



THE HAWES FAMILY ASSOCIATION

210-5th Ave. S.
247 Jennings
Franklin, Tn. 37064

Honorary Memberships

Col. Benjamin Walker Hawes
(1900-1988)

Mildred and Jack Foster
Lewisport, Kentucky

Memorial Memberships

Dorothy Horn Hawes (1912-1989)
Anna Lewis Hawes (1855-1937)
Edwin Combe Hawes (1856-1928)
Lloyd Clark Hawes (1916-1981)
Betty Lou (Carlton) Wilhoyte
(1928-1993)
Dr. Oscar Garth Fitzhugh (1901-1994)
Mrs. Oscar Garth Fitzhugh (1904-1994)
Thomas J. Abbott, Jr. (1929-1994)
Louise Hawes Applegate (1907-1995)
Robert Taylor Haase (1911-1996)
Camilla (Gillette) Haase (1919-1996)
Lucille Mae Russell (1911-1996)
Edith McCallum Howard - died 1997
Colonel Edwin Hugh Hawes (1912-1945)
John Anthony Seaman, Jr. (1918-1997)

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Dear Friends:

A Happy Springtime to you, wherever you live. I hope all is going well with you in this new year of 1999.

Going through the thick folder of our now-retired president, Anna Hawes Greaves, I came across a most interesting story which I believe is worth repeating in this Newsletter. Anna's genealogical lines are 14-Karat Gold, going back to many first Families in America -- the Lewises, Warners, the Reades, Taylors, Hornsbys, Walkers, Meriwethers, Thorntons, Lees, Allertons, Brewsters, to name a few.

It is my thinking it would be nice to honor Anna in this Newsletter, inasmuch as the story given below involves many of her early ancestors.

In 1981, at our Williamson County Library, I was reading the Kentucky State Historical Quarterly of July 1968, and found a story written by Judge Earl R. Hoover, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Cleveland, Ohio. It concerns Jonathan Edwards Spilman, who married Eliza Taylor, the 2nd daughter and 3rd child of Hancock Taylor⁵ and his second wife, Anna Hornsby Lewis...Hancock being a brother of President Zachary Taylor

Eliza Taylor Spilman was a sister to Annah Allen Taylor (1835-1889) who married Charles Theodore Hawes, of Hawesville, Ky., the son of Hugh Walker Hawes and his first wife, Maria Martha Juliette di Rion, and a grandson of Richard and Clary Hawes.

In his article, Judge Hoover pleads for the recognition of Jonathan Spilman. After many years of searching, Judge Hoover found the records of Spilman, and here is the story.

The first Spilman in America was Henry Spilman who came to Virginia from England. His son James was of Culpepper, Va., and James' son Benjamin Spilman married Nancy Rice in 1790 and they immediately left for Kentucky.

Jonathan Edwards Spilman, the 12th of 13 children born to Benjamin and wife Nancy, was born April 15, 1812, in Greenville, county seat of Muhlenburg County, Kentucky. In 1831 he went to Illinois College at Jacksonville and was a member of the first graduating class in 1835. He was, moreover, Valedictorian of his class. He entered Transylvania College in Kentucky in 1836, graduating from the law school there in 1837.

It was while sitting on the campus one summer day, reading Robert Burns' "Flow Gently Sweet Afton" that Spilman - being of a musical nature - sought for and sounded out (in his mind) a suitable melody for the words of Burns' poem. He quickly went home where he sat down at the piano and captured the tune still in his head. He was 25 years of age at that time. In 1838 the song was published by George Willig Company, of Philadelphia, and sheet music was issued. It sold in great quantities and became a favorite song of that time -- it is still a prized ballad!

In 1840, age 28, Spilman married Mary B. J. Menefee, daughter of Major John Menefee of Jessamine County, Ky. She died three years later after the birth of their first child ----the child died later, at the age of 9 months.

Spilman practiced law for 18 years, at Nicholasville, from 1838 until 1849 and then in Covington, Ky. until 1856.

In 1845, at the age of 33, he married Eliza Taylor (born 6-23-1822) and ten children were born of this union. Eliza was the daughter of Hancock Taylor⁵ and wife, Anna Hornsby Lewis. We have the names of nine of them: Charles, Anna Louise, who stood at 4 feet, 11 inches, unmarried and affectionately called "Aunt Tantie", Mildred Watson, Richard Henry, Julia Bird, Clara Lee, Frances Rice, Lewis Hopkins and William Magill.

In 1858 Spilman made a life-changing decision...he became a Christian Minister of the Presbyterian Church. In 1866 the family lived in Maysville, Kentucky and the parsonage was situated on a hill, overlooking the Ohio River, with a grand sweep of the river on every side.

On August 8, 1866 Eliza Taylor Spilman boarded the riverboat Boston #3 for a boat trip to Cincinnati. As the boat pulled away from the Maysville pier and nosed toward Cincinnati, her family watched from the parsonage and waved goodbye to her. Suddenly, a fire erupted below deck. An accident had happened when some sheep aboard knocked over an oil lantern. In horror, the family watched as flames quickly engulfed the entire ship. In her attempt to escape, Eliza collided with a steam-pipe and was pitifully scalded. Someone threw her into the river.

She was rescued and taken to her home on the hill where she died two days later, on August 10th, after great suffering.

Spilman never re-married and continued to serve as a minister in the many small towns of Kentucky.

Judge Hoover's research showed Julia Byrd married a Mr. Dewey and that she was a writer and had a son, Byrd Spilman Dewey who was born in Covington, Kentucky. Clara married George W. Andrews and a daughter of this union was Anne Andrews Anderson, of Xania, Illinois. Lewis Hopkins Spilman was a lawyer of Knoxville, Tennessee. and he had a daughter, Lillian Spilman Howard (Mrs. F. C.), also of Knoxville. Charles Spilman lived in Cincinnati.

Judge Hoover also found other musical compositions by Spilman and they are: "I own the tear that steals", "Flowers, Bright Flowers", "Leonora" "Speed Thee Pearline Fair"(1844), "Star of Evening" and "The Beautiful and True", 1845.

At age 80, Spilman partially retired and moved to Carmi, Illinois. From there, he went to Flora, Ill, where his daughter Clara Andrews lived. He died there and was buried in Flora in the Elmwood Cemetery.

At the 85th Anniversary Celebration of the Presbyterian Church of Flora. Reverend Spilman, D.D., was engaged to "supply the pulpit on April 2, 1893" and Judge Hoover found the printed program of this event. These words were printed on it:

"It is with pride that we can inform you that Reverend Spilman was the composer of the Music to the beloved ballad "Flow Gently Sweet Afton".

Judge Hoover felt the State of Kentucky - while honoring Stephen Foster - has overlooked Spilman, even though he was born in Kentucky, educated in Kentucky's first and finest school, married into the prominent family of President Zachary Taylor, served well as a lawyer and was a pioneer minister and gifted composer. Hoover stated his highest hope was that Kentucky will give acclaim and honor to Jonathan Edwards Spilman for his many accomplishments.

So - that is the story -- it is beautiful and sad, but worth repeating.

Next month, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in the towns of St. Michaels and Easton, our aunt, Claudia Hawes (Mrs. Walter) will be honored with a 2-day Big Birthday Blow-Out, hosted by her son, Walter, Jr. ("Pat") and wife, Mandy, and by her daughter Claudette Hawes Hennesy. Claudia will be 90 years of age on April 15th and the week-end of the 16th and 17th will find many of her grandchildren and great grandchildren celebrating with her. Nephews and neices are also expected from many locations, so we all wish her a Very Happy Birthday!

Until the next time, am still here and welcome any letters from you.



Helen Hawes Hudgins
your secretary