Joe Adams

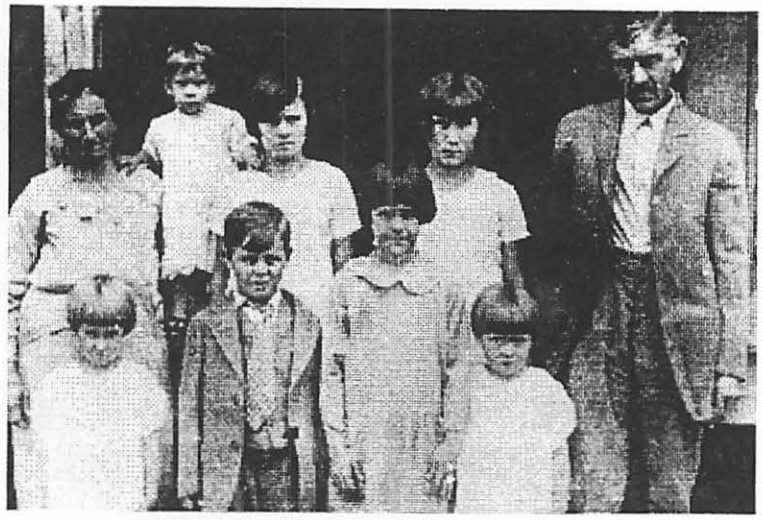
Chapter 14

The James Preston Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
9th Child: **James Preston Keen**

James Preston Keen b. 14-Aug-1870 in Johnston County d. 5-May-1928 in Cordona, Alabama md. 1st (28-Nov-1889) Ava Williams daughter of Bright and Mary Williams md. 2nd (23-Feb-1900) Lula Myrick in Brilliant, Alabama.

According to the local historian and author of the **Four Oaks News** column "Four Oaks History," Preston apparently got into trouble with his relatives, over the thief of some items in a trunk. They had the sheriff declare him an outlaw resulting in Preston leaving the county quickly, moving to Alabama. The article about Preston is so good, it is given here in its entirety.



James Preston Keen (right) with his wife Lula Myrick (left) with their seven youngest children. Photo from Dot Taylor

"John Preston Keen (1868-1928) left Four Oaks in the early 1890s and settled in the coal mining country of northern Alabama. After his marriage to Lula Myrick in 1900 he bought some land and established a home in Brilliant, Alabama where he was a coal mine foreman. For a man raised on a cotton farm in Ingrams Township, life in the col mine was a life in a different world, a dark and dangerous world."

"James Preston (he did not use the name John in Alabama) left Johnston County because of difficulties with the law, but in Alabama he made an effort to live peaceably with everyone. His family never knew him to do anything outside the law. On one occasion he sold a piece of land rather than continue a dispute over a boundary line."

"But there were demons in his life that caused trouble for Keen and his family. Until this later years he drank and gambled and in his own words, 'saw the devil many times in the mine and saw devils dancing around my bed in the night.'"

"There were difficult years for his wife and 11 children. Fortunately for Keen and his family, old influences were at work on him which finally resulted in a new and better man.'

"In the later years of his life, one day as he was working in the Pocahuntas mine, two women appeared to him from the darkness. He recognized them as his mother and sister. He knew that his mother already was dead."

"The women were crying and they prayed for him. They reminded him of his duties to the wife and children who needed him. They warned him to get out of the mine by 5 p.m. that day or risk death."

"Keen was so frightened by the experiences that he left the mine early, went to his home and went to bed without explaining his actions to his family. Believing him to be sick, his family sent for Dr. Maddox who talked with Keen and then announced to the family, 'this man needs a preacher not a doctor.'"

"Preacher Swindle was called and Keen was saved that night. He joined the Pocahuntas Methodist Church and made the church a good worker. He later became an officer in the church."

"Mrs. Joyce Shumate, who is married to Keen's grandson, wrote this history of James Preston Keen. 'I was impressed by the fact that it was his mother who appeared to him,' she said. 'It shows how far reaching a mother's prayers can be. Even though his mother was dead, her prayers and teaching remained in this heart and mind.'"

"Keen stayed too long in the coal mines. A rock fell on him and drove a pick through his chin. He was forced to stop working in the mines and take up farming for a living. Thus he finished life as he began - plowing cotton with a mule."

"He died May 5, 1928. He had been plowing in his cotton field and had stopped for dinner. He started to walk to town and becoming weak stopped to rest by a tree. Attempting to cross a ditch he realized his strength was going, he managed to cover his face with his hat because of the water in the ditch. He fell face down in the ditch, dead of a heart attack. He is buried at the Pocahuntus Methodist Church alongside his wife and their child, Carson, who died in his first year."

"Of the 10 children who grew to maturity, three survive today - Minnie Lee, Willie and Willard. Those who are deceased are Connie Mae, Carson, Lillie, Roy, Annie, Bessie, Jessie, and Ralph."

"John Preston Keen's children produced 38 grandchildren for him. So there is in northwestern Alabama a Keen family of considerable side which is almost unknown to the local Keen family, but nevertheless a branch of the same family tree."

"Such an incident is common in a nation of rovers. The early history of Johnston County records members of almost every family who just passed through this county on their way south and west."

"The nation was built by optimists who believed there was good free land, silver or gold just over the next river, the next mountains in a new state. It is another romantic idea that leaves me cold. Ingrams Township is just fine for me."

Preston left Four Oaks in 1893 and did not appear in Alabama until approximately 1900. It is reported that he said that he had come from Tennessee. Four Oaks relatives (especially Mary Ella Williams, his younger sister) kept in contact with him, although none of them would admit it.

Although the family was very secretive about John Preston, a May 6, 1924 report in **The Smithfield Herald** concerning the death of John Calvin Keen lists Preston as living in Alabama, hardly a secret if published in the newspaper.

From **The Smithfield Herald**, June 1, 1893

"The town of Four Oaks has offered a reward of twenty-five dollars for the arrest of J. Preston Keen who is wanted there for larceny. Magistrates Thos. S. Thain and E. Creech have issued a proclamation of outlawry against said Keen and have called on all citizens to assist in his capture. It is said that he is lurking in the woods near Four Oaks and defies the officers of the law. He has made threats against some of the citizens of

that town and for that reason they offer the reward. It is thought that he is the person who has been making the recent robberies in that town"

The following is a letter from Willard Dean Sealy youngest daughter of Preston Keen and resident of Thomaston, Alabama.

January 19, 1992

Dear Mr. Keen:

Sorry that I have waited so long, but I was trying to wait on information from my niece. She has not sent me the information about the mining incident. I'll tell you what I know. I don't know what year my father came to Alabama. He was married to my mother on 23-Feb-1900. She was Lula Myrick. As I understand it, her father had a store, gristmill and also was a farmer. He and my mother lived in Brilliat, Alabama for that is where my oldest sister was borned. Then they moved to Pacahuntas, Alabama where he worked in a coal mine. I think he worked in the mine until he was injured. I guess that is where he had his spiritual experience I have been told about. After his injury he turned to farming. He and my mother had 12 children. Two died as babies. I think both were boys. Ten of us lived to be married and have families. There was two boys and eight girls. Only one sister and myself are living. I am the youngest child and will be 67 in March.

My father died 5-May-1928. On his grave marker the date of birth is 14-Aug-1870. I was only three at the time of his death. He was walking back from town and died of a heart attack on the road. Heart trouble runs in our family. Not any of our family knew anything about his family. Only that he received letters from a Mary Ellen Williams (Mary Ella - his younger sister). I wrote hoping I could find out about my father's family. We knew not one thing for he never would let anyone read the letters. We didn't know he had been married before or that he was running from the law when he came here. My mother didn't know either but my sisters told me she always thought something was wrong because he was so secretive about the letters. I was 5 when she passed away.

He changed his name from John Preston Keen to James Preston Keene. My sisters say he was a very stern man, very mannerly and polite. He turned out to be a very humble man and a good father and husband. We were always poor. They raised us in the Methodist Church and all or most of us are Baptist except myself. I belong to the Church of Jesus Christ mostly referred to as the Mormans. We all have lovely, law abiding families. Religion has always played a very vital part in our lives. I can't think of my father as being a mean or bad person as I hear my sisters speak of him. I think he must have been unkind to my mother at sometime of there marriage.

All of us children have always lived in Alabama except the oldest son who was a drifter, going from one place to another. He died and was buried in Arkansas. This is all I can tell you about him.

As far as I know, he (John Preston) was never in any trouble after he came here. He married and settled down. I'm glad my mother never knew about his past life. They said she was a very dear sweet timid mother. Maybe you can put this all together. He was never in the ministry but become a very devout Christian.

I hope I have been some help and I think it is very thoughtful of what you are doing. If I get more information I'll send it on. If I can be of further help let me know.

Sincerely

Willard Dean Sealy

P.S. He died at Cordova, Alabama where he lived on a farm. I have a picture of my mother, father, and some of the children but I have not seen about getting a reprint of it. I'll try to soon as I can. I am still working and don't have too much time. I am a widow and have 4 children. I live alone in the country.

A recent (June, 1992) Keen Family Reunion in Four Oaks was attended by relatives of Preston from Alabama. Herbert Shumate, son of Preston's 2nd child Minnie Lee Keene Shumate and his wife Joyce, visited with Johnston County relatives and related many stories and shared pictures of Alabama relatives.

Children of John Preston Keen and Ava Williams:

1. Infant Keen b. ca-1890 d. ca-1890 and was buried in the Keen Cemetery.

Children of James Preston Keene and Lula Myrick:

1. Conie Mae Keene b. 10-May-1901 d. 15-Mar-1983 Md. Dewey Harbin b. 23-Nov-1901 d. 6-Sep-1987.

   Dewey was a farmer.

   a. Coy Harbin b. 23-May-1922 md. Louise Masters

   b. Kathleen Harbin b. 14-Nov-1914 md. Donald Atkins

   c. J.P. Harbin b. 29-Mar-1927 md. Ruthie Atkins

   d. Dewey Harbin, Jr. b. 7-Jul-1931 md. Lena Gray

   e. George Kenneth Harbin b. 20-Jun-1935 md. Patsy Warren

2. Minnie Lee Keene b. 21-Oct-1903 md. 1st Arley Russel, md. 2nd John Oscar Shumate.

   Arley was a farmer.

   Children of Minnie Lee Keene and Arley Russel:

   a. Hazel Russel b. 14-Mar-1921 d. 29-May-1921

   b. Pauline Russel b. 7-Mar-1922 md. Jack Boshell

   Children of Minnie Lee Keene and John Oscar Shumate:

   c. Infant son b. 2-Dec-1937.

   d. Johnnie Shumate b. 29-May-1939 md. Annette Kimp.

   e. Herbert Douglas Shumate b. 28-Apr-1944 md. Joyce Nunn

3. Carson Keene. Died as an infant.

4. Lillie Keene b. 21-May-?? md. Orie Kelley

    a. Buel Eugene Kelley

    b. Margie Dean Kelley

    c. Charles Kelley

5. Roy Keene b. 11-Jun-1909 d. ca-1965.

6. Annie Keene b. 13-Mar-1911 d. 11-Sep-1983 md. 1st Wilburn Marrow b. 2-Feb-1907 md. 2nd. Clayborn Brown b. 28-Jan-1897.

    a. Burnice Marrow md. Raye Black

    b. Cecile Ray Marrow

7. Bessie Keene b. 31-Oct-1913 md. 1st John Moore, md. 2nd James W. Short b. 14-Nov-1892.

    a. Betty Joyce Moore md. Jame Beaty

    b. Shirley Ann Moore md. Bobby Stewart

    c. Bonnie Sure Moore md. Jack Russel

    d. Patsy Eleene Moore

8. Jessie Keene b. 29-May-1917 md. Fenis Raymond Hayes b. 3-Sep-1910.

    a. Mack Houston Hayes md. Sue Martin

    b. Joan Hayes md. James Franklin Spradley

9. Ralph Thomas Keene b. 2-Jun-1919 md. Pauline Ophilicca Manansco

    a. Barbara Jean Keene b. 6-Jan-1940 d. 10-May-1989

    b. Thomas Ray Keene md. Martha Philiex

    c. Fay Joan Keene md. William White

    d. Peggy Ann Keene md. Oskar Lewis Whitt

    e. Judy Diane Keene md. Terry Ray Little

    f. Frankie Keene md. Gail Dozer

10. Willie Keene b. 22-Feb-1922 md. Charles Boyd Robinson b. 28-Apr-1914 d.?-Dec-1979.

a. Rachael Jane Robinson

b. Linda Louise Robinson

c. Charles Ray Robinson

d. Joan Marie Robinson

e. Katie Joe Robinson

11. Willard Dean Keene b. 10-Mar-1925 md. Obie Gaines Sealey b. 26-Aug-19 d. 26-Apr-1979.

O.G. was an electrician.

a. Michael Gaine Sealey b. 27-Mar-1945 md. Connie Gray

b. Waidel Alton Sealey b. 24-Nov-1946 md. Jeanie Perry

c. Mark Shane Sealey b. 25-Sep-1954 md. Pamela Johnson

d. Sherry Yevonne Sealey b. 12-Jun-1959 md. Jimmy Gibson

Chapter 15

The Mary Ella Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: (4)George W. Keen (1820-1891)
10th Child: **Mary Ella Keen**

Mary Ella "Aunt Ellie" Keen b. 15-Sep-1871 d. 29-Jan-1937 in Johnston Co. md. (19-Mar-1899) Horace B. Williams son of Charles and Martha Williams b. 24-Feb-1873 d. 16-Sep-1914 in Johnston Co.

Horace and Ellie were married at Oliver's Grove Church and built their house in Four Oaks in the Oak grove between the Kincheon Barbour home and the railroad. The Williams house faced the railroad and still stands today. Childless, Mary Ella lived for more than 20 years as a widow after Horace took his own life in 1914. Mary Ella acted as "mother" to several of her sister Sarah Catherine Keen Barbour's children and secretly corresponded with her older brother Preston who had fled to Alabama to escape the law.

Both Ella and Horace are buried in a iron fenced area of the Four Oaks Cemetery.

NO CHILDREN.

Horace B. Williams and Mary Ella Keen Williams
Photo from Dot Taylor

Chapter 16

The Gideon Keen Family

Gideon Keen b. 25-Nov-1823 in Johnston Co. d. 3-Feb-1896 (tombstone indicates 3-Feb-1885, however his will was filed 11-Feb-1896) in Johnston Co. md. (3-Feb- 1848) Sally Ann Stanley b. 7-Nov-1829 daughter of William Stanley and Nancy Webb d. 7-Jun-1890 in Johnston Co.

Gideon Keen was the second son and the seventh of eight children of (3)George and Polly Keen. Growing up on his father's plantation that stretched from the present day Four Oaks along both sides of the Keen Road to well past the present day Buleah Hill Church and the Dicy Dunn Cemetery, Gideon and (4)George learned their farming skills well. Their father's home was probably located near the intersection of Highway 96 and the Keen Road.

Around 1845, Gideon built his home near the East end of a pond (presently the Jack Thomas pond) East of Highway 96. His house was a frame and plank affair and remained standing until about 1945. He went searching for a wife and found Sally Ann Stanley on a neighboring plantation just to the South. They were married in 1848, shortly after the death of his father on August 3, 1847. Gideon added to his land holding by purchasing the land of his sisters willed to them by their father. Gideon paid each girl $42.50 for the land interest. More land was added to his farm in 1870 when Sally's father, William Stanley, gave her 98 acres in an adjoining farm located on Camp Branch and Big Juniper (known today as the Bud Stanley farm).

As the Civil War approached, Gideon remained on his land with his five children and young wife. The 24th Regiment of the North Carolina Troops had already been formed and recruited troops from Johnston County. In late 1864, the 24th was stationed in the perimeter surrounding Petersburg, Virginia during the Union siege of that city. In the famous Union maneuver, a huge explosion was set off from a tunnel under the Confederate lines, causing the famous "Crater." The South Carolina Regiment received most of the casualties from the explosion just to the right of the 24th. Rushing to plug the hole in the Confederate lines, the 24th Regiment was devastated. Pleas for recruits quickly went out to Johnston County. Gideon traveled to Camp Holmes in Raleigh and enlisted on October 17, 1864. He was immediately posted to Petersburg where he served in and around Petersburg until he deserted on February 26, 1865. Why did Gideon take such uncharacteristic action as desertion after serving only a little more than 4 months?

Lefler and Newson in their history of North Carolina report that some 23,000 soldiers and 423 officers deserted the Confederacy. The reasons most often cited for desertion were: lack of furloughs, appeals from wives and families in need, destruction of homes and property by Northern invaders, bad food, lack of shoes and clothing, sickness and wounds, and a belief that no amount of sacrifice could defeat the growing armies of the better armed Union troops. Some 8,000 men returned to service after seeing their families or planting a crop. Gideon did not return as the was ended less than a month after he was listed as absent.

In early 1865, the war was going very badly for the Confederates with the men sensing the fate of their effort. The Union Army under General Sherman was advancing from South Carolina toward Goldsboro, North Carolina. Gideon probably realized his family was in the path of Sherman's Army and seized the opportunity to go home. The

Battle of Bentonville took place on March 19-21, 1865 and Union soldiers advancing toward Smithfield and Raleigh after the battle camped near Gideon's home, setting fire to his mill and probably his home. The family "hid their meat" in the surrounding woods and saved this precious asset. Gideon probably was not at home during this crisis, even though he has left his post a month earlier.

After the war, Gideon returned to farming and raised six more kids for a total of eleven. Gideon's five sons married and settled on adjoining pieces of Gideon's farm. Charlie E. Keen was crippled and placed under his sister Sarah's care when she inherited the Gideon Keen homeplace through his will. Joel Gideon settled for a while before moving his family to Coats, NC in Harnett County. The three remaining sons, George Willis, John William, and James Rufus settled on their inherited land and continued the farming life.

Gideon and Sally are buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

The **Will of Gideon Keen** (per copy in NC Archives in Raleigh, NC)

North Carolina Johnston County

I Gideon Keen of Ingrams Township of said state and county being of sound mind but considering the uncertainty of my earthly existence so make and declare this my last Will and Testament.

FIRST My Executor hereinafter named shall give my body a decent burial suitable to the wishes of my friends and relatives and pay all funeral expenses together with all my just debts out of the first money which may come into his hands belonging to my estate.

SECOND I give and bequeath unto my daughter Sarah King in fee simple all of my personal property of every description Choses in action as well as Choses in possession subject however to the payment of my debts as mentioned in the First item above and charges of Administration and the further charges of supporting and maintaining my cripples son Charles E. Keen during his life.

THIRD I give and devise to my daughter Sarah King and her heirs in fee the following lands. It being the part of my plantation on which I now live and on which my dwelling is situate in Ingrams Township Johnston County, NC and bounded as follows to wit: Beginning on a Black gum on Little Swamp corner of the "???? land" and runs N87W20.56 chains to a stake thence S44W12.62 chains to a stake near the head of a ditch; thence down said ditch on branch to a stake at the mouth of the ditch (the stake being in the outside line of my land); thence S27E19.80 chains to a stake in John Moores line thence S87E9 chains to a Pine; thence N4E10.60 chains to a Pine; thence S87E25.20 chains to a stake near the neck of a small branch; thence down the run of said branch to a small Black Gum at the mouth of a small branch; thence S70E6.90 chs to a larger Black Gum on Little Swamp; thence up said swamp to the beginning containing 119 acres more or less and I place this charge upon this said land that the said Sarah King and her heirs shall at all times during the life of Charles E. Keen my crippled son before mentioned support and suitable maintenance him and I mean for his confortable support and maintenance during his life to be a charge upon the above tract of land as well as the personal property heretofore given said Sarah King.

FORTH I said daughter Sarah King and her heirs should fail to confortably support and maintain my said son Charles E. Keen it is my will that my Executor hereinafter named

and I hereby appoint him Trustee for such purposes take charge of the above property and rent or lease it out and out of the proceeds to pay the taxes and repairs necessary and to support the said Charles E. Keen during his life and at his death to return the property to said Sarah King, her heirs or assigns.

FIFTH I hereby constitute and appoint my trusty friend J. C. Keen my lawful Executor to all intents and purposes to execute this my last will and testament according to the true intent and meaning of the same hereby revoking and declaring utterly void all other wills and testaments by me herein made.

In testimony where of I this said Gideon Keen do hereunto set my hand and seal this 18 day of January 1896.

Gideon (X his mark) Keen (Seal)

Signed sealed published and declared by this said Gideon Keen to be his last will and testament in the presence of us who at his request and in his presence do subscribe our names as witnesses hereto.

Witnesses
J.W. Keen
J.R. Keen

From **Johnston County Record of Estates** (CR.056.501.32 in N.C. Archives), indicates:
Page 576 - Inventory of Estate of Gideon Keen, dated 11-Feb-1896, by J.C. Keen, filed 4-Jun-1896.

Assets	Property	$62.20
	Cash	37.65
		$99.85
Received Cash		$39.81
Expenses		41.07
Due to Estate		$ 1.26

Children of Gideon Keen and Sally Ann Stanley:

1. George Willis Keen b. 14-Jul-1849 d. 20-May-1895 md. (3-May-1874) Roseanne King

2. Martha E. Keen b. ca-1850 md. (23-Mar-1891) James William Stanley b. ca-1851.

3. Sarah E. Keen b. ca-1855 md. (10-Dec-1874) George King b. ca-1846 d. 26-Mar-1929.

4. Nancy Rose Keen b. 21-Aug-1856 d. 14-Nov-1929 md. (12-Mar-1874) William Bennett Stanley b. ca-1850.

5. John William Keen b. 14-Oct-1859 in Johnston Co. d. 2-Jan-1956 in Smithfield, NC md. 1st (16-Apr-1882) Susan Cole b. 20-May-1859 in Four Oaks d. 27-Jul-1887, 2nd (28-Oct-1890) Lou Nettie Tiner b. 2-Dec-1872 d. 23-Oct-1912, 3rd (2-Mar-1915) Vessie Ann Coats b. ca-1882 in Johnston Co. d. ca-1864.

6. Joel Gideon Keen b. 26-Dec-1862 d. 29-Jul-1945 md. (11-Jan-1885) Zilla H. Stephenson b. 4-Feb-1859 d. 28-Jan-1937.

7. Susan A. Keen b. 31-May-1866 d. 14-Nov-1947 md. 1st (11-Apr-1886) Ransom A. Johnson b. ca-1860 d. ca-1896, 2nd Mike Ingram.

8. Charley E. Keen b. 19-Mar-1869 d. 28-Jun-1923. Never married.

9. James Rufus Keen b. ca-1872 d. ?. md. (18-Apr-1893) Mary Holly.

10. Mary I. Keen b. ca-1874 d. 20-Apr-1949 md. (10-Mar-1901) Elijah F. Strickland b. ca-1875.

Chapter 17

The George Willis Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
1st Child: **George Willis Keen**

George Willis Keen b. 19-Jul-1849 d. 20-May-1895 md. (3-May-1874) Roseanne King daughter of Starkey King and Patsy Stanley b. 27-Apr-1852 d. 12-Nov-1935.

George inherited the land that presently is located behind the Beulah Hill Church. Their home, which burned in the early 1930s stood on the site of the Bill Adams' home. Roseanne King Keen later married Joseph A. Adams b. 8-Feb-1876 d. 9-Jul-1937. George Willis is buried in Dicey Dunn Cemetery where his tombstone reads "A devoted husband and a loving father is gone but not forgotten."

Will of George Willis Keen (Per copy in the NC State Archives)

The will of Geo. Willis Keen of Ingrams Township Johnston County State of North Carolina made and declared by him on the 4th day of May 1895 - at the house of his one residence whence he had been resident for over ten years next - before the makin of his said will and in his sickness in the presence of us who were specialy named by him to bear whitness: My will is that Paul G. Keen has as his one the home tract of land where we now live and has all clames and titles to it - using it as a home for his mother her life time or during his (???) head that tha take car of Tommy G. Keen the best tha can his being blind. I will P. G. Keen the homeplace and ask him to do the best he can for (???): this track or parsel of land containing 96 and 3/4 acres as the deeds wil shoe located on the East-side of the Little Juniper and bounded North by J.W. Adams. East - by W. R. Stanly. South by J. W. Adams and West by G. W. Keen and J.C. Keens lands: that my other lands which contains several parsels or deds tho lise in two tracks or parsels contains 133 acres and will to my 3 daughters Candaly and Rebeca Adlener to use as tha se (???) for this better support this land 1 track lise between the Big Juniper and Little Juniper and contains 49 acres and the 84 acres is bounded by G.W. Keen South and East - West by Gideon Keen North by J.C. Keen the track name as Neal S. (???) land is bounded North by J.W. Adams West by Gideon Keen South by William Stanly and W.R. Stanly and others. Said decased declared in the presance of the witnesses whose names as hereunto subscribed with an intention that the same should stand for and be his last will and testament and the said G. W. Keen bid the witnesses as same of these to bear witness that - such was his last will this May 4th, A.D. 1895

G. W. Keen (Seal)

Witness
Witness

From **Johnston County Record of Estates** (CR.051.501.32 in N.C. Archives)
Page 464 - Allotment to widow of George Willis Keen - for year 1895, dated 27-May-1895.
Page 494 - Inventory of Estate of George Willis Keen, dated 20-Jun-1895, by J.C. Keen, administrator. Lists cash of $101.91 - given to widow. Lists notes receivable of #309.00 with all but $50.00 listed as bad or doubtful.

Children of George Willis Keen and Roseanne King Keen

1. Condolia Keen b. ca-1874 d. 29-Aug-1930 md. (19-Mar-1893) Wright. E. Stanley son of Col. William Rufus Stanley and Sally Blackman b. 20-Aug-1864 d. 16-Feb-1950.

    Condolia married well to the son of Col. William Rufus Stanley of the N.C. 24th Regiment, the same that her grandfather Gideon served in during the Civil War. The marriage, however, was not a happy one. According to personal interviews with three living witnesses, Wright E. Stanley "was not a nice person." Condolia Keen Stanley was blind in one eye at birth and was totally blind in later life. She had two blind children. The following **Smithfield Herald** article is presented, even though the husband is identified as J. Wright Stanley, not as Wright E. Stanley. Three witnesses have identified to the editor personally that the husband was Wright E. Stanley, which agrees with Census records, and indicate that the newspaper article is in error in identifying the husband as J. Wright Stanley..

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 2-Sep-1930
Four Oaks Woman Fatally Shot in Back Early Friday Morn.
J. Wright Stanley is Jailed On Charge of Killing His Wife; Claims That The Shooting Was Accidental.
Dead Woman was Blind For Years.

'Mrs. J. Wright Stanley, age 56 was shot to death in her home two miles east of Four Oaks Friday morning about 5:30 o'clock, and her husband J. Wright Stanley, age 66, is in the Johnston County Jail without bail, charged with firing the fatal shot."

"Stanley told the coroner's jury that at about 5:30 o'clock Friday morning, his wife came to the bed where he had been asleep and asked him if he was awake. He stated that as he got off the bed, the double-barrel shotgun, which was behind a nearby door fell down and discharged, killing Mrs. Stanley who had turned and was going out of the room. The gun was loaded with two shells but only one load went off, the load taking effect in Mrs. Stanley's back."

"The jury, however, in rendering its verdict, stated that the deceased came to her death from a gun in the hands of her husband; and ordered him remanded to jail without bond. The jury was composed of A.H. Morgan, W.H. Martin, A.Z. West, Lonnie Lassiter, W. Chester Allen, and J.A. Allen."

"The occurrence was made more tragic because of the fact that the deceased was totally blind. She is said to have been blind in one eye since birth and for several years she was totally blind in both eyes. She was the mother of eight children and two of these were also blind. The youngest child is 17 years of age."

"There is said to have been domestic trouble in the home. Stanley had been at home only about two weeks from serving a two-year term on the county roads for alleged intimacy with a 16-year-old girl."

"As the accused man left home with the officers Friday morning, one of his daughters is reported to have implored him to repent but he replied that he did not shoot his wife."

"The funeral of Mrs. Stanley was held Saturday afternoon at the family graveyard. The service was conducted by Rev. D.C. Johnson."

a. Zora Mae Stanley b. ca-1893 d. ca-1934 md. Lassie Johnson b. 1-May-1889 d. 13-Mar-1956

(1) Glennie P. Johnson b. 11-Apr-1910

(2) Ralph P. Johnson b. ca-1920 d. ca-1920

b. William Duncan Stanley b. ca-1895 md. Mary Pool.

c. Pearl R. Stanley b. ca-1898 md. Sam Lee

(1) H. Mozelle Lee b. 20-Jun-1914 md. Rev. Walker Stanley b. 15-Dec-1910 d. 2-Aug-1982

Rev. Walker and Mozelle Lee are buried at Bethel Primitive Baptist Church.

(2) Wendell Lee

(3) Bettie Pearl Lee md. Unknown Lee

d. Leander "Lee" Stanley b. ca-1900

Lee was blind and an excellent piano player and tuner.

e. Anna S. Stanley b. ca-1902

f. Ella F. Stanley b. ca-1904

g. Viola Mae Stanley b. 20-Jan-1905 d. 27-Jun-1905 as infant.

Viola is buried in Dicey Dunn Cemetery where her tombstone reads "In Jesus Arms we laid her down a lovely jewel for his Crown."

h. Gertrude Stanley b. ca-1908

i. Bertha Stanley b. ca-1914 md. Unknown Jones

j. Ethel Stanley.

Ethel was blind.

2. Rebecca Keen b. 10-Jan-1876 d. 30-May-1958 md. (26-Sep-1894) Ransom A. Blackman son of J.M. and P.E. Blackman b. 22-Jan-1871 d. 18-Oct-1938.

Ransom farmed in Ingrams township. Rebecca died at age 82 and is buried at the Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

a. William Boyette Blackman b. 17-May-1899 d. 28-Nov-1943

Boyette is buried at Dicey Dunn Cemetery where his tombstone reads "He now sweetly rests."

b. Anna Bessie Blackman b. ca-1903 md. Dave Thomas

(1) Daniel Thomas "went West."

(2) Durwood Thomas "was killed in Texas."

3. Adlina "Addie" Keen b. 22-Jun-1880 d. 11-Sep-1969 md. (9-May-1910) E. Dalton "Dalt" Adams b. 13-Dec-1881 d. 16-Nov-1964.

Dalt was a farmer in the Buleah Hill Church community and had a lot to do with the success of that church.

The 1910 Census shows Addie and her younger brothers Paul and Tommy living with her father-in-law, Joseph A. Adams.

a. Eva Adams b. ca. 1905 md. Joe B. Barbour

(1) Eunice Barbour

(2) Catherine Barbour

(3) Marjorie Barbour

b. Neva Adams b. ca-1912 md. Oscar Martin son of Wade Martin.

Oscar and Neva lived near Buleah Hill Church. No children.

c. Wilson Adams b. ca-1914 md. Maude Smith daughter of Henry Smith

d. Wilton Adams b. ca-1916 md. Helline Daughtry

e. William "Bill" Adams b. ca-1919 md. Gladys Moore daughter of Johnnie Moore and Lucretia Massengill.

f. Ruth Adams md. Newby Blackman son of Jack Balckman and Cassie Lee

g. Annie Mae Adams b. 17-Nov-1925 d. 22-Nov-1925

4. Paul Gideon "Bud" Keen b. 3-Mar-1882 d. 14-Oct-1939 md. (9-Sep-1903) Rosella Blackman b. 23-Sep-1883 d. 2-Mar-1969.

Bud inherited his father's homeplace, with his mother retaining a "life estate," and his blind brother Tommy receiving the land around the homeplace. Bud is listed in the 1910 Census as a Clerk. Bud was employed at Lassiter's Market for a number of years before he died of heart trouble at Duke University. Bud and Rosella are buried in the Four Oaks Cemetery where his name is spelled Keene.

a. Ruby Keen b. ca-1907.

Ruby attended King's Business College in Raleigh, NC.

b. Violet Keen b. ca-1909 md. Fred Willifred of Dunn, N.C.

c. Paul Obed Keen b. 26-May-1914 d. 12-May-1982

5. Tommy Cleveland Keen b. 4-Apr-1884 d. 30-Mar-1932 md. Cora Grady daughter of Timothy Grady and Emily Goff of Wayne County b. ca-1878 d. 8-Nov-1944.

Tommy was blind and placed under the care of Paul Keen, his brother, in his father's will. The 1900 Census, however, showed Tommy as living with the Joseph A. Adams family, the father-in-law of his sister Addie. Tommy inherited the home place land of 96 3/4 acres. According to James Bryan Creech, Tommy once had a store where Carl Lamb's house is now located at Keen's Crossroads. He also played piano in a Four Oaks string band and tuned pianos.

a. Irma Keen b. ca-1912

b. Ernest Keen b. ca- 1917 d. 20-Nov-1938

Ernest was killed in a truck wreck.

The Johnston County Record of Estates (CR.056.501.33 at N.C. Archives) lists a Statement of Guardian Account for Paul G. Keen, Tommy C. Keen, and Adlina Keen. Each account shows inheritances from their grandfather's estate of $55.09 each. The guardian was J.W. Keen and the account is dated 28-Dec-1896. Other accounts appear on pages 111, 155, 279, 358, 491, and pages 5, 17, and 55 of book 35, **Johnston County Record of Estates**.

Chapter 18

The Martha E. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
2st Child: **Martha E. "Marseline" Keen**

Martha E. "Marseline" Keen b. 2-Oct-1852 md. (23-Mar-1871) James William "Uncle Billy" Stanley son of Littleton and Edey Stanley b. ca-1851.

Mr. Charlie Thomas remembers "Uncle Billy" Stanley as living in a house North of the Keen Road, East of the Buleah Hill Christian Church. He could not stand erect and had a permanent stoop but could ride a horse well. He raised pigs and would load his horse with sacks of corn to feed the pigs. He had a terrifically loud hog call and said it was necessary since his pigs were not penned and could roam for a mile or more. Uncle Billy married a second time after the death of Marseline and had two children by the second wife, Lessie Strickland, daughter of Ben Strickland..

Children of James William and Marseline Keen Stanley

1. Georgiana Stanley b. ca-1871
2. Emily A. Stanley b. ca-1874
3. Martha E. Stanley b. 26-Nov-1878 d. 2-May-1885 buried in Piney Grove Cemetery.

Children of James William and Lessie Strickland

4. William "Billy" Stanley
5. Alma Stanley

Chapter 19

The Sarah E. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
3st Child: **Sarah E. Keen**

Sarah E. Keen b. 6-Apr-1855 d. 4-Jun-1924 md. (10-Dec-1874) George King son of Starkey King and Patsy Stanley b. 19-Mar-1854 d. 9-Mar-1929.

According to Charlie Thomas, George married Sarah after they found she was pregnant. He declared that he would marry her but never live with her. He left and was gone for several years before he returned to live with Sarah who bore him six more children. George was brother to Roseanne King who married George Willis Keen.

Sarah received the homeplace and a farm of 119 acres and all personal property of her father Gideon through his will. Gideon required that she look after his crippled son Charlie E. for his lifetime. The 1920 Census lists Charlie E. Keen, age 48, living with the family.

In 1907, the heirs of the George King family sold the Gideon Keen homeplace to Charlie Daniel Thomas who raised a family and has lived there since.

George and Sarah are buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

1. Infant Son King "born and died about 1892."

2. Lettie A. King b. ca-1884 md. Robert E. Thomas.

    a. Robert Thomas

3. Fernie George King b. ca-1888 d. 17-Jan-1961 md. Ida Southerland b. ? d. 30-Nov-1954

4. Fredie King b. 22-Dec-1892 d. 5-Jun-1900 as an infant.

5. Walter George King b. ca-1893 d. 18-Dec-1984 in Cary, NC md. Bettie Moore.

    Walter is buried at Montlawn Cemetery in Raleigh, NC

6. George Farrow King b. 12-Dec-1896 d. 4-Aug-1921

    George was crippled and his tombstone at Dicey Dunn Cemetery reads "Gone but not forgotten."

Chapter 20

The Nancy Rose Keen Family

GRANDFATHER:	(3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER:	Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
4th Child:	**Nancy Rose Keen**

Nancy Rose Keen b. 21-Aug-1856 d. 14-Nov-1929 md. (12-Mar-1874) William Bennett Stanley son of John Washington Stanley and Charlotte Strickland b. 1-Feb-1849 d. 14-Jan-1929.

William and Nancy lived on a 230 acre farm left to William by his father, John Washington Stanley.

1. Betty Stanley b. ca-1875

2. Mary M. Stanley b. ca-1878

3. John Bennett Stanley b. 15-Jun-1887 d. 26-Dec-1965 md. Sallie Strickland b. 17-Jul-1891 d. 24-Jan-1973. John and Sallie are buried in the Piney Grove Cemetery.

    a. Roby Stanley b. 5-May-1910 md. Wilma Stewart

        (1) Dorothy Stanley md. Charles McGoogan

            Charles and Dorothy live in Burlington, NC

            (a) Jean Carol McGoogan

            (b) Lynn Marie McGoogan

            (c) Anne Carla McGoogan

        (2) Thelma Stanley md. Rayford Stanley

            (a) Troy Raeford Stanley

            (b) Page Marie Stanley

        (3) Caroline Stanley md. 1st. Philip Gurganus md. 2nd Leon C,. Cheek, Jr.

            (a) Kevin Cheek

    b. Rufus Stanley md. Pearl Jernegan

        (1) Eddie Pearl Stanley md. 1st Earl Dodd md. 2nd George Ray Raynor

        (2) Peggy Jean Stanley md. 1st H. M. Hines, Jr. md. 2nd Jerry Langdon md. 3rd Gary Cobb.

(a) Jay Langdon

(b) Lynn Langdon

(c) Leigh Cobb (stepdaughter)

c. William Stanley md. Lola Belle Holly, daughter of Elisha Holly and Millie Cole.

(1) Patricia Stanley md. 1st Joe Eller md. 2nd Ivan Unknown

(2) Nancy Stanley md. Theodore Strickland

d. Hattie Stanley md. Ernest Stewart

(1) Wilma Lee Stewart md. Rupert Barbour

(a) Beth Barbour

(2) Linda Fae Stewart md. A.C. Rowe

(a) Casey Rowe

(3) Daniel Stewart

(4) Jimmy Stewart

(5) Bobbie Jean Stewart md New Rowe

e. Effie Stanley md. Gary Lamb

(1) Kathy Lamb (adopted)

f. Bessie Stanley md. Wallace Warren

(1) Chip Berry Warren md. Kathy Unknown

4. Minnie I. Stanley b. 2-Dec-1890 d. 27-Aug-1972 md. (20-Mar-1920) Varon Coats b. 7-Mar-1887 d. 7-Jan-1954.

(a) Howard Coats b. 12-May-1915 d. 27-Mar-1943 md. Ruby McLamb

Howard is buried in Piney Grove Cemetery.

(1) Billy Ray Coats md. Wilma Lee

5. Lulu M. Stanley b. ca-1896 md. Robert Lee

(a) Eva Lee

(b) Ima Lee

(c) Hatty Lee

(d) William Lee

(e) Roberta Lee

(f) Belle Lee

(g) Janice Lee

6-10. Five unnamed children that died in infancy.

Chapter 21

The John William Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
5th Child: **John William Keen**

John William Keen b. 14-Oct-1859 in Johnston Co. d. 2-Jan-1956 in Smithfield NC md.1st (16-Apr-1882) Susan Jane Cole daughter of James & Elizabeth Cole b. 20-May-1854 in Four Oaks, NC d. 27-Jul-1887 md. 2nd (28-Oct-1890) Lou Nettie Tiner daughter of Robert & Helsie Tiner b. 2-Dec-1872 d. 23-Oct-1912, md. 3rd (2-Mar-1956) Vessie Ann Coats daughter of William Richard Coats and Sarah Temesia "Aunt Minnie" Lassiter of Pleasant Grove Township b. ca-1882 d. ca-1964 in Durham, NC.

Born in Ingrams Twp. of Johnston Co., John William Keen was only six years old during the Civil War when Yankees quartered in his father's corn mill a few days after the battle at Bentonville.. "They burned a lot of things" he said, "but we saved out meat". Quoted in a January 3, 1956 report of his death, he indicated that "his father, Gideon Keen, was with the Confederate Army and sent a message home warning of the Yankees' approach just in time." He first married Susan Cole and produced two children, William and Betty and at least one infant son who died at birth. John and Louella produced three children, Roy, Rupert, and Pesria. John William then married Vessie Ann Coats of Pleasant Grove Twp. Vessie Ann survived John William Keen and later died at the Methodist Retirement Home in Durham, North Carolina. John William and his wives are buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

In a February 24, 1982 "Four Oaks History" article in **The Four Oaks News**, James Bryan Creech is quoted:

"In the hard time just after the Southern defeat, John Williams schooling consisted of 30 days in the fall of the year. The only book he remembered was the blue back speller. His mother sewed his clothes; there was no money to clothe the 10 children from the stores in Smithfield (Four Oaks was not an option. He was about 27 when Four Oaks was established)."

"John William began to help his father farm before the days of 'bought' fertilizer. A good tobacco crop was 600 to 700 pounds per acre, a good cotton crop was half a bale to the acre and a good corn crop was five barrels to the acre. Mr. Keen primarily considered himself a farmer although he did have business interests in Four Oaks from its beginning."

"In 1890, John Keen and his brother-n-law, Nathan Cole, bought Lot 5, Block G in the new town of Four Oaks. They paid Dave Adams (He owned the whole block) $75 for the prime location. The lots on the north side of Block G were laid off to face the railroad (The area now covered by Jack Austin's three stores and the Four Oaks Drug Company). I have found no record that Mr. Keen had any interest in buildings on this site. However, by some imaginative swapping, Mr. Keen, Mr. Cole, Ezekiel Creech, and Part Lassiter managed to initiate a bold new idea in the growing business district. These men bought the quarter block and laid off four lots facing Main Street. Nathan Cole, Ezekiel Creech, Part Lassiter, and later D. H. Sanders built the first stores facing Main Street.. The first stores in town faced the railroad from the three other blocks at the Main

Street crossing. Nathan Cole's wooden store on the corner housed a general merchandise store and bar. Ezekiel Creech was selling dry goods in a little store next door. Part Lassiter rented out his store (site of Austin's clothing store). R.E. Creech had a barroom in a small building on the site of the Four Oaks Drug Company. Best evidence indicates that this establishment faced the alley. In 1904, D.H. Sanders built a brick building on the site for a drug store facing Main Street. Nathan Cole was murdered in 1894 and his store was purchased by a relative, John Cole. About 1907, the three wooden stores burned and were replaced with brick buildings."

"In 1907, John William Keen and his son, William, established the Keen Company, an incorporated farm supply and dry goods store in the Part Lassiter store (next to the Four Oaks Drug Company). This business closed in 1930. John William continued to live on and farm about 100 acres he received from his mother, Sally Stanley Keen. The land joined the Keen lands to the Stanley lands and was a gift to his mother from her father, William Stanley. In the early 1930s, John William sold the farm to Bud Stanley and moved to Smithfield. He worked in the courthouse registering deeds until 1940 when he retired at the age of 80. He died in 1956 having celebrated his 96th birthday."

The Smithfield Herald, January 2, 1956

JOHN WILLIAM KEEN, SMITHFIELD'S OLDEST CITIZEN, SUCCUMBS AT 96

Smithfield's oldest citizen, John William Keen, succumbed in Johnston Memorial Hospital Monday morning at the age of 96 following a long illness.

A funeral service was scheduled to be conducted at 2 o'clock this (Tuesday) afternoon at Centenary Methodist Church here by the Rev. J.V. Earls with burial to follow in Dicey Cemetery new Four Oaks.

Surviving are his wife, the former Vessie Ann Coats, a native of Pleasant Grove Township; one daughter, Mrs. John W. Stanley of Arlington, Va; two sons, Roy Keen of Idaho and Ruppert Keen of Las Vegas, Nev; 15 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Mr. Keen was born October 14, 1859 near Four Oaks in Ingrams Township, son of the late Gideon and Sally Stanley Keen. He was only six years old when the Yankees during the Civil War quartered in a corn mill at his father's farm, but he recalled how the troops stayed for about two weeks and the pillaging they did.

"They burned a lot of things," he used to recall, "but we saved our meat." His father, Gideon Keen, was with the Confederate Army and sent a message home warning of the Yankees' approach just in time. The meat was hidden in some woods nearby until the Northern troops moved on.

His grandfather, George Keen, came over from England and settled in Johnston County with a grant of 1,000 acres. "The same land I was born and raised on," Mr. Keen would tell.

Raised a farmer, Mr. Keen continued farming until he came to Smithfield in 1933. In 1910 he went into the general merchandise business in Four Oaks but he still farmed.

From 1933 until his retirement about 15 years ago, Mr. Keen worked in the office of the register of deeds.

The nonagenarian, the oldest member of Centenary Methodist Church, had only one explanation to offer for his long life and good health. "I didn't smoke, use tobacco or drink," he declared. "That's the main reason for my long life, I guess."

Mr. Keen was a lifelong Democrat. "My father told me always to vote that way," he explained. "He told me the North's got everything anyhow."

The Smithfield Herald, January 6, 1956.

FUNERAL SERVICE FOR J.W. KEEN CONDUCTED HERE

A funeral service for John William Keen, oldest citizen of Smithfield, was held Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock from Centenary Methodist Church of which he had been a member for some 40 years.

Mr. Keen, who had observed his 96th birthday last October 14, died Monday morning at Johnston Memorial Hospital after an illness of several weeks.

His pastor, the Rev. J.V. Early, conducted the service in the presence of a number of relatives and friends. A quartet from the church choir, composed of Luby F. Royall, John Marshall Sasser, Mrs. James Sawrey and Miss Betty Ann Williford, sang three hymns which Mr. Keen had selected as his favorites to be used at his funeral: "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," "Amazing Grace" and "God, Be With You."

Mr. Early paid tribute to the good life of this oldest member of Centenary Church in a beautiful prayer and in the ritual of the Methodist burial service.

Interment was in the Dicey Cemetery near Four Oaks. Active pallbearers were John W. Stanley, Jr. of Arlington Va. and Edward Keen of Charlotte, grandsons; Edward Keen, Jr., and Andy Hodges of Charlotte, great-grandsons; Dr. DeWitt Woodall of Erwin, a grand-son-in-law; and O.K. Keen of Coats, a nephew.

Honorary pallbearers were members of Centenary Bible Class of which Mr. Keen had been a member for many years.

John William Keen was a lifetime resident of Johnston County. He was born in Ingrams Township on October 14, 1859, one of 10 sons and daughters of the late Gideon and Sally Stanley Keen. All of his brothers and sisters preceded him in death.

He was first married to Miss Susan Cole, and to this union two children were born -- the late William R. Keen of Four Oaks, who died 24 years ago. and Mrs. John W. (Bettie Keen) Stanley of Arlington, Va., who survives. After the death of his wife in 1887(?) he married Miss Louella Tyner and to this union two sons and a daughter were born -- Roy H. Keen, who makes his home in Harrison, Idaho; Rupert A. Keen of Las Vegas, Nev; and Mrs Pesria Keen (W.E.) Alley of Four Oaks, who died about 40 years ago.

Following the death of his second wife in 1912, Mr. Keen married Miss Vessie Ann Coats of Pleasant Grove Township, who survives. They were married on March 2, 1915.

Surviving besides his wife, two sons, and one daughter are 15 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Helen (Will R.) Keen of Charlotte, daughter-in-law. has been in the Keen home on West Davis Street for the past three weeks during Mr, Krrn's last illness. Other members of the family from out of town who attended the funeral here Tuesday included; his son-in-law and grandson, John W. Stanley and John, Jr, of Arlington; his grandson, Edward Keen, Mrs Keen and great-grandson, Edward Keen, Jr. of Charlotte; a granddaughter , Mrs J.V. Hodges and great-grandchildren, Susan, Helen, and Andy Hodges of Charlotte; a granddaughter, Mrs, DeWitt Woodall, Dr. Woodall and great-grandchildren, Beth, Al and Woody Woodall of Erwin; a nephew, O.K. Keen, great-nephew, Kenneth Keen, and a neice, Mrs. Eva Keen Stewart , all of Coats; and his son-in-law, W.E. Alley, and Mrs. Alley of Durham.

Children of John William and Susan Jane Cole

1. William "Will" Rufus Keen b. 18-Feb-1882 d. 15-Oct-1931 md. (31-Jan-1906) Helen Pierce b. ca-1882 d. 1962.

William built a house in Four Oaks on the present site of the First National Bank and married Helen Pierce, who had come from her home near Kenly to Four Oaks to teach in the first public school, a one room school which was built on Wellons Street about 1888.

The Keen Company was incorporated in 1907 with $2,500 capital. The stock was split equally between Will and his father John William. The company sold groceries, dry goods, hardware, farm supplies, and fertilizer. Will had excellent penmanship as noted on some of his company's billheads.

Will was elected mayor of Four Oaks from 1926 until 1931. Will closed The Keen Company during the depression and died at home in 1931 at the age of 49. After Will's death, Helen worked as a clerk in W.J. Lewis's dry goods store.

From a 1982 "Four Oaks History" article in **The Four Oaks News**, James Bryan Creech is quoted:

"A new school house was opened on South Main Street in 1907 and the one road school was offered for sale. B.B. Adams bought the quarter block and the little building for $275. In 1910, Will Keen bought the property for $2,000. Perhaps Mr. Adams had enlarged the building; if not, he made a tidy profit. Mr. Keen and Mrs. Keen then built a two-story house and joined the one room school house to the rear for a kitchen and dining room. Mrs. Keen stopped teaching but she did not escape the classroom. She cooked and raised her own children there. In the front polar she taught piano to some of the girls in town. Leola Sanders and Bertha Creech were tow of them."

a. William Roland Keen b. ca-1907 d. ca-1940.

William lived in Rich Square, NC.

b. Edward Keen b. ca-1908 d. ca-1973 md. UNKNOWN UNKNOWN.

Ed joined the Army in World War II.

(1). Edward Keen, Jr.

c. Hilda Keen b. ca-1912 md. Jack V. Hodges.

The Hodges live in Charlotte.

(1). Susan Hodges

(2). Helen Hodges

(3). Andy Hodges

d. Rachel B. Keen b. 6-Aug-1913 d. 12-Aug-1979 md. UNKNOWN Van Hook

e. Paul G. Keen b. ca-1916 md. Elizabeth Pierce of Clayton.

Paul met Elizabeth while playing baseball with the Four Oaks team in the late 1930s. After his father's death in 1931, Paul helped support the family in town and in 1934 joined the Marines and served on the aircraft carrier Ranger. Paul suffered a slight hearing impairment and was rejected from service during WWII. He then went to work with Union Carbide Corporation in 1943 and retired in 1977 while in Cleveland, Ohio, after 34 years with the Union Carbide Corporation. He was district manager of production of Eveready batteries for plants in North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Iowa. Paul Makes his home at Route 8, Sanford, N.C.

(1). Patricia Keen md. Unknown Unknown and lives in Columbia, S.C.

(2). Paul Keen, Jr. md. Unknown Unknown and lives in Columbia, S.C.

f. John Wilbur "Red" Keen b. ca-1918 d. ca-1978

Red was the "too tall" brother who was the basketball whiz of Four Oaks and a star for the High Point College team in the mid-1930s. His 6-9 height caused him to be rejected for military service.

2. Betty Ila Keen b. ca-1886 d. ca-1871 md. (ca-1905) John William "Roger" Stanley b. ca-1888 in Fayetteville, NC d. ca-1965.

Roger was a retired US Army Major. Betty and Roger lived in Arlington, VA and are both buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

a. Rudolph Stanley b. ca-1907 d. ca-1977.

Rudolph was a retired Marine Corps. Colonel and is buried in Arlington National Cem.

b. Rosamond Stanley b. ca-1909

c. John William Stanley, Jr. b. ca-1911

d. Madolyn Stanley b. ca-1914

e. Marguerite Stanley b. ca-1917 md. Herbert Baxter b. Arlington, VA. d. ca-1983.

Marguerite retired from RCA Corp. Herbert and Marguerite live in LaPlata, MD.

3. Infant Son of J.W. and Susan J. buried in Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

4. Pearl Keen md. (4-Jan-1914) W.E. "Bill" Allie of Durham, NC.

    a. Leah Allie md. Dr. Dewitt Woodall of Erwin, NC.

        (1). Beth Woodall

        (2). Al Woodall

        (3). Woody Woodall

Children of John William and Lou Nettie Tiner

5. Roy H. Keen b. ca-1896 made his home in Harrison, Idaho.

6. Rupert A. Keen b. 28-Mar-1901 d. 28-Dec-1972 in Las Vegas, NV.

    Rupert is buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

7. Pesria Keen md. W. E. Alley b. ? in Four Oaks, NC and make their home in Durham, NC.

8. Unknown Keen

Chapter 22

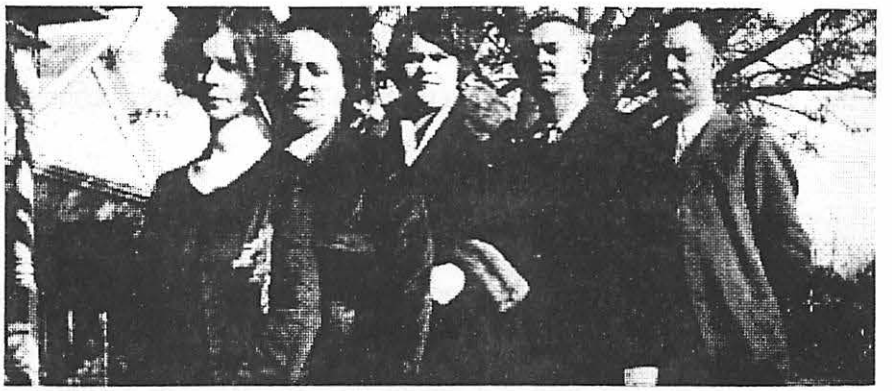
The Joel Gideon Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
6th Child: **Joel Gideon Keen**

Joel Gideon Keen b. 26-Dec-1862 in Ingrams Twp. of Johnston Co. d. 29-Jul-1943 in Coats, NC md. (11-Jan-1885) Zilla A. Stephenson daughter of Moore Stephendon and Zilla Coats b. 4-Feb-1859 of the Pleasant Grove township in Johnston Co d. 28-Jan-1937 in Coats, NC.

Joel and Zilla farmed their land in Ingrams Township until an agrument between Joel and his brother-in-law, Ransom A. Johnson, resulted in the death of Ransom. Joel was convicted and served jail time for Ransom's death. After his release about 1900. Joel collected his family and selling his land, moved to Troyville, N.C. (present day Coats, N.C.). to make their home. Joel and Zilla are buried in the Coats Cemetery.

Joel Gideon Zilla Stephenson Keene
Photo from Kenneth Keene



Children of Joel Gideon Keene. L to R. Eva, Laura. Annie, Walter, and Oker.
Photo from Kenneth Keene

1. Laura Keene b. 2-Nov-1885 in Johnston Co. d. 7-Oct-1968 md. Henry Beasley of Harnett Co, NC. b. 14-Dec-1883 d. 24-Nov-1967.

    a. Gladys Beasley b. 30-May-1910 d. 1-Aug-1984 md. Bennet Martin Clevenger of Coats, NC. b. 15-Oct-1944 d. 5-Dec-1972.

        (1) Wade Clevenger b. 14-Mar-1888 d. as infant

        (2) Josie Fern Clevenger b. 31-Dec-1934 d. Oct-1935

    b. Wade Beasley died in infancy.

2. Osker Keene b. 14-Mar-1888 in Johnston Co. d. ? as an infant.

3. Walter Moor Keene, Sr. b. 22-Apr-1891 d. 22-Sep-1941 in Coats, NC md. (29-Mar-1917) Flora Annie Strickland b. 27-Apr-1897 in Ingrans Twp. of Johnston Co d. 28-Apr-1943 in Coats, NC.

    Walter was a U.S. Army Corporal in WWII. Both are buried in the Coats Cemetery.

    a. Walter Moore Keene, Jr. b. 16-Sep-1918 d. 9-Nov-1984 md. Audry Dorman of Harnett Co, NC.

        Walter and Audry made their home in Arlington, Va. where Walter and his son Michael worked together in a fencing business.

        (1) Infant daughter Keene b. Aug-1947 d. Aug-1947

        (2). Michael Keene

        (3). Debbie Keene

    b. Madelene Keene md. Holt Heritage

        Madelene taught in Arlington County Schools.

        (1). Ann Heritage

        (1). William Heritage.

4. Oker Kenneth Keene b. 14-Sep-1894 in Johnston Co., d. 18-Apr-1965 in Coats, NC. md. Billie B. Black of Rockingham Co. b. 24-Feb-1905 d. 12-Jul-1977.

    Oker was a Corporal in Co, "M", 119 Infantry during WWI. His tombstone reads "PH" which I believe means Purple Heart. Oker and Billie made their home in Coats, NC.

a. Oker Kenneth Keene, Jr. md. Cecle Eline Jones

Kenneth taught in the Harnett County Schools until he retired in 1990. Kenneth makes his home in Coats, NC.

(1) Gina Ann Keene

5. Annie Keene b. 23-Jan-1900 in Johnston Co. md. James Morgan and makes her home in Erwin, NC. **No Issue.**

6. Zilla Eva Keene b. 11-Jul-1903 in Johnston Co. md. (25-Dec-1933) Thomas Jefferson Harper of Erwin, NC.

Thomas is Past Master of Neil F. Stewart Lodge 556 at Erwin, NC. Zilla had been active in the Eastern Star.

a. Judy Harper md. Carl L. Grimes.

Judy and Carl lived in Norfolk, VA. Judy now lives in Fuquay, N.C.

7. Billy B. Keene b. 24-Feb-1905 d. 12-Jul-1977

Chapter 23

The Susan A. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
7th Child: **Susan A. Keen**

Susan A. Keen b. 31-May-1866 d. 14-Nov-1947 md. 1st (11-Apr-1886) Ransom A. Johnson son of J.H. and Fanny Johnson b. 17-Oct-1860 d. 14-Nov-1896, md. 2nd Mike Ingram son of John R. and Julia A. Ingram b. 17-Mar-1870 d. 4-Apr-1935

From **The Smithfield Herald**, 19-Nov-1896

Another Murder at Four Oaks. Joel G. Keen Kills Ransom A. Johnson

"Ramson A. Johnson was at Smithfield last Saturday, but little did he think he would never see his family again. On his return home he went by Four Oaks and got drunk and kept staying there. After night he met his brother-in-law Joel G. Keen. There had been bad feeling between them for some time. They began to talk over their affair and Johnson cursed Keen in a terrible manner. Keen struck Johnson with his fist and knocked him down. While Johnson was getting up Keen found a piece of wood weighing about 3 1/2 pounds and struck Johnson on the head with it. This caused concussion of the brain, but nobody know at the time that the blow was fatal. In about half an hour he was found in a back lot down on the ground but it was thought to be the effect of liquor. Next morning he was in the same place dead. Dr. Wellons, our Coroner, held an inquest over him and he and Dr. Noble sawed into his head and found a lot of clotted blood under where the blow was struck. Keen was at once arrested and brought to jail, and the case will probably be tried this week. Keen is a much stronger man than Johnson. Johnson's remains were buried at the home of his father, Mr. James H. Johnson, Monday evening."

"Our readers will remember that a year or two ago, Mr. Nathan T. Cole was killed there in about the same manner."

Susan and Mike are buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery..

1. Lena Johnson b. 17-Mar-1887 d. 18-Dec-1984 md. (26-Jul-1904) Jessie A. Ingram b. 18-Feb-1881 d. 5-Jan-1932.

   Lena and Jessie are buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery.

   a. Clara Ingram b. ca-1905

   b. Leon Ingram b. ca-1908

   c. Herm Ingram b. ca-1909

   d. Vern Ingram

   e. Clyde Ingram

f. Hilda Ingram

g. Earl Ingram

h. Owen Ingram

2. Lassie Johnson b. 1-May-1889 d. 13-Mar-1956 md. Zora Mae Stanley b. ca-1893 d. ca-1934.

   a. Glennie P. Johnson b 11-Apr-1910

   b. Ralph E. Johnson b ca-1920 d. ca-1920.

3. Ethel Johnson

4. Omie Johnson

5. Cora Johnson lives in Richmond, VA.

Children of Susan A. Keen and Mike Ingram

6. Elmer Ingram b. 27-Jul-1903 d. 31-May-1968.

   Elmer's tombstone reads "S2 - US Navy"

7. Debra Ingram b. ca-1905

8. Roby Ingram b. 31-Jul-1908 d. 2-May-1910

   Roby's tombstone reads "Gone to be an angel."

Chapter 24

The Charlie E. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
8th Child: **Charlie E. Keen**

Charlie E. Keen b. 19-Mar-1869 d. 28-Jun-1923.

Charlie was crippled in both legs in such a fashion that he could never walk. He was able to move about by lifting himself from the floor with his hands and arms. Gideon placed Charlie under the care of his sister Sarah in his father's will. Charlie is listed in the 1910 Census as living with his sister Sarah and husband George King. Charlie is buried in the Dicey Dunn Cemetery where his tombstone reads "May he find Joy in the life everlasting."

Chapter 25

The James Rufus Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
9th Child: **James Rufus Keen**

James Rufus Keen b. ca-1872 md.(18-Apr-1893) Mary Holly daughter of J.W. Holly & Edith Barnes

The children lived with the Elijah Strickland family in 1910.

1. John Estelle Keen b. ca-1894 d. ca-1970 md. Zoda Unknown b. ca-1906

2. Carol Keen b. ca-1896

Chapter 26

The Mary I. Keen Family

GRANDFATHER: (3)George W. Keen (1786-1847)
FATHER: Gideon Keen (1823-1885)
10th Child: **Mary I. Keen**

Mary I. Keen b. ca-1874 d. 20-Apr-1949 md. (10-Mar-1901) Elijah F. Strickland son of Julius W. Strickland and Leann Johnson b. ca-1875 d. 7-Jul-1959

Mary is listed in the 1800 Census as a 24 year old cook for the Jarmon G. Johnston family with a one year old son, James H. Oral family history indicates that the father of the child was a prominent Four Oaks citizen. Mary later married Elijah who was a farmer, merchant, and rural mail carrier. Mary operated the Strickland hotel on Main Street from about 1923 until after World War II. Mary reared Bessie and Jackie Strickland, children of Riley Strickland and Florence Barbour in addition to her son James H.. These children were treated as their own.

1. James Hunter Strickland b. 15-Jul-1898 d. 18-May-1954 md. Mable Coffinberger b. ? d. ca-1980

Hunter Strickland developed extensive business holding in Four Oaks and Johnston county before his untimely death in during surgery. He was a Smith-Douglas fertilizer dealer, owned and operated a market, grocery, livery stables, and trucking firm in Four Oaks, and a brick mill in Slocumb, NC. After World War II, he bought the Riverside Brick Company in Smithfield and later the Ideal Brick Company in Solcumb. He bought property in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and had idea of supplying brick for Florida homes.

Hunter served for many years on the Board of Trustees of Campbell College before his death. Mable followed Hunter in this service resulting in the naming of a new dorm as the Strickland Dorm in honor of James Hunter and Mable Coffinberger Strickland.

A native of Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Mable "Berger" Coffinberger was picked by Jim Creech to come to Four Oaks to make hats in his store. James is buried in Sunset Memorial Cemetery.

Children of Riley Strickland and Florence Barbour raised by the Elijah Strickland family

2. Jackie Strickland md. John Henderson of Jacksonville, N.C.

3. Bessie Strickland md. 1st Jasper "Jack" Surles.

Jack later married Pearl Strickland.

Chapter 27
Family Traditions

The Smithfield Herald, 21-Sep-1917

IN MEMORIAM - MISS LUCY HAWKINS LASSITER

Miss Lucy Hawkins Lassiter, who died at her home in Elevation township on Monday night, September 17, was the daughter of Elder James O. and Lucy Lockhart Lassiter. She was born in Johnston County on May 4, 1836, and spent her long and uneventful life near the scene of her birth. She was eighty-one years, four months and thirteen days of age. While not a member of any church, she had long been a believer in the faith held by the Primitive Baptists, and in a bright hope of eternal life she entered the great Veiled Beyond unfaltering and unafraid. She was laid to rest in the family grave year near Mr. R. C. Barbour's in Elevation township, on Tuesday afternoon in the presence of a goodly number of relatives and friends.

She leaves an only sister and a number of nephews and nieces, together with a host of friends to mourn her departure. She had lived a life of usefulness and has gone to receive the reward of the faithful.

"Death is the crown of life; Were death denied, poor man would live in vain; Were death denied, to live would not be life."

The deceased was one of eight children who lived to manhood and womanhood. The eldest died several years before the Civil War. The others. two brothers and five sisters, were spared many years. Of the number there were four sisters who never married, but lived together from the time of the death of their mother in 1882, until the first one was taken a little more than ten years ago. These four sisters --Misses Lucy Hawkins, Elizabeth Alice Rebecca and Eleanor A. Lassiter -- for many years lived lives of unselfish devotion to their loved ones and neighbors, and until old age and the ravages of disease laid hold of them they were faithful in the work of ministering to those in need.

The first of the aged quartet to pass away, was Miss Alice Rebecca, who answered the heavenly summons on April 17, 1907, in the 65th year of her age. She was soon followed by Miss Elizabeth, who died September 18, 1909, in her 71st year. The third was Miss Lucy Hawkins who died this week. The only one of the family lift now is Miss Eleanor A. Lassiter who is in her 73rd year. she will feel the loss of her sister most keenly. For many long years, since the death of Miss Elizabeth, they had been devoted companions. During her last illness "Aunt Hawkins," as she was called, had her undivided attention. She will miss her, but she can look up through her tears and rejoice that her sister is now basking in the sunlight of a Saviour's love.

As has already been said these sisters were the daughters of Elder James O. Lassiter who was a Primitive Baptist preacher. He was born in 1800 and died in 1847. His father was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and was with Washington at Valley Forge. The writer remembers hearing his father, who was the second son of Elder James O. Lassiter, speak of hearing his grandfather tell of the hardships the soldiers endured in the War of Independence.

Lucy Lockhart Lassiter, the mother of these sisters. and the grandmother of the writer, was born in Smithfield, N.C., in 1810, in the house which formerly stood on the corner where the residence of Dr. L.D. Whorton now stands. Her brother Thomas Lockhart, was one of the early deacons of the Smithfield Baptist church, and at one time was clerk of the church. He was ordained a deacon in 1839.

Of the other member of this family, James O. Lassiter was the first to "cross over the river." He died in May 1898, at the age of 66. The next to follow was William G. Lassiter who

died on July 20, 1898, in his 64th year. This third to pass away was the youngest child Mrs. Louenza P. Barbour, wife of R.C. Barbour, of Elevation township, who died on June 19, 1900, in her 54th year.

They were a large family of honest, sturdy, unassuming people who lived and died near the scene of their birth. Honored and loved among their neighbors and friends they, with the exception of the one sister, have gone to get their reward. T.J.L.

The Smithfield Herald, June 8, 1939.

KEEN-FITZGERALD VOWS SOLEMNIZED IN CHURCH WEDDING

KENLY, June 8. -- The Micro Methodist church was the scene of an impressive wedding service Thursday evening, June 1, at 7:30 o'clock uniting Miss Ila Mae Fitzgerald and Chester Edward Keen. The vows were spoken before Rev. J.W. Bradley, pastor of the bride, and Rev. H.B. Baum of Cary. The ring ceremony was used.

The chancel of the church was decorated with tall baskets of white gladioli and Queen Anne's lace and cathedral candles.

Mrs. Lucile Cooper played a musical program including "Venetian Love Song," Nevin; "Elegie," Massenet; and Mrs John Bandy sang "I Love You Truly" and "At Dawning." "To A Wild Rose" was played during the ceremony. Mendelssohn's Wedding March was used for the processional and Wagner's Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin was used as the recessional.

The bride was given in marriage by her father. She wore a wedding gown of white slipper satin, fashioned on princess lines. Her veil of illusion was arranged with orange blossoms and extended over the train of her dress, court length. She carried an arm bouquet of bride's roses and valley lilies.

Miss Edith Ausley of Micro was maid of honor. She wore a dress of blue organza and carried an arm bouquet of pink gladioli roses and snapdragons tied with pink tulle.

The bridesmaids were Miss Esther Keen of Four Oaks, Miss Lou Eloise Barefoot of Benson. Their dresses were yellow, pink and green net over taffeta with full skirts. They carried arm bouquets of pink gladioli, roses, and snapdragons tied with pink tulle.

Robert Johnson of Fuquay Springs attended Mr. Keen as best man.

Ushers were Billy Pearce of Wilson, Leonard Creech of Oxford, W.F. Snipes of Smithfield and Melvin Spraggins of Kenly.

The bride's mother wore a dress of powder blue lace and a corsage of pink roses.

The bride is the attractive daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A.E. Fitzgerald of Kenly. She is a graduate of East Carolina Teachers' College, Greenville, and for the past few years has been a member of the faculty of the Four Oaks school.

Mr. Keen, the son of Mr. and Mrs G.D. Keen of Four Oaks received his education at the University of North Carolina and at King's Business College in Raleigh. At present he holds a position in Clinton.

Immediately after the ceremony, a reception was held at the home of B.S. Spraggins, uncle of the bride.

Following a bridal trip to New York and other northern points, Mr. and Mrs. Keen will be at home in Clinton.

The Smithfield Herald, June 19, 1939.

RECEPTION GIVEN IN HONOR OF MRS. CHESTER KEEN

FOUR OAKS, June 19.-- Mrs. Bert Lassiter, Mrs. Robert Johnson and Miss Esther Keen entertained jointly at a reception Friday afternoon honoring Mrs. Chester Keen, bride of early June, who formerly was Miss Ila Mae Fitzgerald, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A.E. Fitzgerald of Micro.

Mrs. J.T. Hatcher greeted the seventy-five guests who called during the afternoon, introducing them to the receiving line which was composed of Mesdames Bert Lassiter, Chester Keene, the bride, G.D. Keen, mother of the groom, and Miss Esther Keen.

In the music room where the receiving line was formed, huge baskets of Queen Anne's lace, gladioli, and fern lent unusual beauty to a scene enhanced by burning tapers in tall candelabra.

Mrs. E.M. Denning directed the guests to the dining room where they were greeted by Mrs. B.I. Tart, Sr. In the dining room masses of white flowers and fern formed an artistic setting. The central arrangement of the lace covered table was a crystal bowl of valley lilies, fern, and Queen Anne's lace. At opposite sides of the centerpiece crystal candelabra held lighted white tapers, while directly over the table a wedding bell with a bow of tulle and showered with ribbon, valley lilies and fern gave a lovely tiered effect. Molded bridal ices were served with cake, mints, and nuts by Misses Emily Gattis, Frances Steed, Inez Upchurch, and Avis Keen. Jean Barbour and Leah Upchurch presented little bouquets of valley lilies and fern to the guests as they passed from the dining room to the gift room where Miss Dorcas Stanley presided.

Misses Jean Cooper and Josephine Lassiter directed the guests to the north porch where punch was poured from a beautifully arranged table by Mrs. J.H. Austin, Misses Floried Johnson, Florence Denning, Helen Doggett, and Agnes Harris. The table was covered with English ivy and flat arrangements of Queen Ann's lace, carrying out the white and green motif, as was the entire home.

From the north porch Mrs. Albert Farmer directed the guests to the bride's register where Miss Carmen Austin presided. Mrs. Jesse Keen bid guests good-bye as they left the register.

Chapter 28

Johnston County Life - 50 Year Apart

The Year 1750:

Green's path, a trail through the wilderness that started in southeastern Virginia and roughly followed the present route of Highway I-95, provided the trail of settlement into the present day Johnston County. Early English maps identify Green's path as a trading route once used by Indians roaming from the Algonquin lands in Virginia to the Cherokee forests of western North Carolina. Roger Green's settlers apparently used this ancient path, hence the name. The wilderness was sparsely settled, with most farms within a mile or two of Green's path. New tobacco or Cotton land or the escape from political and religious persecution was the normal motivation for settling in this wild country.

There was little contact with the outside world. What government that existed was the existing English Governor in New Bern. The new county was just over 3 years old, having been formed on June 28, 1746, and had little local government.

George Keen wouldn't appear in Johnston County records for 34 years.

The Year 1800:

With the new America less than 25 years old, Johnston County was becoming crowded. (2)George Keen had arrived in 1784, probably down an improved Green's Path, turning south at Smithfield down the Fayetteville Road (today's Highway 96) to settle along this road at about the present Keen Road intersection. George's motivation for coming to Johnston County is the subject of speculation among family researchers. Search for new tobacco land or escape from political persecution are some of the reasons proposed. Loyalists to the Crown were very unpopular following the Revolutionary War prompting many to seek homes in western lands. Was (2)George a Loyalist?

By the year of his death, 1797, (2)George had purchased land to form a 1,000 acre plantation. Housing was still the log cabin, constructed with materials from the thick pine forests covering the county. Large families were raised to counteract the realities of high mortality and the need to supply labor for the farm. Slaves were not used. generally; however indentured servants provided more labor in many families. Children orphaned were normally parceled out to family members for care. Census records indicate the presence of these servants and relative children.

The county was still isolated with vast wilderness stands of pine and hardwood on the high ground. Ancient trails and newly constructed country Paths linked farms, with better paths leading to Smithfield, the county seat. A major industry was clearing the pine forests for agriculture and timber products although the work was done on individual farm by their owners, not by organized companies. Vast turpentine woods became a common sight with the collection, distillation, transportation, and sale of pine tar products a major industry. George, like most other farmers of the region, probably raised tobacco, along with other crops and livestock.

The Year 1850:

A much more civilized Johnston County existed after 100 years of settlement. The Keen plantation was 66 years old, with (3)George Keen adding 558 acres in 1821 making a plantation of over 1,500 acres. Gideon and (4)George William Keen had split the original Keen plantation at the death of their father(3)George Keen.

Gideon had married in 1848 and built his home near the present Dicey Dunn Cemetery. He raised ten children, five boys and five girls. He built a frame home and nearby a grist mill at the dam of his pond. This mill was destroyed during the occupation of his farm by Confederate troops during their march to the Battle of Bentonville. The house survived until the early 1900s and has been recreated in a model by Charlie Thomas from his memory of the original that stood near his home. Gideon's children became farmers or merchants in Four Oaks and settled on original Keen land or nearby farms. Joel Gideon and Rufus fled to Coats, N.C. to make their life there.

(3)George married in 1850, building his home on the Smithfield Road, next to the present Keen Cemetery. George raised ten children, five boys and five girls. The girls all married local men who all were farmers. Elijah Elbert went to Texas and later Alabama where he drowned at a local lake that he and helped to construct. James Preston fled the county, after his relatives had him declared an outlaw, to settle in Alabama and raise a new family. George was a Justice of the Peace for Ingrams Township and took an extremely unpopular stance, signing the Beckwith Resolution that urged preservation of the Union. George paid for this action by harsh treatment from neighbors for the rest of his life.

The following is an advertisement from a Smithfield paper (**The Smithfield Herald?**), October 10, 1823.

> "The subscriber, contractor for carrying the United States Mail between Raleigh and Newburn, respectively informs the public that he has commercial running a Stage for the accommodation of travelers, under the following regulations."
>
> "Leave Raleigh every Friday at 6 p.m.
> Arrive at Newburn on Monday at 2 p.m.
> Leave Newburn on Tuesday at 6 a.m.
> Arrive at Raleigh on Thursday at 6 p.m.
> Price for passage through,...$10.00
> From Raleigh to Smithfield,...2.50
> From Smithfield to Newburn,....7.50"
> And in proportion for any less distance"
>
> "Each passenger will be allowed the privilege of taking baggage weighing 20 lbs. ....The proprietor of this line, entertains the hope that his endeavor to facilitate the means of traveling from the Western to the Eastern part of the state, will be complimented by the encouragement he shall receive from the Public. No exceptions shall be wanting on his part to render the line worthy of such support."
>
> Merrit Dillard
>
> "This line intersects at Waynesboro the Stage line from Tarborough to Fayetteville, thus affording to Merchants and others a more expeditious conveyance to the North and South, than has heretofore offered."

The Year 1900:

Tremendous changes had come to Johnston County during the past 50 years. Forces of General Sherman had battled in Bentonville before burning and raiding their way to Smithfield at the close of the war. Gideon Keen had fought on the side of the Confederacy while his brother (3)George joined the movement to save the Union.

With the building of the railroad in 1886 and the start of Four Oaks in the same year, rural Ingrams Township began to have contact with the rest of the nation. Two railroad tracks existed through Four Oaks, with a railroad station that stayed open 24-hours a day.

A budding business district had formed along Main Street. Four Oaks had an atmosphere of a frontier town with a booming saloons and merchant trade fulfilling the needs of the farmers for drink, farm supplies and dry goods. Four Oaks was not a place for a lady after dark.

Smithfield Road was the old link to the county seat, crossing and re-crossing the railroad at grade crossings creating hazards for horses and "machines" that prompted the later construction of N.C. Highway 22 and then U.S. Highway 301.

American historian Frederick Lewis Allen wrote in his essay "Main Street America - 1900", excerpted from his book, **The Big Change: America Transforms Itself 1900-1950,** the following description of that year:

> If a neatly adjusted time machine could take you back to the Main Street of an American town in 1900, to look about you with your present-day eyes, your first exclamation would probably be, "But look at all those horses!"
>
> For in that year 1900 there were registered in the whole United States only 13,824 automobiles (as compared with over 44 million in 1950). And they were really few and far between except in larger cities and the well-to-do resorts. For in 1900 everybody thought of automobiles as playthings of the rich - and not merely of the rich, but of the somewhat adventurous and sporting rich: people who enjoyed taking their chances with an unpredictable machine that might at any moment wreck them. There were almost no paved highways outside the cities, and of course there were no roadside garages or filling stations; every automobilist must be his own desperate mechanic. Probably half of the men and women in America has never seen a car. When William Allen White organized a street fair in Emporia, Kansas, in 1899, the automobile which was brought there for the occasion- and proved to be the most exciting exhibit of the fair- came from Chicago by rail; it was the first automobile ever to have crossed the Missouri River.
>
> But horses were everywhere, pulling surreys, democrats, buggies, cabs, delivery wagons of every sort on Main Street, and pulling harvesters on the tractorless farms out in the countryside.
>
> The sights and sounds and sensations of horse-and-carriage life were part of the universal American experience: the clop-clop of the horses' hoofs; the stiff jolting of an iron-tired carriage on a stony road; the grinding noise of the brake being applied to ease the horse on a downhill stretch; the necessity of holding one's breath when the horse sneezed; the sight of sand, carried up on the tires and wooden spokes of a carriage wheel, spilling off in little cascades as the wheel revolved; the look of a country road overgrown by grass, with three tracks in it instead of two, the middle one made by horses' hoofs; the special male ordeal of getting out of the carriage and walking up the steeper hills to lighten the load; and the more severe ordeal, for the unpracticed, of harnessing a horse which could recognize inexperience at one scornful glance. During a northern winter the jingle of sleigh bells was everywhere. On summer evenings along the tree-lines streets of innumerable American towns, families sitting on their front porches would watch the fine carriages of the town as they drove past for a proud evening's jaunt, and the cognoscenti would wait eagerly for a glimpse of the banker's trotting pair or the sporting lawyer's 2:40 pacer. And one of the

magnificent sights of urban life was that of a fire engine, pulled by three galloping horses, careening down a city street with its bell clanging.

It is hard for us today to realize how very widely communities were separated from one another when they depended for transportation wholly on the railroad and the horse and wagon - and when telephones were still scarce, and radios non-existent. A town which was not situated on a railroad was really remote. A farmer who lived five miles outside the county seat made something of an event of hitching up and taking the family to town for a Saturday afternoon's shopping. (His grandchildren make the run in a casual ten minutes, and think nothing of it.) A trip to see friends ten miles away was likely to be an all-day expedition, for the horse had to be given a chance to rest and be fed. No wonder that each region, each farm was far more dependent upon its own resources - its own produce, social contacts, amusements - than in later years. For in terms of travel and communications, the United States was a very big country indeed.

No wonder, furthermore, that the majority of Americans were less likely than their descendants to be dogged by that frightening sense of insecurity which comes from being jostled by forces - economic, political, international - beyond one's personal ken. Their horizons were close to them. They lived among familiar people and familiar things - individuals and families and fellow townsmen much of their own sort, with ideas intelligible to them. A man's success or failure seemed more likely than in later years to depend upon forces and events within his own range of vision. Less often than his sons and grandsons did he feel that his fortune, indeed his life, might hang upon some decision made in Washington or Berlin or Moscow, for reasons utterly strange to his experience. The world at which he looked over the dashboard of the family carriage might not be friendly, but at least most of it looked understandable.

The Year 1950

Following the great World War II that had sucked the youth out of the countryside, a great sense of anticipation and optimism existed as the people went about the task of providing housing and education for the returning soldiers. Many returned to the farming life they had left while many others, changed by the sights of foreign lands, left the country for the cities of the north.

Two great changes marked the year 1950; communications and transportation. These two single factors accelerated the changes in 1900 rural life to involve Johnston County in the affairs of the world. The invasion of the great war on the rural quiet took place in the 1940s with an equal invasion of the rural south by tourist and industry in the 1950s and thereafter.

On September 17, 1957, H.V. Rose gave his impression of the early 1900 roads in Johnston County and compared them to the "modern" roads of the 1950s.

The Smithfield Herald, 27-Sep-1957, by H.V. Rose.

"The county of Johnston, in step with the state at large, has made many and great improvements since it shuffled off the shackles of reconstruction days following the Civil War. In no respect has improvement been more signally observed than in road construction and maintenance."

"The average citizen today who glides along over the wonderful system of hard-surfaced roads here in Johnston County gives little thought to travel conditions as they existed, say, in 1900. Moreover, he has little or no conception

of the condition of the mediums of travel which were then referred to as 'the public roads.'"

"Almost all of the roads were very old. Very few new roads were every opened up. Travel over them was by foot, by ox-cart. by horses and mules singly or in teams. All of them were known by some local name. Our main thoroughfare was the Smithfield-Clinton road. It then had been there so long that no man knew who blazed the trail or when he did so. It was good topic to say that Lord Cornwallis used it in his march from South Carolina to Yorktown where Washington relieved him of his sword, but history does not sustain this legend. However, it is true that this road was used by British soldiers during the Revolutionary War. In a field near where Tom Upchurch now lives old leaden balls of Revolutionary vintage can be picked up until this day. Presumably British soldiers stopped there and camped for a few days."

"There is nothing like the open land in 1900 as now, and long stretches of the roads were but open vistas through vast woodlands. In winter, the bane of these roads were deep mudholes and in summer their chief plague was the formation of deep, tough sand beds to be followed by bottoms, from which a blinding sand of dust would whip up every time a horse would go spanking along over these dark places."

"Our school house stood by the side of the old Smithfield-Clinton road, and nothing delighted us school boys more than to see the great drove of old plug mules and horses as some trader would shift them from Clinton to Smithfield and back again as one Superior Court term would follow another. In this way we could tell when the Clinton Court had closed and when a term was about to open in Smithfield. There was always in the drove some old white nag and we thought he was used as a leader and guide. Certain it is that only a few in the drove were bridled and saddled, yet all trooped along after the leader in fairly good order. Some of them were so poor they could hardly keep up but they showed no disposition to be left behind. There was a huge sand bed in front of the school house and as the rider rallied his drove along a bottle of whisky 'unbeknownst' to him fell out of his pocket. The old horses trotted along without smashing the bottle. When they were well up the road some of the boys got hold of it and were having great fun until the teacher came along. The dry sand in the road immediately drank the liquor."

"Road maintenance was a joke. About once a year, the overseer would go around and summons his hands - all able-bodied males from 18 to 45. Some were directed to take an axe, some a hoe, some shovels. and occasionally I was ordered to bring my horse and turning plow. The day on the road was more of a social party than men at work. The work done consisted of opening the side ditches, usually about the width of a shovel, and the occasional construction of a 'thank-you-ma'am.' This was a ridge thrown across the road with one end higher uphill than the other. It diverted the water from the roads into the woods. The name was given it by happy lovers. When a girl was riding with her beau and one of these water guides was crossed, it would have a tendency to shift her a little closer to the driver, and of course his remark had to be 'thank-you-ma'am.'"

"Other work consisted of keeping up the abutments of the bridges across the creeks and the foot logs that spanned the low grounds of the creek swamp. A few poles covered with roadside mud composed the abutments. Needless to say, they were always in bad condition and were the chief source of complaint of the township supervisors to the section overseers."

"There were no printed road signs. Distances were indicated by mile posts. They were usually made of a fat light wood fence rail dressed down

smooth and three cornered. One stood in front of the schoolhouse with 15 well-defined notches, carved along on its sharp edges. The next with 14 notches stood farther up the road in front of old Randal Peacock's cabin. It contained 14 notches and so on all the way to Smithfield. They were on the east side of the road. The posts on the west side of the road had a great deal more notches. They told the miles to Clinton."

"Those were the horse-and-buggy days. They are gone beyond recall. The horse is almost gone, and many people now living would not recognize a buggy if they should see one. Changing times have brought to this age and generation a world full of comforts and luxuries undreamed of fifty years age, as our paps and mammas disported themselves over roads and cartways any nimble teenage school boy could jump at a single bound. Meantime men are operating monstrous machines as they improve and broaden the Smithfield-Clinton road. They tell us that we have merely got started on road construction. Seeing all this, old-timers such as myself pause and wonder what cargo these vast thoroughfares will bring - will they usher in some happy Elysium or in their trail will death and destruction follow?"

"However gladly we may welcome these new and imposing routes of travel, we are sobered by the grim thought that perhaps the designers of these giant highways vaguely frame that they are but building a modern warpath."

With the new century, the telephone and little later, radio had been ushered in. Communication with the outside world became a commonplace home affair, instead of going down to the local train depot to send a telegram. With the arrival of the radio, people began to abandon their cooler front porches to listen and laugh with strangers from around the world. Conversation among family members began to be replaced with these sessions before the radio. It was just at 1950 that the first few televisions began to enter the more affluent homes. Radio and televisions began to change these rural Johnston County people. Young people began to dream of worlds beyond the edge of the field. Values and ideas were accumulated that were many times foreign to their parents. A radical change in education was beginning to take place, spurred by communication with the outside world.

Tobacco was king during the first half of the twentieth century. With the bowl weevil infestation and the demise of cotton, tobacco became the main cash crop for the farmer. Improvements in curing and harvesting methods were championed by the engineers and agricultural experts at N.C. State University. These changes, however, failed to stop the outflow of farmers to the cities and a steady cash income of a regular job. An acceleration of this process began in earnest after the 1950s.

The Year 1992

The 1950s, only 42 years ago, seem quaint to us now. With the tremendous improvements of roads in the 1950s came an influx of industry of the 1960s. Able bodied men and women flocked to the industrial jobs that promised cash and great improvement in their standard of living. No longer isolated by poor roads, the farmer could live in a rural setting, farm part-time, and still hold a full-time cash job in industry.

Education became a prime target for improvement by state and local governments. The 1950s local primary and high schools began to be closed and integrated into the giant consolidated school that served a whole district of townships. Racial integration provided an additional push towards consolidation as did the desire to improve variety and quality of instruction.

The birth of the Community College System in the late 1950s ushered in the era of low-cost college and technical school for all. Johnston Community College now has a huge campus offering courses ranging from technical to college preparatory.

Industry now lines Interstate 95 which was opened in 1960, providing a high-speed thoroughfare through Johnston County replacing the "bloody 301" as the main avenue from New York to Florida. Flowing up and down I-95, among the Disney World bound tourist, was the drug dealer, peddling his death in small towns along the route. Crime had risen with access.

The work ethic, so strongly felt in the 1900 and well in the 1950s, has paled in 1992. Comfortable, well fed and housed, many people today shun the fields in preference to jobs in air-conditioned buildings. Armed with huge modern farm equipment and migrant workers, the farmer of 1992 tends more land than ever before, with far greater efficiency.

A blight in our modern Johnston County is the rising disparity of the "haves" and "have-nots" Often the common denominator is education, a ticket to higher paying and better jobs. The once hidden illegitimate child has become common among elements of our society where up to 50% of teenage mothers are unmarried. The break-down of the family , the rise of single parent families, the loss of favor of organized religion has affected large segments of our population. Yet, many rural Johnston County families cling to old ideas and values, the work ethic, religion in the home, family, and help for neighbors.

The future is bright for Johnston County in 1992. Problems abound, yet they should be viewed as opportunities.

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