

Letter From the Editors

It has been difficult deciding which direction to take this issue of the newsletter. We have been looking at the Armfield women even though early information on them has been difficult to find. Our September 2011 issue featuring our guest writers gave us another interesting avenue to delve into, the mysterious Roberts. The more we think and learn about the Robert's the more confused we get. Much of our data doesn't give us enough identifying clues to be sure who is who, especially when we find so many people with the same name. There are around thirty Robert's in our research files, some we have identified and some we have not. The New Orleans Robert Armfield is of particular interest as we do not really know who he was or what family he belonged to. We have decided to focus on this Robert in the next two newsletters. *Joyce & Connie*

The Robert Armfields

In the December 2007 issue we wrote about a Robert Armfield, born about 1796, son of William "Sheriff Billy" Armfield (1762-1842) and Elizabeth/Hannah Greene who had married Thankful Bland. Since then having reviewed the research of the late Anita Short, a certified genealogist and others, we have come to the current conclusion that this Robert Armfield was married on 1 Oct 1840 in Guilford County, NC. to Deborah Lovett, not Thankful Bland. The family can be found in the Southern Division, Guilford County, 1850 census with Robert aged 54, Deborah aged 30, Boston aged 9, Cynthia aged 7, Adeline aged 3 and Hans G aged 10/12 months. All were recorded as born in Guilford County and Robert's occupation given as a saddler.

The Robert Armfield (born c1808) who married Thankful Bland was more than likely the son of Isaac Armfield (1780-1813) and Mary "Polly" Stephenson. Isaac was the son of William "Little Billy" Armfield, Jr. In the divorce records, Robert was said to be nineteen years old when he married Thankful on 27 Sep 1827. In the divorce records it was recorded that the couple had two children, gender unknown. Their date of birth would have been sometime between 1831 and 1835. One theory is that they had two daughters Elizabeth Ann "Betsy" and Mary Mariah. As a result of the Short Family DNA project it is now known that Thankful and Robert also had a son Jonathan Milton in 1825. Jonathan used the surname Short. It was possible that his parentage was difficult to establish, therefore, his true biological father was unknown at that time. Recorded in the NC Guardian Docket, 1841-1849, p 155, Robert Armfield was named guardian of Jonathan Milton until he came of age in 1847.

Thankful did not take any of their children with her when she left Guilford County for Cincinnati with Gorrell Forbis in 1835. If Elizabeth Ann and Mary Mariah were daughters of Robert and Thankful, in the Southern Division, Guilford County census of 1850 they were living with their uncle Robert Armfield (1790-1862) a widower who had been married to Thankful's sister Margaret "Peggy" Bland. In the same census records, Jonathan Milton was married and living in Ohio. Linda Wells wrote "that perhaps the greatest tragedy of this

story is that all three children of Robert and Thankful were abandoned by both parents” although Jonathan was reunited with his mother in 1850 in Kentucky.

In review we have briefly discussed three Roberts: Robert of Guilford County, NC (1796-1860) married to Deborah Lovett, Robert (b 1808) married to Thankful Bland and Robert of North Carolina (1790-1862) married to Margaret Bland. No wonder for the confusion. Robert Armfield, husband of Thankful Bland, was still dealing with his divorce spring term of 1836 as shown by court records. A petition was issued for Thankful to appear in the Superior Court of Law before the judge of the County of Guilford at the court house in the Town of Greensboro on the 4th Monday of March 1836. The last entry we have is for the “Spring Term Robert Armfield vs Thankful Armfield. Petition for Divorce. To Spring T(erm) 1836. Copy issued to the Defent. J.A.G. atty.”

We are submitting that there was another Robert that could fit the man residing in New Orleans and that he was the son of John Armfield (1764-1833) and Margaret Dunlap.

Robert Armfield of New Orleans

One State of Tennessee, Sumner County marriage record has been found that shows R. G. Armfield and Betsey McDaniel (1810-1859) were married on the 23 of May 1873 by a Sumner County Clerk of Court. We believe this man to be **Robert G Armfield** born in Guilford County, NC to John Armfield (1764-1833) and Margarete Dunlap (1765-1833). Another marriage date was found in a TN marriage record with the marriage date of 23 Aug 1837. The father John Armfield was born abt 1764 in Guilford County, NC and resided there until around 1810. An Oath witnessed by John Armfield and Elizabeth in May 1807 (Abstracts of Deeds, Guilford County, NC, Book 9, entry #4494); On 14 Sept 1807 John Armfield and Elizabeth sold 80 poles for \$250 on the waters of South Buffelow Creek border which began at a post Oak in McGibbony's line joining Wm Armfield and Jacob Armfield. The deed was signed by John Armfield and Elizabeth Armfield and witnessed by Isaac and Joseph Armfield. By 1816, John was recorded in the tax list of Sumner County, TN and had 179 acres on West Middle Fork Red River. In the 1817 tax list John owned 270 acres of land. John died 13 May 1833 in Sumner County and it is believed his wife predeceased him as she was not named in the estate papers. Joseph Ing and George Zaricor were named administrators of his estate.

In 1837 John's son Robert was residing in Tennessee at the time of his marriage to Betsey. We have not found this couple in any other TN records after 1837. Based on records we have found, we believe the couple left the state shortly after their marriage and went to New Orleans, LA and were the couple who appeared in the 1840 census. 1840 New Orleans Ward 2, Orleans Parish, LA census Robt. Armfield was listed along with one female in the household both between the ages of 20 to 30 years. This would put their date of birth between 1810-1820. In the 1842 New Orleans City Directory an entry was recorded for Robert Armfield in the Orleans Parish who was a police officer in the 2nd Municipality, 19 Canal Row to Magazine Street (French Quarter). On 24 April 1848 Elizabeth and Robert Armfield divorced.

Elizabeth Armfield was listed in the 1850 New Orleans Municipality 2, 2nd Ward, Orleans, born in TN abt 1815, living with Henry Thompson age 16, born about 1834 in TN. The value

of Elizabeth's property was recorded as \$2500. In the 1851 City Directory Elizabeth was living at the corner of Dryades and Derbigny Streets in Orleans Parish. She died 8 Feb 1859 in New Orleans and was buried at the Lafayette Cemetery, center section, with the inscription "Heaven is her Reward" written on the headstone. Pictures of her grave site can be found at findagrave.com memorial #11713273. The 1850 Representative District 3, Orleans, LA census lists a Robt. Armfield born abt 1822 in NC, age 28, occupation auctioneer. He was living with Elizabeth Martin, age 50, and her children Clara age 26 and Belle age 19, all born in Ohio.

In the 1851 City Directory Robert Armfield, auctioneer was living at 52 New Levee which was changed to South Peters in 1855. We believe sometime between 1850 and 1853 Clara Martin had married an unknown Lyons. On 2 Mar 1853 Clara E. Lyons married Robert Armfield, (Picayune, 4 Mar 1853, p 2, col 5). The couple can be found in the 1860 New Orleans Ward 3, Orleans census records; 29 Jun 1860, family # 2524 Rob. Armfield born about 1814 in NC, age of 46 and Clara Armfield born about 1828 in OH, age of 32. Rob was an auctioneer and his real estate recorded as \$5000 and personal estate of \$500.

Robert Armfield appears in other 1860's census records. 19 Jul 1860 New Orleans Ward 3, Orleans, LA record, Robt. Armfield was listed with several others, age 50 born abt 1810 in NY, auctioneer, (could NY have been a recording error by the census taker?). In the 1860 US Federal Census, Slave Schedules, Robert Armfield appeared as the owner of one 25 year old male slave. In the 1860 LA census, Orleans Parish are two records for Robert Armfield; Robert Armfield and Robert Arnefield, both in the 3rd Ward (this may have been a double counting). In the 1865 US IRS Tax Assessment List, Robert Armfield of 422 Lafayette Street was recorded in Division # 7, Collection District 1, State of Louisiana.

Two death records for Robert have been found. One reported that Robert died 9th July 1866 aged fifty years (born abt 1816), at No. 422 Henri Street at half past two o'clock P.M. in this city. Reported on 10 July 1866 by Mr. Henry A. Angleberger a native of Maryland. (New Orleans, LA Death Records Index, 1804 - 1949, V 34, p. 126). The other record reported Robert, age about 53 years (born abt 1813), died 9th July 1866 at half past two o'clock P.M. at the dependants (?) aforesaid residence. Deceased was the lawful husband of said dependant. Reported by Mrs. Robert Armfield (borne ?) Smith a native of Ohio residing at no. 422 Lafayette Street in this City. Reported on 12 March 1867. (New Orleans, LA Death Records Index, 1804 - 1949, V 40, p. 12). The obituary of Robert Armfield appeared in The Daily Picayune newspaper on 11 Jul 1866, p. 4, col. 3; "Died - On Monday, July 9, 1866, at 3 o'clock P.M., at his residence, No. 422 Lafayette street, after a short illness, ROBERT ARMFIELD, aged 53 years, a native of North Carolina, and for the last 30 years a resident of the city of New Orleans, La."

Irene Wainwright, Archivist at the New Orleans Public Library responded to our query about the discrepancy in place of death for Robert; Henri vs Lafayette Street. She wrote that Henie / Henri street could have been Hevia Street. This is part of the "L" Streets, a list of street name changes that occurred in the city prior to the 1930's, when this list was compiled. Hevia Street was changed to Lafayette Street in 1852. She said it seems a bit unlikely that someone used the old name as late as 1866, but it is a possible explanation. (Alphabetical Index of Changes in Street Names, Old and New Period 1852 to Current Date, Dec. 1st 1938.)

Clara Armfield died 22 Jul 1870 at the age of 42 in New Orleans, Daily Picayune, 24 Jul 1870, p 4, c 3; "ARMFIELD - Suddenly, of heart disease, on Friday, July 22, at 6:15 P.M., Mrs. CLARA E ARMFIELD, born in Ohio, aged 42 years the wife of the late Robert Armfield. Nebraska papers please copy.". Clara's mother was a widow from her first marriage to a Smith and her second marriage was to a Z. Martin. At the time of Clara's death, her mother was living in the state of Nebraska. Clara's estate was divided three ways. She had a sister Belle Gertrude who married Andrew McCormick, both of them mentioned in her will. In the will Robert was referred to as Robert G. The TN marriage record for Robert and Betsey (Elizabeth) referred to Robert as R. G. Armfield. It would appear these are the same man.

Elizabeth Armfield's Will and Estate Records

The following is from research and transcription of the court documents done by Joyce Agerton. The court records, page one read; "PLEASE NOTE: RECORD NUMBER 15085, 2nd Dist COURT WAS TRANSFERRED TO NUMBER 38383, CIVIL DISTRICT COURT. Apparently it was the practice of the Civil District Court staff to renumber records of suits that had originally been filed in an earlier court. This was usually done to accommodate the record in a case that was still pending in 1880 when the Civil District Court was created, but there is also evidence that it was also done for the convenience of the Civil District Court staff.". The settlement papers are long and quite redundant. The copies were marked "Soiled Document". The age and condition of the documents make several parts of it illegible so a full and accurate transcription is impossible. Words which are indecipherable are marked as [?] in the transcription below.

Elizabeth divorced Robert. According to these New Orleans records, her maiden name was given as McDonald, not McDaniel. As these names (McDonald and McDaniel) are close enough, they may have been the same person. The surname of McDonald was repeated a number of times in the document. Elizabeth had no children and she wrote two wills that were found in the bank. She left a sister Mary who married A. E. Gillett. Elizabeth's estate amounted to \$5,295.63, a tidy sum in those days.

Following the death of Elizabeth in 1859, her brother-in-law, Asa E. Gillett applied for letters of administration which were granted by the court. "*Mrs. Elizabeth Armfield, born McDonald former wife of Robert Armfield, long since divorced from him, departed this life leaving considerable property, but no descendants nor ascendants, and only, Collateral heirs, one of whom a sister Mary, wife of your petitioner.*" A will was not found in the home of Elizabeth so the court ordered the Cashier of the New Orleans Savings Bank to present in court the bank box of the deceased. The contents revealed two wills, one dated 29 July 1851 and the second 01 April 1856, both being olographic¹ wills. Both wills were placed into probate. The Court ordered an inventory which was made 01 March 1859. The inventory recorded money, coins, notes, etc. that she had at various institutions. It referred to her last residence as being at the corner of Euterpe and Dryades Streets. The total appraised value of her household effects were forty eight dollars and eighty five cents. Below is a partial description of what appeared in the estate inventory.

¹Olographic wills: The Louisiana term for what other states call a holographic will. This is a will that is entirely handwritten, signed, and dated by the person making it.

Rights & Credits

A Certificate in the Louisiana Mutual Insurance Company in favor of the said Mistress Elizabeth McDonald the Second for the sum of ten dollars & valued at the Sum & price of Seven dollars & fifty cents \$7.50

Total appraisers value of the Rights & credits - \$7.50

Slave

A slave for life named Sarah, Negro, aged about forty five years, Sickly, Valued at the Same Price of Three Hundred fifty dollars \$350.00

Said slave was acquired by the deceased from John N.[?] White by deed under Private [?] Signature, dated 26th March 1854 Appraised value of the slave, Three Hundred & fifty dollars \$350.00

Real Estate

A certain lot of Ground Situate, lying, & being in this City, designated by the N. L [?] seven [?] in square [?] N E [?] Seven in square [?] N E [?] one hundred, bounded by Dryades, Hercules, Euterpe & Felicity streets, according to a plan Made by Jno[?] Pile[?] Surveyor, dated twentieth of July 1840 & deposited in the office of R. Magureau[?], Notary Public

Said lot forms a corner of Dryades & Euterpe streets & measured thirty two feet front on the former [?] street by a depth between parallel lines of One hundred & Twenty seven feet, ten inches & five [?] fronting on the latter Street, together with the frame buildings thereon & all the improvements, rights [?] valued by said appraiser at the sum and price of Five thousand dollars \$5,000.00

Said property was acquired by the deceased in Settlement of Community rights only [?] and passed before S.[?] H. Lewis, formerly notary in this City on the Twenty fourth day of April 1848.

Recapitulation

To appraised value of the ready Money on deposit at the New Orleans Savings Institution & in the box placed there for safe Custody Eight Hundred & seventy Eight dollars & Seventy Eight Cents \$878.78

To Appraisers value of the Dwelling & Silver, Ten And Carried over \$878.78

Amt. Ten dollars & fifty \$10.50

To appraised value of the household effects, forty Eight dollars & Eighty five Cents \$48.85

To Appraised value of the Rights & Credits Seven Dollars & Fifty Cents \$7.50

To Appraised value of slave property, Three Hundred & fifty dollars \$350.00

To Appraised value of the Real Estate Five thousand dollars \$5,000

Total appraised value of the property & effects of the of the Said late Elizabeth Armfield, amounting to the total Sum of five thousand, Two hundred and ninety five dollars & sixty three cents \$5,295.63

And there being nothing [?] inventory belonging to said Estate & Succession, I do here clear this inventory - Whereupon the said Asa E. Gillett, the applicant for letter of dative² Testamentary executorship being by my notary, duly Sworn, [?] & said the he knows of no property belonging to the deceased to be therein included. In faith where of the said Asa E. Gillett said appraiser & Witnesses hereunto subscribe their Names together with our, Notary [?] on the day, Month & year herein first above Written

Signed A. E. Gillett, Edmond P [?] Wills - A. Moral John A. Augustin -Hardin [?] P. Horten [?] Robert J. Ker [?] [?] Reby [?]

A True Copy

New Orleans March
3d A.D. 1859
Robert J. Ker [?]
Not [?] Pub [?]

Second District Court of New Orleans Succession (of) (No. 15085 Mrs. Elizabeth Armfield)

J. L. Kelly being duly sworn says the that the application of Asa Gillett praying for Letters of dative Testamentary [?] Executorship of this Estate has been published in the new Orleans daily & Crescent [?] on the 28th Feb. & 9th [?] March 1859 in the French and English languages.

J. L. Kelly
Dept Clk

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the 10th day of March 1859
E. Michel [?]
Clk

To the Honorable Judge of the Second District Court of New Orleans. The Petition of Robert Armfield who resides in New Orleans humbly showeth that Asa E. Gillett Dative Testamentary Executor of Elizabeth Armfield is proceeding to liquidating the affairs of her Succession under a will dated 29th July 1858 as if the last will & Testament of said Elizabeth Dated April 1st 1856 was null & void & revoked by the will

² Dative: A word derived from Roman law, signifying "appointed by public authority." Thus, in Scotland an executor- dative is an executor appointed by a court; corresponding or equivalent to an English administrator or administrator with the will annexed. *Blacks Law Dictionary*

dated in 1857[?] although said Gillett has caused to be probated both of said wills in this Honorable Court. Now your Petitioner shows that the testor by said will dated in 1856 be-queathed to Petitioner who was her husband five hundred Dollars & that said will is legal valid & [?] & that Petitioner is entitled to said Sum of five hundred Dollars. Petitioner further shows that the two wills are not inconsistent or irreconcilable so far as he is concerned & that receiving the \$500 under the will of 1856 he may yet come to want as his expressed in the will of 1856, which the said Gillett alleges was actually made in 1858. Petitioner ansr that under the will of 1856 and also under [?] it and the will of 1857 both taken together he is still entitled to Said Sum of \$500. Wherefore Petitioner Prays that said Asa. E. Gillett, D. F. Executor cited and that after due proceedings had Petitioner have judgment in his favor for said sum of \$500 Five, Hundred Dollars, with costs and for general relief. M. M. Cohen of Council for Pet[itioner]

Now comes A. E. Gillett Dative Testamentary Executor of the [?] succession And for answers to the app [?] herein [?] filed by Robert Armfield, Says that he denies the allegation claiming[?] a legacy of Five Hundred dollars on grounds that the will leaving an [?] date of 1851 was in reality [?] in 1857 and is the will under which a deposition of descendants Property[?] should be resolved and essentially[?] revokes the first will made in 1856 & with it the legacy of five hundred dollars therein made & Said Robert Armfield [?] just [?] answering he [?] denies that said Robert Armfield is in want as he has set forth in his petition & denies generally all the allegations in said petition except such[?] as had[?] heretofore him up [?] [?] admitted [?] and prays that the [?] be dismissed with costs.

Whitaker & Fellows Attys.

[Note: this record does not reflect the outcome of the suit Robert Armfield filed against the Estate of Elizabeth Armfield and her two hand written wills.]

Family Lines & Queries

Gerald and Sue Tucker would like more information on their Williams - Armfield families. They are researching the lines of Sanford P. Williams Sr., s/o Bert Williams, s/o Franklin P. Williams. Franklin's wife was Florence Armfield d/o Isaac Armfield (1814 - 1886) and his second wife Elizabeth Hannah Piatt (1828-1914). biscuit518@yahoo.com

An obituary for Florence "Flora" Armfield appeared in the Montfort Monitor, Thursday, January 15, 1914. "Florence Armfield was born on a farm east of Montfort, in the township of Eden, May 11, 1870, and was the daughter of Isaac and Hannah Armfield. Her father died in July, 1886.

She was married to F. Pierce Williams, June 29, 1887 at Janesville, Wisconsin where she made her home to 1900. To this union were born three children, Mrs. Bessie Strickland,

Waukegan, Ill., Bert and Fred Pierce Williams of Minneapolis. She is also survived by her husband, and aged mother, two brothers, O. P. B. Armfield of Portland, Ore. and Tillman of Davenport, Iowa and one sister, Ella Flint of Lincoln Neb.

Deceased was taken sick seven weeks ago with pleurisy which developed into Dropsy, and she died on Sunday, Jan. 4, 1914 at her home in Minneapolis. All the children were at her bedside at the time of her death. She celebrated her silver wedding anniversary on Jun 29th, 1912.

The remains were brought here for interment arriving Wednesday and services were held in the M. E. Church at 1 o'clock. Rev George Merrifield officiating. Numerous old friends of the family attending. Interment in the Montfort Cemetery.

Tillman Armfield of Davenport, Iowa and his daughter of Janesville attended the funeral and the husband and mother accompanied her remains to Wisconsin.

A thank-you was sent from Minneapolis dated 10 Jan 1914 and signed by Hannah Armfield, F. Pierce Williams and Tillman Armfield.

**Gone But Not Forgotten:
Audrey Seltz Armfield
1921 - 2011**

Audrey Seltz Armfield, 90, of 904 Avondale Ave., Asheboro, died Sunday, November 6, 2011 at Woodland Hills Care & Rehabilitation in Asheboro.

Graveside Services, 3:00 PM, Thursday, November 10, 2011, Sharon Cemetery, Mt Gilead.

She was a native of Montgomery county, a homemaker and a member of the First United Methodist Church in Mt Gilead. She was also a member of the Asheboro Women's Club and a avid bridge player. She was preceded in death by her husband, Henry M. Armfield.



Survivors: son, Henry M. Armfield, Jr., and wife, Rebecca, of Jamestown, grandchildren, Katie Armfield Klobberdanz, of Dallas, TX, Lance Corporal Benjamin W. Ware, of Camp Lejeune.

Submitted by Henry M. Armfield, Jr. He wrote that the picture was probably taken when his mother was in her mid to late 30's. He wrote; "We liked it and she was always pretty and never looked her age."

Please check out our new and improved website! www.armfieldnewsletter.com

Copyright © 2011 Armfield Newsletter, Joyce Agerton (gigi@seark.net) and Connie Stenhjem. All rights reserved. We respectfully request that the authors be cited if any portion of this newsletter is reproduced in whole or in part in any form or medium for any purpose beyond your personal use. You may unsubscribe by contacting Connie Stenhjem at cstenhjem@gmail.com