

LINNELL FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Volume 12, Issue 4

November 2000

From Our Chairman

Hello Cousins:

You have a new president as you sit down to read this quarterly issue of the Linnell Family Association newsletter. However, as I am writing this article the elections have yet to be decided. I am wondering how many of you actually voted not only for the presidency but also for congressman or woman, senator, governor—all the way down to the local school board members.



As you can imagine we who live in Washington, D.C. take the elections quite seriously. Congress has been laboring mightily to complete its business before the November ballot boxes are front and center in the eyes of the voting public.

Throughout the generations of the Linnells there have been men and women who served the nation and our family with honor and distinction. Samuel Linnell, the man we just honored in

Alexandria Bay, being one of them. His war story and that of many other Linnells can be found in "The Descendants of Robert Linnell". These people made tough decisions during their years of service so that you and I would be provided the opportunity to vote for the persons of our choice.

So, I ask you. Did your candidate win? I hope so. I know mine will – or maybe not. At this moment the thought I cherish is that of stepping into the booth to make the decision to select the persons of my choice. So many people have died that you and I have that choice.

Also, as you read this newsletter the holiday season is fast approaching. Pat and I take this opportunity to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Jerry Linnell, Chairman

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The Swedish Linnell Family

Contributed by Mark Wynn

One of the interesting facts about the Linnell family in America is that, until relatively recently, all of the Linnells in the country were descendents of English immigrant Robert Linnell, whose story is told in the book by Rachel Linnell Wynn. However, we know that there is also a group of American Linnells who are of Swedish descent. Is there any connection? The original Linnell family in England came from Norman stock, and many of the Normans in turn are descended from Viking invaders of Normandy. Could there be any relationship to the Vikings or other Scandinavians? One can visualize great-grandfathers roaming around the countryside in long-boats, sailing to Greenland, and indeed settling many areas of the British Isles such as York and parts of Ireland.

(The Swedish Linnell Family, Continued on page 4)

The Tongren Letters

Contributed by Sally S. Tongren

When I told Rachel Linnell Wynn that I had these letters, she suggested that I might contribute something to the newsletter. I hope that the following will be of interest. Rather than insert explanations into the text, I will start with a brief identification of the cast. Martha (who is given in the DRL as Adeline but signs herself "Martha") with her husband, Benjamin A. Hewes; and their children, Jennie, Augusta, and Benjamin Warren, moved to Levant, Maine from Plymouth, Massachusetts about 1857. Levant, Exeter and Kenduskeag are small farming communities about 15 miles west of Bangor in central Maine.

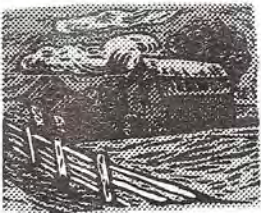
The first letter was written in 1864 to Martha's sister-in-law back in Massachusetts. At this time, Jennie is 20 years old, married to Llewelyn Powers, and living in Houlton, Maine (Aroostook County). Augusta, or "Puss", is 18, living with Jennie and teaching school. Bennie would be about 10.

In reference to the Civil War casualties, the sister to whom Martha refers was Elizabeth Linnell Marquis (118,241,54). Elizabeth's son, George, was killed at Petersburg, Virginia. The brother who lost two sons was John Warren Linnell (118,241,53). John's son, Charles, died of smallpox in Washington, D.C.; the other son, Virgil, contracted the disease while nursing his brother and also died. Martha's youngest brother, also named Virgil (118,241,55), later died in Andersonville Prison.

I have eliminated a few lines here and there that add nothing of interest and indicated this by "...". I have tried not to correct spelling or punctuation; in general, theirs is better than mine.

* * * * *

E. Exeter, Maine
August 11, 1864



My dear sister and family, we received your papers and letter and was highly gratified to think you have not forgotten us. You forget that I am getting to be an old woman and wear glasses. I cannot realize that time has passed so fast, and eight or nine years since we saw each other. We have been here going on seven years now. How many changes have taken place since we were at Plymouth. We are all alone now, I mean we have no help. Puss is teaching this summer, Ben is doing his own work. Help is so high we are keeping Bennie home from school this summer to help his father. I think it will be quite as well for him, he learns fast when he goes to school. You would be surprised to see the great boy, cutting wood, riding the horse to plough and harrow. He can rake hay and hoe, I cannot tell you the half. He is up before 6 in the morning and drives his cows. Ben says he saves him ten dollars a month and a boys board. I just had a letter from Jennie and 'gusta. They were quite well...

Oh, the trouble and suffering there is in the land, the war destroying lives and the fires (forest fires) destroying property. Ben has had to leave his work twice to go and fight fire. The men are all gone to this dreadful war. Here lays a letter from my poor sister, her dear boy's wounded and taken prisoner. He was a brave boy, had just been promoted. He was next to the Captain, the Captain was shot in this last battle. There has not been one from this place that has been more regretted than this boy. Ben thought him an exception. My brother has just buried two young men, his sons, from the effects of the

(Continued on page 3)

Editor's Note:

In the fall of 1999, Sally Tongren (118,241,513,41) discovered the Linnell Family Association. This discovery led Sally to connect her family research with the research of our Historian, Rachel Linnell Wynn. Sally has been using family letters and diaries as a source of information. Most were written by Sally's great-grandmother, Martha Adeline Linnell Hewes (118,241,51 DRL p.281), and great-aunt, Augusta Hewes (DRL p. 281). Sally has been transcribing the family letters and diaries and has graciously agreed to share this fascinating glimpse into the lives of her descendants.

(Continued from page 2)

war. They were brought home and buried in one grave. My youngest brother is a prisoner in Richmond. We mourn for them all, but this boy of sister's had endeared himself to everybody. The land is in mourning...

Our farm is called the best lot in town. We shall have nearly 25 tons of hay. Everyone tells him he will get \$25 a ton, but we have to keep enough for ourselves. We have two horses, two cows, two hogs and thirty sheep. We had four cows, Ben sold a cow and a heifer last spring for \$75. The farmers all say he is doing well, and I think he is. He was offered \$1700 for the place this spring but would not take it...

Dear Hannah, it has been four weeks since I commenced your letter, it seems you are never to get it. The drought has been dreadful here, but our farm has stood it nicely. We shall have just half a crop, some will not get much more than their seed. I do not know what some families will do this winter...

I am spinning a long web of thirty yards. I have spun 10 skeins it is for blankets. Cotton cloth is so high I made 27 yards last year... Give my best love to your husband and daughter and yourself. Do write soon. Martha A. Hewes

* * * * *

Life was not always easy. Weather is the farmer's friend or enemy even when the effects can be cushioned by irrigation or government assistance. In 1871, when a family was facing college expenses of the only son, the quirks of weather were no joke. Puss wrote to Ben who was still in Houlton and planning to enter Bowdoin in September. Martha adds a postscript

* * * * *

West Levant
July 26, 1871



Dear Ben,

I can tell you one of the most joyful sounds of summer tonight. A heavy rain continuing at intervals all day. We have scarcely had a storm since last spring, only an occasional shower, and the scanty pasture and the drooping crops will be much benefited by this.

We shall have but a few tons of hay, but shall try to keep all our cows through. Corn is low and Father has, I believe, bargained for a hundred bushels to feed during the winter. The most profit we have thus far received has been for our poultry which has been very fine. We dressed thirty-one chickens this afternoon. Father goes to Bangor tonight. (It seems that Ben started to market at night when it was cool, arriving for the early buyers.)

I wish you had some of our cherries. They are dead ripe and delicious, but not so plenty as last year and there are no raspberries at all owing to the drought... Father and Mother send love to you and Jennie. Excuse haste and carelessness. Your loving sister, Puss

PS Dear Ben, I know you and Jennie are looking for money and it does seem the hardest thing to get. I know you have not got your things made yet and I am so worried about you. How are you and Jennie getting along... are you coming home. Tell me everything. Don't spend money for anything foolish for the cattle is starving. Mother

* * * * *

To be continued in the next edition of *The Linnell Family Newsletter*.

(The Swedish Linnell Family. Continued from page 1)

Evidence on this issue was recently sent to us from John Linnell of Lincolnshire, England, who is a member of the Linnell Family Association and has done a great deal of genealogical research into the Linnell family in England over the years. John has kindly shared information that he received in the mid-1980s from Daniel Lihnell of Stocksund, Sweden. John had learned of the Swedish Lihnell family, and sought to learn the history of that family. The surnames Linnell, Lunell, Lihnell, Linell, and possibly other spellings are found in several parts of Sweden.

According to the correspondence from Daniel Lihnell, until the mid-nineteenth century, most Swedes did not have family names. People were generally known by their Christian names and a patronymic name, such as Peterson, Olafson, etc. Occasionally there would be an addition of some reference to the family domicile or profession. Family names were generally limited to clergy, members of university communities, and other members of educated classes. In many cases, family names of the educated elite were Latinized. Thus, a student from Linneryd might adapt the Latinized name Linnelius. In many cases, the Latinized suffix was dropped, leaving a name such as Linnel, with the accent on the last syllable. Similarly, the family name of the founder of the Nobel Prize, Alfred Nobel, was once Nobelius, taken from the name of the parish where the family lived, Nobbelov, then shortened to Nobel.



With the advent of industrialization and urbanization, there was a more general trend to assume family names among the general population. Many of the newly assumed names were made of two syllables. In many cases, people adopted names with no relationship to the original family with the given name. Daniel Lihnell stated in correspondence that there were 27 Linnells in the Stockholm phone book in the mid 1980s. As far as Daniel knows, he is unrelated to all of them. In the case of his family, the name Lihnell was simply assigned to a student in the family by a teacher in the 1860s, and the reason or origin of the name is unknown. Some of the Linnells in Sweden obtained the name as an adapted reference to the place name such as Linneryd.

The evidence is clear that there is no relationship other than name alone between the English and the Swedish Linnell families, and it is likely that many of the Swedish Linnells are also unrelated to each other. Thus, the only known connection between the English descended and the Swedish Linnells is the common use of a lovely sounding name.

LFA Gravestone Restoration And Scholarship Funds



At the reunion in June the membership voted to approve an expenditure of \$2000.00 for the replacement of the Jonathan Linnell gravestone in Orleans, Massachusetts. Cousin Robert S. "Bob" Linnell from Selah, Washington is in charge of the replacement project. Association treasurer, J. Scott Linnell, reports that \$540.00 has been donated to the fund supporting Linnell family gravestone replacement and restoration.

The LFA membership also voted at the reunion to establish a Linnell Family Scholarship Fund. The objective of the Scholarship Fund is to further the education of our graduating high school students by awarding a \$500.00 scholarship annually. Although no official Scholarship Fund target amount has been set, treasurer Linnell suggests that \$5,000.00 is a reasonable near-term target. To date, \$549.00 has been contributed to the Scholarship Fund.



From the Editor

Greetings! I am thrilled to squeeze myself into what small space is left over after fitting all the interesting articles into this issue! Please keep the news heading my way and don't be shy! I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I enjoyed putting it together. Your comments and suggestions for improvements are appreciated. ~ Pam

Linnell West Coast Reunion

by Ladoska "Dossie" Linnell Elliott

Alexandria Bay, New York and were able to share the experience with the 54 West Coast reunion attendees. Reunion guests included recently discovered cousins as well as cousins returning to this now annual event. Not only did guests come from areas in Oregon but from California, Washington, Nevada and as far as Texas. Thanks to everyone who came and made this reunion possible.

Plans are already underway for the next West Coast Reunion to be held on August 4, 2001, again at the Surfwood Villa Clubhouse if the facility is available. Each and every Linnell cousin is invited. For more information and to be kept advised on the plans you should contact Ladoska (Dossie) Elliott, 425 South 2nd, Harrisburg, Oregon 97446 or email ladoska1@juno.com.



Barrie Westerwick still welcomes any Alexandria Bay Reunion memorabilia that attendees may want to contribute to the family archival records.



Reunion 2000 Scrapbook

by Barrie Westerwick

If you have duplicate photos from reunion events and would like to send a few copies, please remember to label with names and event displayed in the photo(s). Also, any of the cousins who participated in the camping trip preceding the reunion, your duplicate photos or post cards, written memories, travel brochures, etc. would really be appreciated. Barrie will be grateful for any items cousins can contribute. Her address is Barrie Westerwick, 11 Allocco Drive, Holmdel, NY 07733-1451. You can email her with questions at eandb1@juno.com.

Cousins Check Your Mailing Label!

by Dick Linnell, Membership Chair



Take a look at the mailing label on this newsletter. Following your name the word "STATUS" will appear followed by your membership type—Life, Single or Family— and the last year the Association received a dues payment from you.

The Linnell Family Association grew out of the desire of Rachel Linnell Wynn to record the descendants of Robert Linnell. From the First book published in 1985, the Association has experienced considerable growth.

The Association has held five national reunions, publishes four newsletters a year, has undertaken a gravestone restoration project and established a scholarship fund. To continue the work and growth of the Association we need the support of the COUSINS as DUES paying Association members.

Over the past two years this support has declined. We need to reverse this trend and increase the number of dues paying Association members. To assist the Linnell cousins in staying current with dues payment, the mailing labels on your newsletter will now show the status of each COUSIN as a dues paying member.

If you believe that you status is in error, please let me know. Remember, this information arrives by human communication and errors can occur.

The Association hopes this dues membership reminder will help all COUSINS bring their dues paying membership up to date. With your cooperation, the Linnell Association will continue to grow, prosper and serve all Association members. Thanks for your attention.

Dooryard Visits

Not long ago, "neighboring" was something people actively did.

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Back in the old days, when I first lived on Pike Hill people used to visit. I say these words like a real old-timer, but the truth is that twenty-five years ago, driving right into someone's dooryard completely unannounced was the way we all conducted the business of forming friendships. Whether it was for the purpose of getting a dozen eggs, borrowing a piece of machinery, or saying a simple hello, it seemed no one was ever too busy to stop for a friendly cup of coffee or a stand-by-the-truck-and-talk visit. You lived on the same road; you lived in the same valley. The fact that you shared the same geography—the Oxford Hills area—was reason enough to make a spontaneous visit.

So it was with Orrell and Lottie Linnell, who lived across the valley. Curious, I'm sure, like the rest of the people in the area who'd heard someone new was working the farm, they must have decided one late afternoon to find out for themselves who was living on the land they could see out their kitchen window.

I can still see Lottie as she stepped out of her car and quickly and comfortably explained that she and Orrell were the people who lived in the farm across the gore. She pointed to the lower of two places we could see from our farm. We invited them in for a cup of coffee, as was customary, there always being a pot of hot water on the woodstove. We were pleased to meet these people, our neighbors from across the gore, as we came to call each other after awhile.

Named for the deep creviced land form that separates Otisfield from Norway, the Otisfield Gore Road is bounded on both sides by old farmhouses, gnarled maples, stone walls, cow

pastures, hayfields, and old, well-weathered barns. We marveled at how much like Pike Hill it was when, a week or so later, we visited the Linnells. But it wasn't until we came into the Linnells' kitchen that we understood why it was they had felt compelled to come see us. As if it had been painted there, our house and barn and the fields that spread like matching butterfly wings on two sides of the road, were perfectly framed in their kitchen's large picture window.

We became friends. We relished Lottie's stories of the orchard her family ran in Washington state, where she was born and raised. She and Orrell had met on that orchard. They married and came back to Maine. She told us about growing cucumbers and beans for the local canning factories when their four foster children were young and how, like a lot of their neighbors, they'd raised chickens for a large broiler company. We listened as Orrell told us about the old days, how he'd worked in the woods with horses and cut ice in the winter on Norway Lake.

A lot has happened since those days of unannounced dooryard visits. More than a decade ago, after the Linnells sold their farm to some people from out of state, they built a small house on some land they kept out of the farm sale. Shortly after that Lottie died. I visited Orrell once or twice following Lottie's death, and though I might have spotted him at a local restaurant a couple of times, I hadn't seen him since.

These days, if there's a place where I'm going to see people I know it's when I'm in the supermarket. Though I don't normally like to linger, I like the fact that I can have a conversation in the aisle that I might not have had otherwise. I have come to see these chance meetings as substitutes for the old-fashioned drop-in.

The other day I was in the store picking up a few things when I wandered over to the fruit section. At first, I didn't pay much attention to the man who, like me, was trying to figure out what color of

grapefruit to buy. Then I started looking at his profile. I stared at this man in the tweed cap who suddenly seemed so familiar, saying to myself, that no, it couldn't be. "Orrell Linnell. It is you, isn't it?" I said, still disbelieving a little bit.

Once I'd said his name out loud, Orrell slowly turned his head and looked in my direction, like he'd suddenly been awakened from a very deep sleep. I introduced myself and, like it had for me, a small but growing measure of recognition began to cross his face. In a matter of seconds he was grasping my outstretched hand and shaking it up and down.

He knew a little about me from reading columns I published in a local paper. He told me he'd just had heart surgery, but he figured for eighty-nine years, he was doing pretty well. All I really wanted to say was, "Remember those dinners we used to have, and all those dooryard visits?" But I asked him if he had some nice neighbors now instead. "Oh, it's not like it used to be," he replied without hesitating. "Nowadays there aren't neighbors."

I told him that since moving to Albany, a tiny township south of Bethel, I didn't get over to Otisfield much anymore, but I promised that the next time I did I'd pay him a visit.

A couple of weeks later I was in the grocery store again. As usual, I saw quite a few people I knew. Because of this, I was in a rush by the time I pulled up to the checkout counter. I set my things on the conveyor belt, and while I was waiting, my eyes fell on the man who was ahead of me. To my astonishment it was my old neighbor once again. "Orrell," I said, "so we meet again. Isn't that amazing!" He might as well have been standing by his old farm truck in the dooryard of our farm as in the line at the grocery.

This time, it didn't take long for him to recognize me. "That's the way things go sometimes," he said. He picked up his groceries, tipped his hat, and simply headed for the door.

-Pamela Chodosh



Orrell E. Linnell at his home in Otisfield, Maine. June 2000

This article, reprinted in its entirety, was submitted by Bob Linnell of Selah, Washington. Bob visited Orrell following the 2000 reunion and took this photo of him at

(Orrell Linnell, Continued on page 7)

(Orrell Linnell, Continued from page 6)

his home in Otisfield, Maine. Orrell E. Linnell (117,7-10-2,1-10-2,1) will be 91 in March 2001. An accomplished craftsman, Orrell crafted and presented the "Linnell Bowl" to the Association in 1991. Many other examples of his craftsmanship have been acquired by an historical society museum in So. Paris, Maine.



ADDITIONS TO THE FAMILY RECORDS

AnnMarie Shaffer (11a,b15,515,422,1) DRL pg. 233
married Michael Peterson 20 May 2000 in Colorado Springs, Co. AnnMarie is the second child of Ronald Shaffer

Trinity Kole Qualls
born 11 Sept 2000
to Vahania Spurlin (11a,b15,514,-11-12,2) DRL pg. 230
and Brian Qualls in Joplin, MO.

Allison Lynne Gower
born 19 May 2000 to Kristen & David Gower.
Grandparents are Barbara & Jack Linnell.

Hunter William Dufresne Browe
born 14 June 2000
to Heather A Dufresne (118,552,151,522) DRL pg. 271
and Joseph Browe.

David Spiker (11a,b15,515,211,1) DRL pg. 231
died 21 June 2000

Cecelia B Linnell
wife of Carroll Linnell Sr (118,241,236,124) DRL pg.315
died July 2000

Leslie Weekley
Husband of Marian Beldo Weekley (118,241,145,131,2)
DRL pg.459
died 2 October 2000

Nina F. Linnell Townsend (118,241,112,69) DRL pg.370
died 18 October 2000

Please report changes to your family records to Pam Beach.
Her address will be found at right, see "VITAL RECORDS".

THE LINNELL FAMILY ASSOCIATION

The purposes of the Association are to promote fellowship among Linnell family members through reunions and the publication of the **Linnell Family Newsletter**, and to preserve the records of the family.

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Linnell Family Association

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**LINNELL FAMILY ASSOCIATION
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