

Rush County Genealogical Society

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Rush County Families

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This couple is labeled "E. Ramsey & Wife" on the Old Settlers collage of 1877 at the Historical Society and, despite being blessed with the unique and memorable name of Eugenius, his life is all but lost to history.

Eugenius is briefly mentioned in the Centennial History of Rush

County as the father-in-law of the prominent farmer Dora Hilligoss, who had married Emma Ramsey, Eugenius's youngest daughter with his wife Ann M. Tyler. And a search of the website Find-A-Grave shows Eugenius and Ann Tyler Ramsey were interred at Pleasant Run Cemetery in New Salem. Hours of additional searching revealed scant additional information about his life beyond his birth in Virginia between the years 1816 and 1820, while his tombstone states his birth year as 1837.

What did come to light, however, was his first marriage to Lucinda Farler/Farley in July of 1846 and the birth of their four children: Mary, Martha, George and William Thomas. Eugenius was a farmer in the northeast part of Anderson Township in Rush County. Having settled in the county by the time he was in his early 20s, Eugenius spent the rest of his life working the land to support his family. His marriage to Ann Marie Tyler, a daughter of John Tyler and Priscilla Springer, occurred in January of 1863 but it is not known when Lucinda died or where she may have been buried.

Despite having lived a quiet, unobtrusive life, one event undoubtedly brought him to the forefront of the county's consciousness. On January 14, 1879, Eugenius and Ann were traveling along the gravel toll road from Rushville to Milroy in their one-horse buggy. For weeks prior, snow and ice and drifts along the road had accumulated to create hazardous traveling conditions. In an attempt to circumnavigate a particularly large drift of snow and ice, the Ramseys' buggy overturned, throwing the Ramseys from the buggy. Ann suffered a broken collarbone and was badly bruised as a result of the accident. The Ramseys subsequently brought suit against the Rushville and Milroy Gravel Road Company for its negligence in maintaining the toll road. The verdict for the Rushville and Milroy Gravel Road Company was appealed by the Ramseys but it was upheld by the Indiana Supreme Court at its 1882 May Term.

Eugenius lived another nine years before his death in 1893. His body was interred at Pleasant Run Cemetery in New Salem where Ann would also be laid to rest beside him in 1912.



Buildings and Businesses

On the last Sunday of August, people gather every year from all parts of Indiana, and beyond, at a little church in a grove of trees in Rush County's Ripley Township. Properly called Mt. Pleasant Beech Church, it is familiarly known as "The Beech Church."

The Beech was a settlement, a neighborhood, of free African Americans and mixed race people, most of whom came to Indiana from North Carolina and Virginia beginning in the 1820's. Like other settlements of free African Americans in Ohio and Indiana, the Beech settlers located their community near a Quaker village, in this case Carthage. The people who now gather every year in August at The Beech are descendants of the first Beech settlers.

The founders of The Beech Church organized their congregation in 1832, and decided to affiliate with the African Methodist Episcopal denomination. By 1838, the first building to house the congregation, a simple log cabin, was erected. It fulfilled their needs until a simple frame structure was erected in 1865. During the 1860s and into the 1870s, the congregation was led by the Rev. Nathan Mitcham and later by Rev. Morris Lewis; it was a period of time when the Church was strong and prosperous.

Within a decade of organizing their Church, members of The Beech invested in their children's futures and organized a library which was housed in the Church. There are 60 names on the list of charter members in the Library's minutes, six of whom were white residents of Carthage. Many lived on farms within a mile or two of the meeting house while others lived in Carthage and the surrounding area. Among the families who were active in both the Church and in organizing a library were the Roberts,

Jeffries, Watkins, Winborn, and Brooks families.

In his book *Southern Seed, Northern Soil*, Steven Vincent points out that most adult Beech residents of the first generation were largely illiterate. The 1850 census bears that out, with some exceptions. However, nearly every one of those families sent all of their children to school. The children who grew up in the Beech neighborhood were more likely to be educated than their parents and grandparents. And it is also notable that many of the descendants of these families have been prominent in the fields of education, the A.M.E. Church, politics, and medicine.

The Beech Settlement was a remarkable neighborhood. By the close of the 19th century, however, the settlement had largely vanished. The building that stands in the grove today is a visible reminder of The Beech community. It is a church, a library and a symbol of a community of people determined to raise their families in a stable and safe environment free of racial discrimination. A community that sought to provide education for themselves and their children.

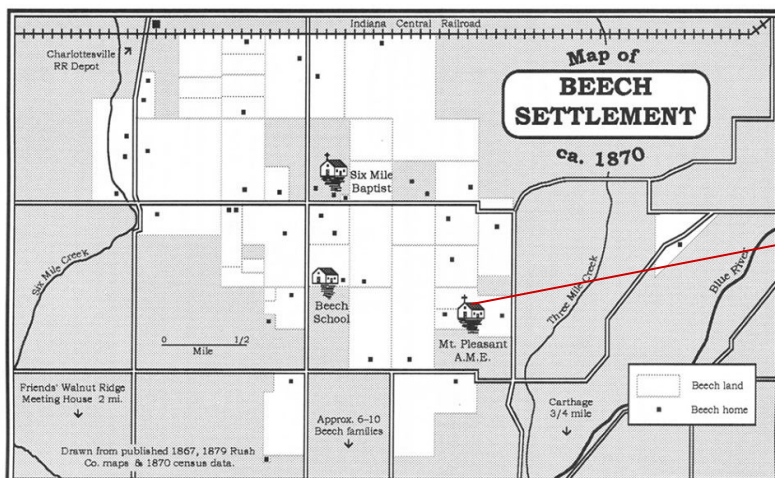
While the Beech has stood for decades in quiet testimony to strength and perseverance, the elements have slowly been having an affect on the structure. Today, its trustees are pursuing available avenues to fund repairs necessary for it to continue to stand. With the assistance of Indiana's Historical Landmarks, the Rush County Historical Society, the Rush County Heritage Society and other concerned individuals, the Beech will continue to be an historic symbol on Rush County soil.

Excerpts from:

<https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/403/beecehnewsnotes.pdf?sequence=1>

The Rush County Sesquicentennial, The Beech Church by Lawrence B. Carter, page 17

Map of Beech Settlement from: RCGS Facebook post of G. Edward Knight



From Our Officers

We have all moaned at the amusing quips made about the information you most seek being in the hands of a relative who does not care about genealogy or, worse still, being hauled to the landfill after the family researcher's death. Our research is more than a fun hobby, it is something we care very deeply about: it's our family's history. So it's important to mention that you can control what happens to your research. Two avenues are available and can even be combined. One avenue is to utilize a "Last Will and Testament of Genealogy," so to speak. Sounds silly, maybe; but the document is clear and the information you provide informs others of what your wishes are about what you would like to see happen to your research. Some sample forms are available on-line by others who have websites or blogs concerning genealogical topics.

Another avenue is to bequeath your material to a member of your family yourself, before your demise. When you see that a certain member of your family has an interest in the family history, what better time to nurture and encourage

the next generation's interest in genealogy. Passing along your material while sharing family history and your hobby is a unique opportunity worth considering.

As you can see, each avenue does not have to be mutually exclusive of the other. Particularly if you have certain items that you want specific people to have, it's best to make your wishes known to whomever you leave in charge of your affairs.

And while you are making all these decisions, do not forget that much of genealogy today is done on-line. You may have created accounts on multiple websites where you have stored a surplus of information about your research or posted family pictures. It cannot be stressed enough the importance of writing down each website you have an account with and what your user name and password is for each of them. This may be the most valuable piece of paper you leave behind!

Meeting Notes

RCGS has become aware that The Beech Church is structurally in peril. As our article on Page 2 states, it is encouraging to know that positive steps are being taken to address the issues. While RCGS is only purposefully keeping an ear to the situation at this time, it gives us an opportunity to ask our membership for some feedback. Would you like to see RCGS become involved in preserving The Beech Church? Please write to us and let us know what you think.

RCGS recently received a request from one of our out-of-town members asking if there was a way to list members and the surnames they are researching as a way to assist researchers, particularly those living a distance away. It was noted that often researchers of the same name/family don't realize there are others on the same quest who may be able to share information and resources. We would like to remind our members that our webpage does have a list of researchers and the surnames they are researching. From the home page of our website (www.rushcogs.com), the **Projects** tab has a link to a **Surname Project** page. The Surname Project page is a register of all the people who would welcome inquiries from others researching the same surname. We encourage all members to visit this page to see if you are listed and to make sure your email information is current! Please let us know if there are any changes or corrections that need to be made.

We wish to thank our May meeting's guest speaker Donald Craige, Jr., along with his wife Suzanne, for traveling from Indianapolis to make a presentation on his research of the Craige family of Rush County. Donald certainly revealed that his interest in his family history runs deep and his solid research will ensure that the Craige family is not forgotten. Thank you Donald and Suzanne for sharing your work and enthusiasm for family genealogy!

From The Daily Republican, June 12, 1915:

FLAG DAY WILL BE OBSERVED

D.A.R. Will Carry Out Program in City Park Next Thursday and Prize Essay Will be Read.

PRIZES TO AMOUNT TO \$26.00

Monday, June 14, is 138th Anniversary of Adoption of Stars and Stripes as U.S. Flag

The D.A.R. will observe Flag Day next Thursday in the city park. At this time the prize essays on historical subjects will be read and the prizes announced. The D.A.R. offered \$26 in prizes among the students of the high school and the grades for essays on history subjects assigned by the teachers. These essays are now in the hands of the judges and the winner will be announced some time the first of next week. The prize essays will be read at the celebration in the coliseum.

The members of the D.A.R. are preparing for a big time. In addition to the Flag Day exercises a basket supper will be served in the evening. The public is invited to the exercises and all are urged to participate in the supper on the lawn of the park.

Monday will be the hundred and thirty-eighth anniversary of the adoption of the stars and stripes as the flag of the United States. For eighteen years the American flag Association, a national organization, has been urging the universal recognition of the Flag Day, and each succeeding year the observance has become more widespread.

On the 14th of June, 1777 Congress enacted: "That the Flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." The number of the stripes have been increased by the admission of new States, the possibilities of the nation's future development dawned upon our fathers, the original thirteen stripes were unchangeably restored by act of Congress on April 4, 1818, when it was enacted: "That from and after the fourth day of July next, the Flag of the United States be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be twenty stars, white in a blue field, and that on the admission of a new State into the Union one star be added to the Union of the Flag, and such addition take effect on the fourth day of July next, succeeding such admission."

Since the struggle of 1862-1865, the Flag has become the symbol of a mighty nation. It has been carried to the utmost parts of the earth, carrying liberty wherever it has been thrown to the breeze.

What follows, from the website Civil War Trust (<http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/appomattox-courthouse/appomattox-court-house-history/surrender.html>), speaks simply and directly of the events which unfolded one hundred and fifty years ago:

“The correspondence below follows the letters of Grant and Lee as they seek to find an honorable and acceptable end to this bloody war

APRIL 7, 1865

General R. E. LEE:

The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the C. S. Army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

U.S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
APRIL 7, 1865

Lieut. Gen. U.S. GRANT:

I have received your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express on the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender.

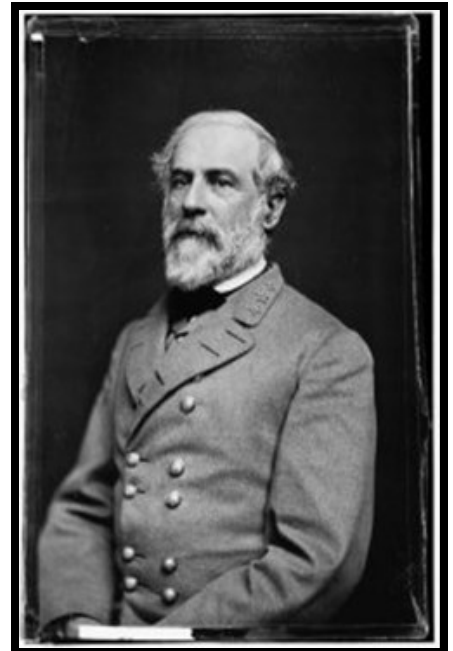
R. E. LEE,
General.

APRIL 8, 1865

General R. E. LEE:

Your note of last evening, in reply to mine of same date, asking the condition on which I will accept the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, is just received. In reply I would say that, peace being my great desire, there is but one condition I would insist upon, namely, that the men and officers surrendered shall be disqualified for taking up arms again against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged. I will meet you, or will designate officers to meet any officers you may name for the same purpose, at any point agreeable to you, for the purpose of arranging definitely the terms upon which the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia will be received.

U.S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.



Robert E. Lee
(Library of Congress)

150 Years Ago

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
APRIL 8, 1865

Lieut. Gen. U.S. GRANT:

I received at a late hour your note of to-day. In mine of yesterday I did not intend to propose the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, but to ask the terms of your proposition. To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army, but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I cannot, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia, but as far as your proposal may affect the C. S. forces under my command, and tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at 10 a.m., to-morrow; on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket-lines of the two armies.

R. E. LEE,
General.

APRIL 9, 1865

General R. E. LEE:

Your note of yesterday is received. I have no authority to treat on the subject of peace; the meeting proposed for 10 a.m. to-day could lead to no good. I will state, however, general, that I am equally anxious for peace with yourself, and the whole North entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms they will hasten that most desirable event, save thousands of human lives, and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be set-tied without the loss of another life, I subscribe myself, &c.,

U.S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
APRIL 9, 1865

Lieut. Gen. U.S. GRANT:

I received your note of this morning on the picket-line, whither I had come to meet you and ascertain definitely what terms were embraced in your proposal of yesterday with reference to the surrender of this army. I now ask an interview in accordance with the offer contained in your letter of yesterday for that purpose.

R. E. LEE,
General.



*Ulysses S. Grant,
as photographed by
Mathew B. Brady (National Archives)*

APPOMATTOX COURT-HOUSE, VA.
April 9, 1865

General R. E. LEE:

In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th instant, I propose to receive the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia on the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate, one copy to be given to an officer to be designated by me, the other to be retained by such officer or officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged; and each company or regimental commander sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery, and public property to be parked and stacked, and turned over to the officers appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side-arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to his home, not to be disturbed by U. S. authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside.

U.S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
April 9, 1865

Lieut. Gen. U. S. GRANT:

I have received your letter of this date containing the terms of surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia as proposed by you. As they are substantially the same as those expressed in your letter of the 8th instant, they are accepted. I will proceed to designate the proper officers to carry the stipulations into effect.

R. E. LEE,
General.

Note: Many point to Robert E. Lee's surrender on April 9, 1865 as the end of the American Civil War. This claim ignores the fact that other Confederate armies were still in the field and fighting after Lee's surrender. On April 26, 1865, Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston would surrender his forces to William T. Sherman in North Carolina. General Richard Taylor's forces in Alabama surrendered on May 4th. On June 2, 1865 General Edmund Kirby Smith surrendered the Confederate Department of the Trans-Mississippi. And on June 23, 1865, General Stand Watie surrendered his Cherokee forces to the Union army in Oklahoma.

Source: Official Records of the War of the Rebellion

To Whom It May Concern!

I went searching for an ancestor, I cannot find him still.
He moved around from place to place, and didn't leave a will.
He married where a courthouse burned, he mended all his fences.
He avoided any man who came to take the U. S. Census.

He always kept his luggage packed, this man who had no fame.
And every 20 years or so, this rascal changed his name.
His parents came from Europe, they should be on some list.
Of passengers to the USA, but somehow they got missed.

And no one else in this world is searching for this man.
So I'm playing 'Gene-Solitaire,' to find him if I can.
I'm told he's buried in a plot, with tombstone he was blessed.
But the weather took the engraving, and vandals took the rest.

He died before the county clerks decided to keep records.
No family Bible has emerged, in spite of all my efforts.
To top it off, this ancestor, who's caused me so many groans.
Just to give me one more pain, betrothed a girl named JONES.

By Merrell Kenworthy

www.ancestryprinting.com

In considering what tip to provide with this issue, it was felt that it never hurts to re-visit some hints beginning family researchers are given. One author is consistently quoted by many genealogical websites: Emily Anne Croom. Croom has authored three books for beginning researchers that provide research methods, insights and tools to become a successful researcher. One method is often set aside in our quest to trace our direct line of ancestors back in time: cluster research.

Cluster research is recognizing that our ancestors lived in a neighborhood, whether it is a farming community spread many acres across or a bustling, city apartment building. They had schoolmates, cousins, business partners and in-laws, much like we do now. What do you know about these people? If you are up against a "brick wall" with your research, study your ancestor's family, neighbors and associates in the same way you research your immediate line. Their documentation may reveal a clue to break down your brick wall.

The two examples that Croom gives to illustrate the benefits of cluster research, which is sometimes referred to as collateral line research, resulted in her finding the maiden name of a female ancestor. In the first example, Croom's goal was to find the maiden name of her ancestor's wife. By mapping the landowners around her ancestor and researching their lives, Croom learned that the wife's family owned land in close proximity to her ancestor's farm. The second example given illustrated why the siblings that never married shouldn't be overlooked. Croom's cluster research revealed that a bachelor brother's probate records contained his Last Will and Testament in which he named his mother, along with his married sisters, to whom he left his property.

When all the siblings of your direct ancestor are studied, the vital records can be compared and may reveal very useful information. As we know, vital records are prepared based on an informant's knowledge of the event. What one informant may have not known, another may have: a place of birth or mother's maiden name, for example.

As an added benefit, when collateral line research is conducted, you have the potential to identify a list of present-day cousins. Their ancestor was a part of your ancestor's life; sharing, combining and collaborating can only lead to a more vivid picture of your ancestor's life. By reaching out to those cousins, you may find they have information or documents that your branch of the family was unaware of, the piece that breaks through your brick wall.

**RUSH COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

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Our Mission:

*To bring together those interested in the
history and genealogy
of Rush County*



The Answer to the March Reader's Challenge:

The Historical Society was so pleased to hear that Kevin Harr was able to identify the J. P. Guffin building on the north-west corner of Morgan and Second Streets. Kevin shared an old postcard (above left) which shows the building had gone through a remodel before the picture on the right was taken.

Thank you, Kevin, for solving a mystery!



June Reader's Challenge:

The Historical Society is simply delighted that we have such knowledgeable members and is asking for your continued help to identifying yet another photograph. The school at the right is not the old Graham High School; can you identify which school it was?