

Fuller Times

Volume 3, Issue 1 - April 2020

Fuller cousins - We hope this latest edition of our Fuller Times newsletter finds each of you doing well! Our world as we knew it has definitely changed over the past several weeks due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Hopefully, this will be over soon, and we can return to our normal lives again. - Last June, Fuller cousins from all across the United States arrived in Batesville, Arkansas for our third Thomas Edward Fuller family reunion! They gathered to celebrate the rich heritage of our Fuller ancestors, and also to just reunite with one another over some great potluck dishes! Those in attendance would all agree that the event was a huge success! Incidentally, its not too early for you to begin making plans to attend next year's reunion, to be held June 18-19, 2021.

In this issue, we will take you down "memory lane", and revisit last summer's reunion, with photos and comments from many of your cousins who were in attendance. We are also happy to announce that we currently have almost \$1600 in our reunion bank account, managed by Linda Fuller Brooks! You will also want to read the story about the missing Fuller family Bible, and how it mysteriously reappeared after being lost for over 40 years. All of this, and a lot more is in your new Fuller Times!

FULLER FAMILY DEATHS SINCE OUR REUNION

Glenda Kay Gottfried Short - July 25, 2019

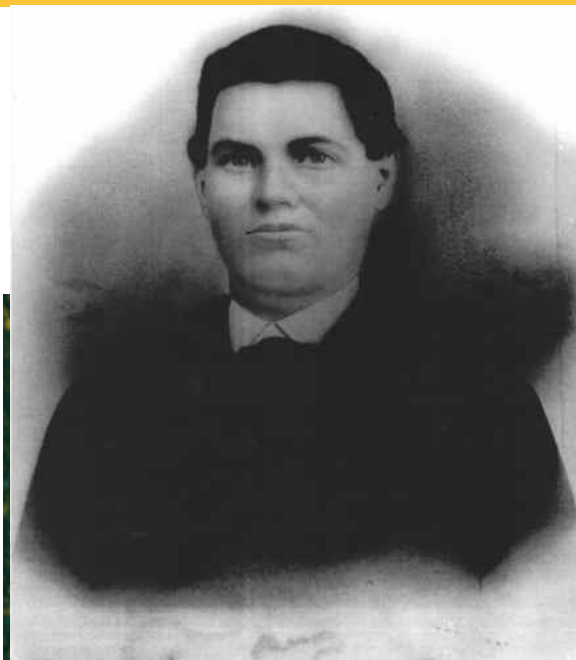
Jason Greenlee - August 25, 2019

Jack Greenlee - November 25, 2019

Dale Davidson - December 9, 2019

Sally Ann Freeman Shepard - December 27, 2019

Kenneth Darrell Freeman - February 22, 2020



We want to remind you, our readers, if you would like a past issue of our newsletter, do not hesitate to call, email, or text and we will get you one on the way!

Tdd0130@gmail.com or 479-459-8697

If you would like a Fuller Cookbook,

Send \$20 to: Fuller Cookbook

P.O. Box 132

Thida, AR 72165



The Lost Bible of Thomas Edward Fuller

When researching family history, nothing can be more frustrating than discovering that an ancestor you were searching for mysteriously "chose" to not be counted on a particular census year, or learning that the county courthouse where your great-grandparents' marriage records were recorded had burned and that those records were forever lost, or being given a box of old photographs only to discover that someone had forgotten to write the names on the back of the photos of the people pictured, or hearing the old family Bible can't be found. That was the case of the Thomas Edward Fuller family Bible, which had been missing for over 40 years. And although the actual Bible has not been found, this is the story of how the important pages of that Bible with their handwritten names and dates finally reappeared, and the role our Fuller reunion played in those pages finally being returned to our family.

Many of you who have attended our reunions know Bob Fuller of Maine. For years, Bob and Loyd "T.J." Fuller of Arkansas had been on the trail of the missing Fuller family Bible. After T.J.'s death in 1992, T.J.'s son, Mark Fuller joined the hunt. The Bible had originally belonged to Thomas and Amanda Fuller back in the 1800's. Apparently, Thomas had given his wife Amanda the Bible on the occasion of Thomas' own birthday! The Bible eventually wound up in Texas with the family of Fred Fuller, oldest child of Thomas and Amanda. And although we can't be sure, Fred Fuller probably received the Bible sometime after the death of his mother Amanda on December 31, 1887 or 1888. Thomas Edward didn't die until 1900, but it is believed that the Bible was already in Fred's hands by then.

Prior to our 2015 reunion, our cousin Celia Hampton was given a collection of old photos and letters by Sherrie Tucker. In this collection was a December 7, 1923 letter written by Thomas Fuller's son Fred Fuller to Fred's sister Celia Fuller Beck. Fred had copied the names, birth and death information from the old Bible. Fred wrote, "Now here is the births and deaths just as they are in the Bible in Father's and Mother's handwriting." And later he added, "Now this is as it is in the old Bible. I have the Bible and it has been in our hands 46 years this month." We can't be positive, but it seems likely that Fred's math may have been off by 10 years, and he should have written "36 years", instead of 46 years.

After Fred's death in 1933, the Bible remained with Fred's widow Mary Grey Fuller, until she handed it down to Fred's oldest surviving son Charley Taft Fuller, sometime before Mary's death in 1952. Charley died in 1956 in Amarillo, Texas, and this is when the story becomes a little murky. For a while, the Bible remained in Amarillo, but later was taken by family members to Arizona. Several years later, the Bible had disappeared. After years of searching, it became apparent that no one knew what had become of the old Bible. That is, until a series of incredible events took place last summer, beginning a few weeks before the reunion.



Fred and Mary Grey Fuller



Geneva and Charley Taft Fuller, and their children Fran, Harold, and Gerri

A few months before the reunion, I got in touch with Melody Freeman Parr from Oregon. I gave her a brief explanation concerning our Facebook reunion page, and invited Melody and her family to the reunion. Shortly after that, Melody shared with me that she was going to be in Independence County the week of the reunion to visit the grave of her father, Larry Vernon Freeman, who had died thirty years earlier. She expressed regret that she would not have time to come to the reunion, but that she had hoped to be able to attend a reunion in the future. Then, the morning of the reunion, Melody, along with her husband and children walked in and shared that they were on their way to Little Rock to catch their flight back to Oregon, but that she wanted to come by and meet me in person. Twenty minutes later, they were gone. That twenty minute meeting would eventually lead to the Fuller Bible's reappearance after decades of being lost.

Two months after the reunion was over, Melody contacted me on Facebook and said she had received some old pages from someone on Ancestry.com. Along with her message to me were pictures of those pages. In addition, she included a letter from a John Fuller from Fort Meyers, Florida that accompanied those old pages. In John Fuller's letter, he explained that his aunt, Lois Ruth Fuller Foreman who had lived in Bloomington, Illinois, and who also had a retirement home near Heber Springs, Arkansas, had given the pages to him. John had no idea how they had come into his aunt's possession. After carefully researching the names found on the pages, John decided that he was not related to any of those names. But, as he searched on Ancestry.com, he did discover that Melody Freeman Parr was related to at least two of the people, Thomas E. Fuller and his wife Amanda Morgan. As soon as I saw the pictures of the pages Melody had received, I knew these were pages from the missing Fuller family Bible! Why the pages were no longer in the Bible, we may never know. Nor may we ever know what happened to the Bible. I explained to Melody the significance of what she had received, and shared that many people throughout the years had been searching for the Bible and those pages. And graciously, Melody chose to send the pages to me, to keep close to our Fuller family for years to come. The pages are brittle and old, at least 140 years old. Because of the fragile condition of the pages, we decided to specially preserve and custom frame them here in Arkansas, home of the reunion. It's somewhat fitting, that after traveling all across our country, those family Bible pages belonging to Thomas Edward Fuller, have finally returned home. Maybe, just maybe, one day the Bible itself will come home to Arkansas, to be reunited with those pages once more! TDD



Reunion

Memories

Linda Brooks & Melanie Miller



"The 2019 reunion was my first reunion. I was so glad I went. I connected with relatives from across the country as well as visiting with those I don't get to see often enough. It was a wonderful afternoon full of food, fun and family." - Melanie Miller

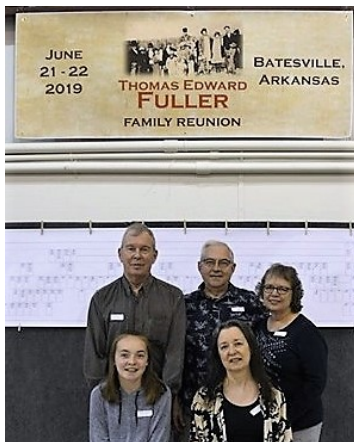
Adeline Davis & Judy Hawkins



"I enjoy the family reunions and can't wait till next time and the food is great!" - Violet Propes

"I look forward to the Fuller reunions where we meet and visit with family members" - Janet Rochner

Descendants of
Charles Lyman Fuller



"I thought our last reunion was wonderful. It was so good to see everyone again and loved getting to catch up with them. Definitely missed those that were unable to make it and especially those who have passed on. But I am so thankful to be a part of such a family with a close tie to one another that I believe has become stronger because of our reunions." - Kristi Fuller Gillihan

"I think having seen all of the setup, all of the effort that went into making the reunion happen, it makes it so much more rewarding when people start arriving and it begins to all pay off. I was really touched by all of the reactions of people, at each of the reunions, and by how much everyone really seemed to enjoy themselves."

Taylor Vaughn



Sherri Smith, Brayden Wild and Kristi Gillihan cleaning ancestors' gravestones

Reunion Memories

Shirley & Lynn Fuller

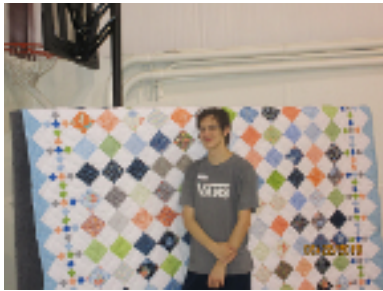


"At this year's Fuller family reunion, I was impressed with the amount of people that came from various parts of our country to meet, greet and fellowship with one another." - Robbee Brown



Curt Patton

"Last year's reunion was a perfect example of how a family can continue to expand it's interest in family connections." - Mike Todd



Taylor Vaughn

"Seeing everyone get together again. Learning more about the Fuller families." - Sandra Emery

""One of my favorite memories of the 2019 reunion was when we did the setup for the reunion. It does take a little work, but we always seem to have fun in the process." - Barbara Finley

Rita Wilson



Great Food at the 2019 Fuller Reunion!

"In times of uncertainty and fear, it is important to lean on His word to bring peace and comfort. In Exodus 33:14, the Lord says, 'My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.' God knows what we are going through and ... you can reach out and pour your worries on His shoulders."

Barbara Greses

Due to the current coronavirus pandemic we are only sending the Fuller Times out in e-newsletter form. Please print copies at home and distribute them to family members who may not have email. If you know of relatives who have email but who are not on our mailing list, please forward them a copy.