

Amonett Family Newsletter
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By Glen Amonett

(To clarify my numbering system, the letter by Faye and Laudane last year was #4)

It's time for the Annual Amonett Family Newsletter and it isn't ready. It was announced at the reunion in June that the subject this year would be Granddad John Alvis Amonett, (March 1, 1873 to June 28, 1954). That letter will require some more research, so it will be delayed until next year.

In the mean time, we have some other data that should make an interesting letter.

This one is about the Amonett history from way back. The Amonett Family History was published in a National Magazine. It was a fine article and contained considerable data that traces the family farther back than any of our other data. The name of the magazine was "Hobbies - The Magazine For Collectors," issued December 1961, pages 125 and 126. The article dealt with the history of the family from our origin point of near Loudun, France (west central area).

France became involved in a fierce political and religious struggle during the 16th and 17th centuries. A religious reformation started in Germany by Martin Luther spread into other European countries. A spokesman for the Religious Reformation in France was John Calvin, and the Protestants became influential and precipitated a civil war. The Protestant area developed fortified cities and their own universities, and they became known as Huguenots (pronounced Huga-E-Noes). From 1560 to 1598 bloody military clashes were frequent. Early family members were identified with the Protestant struggle.

The "Edict of Nantes" in 1598 was a Royal Decree of religious toleration. For a time the Huguenots and the Catholics were more or less at peace. The Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685 and the war was on again. This time the more numerous Catholics successfully seized the fortified cities and much of the property of the Huguenots. About 50,000 people fled the country, mainly from southern provinces of France. The people migrated to Belgium, several locations in the United States, Canada's eastern provinces, and several places in South America.

The Amonett settlers in Belgium were issued another Coat-of-Arms by the rulers of the time. It was less colorful than the French Coat-of-Arms of an earlier day. French settlers in most of the Countries were absorbed into the regular population over the years. Our name probably persists in most areas where the

emigrants settled. It seems that our own ancestor didn't follow the Belgium route, but came directly from France to the United States.

Jacob Amonette (as he spelled it then) landed in Virginia. His son William Amonett married Elizabeth Johnson in 1802 in Cumberland County, Virginia. He enlisted on June 20, 1814 as Sergeant in Captain David Smyth's Company of the 1st regiment of west Tennessee Militia. (An indication that he had moved to Tennessee)

This was the war of 1812 era, which we fought with the British, and it lasted three years. Reuben Amonett died of wounds September 24, 1814.

James Amonett, second of six children, who lived from 1809 - 1875 married Elizabeth Huddleston in Pickett County, Tennessee. Willis Amonett, third of five children, married Hannah Elizabeth Jackson in Pickett County, Tennessee. John Alvis Amonett (Granddad) second of nine children, married Elmira Octavia "Tiva" or "Tivvie" Irwin in Pickett County and migrated to Comanche County, Texas about 1903. To this union was born ten children: Floyd, Pearl, Leo, Myrta, Willis, Posey, Cordie, Earlene, Clyde and Thayne Amonett.

This is the direct lineage. As you will notice, brothers besides our lineage, and sisters too, but their name won't be Amonett after marriage. Incidentally, if you have visited in a French speaking area, your name has probably been pronounced "Amon-ay". That is the customary French pronunciation.

I obtained a coat-of-arms from a relative in Mississippi. The spelling is a little different. I took a color picture of it. If you would like a photo, I'll be glad to send one. A dollar to cover costs and postage would be appreciated. Somebody gave me a dollar last year for a print and I didn't write their name down. If I have your dollar, don't send another. Just request your picture. My address has changed slightly:

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Sources of Information on Amonett history:

1. "Hobbies - the Magazine for Collectors" December/1961.
2. "The Huguenot" 1941-1943 publication #11.
3. The Virginia Magazine - list of tithables - data about early King William Parish.
4. The Huguenot Magazine Yearbook I, 1924.
5. "History of the Huguenots" by Baird Vol. II p.51.

These sources have been recommended but our area doesn't have an elaborate library available. If someone can get a copy of the above data, it would be interesting to us all.

Glen