

COWARD FAMILY NEWSLETTER

January 1976

Dear Kinfolks,

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I hope each of you had a wonderful Christmas. We appreciated all the nice Christmas cards and messages. Thanks a million!

Our family had an especially good Christmas this year, but two days after Christmas our family was deeply saddened by the sudden death of my husband's father. He and his wife had spent Christmas day with us in our home, and we all had had such a wonderful time together. We were on our way to their home for a 6:00 p.m. dinner on that Saturday evening when he was stricken with a massive heart attack between 5:15 and 5:30. We arrived moments after he was taken to the hospital. It happened so quickly he was unconscious immediately, and the doctor said he never felt a pain or suffered for one moment. For this we were thankful. Also we were thankful that Jack's mother was not alone when it happened as Jack's sister and her family were already there, and we arrived so soon thereafter.

This newsletter is a bit unorganized. Several of you have written and sent notes and clippings, and I have temporarily mislaid the folder I keep them in. Maybe I can find it before this goes out.

Joe A. Cowart, Jr. 829 Indian River Drive, Cocoa, Florida 32922, has done an excellent job on compiling the Coward /Cowart Family. He recently sent me his Coward - Cowart Genealogy, Southern Second, which he and his daughter Kathi have compiled. If you were born with the surname Coward, your name is very likely in this booklet. He tells me there is still work to be done, and he needs our help. Those of you who live in Western North Carolina, can you help him (and me) by getting from the Court-house records all Coward birth, death, and marriage records in Jackson County. Also he would like those in Haywood and Clay County. He says this information will do much to fill out the basic family data that he has. It would also help me in my efforts. If you feel that you can help with this project, please contact me, and we will see how to get it worked out, for the most benefit to all the family.

Mr. Cowart identifies these three men - possibly not related - as probably being the forbears of most of the Cowards in the Southern United States:

1. A "James Coward" of Rappahannock County, Virginia, who had descendents in eastern N.C. and other southern states.
2. A "James Coward" of old Rutherford County, NC, which is our line.
3. A "John Coward" who was born in New Jersey, served in the Revolution, and after the war settled in Jefferson County, Ga.

He indicates that the northern lines originate with a "Richard Coward" in Talbot County, Md., and a "James Coward" of Dorchester County, Md. and with a "Hugh Coward" of Monmouth County, N.C. Some families retained the original spelling of Coward, others changed the spelling to "Cowart" and others used the older form "Cowherd".

Florence Thompson of Hayesville wrote that she had heard from Helen Zachary regarding the East LaPorte Cemetery (where our grandmother Clara Coward Smith is buried). They are trying to maintain it (cemetery) and are buying a lawn mower and getting it seeded and will hire someone to keep it mowed. They are accepting contributions toward this project. If you wish to contribute, send a check to Helen Zachary in care of the East LaPorte Methodist Church, RFD, Cullowhee, NC. (Is this the correct address, Florence?)

Juanita Phillips has retired from the Jackson County Health Department, but may be helping them some part-time.

Blanche Phillips Painter had a gall bladder operation early in September.

Florence wrote that her son Bud's eye rejected the transplant, so they have been back to Duke Hospital where the transplant was removed. Bud is going to Western Carolina University.

In my last newsletter, I told you that Bob and Carol Hughes were expecting a baby. It was around that time, that Carol lost the baby, and we were all sad to hear this. We do hope they are doing o.k. Good news - they are expecting again!

Thanksgiving was a very nice time for us. I fixed dinner at my home and made one long table so we could all sit down to eat together. Present were Mother, my sister Frances, her husband Jim Payne, her daughters Jan and Julia, Julia's fiance' Darryl Rouse, (they plan to marry March 6), my sister Nell, her husband Tom, their daughter Laura and her husband Bill Smith and their two children Jennifer and Allison (two darling little girls), Alma Ray Hinkle, a life-long family friend, Jack and me and our three boys, Jim, Andy, and Douglas. We had a great time together.

Clara McGuire Wendt's daughter, Nancy Rideout, now lives in Raleigh, so we get to see Clara more often than we used to, and we are very happy about this. Clara has had a family tradition for years of serving oyster stew on Christmas Eve. This year she came up to Nancy's before Christmas, and on Christmas Eve a number of us were able to get together at Richard and Nancy Rideout's home to enjoy Clara's wonderful oyster stew. In addition to Clara, Nancy and Richard and their son Will, there was present Clara's son Fred and his wife Judith and their young daughter Mary Melissa, my mother Ellen Smith, my sister Frances and her husband Jim Payne, Frances' daughter Julia Kidwell and Jack and me. It was a wonderful evening and we were so glad to have the opportunity for good family fellowship.

Elise McGuire Meeks spent the month of October in the mountains, where she had rented a cabin by the lake at Hayesville, NC. ... a lovely spot for a vacation? Elise's husband Herman lost his brother J. L. a few months back.

Hazel Coward Rohde's husband Ed was elected city commissioner in Winter Haven, Fla. (I think this is correct; it was a very close election, I understand.)

Mrs. Charlotte McDonald, 2755 Dresden Trail, East Point, Ga. 30344, descends from Stephen Cowart, born about 1785 in North Carolina, and she is interested in information about him. Can anyone help her? She was kind to send us the following information which she found in the Georgia Archives, and N.C. State Library.

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA CENSUS FOR 1840: Peter C. Coward

PETER C. COWARD and OLIVE CLIFTON married 19 Dec. 1838 in Rutherford Co., NC. Bondsman: Eli F. Littlejohn; Witness: T. F. Bircheff, Clerk

PICKENS COUNTY, GEORGIA CENSUS FOR 1860

Peter C. Coward	42	Farmer	born N.C.
Olive	43		born in S.C.
Margaret S.	19		born in N.C.
Stephen	15		born in Ga.
Sophia	9		born in Ga.
Caroline A.	4		born in Ga.
Mary A.	10/12		born in Ga.

Marriage: John D. Harris and Sophia Cowart, Pickens County, Ga., 28 Dec. 1868.

Sophia (Coward) Harris, born 13 March 1851, died 16 Sept. 1930, Georgia (Spalding Co.?). Death certificate has father as Crawford Cowart. Husband, Rev. John D. Harris (Baptist), born Jan. 11, 1850, died 15 Dec. 1909.

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC. MARRIAGES: (Who knows how these fit into the family?)

- Elihu Coward - Charlotte Bird, 27 Jan. 1823.
- James Coward, Jr. - Mary Worley, 8 Nov. 1812
- Lewis Coward - Ozella Bradley, 10 Dec. 1842
- Peter Coward - Nancy Dimsdil, 13 Jan. 1801, bondsman James Coward.
- Peter C. Coward - Olive Clifton, 19 Dec 1838. (listed above also)
- Stephen Coward - Milly Rogers, 29 Nov. 1815; bondsman: Elihue Coward
- Cynthia E. Coward - William Jay Blanton, 24 Jan. 1844.
- Elizabeth Coward - John Jacks, 26 Oct. 1851.
- Mary Coward - Samuel Waldrop, 19 Nov. 1840.
- Rebecca Coward - Abodeah Worley, 13 June 1821, witness: James Coward.
- Sarah Coward - David Cochran, 13 Dec. 1802; witness: James Coward.
- Winnie Coward - William Mills, 22 March 1823.

I apologize for the disjointed newsletter. Although disjointed it is sent with love to each and every one of you. Your family's Ann Smith

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