



# Cauble-Rotan Family Report

December 2008

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## Texas Cauble Family Association Board of Directors, 2008-2010

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This issue was written, edited, and illustrated by Julia Cauble Smith H2353 and Sylvia Caldwell Rankin C76211.

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## 1850 Christmas On Russell Creek

The decade of the 1850s settled softly upon Tyler County, Texas, spreading a sense of security, peace, and economic prosperity around the 137 families who farmed there. Life had not always been good for them. Although Texas had been admitted to the Union in 1846, that action brought the United States and Tyler County volunteers into a war with Mexico. After two years, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended that war and brought peace after firmly establishing the border between Texas and Mexico at the Rio Grande. With peace secured, the 1,900 residents of Tyler County set about building rich lives from the great natural resources around them.

The Piney Woods of Tyler County were filled with virgin timber, fertile land, plentiful game, and clean watercourses—springs, creeks, and the Neches River. Since Texas had come into the Union as a slave state, even squatters who held only tenuous claims to land ownership could invest in cheap labor as well as free land. These settlers entertained high hopes for a good life in Tyler County as Christmas approached in 1850.



Up in the northwestern corner of the county on Russell Creek and near old Fort Teran on the Neches River, where the Cauble families had settled at Indian Village—later called Peach Tree Village—late in the 1830s, optimism for the future brightened their lives. The opportunities brought by the new decade were not wasted on the Cauble families. When they filed for headrights to their chosen acreage with the General Land Office of Texas in 1839, Peter Cauble and his sons had intended to use the available land and the Negroes they hoped to acquire to build new lives.

The piping times of 1850 brought a Christmas of excitement and celebration for both white and black settlers. When steamboats came up the Neches between December and May to deliver supplies and to take on cotton bales for delivery at gulf ports, there was dancing on the boat decks by planter families and in the shadows on land by black families. Prominent houses along the watercourses and main roads of the county opened their doors to visitors at Christmas for receptions and dances. Families gathered at their own homes for Christmas dinners.



The Peter Cauble family, including his wife, Mary Ann Rotan, and their youngest son—James W. Cauble—lived in a double-trot log cabin at Peach Tree Village near the crossing of the Nacogdoches-Liberty and the Jordan Ferry-Moscow roads. The Cauble cabin had been constructed of hewn logs in 1839 and was well known to all local residents as well as travelers. The outbuildings on the farm consisted of slave quarters for the Negro man named Willie, for 21-year-old Sarah, for 20-year-old Peter, for 19-year-old Emily and her young daughter Mary Jane, and for 16-year-old Mandy and her young son Henry—all of whom lived and worked on the Cauble farm in 1850. Barns and a smokehouse completed the outbuildings. A nearby summer garden was laid out and tended to provide food for people who lived on the farm.

On nearby farms, the sons of Peter and Mary Ann—John W. Cauble, Isaac Butler Cauble, and Peter Cauble, Jr.—lived with their own families. The daughters' families lived in other counties. Helen Elmira and her husband, Valentine Ignatius Burch, lived with their four children in Houston County. Martha and her husband, Benjamin Green, had a farm in Limestone County, where they lived with their two

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small children near other Green families. Robert Hughes, the widower of their daughter, Lucinda, and his sons— Jesse C. and Isaac Butler—lived in Tyler County. Other kinsmen resided nearby—John Martin Cauble and his wife Mariah Jane Rotan—as well as John A. Rotan and his children. If all Cauble-Rotan kin gathered for Christmas, there was a large number for dinner.

For that dinner, the cooks used produce from their well stocked larders. Like most farm families in Tyler County, the Christmas menu may have been as follows:

*Spit-Roasted Ham, Game Ducks,  
Wild Goose and Venison  
Creamed Corn  
Fresh Ramps or Wild Onions  
Pan Roasted Sweet Taters Poured Over  
with Molasses  
Cornbread with Butter  
Hominy Batter Cakes  
Wild Berry Cobbler Spiced Gingerbread  
Hot Coffee or Buttermilk  
Spring Water or Whiskey*



Most farms in the Piney Woods raised more hogs than any other livestock because hogs foraged unattended in the forest. Peter Cauble reported 100 hogs on his farm in 1850; one or more was slaughtered and processed for the family and guests long before Christmas. Workers on the farm hung hams, slabs of bacon and pork shoulder, and wild game meats in the smokehouse to cure for the holiday.

Some of the farm's 300 bushels of corn was preserved or made into hominy for the winter. Part of the corn was taken to the grist mill for grinding into baking meal. James Barnes, a close neighbor, operated a grist mill near the Cauble farm. How much corn Cauble distilled into whiskey is not known, but distilling was recognized on the frontier as a convenient method of preserving corn.

Another crop as important as corn for feeding 1850 families in Tyler County was sweet potatoes. The Cauble farm reported raising forty bushels of sweet potatoes that year. To provide a sweetener, Cauble raised 250 pounds of sugar cane and converted it into forty gallons of molasses that year. Although the Cauble farm produced no wheat, rye, or oats, the family bartered or purchased baking flour as well as spices, coffee, and other needed items

by using the \$50 made from the sale of butter or any other homemade items manufactured at the farm that year.

With plenty of good food produced or taken from the land, with a warm fire in the snug cabin, and with a surrounding of smiling kin, the family was content. There was no need for the exchange of gifts or for a Christmas tree because the presence of friends and family were gifts enough and all outside the cabin door grew countless pines. One could claim as many Christmas trees in the forest as one pleased.

The black members of the Cauble farm may have enjoyed the same Christmas fare as the white members or they may have prepared a feast of their own from their garden produce and from trapping forest game. They cooked their own food and ate together in one of the cabins after they finished work on the meal for the white family. After their Christmas dinner, they had the remainder of the day—or several days—off to celebrate. They may have been allowed to visit friends on other farms.

The Cauble farm, both its white and black members, celebrated Christmas in

1850 with food they raised, hunted, or gathered inside their humble, but warm, cabins. They surely counted themselves lucky to have a peaceful and pastoral life among pine trees and running creeks after the hardships of the Republic and a long border war.

As their descendants, we live in a nation that knows neither peace nor plenty. Fearing our economic and political futures, we long for an 1850 Christmas in the Piney Woods. But such a transition is not possible. Our comfort must come from knowing we are descended from strong people who lived through times even harder than ours today and they finally found themselves with peace and plenty on a Christmas long ago. May we all have such a Christmas in our near future!

*Text by Julia Cauble Smith H2353*

*Graphics by Sylvia Caldwell Rankin C7621*



# President's Letter

Dear Kin,

As I write this I am not sure what is in this newsletter but from what I have been told and remembering last year's "Christmas at Mossy Creek" story, I look forward to reading it. As most of you remember Julia resigned as Editor due to other commitments and that position is still vacant. As dedicated as Sylvia and Julia are, they still managed to find the time to put together a special Christmas Newsletter. I want to thank both, Julia and Sylvia, for taking the time to put this together and sharing it with our family. I hope everyone enjoys it.

I also want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

God bless,

*James*

*Remember the date of our 2009 family reunion  
at Albany: 12 and 13 June 2009!*





# Frontier Food

*Most diets on the frontier were based on hogs and hominy. Our ancestors likely consumed both at most meals.*

**About Hogs:** For those of you who did not grow up on a farm between 1920 and 1960, hogs were butchered in the fall when weather was cool enough for the meat to be processed without spoiling. Before freezers were in common use, the pork was salted or smoked or both. Hams, shoulders, and bacon were preserved whole. Parts of the hog were ground into sausage. The liver was cooked fresh. The hog head was boiled down and combined with spices to make *souse* or *hoghead cheese*. This was something like sandwich loaf that is eaten today.

**About Corn and Hominy:** If corn was to be used as livestock fodder, it was dried in the field until needed or stored in the barn. If corn was to be used for a meal, it was gathered fresh and cooked. Or it was cut from the cob for drying and preserved for later use. If dried, one needed to soak it from twelve to twenty-four hours in water and to boil it until tender. This made creamed corn, a favorite winter dish.

Hominy started out as corn. It became hominy by a process that involved soaking in homemade lye and pounding to remove the husks. Hardwood ashes were collected from fireplaces and water was filtered through the ashes to produce lye, a caustic brownish liquid. Corn was first soaked in the lye solution and then cracked in a hominy block.

**Making a Hominy Block:** A hominy block was made by sawing a good-sized tree off about three to four feet above the ground and hollowing out the inside of the stump. A block of the log with limbs sawed off to make handles was then tied with rope to the limb of a nearby overhanging tree, so it dangled over the hollow stump. To crack the corn for making small hominy, the log block was pulled down and used to pound the corn in the hollowed-out stump. Production of hominy was hard work, but it gave a little variety to the frontier diet.

**Cooking With Hominy:** Hominy was cooked into main dishes and desserts. It was stirred into sizzling fatback with ramps, or wild onions, for a tasty main dish. Pudding was made by cooking hominy with cream and sugar or molasses and butter. Chopped apples, raisins, currants, and lemon juice were added. Hominy was made into batter cakes that were prized as a breakfast entree. Batter cakes required the boiling of two cups of small hominy until soft and adding an equal quantity of corn meal. Salt was added along with three eggs and enough milk to make a batter. Sometimes batter cakes were served with fresh wild blackberries, dewberries, huckleberries, persimmons, grapes, and nuts.

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# Family Photographs



Above: **Tennie G. Cauble** E19 and her husband, **Jesse Daniel Biggs**, were photographed as newlyweds in December 1900.

*Image supplied by J. D. Biggs E196*

**Tennie G. Cauble** E19 (14 December 1881 Hill County, Texas-3 June 1964; buried Rosemound Cemetery, Waco, McLennan County, Texas), a daughter of **Sarah Jane Underwood** and **James Lafayette Cauble** E1, married **Jesse Daniel Biggs** (10 November 1878-27 November 1965; buried Rosemound Cemetery, Waco, McLennan County, Texas) on 9 December 1900 in Hill County, Texas. By 15 April 1910 the couple lived on a farm on the Hillsboro and Aquilla road with their three daughters—**Clara Bernice Biggs** E191 (22 November 1901-24 October 1915; buried Valley Mills Cemetery, Bosque County, Texas); **Edith Marie Biggs** E192 (4 March 1904 Hillsboro, Hill County, Texas-13 December 1997 Waco, McLennan County, Texas; buried Rosemound Cemetery, McLennan County, Texas); and **Dora Pearl Biggs** E193 (4 August 1906-June 1990; buried Comanche Springs Cemetery, McLennan County, Texas).

Tennie G. Cauble and Jesse Daniel Biggs eventually had four additional children in their 63-year marriage. Their later children were **Leatha Lorie Biggs** E194 (24 September 1912 Hagerman, Chaves County, New Mexico-18 November 2007 Oceanside, California; buried Grandview Cemetery, Pasadena, Harris County, Texas); **Woodrow Wilson Biggs** E195 (2 June 1917 Coryell County, Texas-11 December 1999 Mexia, Limestone County, Texas); **J. D. Biggs** E196; and **Mildred Martha [Mickey] Biggs** E197 (8 December 1924 Texas-25 June 1999 Jekyll Island, Georgia).

# Family Photographs



Above from left: **Jesse Carter Cauble** E152 (12 November 1906 Howard County, Texas-26 October 1982 Howard County, Texas; buried Mount Olive Memorial Park, Howard County, Texas) and his older brother, **Allie Willard [Ladd] Cauble** E151 (28 June 1903 Howard County, Texas-12 June 1973 Howard County, Texas; buried Mount Olive Memorial Park, Howard County, Texas) were photographed about 1918 in Big Spring, Texas, where they lived.

*Image supplied by Jack Cauble E1512*

The young men pictured above were the sons of **Samuel Ivan [Sam] Cauble** E15 (8 October 1874 Hill County, Texas-24 October 1969 Howard County, Texas; buried Mount Olive Memorial Park, Howard County, Texas) and his wife **Maggie May Carter** (12 July 1882-21 August 1937 Tarrant County, Texas; buried Mount Olive Memorial Park, Howard County, Texas), who married 14 August 1902 in Howard County, Texas. Sam Cauble left the county of his birth and migrated to Howard County after his brothers had settled there. Although Sam was a stockman, he and his family lived in Big Spring at 800 Johnson Street.

Sam was a son of **Sarah Jane Underwood** (23 July 1849 Arkansas-8 September 1909 Hill County, Texas; buried Bell Cemetery, Hill County, Texas) and **James Lafayette Cauble** (25 March 1843 Tyler County, Texas-14 December 1937 Hill County, Texas; buried Bell Cemetery, Hill County, Texas), who was the first son of **Sarah E. Green** (15 September 1822 Tennessee-7 March 1893 Hill County, Texas; buried Prairie Grove Cemetery, Hill County, Texas) and **Isaac Butler Cauble** (25 December 1820 Alabama-5 April 1904 Hill County, Texas; buried Prairie Grove Cemetery, Hill County, Texas).

Source: Cauble Family Registry

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# Family News

## Young Descendants

**Kailee Danielle Carr** H132111, daughter of **Judy Cauble Carr** and granddaughter of **Pat and Dan Cauble** H1321 was recently inducted into the National Honor Society at her high school. We are proud of you, Kailee!



**Shawn Michael Chick** H235311, son of **Gwen and Dan Chick** H23531 and grandson of **Al and Julia Cauble Smith** H2353, finished flight school in the spring of 2008 and now is a pilot at Mesa Airlines. If you see him in an airport in Chicago, Austin, D. C., or Charlotte, tell him you are his kin!

*Image: Al H. Smith MH2353*

## Dues and Contributions

You may send your \$10 check for dues or any amount for contributions to the following designated funds—Ancestral Cemeteries, Capt. Todd Christmas Memorial Scholarship, DNA Project, or Historic Peter Cauble House to our family treasurer:

*Gwen Chick, C.P.A.  
132 Westridge Trail  
Weatherford, TX 76087*

## Reunion Auction 2009

Auctioneer **Dan Chick** H23531 reminds all descendants that another craft auction is planned for the next family reunion—**13 June 2009**. Begin work soon on the crafts you intend to bring for auction. Remember this is the fundraiser for our scholarship and it will be great fun. Dan plans to tell more of his creative stories about the auction items if Cousin Connie can refrain from reminding him to be truthful.

## About Our Y-DNA Project

Chairman **Revis Cauble Leonard** H23611 is pleased to announce that **Betty Jo Lowery's** "Uncle Jimmy," **James D. Cauble** of North Carolina, has matched with our Texas Cauble descendants. Julia and Revis will begin in the new year to search for our common ancestor. This is good news in our search to find the parents of our **Peter Cauble**. Thanks to Betty Jo for finding us!

# Prayers



*For those serving in the  
nation's military:*

*U. S. Air Force:* **Stephen Baxter** E75131 [Major]

*Nebraska Air National Guard:* **Roxanne Baxter** ME75131

*U. S. Army:* **Thomas Aquinas Bayer II** MD249211 [Major]

**Mary Margaret Loughlin Bayer** D249211 [Major]

**Carol R. [Trey] Caldwell** C762121

**Danielle J. Gluck** of C7.12. family; **Luke Hatheway** H51121 in Iraq

**Paul Hill** MH231213; **Lee C. Mahan** of C7.12. family

**Trenton H. Yarter** H29122

*U. S. Marines:* **Brent Cauble** E723312; **James Leonard Saint** E151112

**Kenneth J. Windsor** of C7.12.1111

*U. S. Navy:* **Brandi Baize** E722222S

**Pamela Burns Howell** H12611

**Michael Douglas Hunt** E146121 on a nuclear submarine

*Those who have had surgery, accident, or illness:*

**Jessica Hibbs** HA51421

**Pat Cauble** MH1321

**Carolyn Cauble Long** H2362

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## Those Who Are Gone

**Loretta Mae Hughes C1464** (14 May 1923 Bauxite, Arkansas-7 August 2008 North Little Rock, Arkansas; buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Booneville, Arkansas), daughter of **Lillie Rose Lewis** and **John Oran Hughes C146**, grew up around Bauxite, Hardin, and Pine Bluff, Arkansas. After high school, Loretta worked at Ben Pearson Archery Company in Pine Bluff from 1941 to 1944. She contracted tuberculosis in 1944 and went to Arkansas State Tuberculosis Sanatorium, where she met **William Monroe Burt** (8 October 1910-23 August 1979; buried Oak Cliff Cemetery, Booneville, Arkansas). Monroe had been a patient there for sixteen years. On 28 February 1946 they were married. In 1947 both Loretta and Monroe were released from the sanatorium, but they continued to work there for another year. Monroe was in the janitorial department and Loretta was a nurses' aide. In 1948 they moved to Pine Bluff and lived with Loretta's parents, but Monroe had to return to the sanatorium in 1949. Loretta remained in Pine Bluff and worked again at the archery company. Loretta Hughes Burt became a beautician and operated a shop in Booneville for more than forty years. She lived in Booneville, Arkansas, for the remainder of her active life. She was the mother of **Oran Burt** and grandmother of **Jenifer Burt Mounger** and **Jason Burt**. She is survived by two sisters—**Juanita Hughes Bright** of Hope, Arkansas, and **Lorene Hughes Cassity** of Booneville, Arkansas.

—Reba Hughes Torres C14.10.4



Above: Jim and June Windsor posed happily in an earlier time.

**James Monroe Windsor C7.12.11** (10 January 1928 Quemado, Catron County, New Mexico-25 October 2008 Clovis, Fresno County, California) was a son of **Katherine Modean Switzer C7.12.1** and **Jesse Perry Windsor**, a grandson of **Ulmer Lee [Birdie] Wood C7.12.** and **William Adolph Switzer**, and great-grandson of **Loucinda Cauble C7** and **George Washington Wood**. He married **June Ann Dean** on 3 July 1952 at Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jim and June were parents of a son, **James Lee Windsor**, and grandparents of **Kenneth J. Windsor**. Jim and June lived in Clovis, California. Jim was interested in family history and in supporting our military troops.

—Sylvia Caldwell Rankin C7621

# Texas Cauble Family Association

## *Barn-Raising Committee*

Roy Hughes C14232, chair, roynlue2@verizon.net

Phyllis Hudson Hance E2551, phance@sw.rr.com

Regenia R. McIntyre H2342

Donald W. Cauble E1.12.6

Dan Chick H23531, representing the Board

## *Todd Christmas Memorial Scholarship Committee*

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Rick Cauble E5142, Dan Cauble H1321

Dan Chick H23531, representing the Board

Becky and Brad Christmas D6.10.32, Benefactors

## *Special Contributions to Scholarship Fund*

Becky and Brad Christmas D6.10.32

Elaine Lewis Hentschel D6222/Delores Lewis Springs

D622: *In Memory of their mother, Delores Lewis*

Julia Cauble Smith H2353 and Al

Ruby Yarter H2391 and Clarence

Connie Baker Wallner E22221 and Jim

Kiefer Cauble H2361 and Aubry Nell

Shawn Cauble E72241 and Shannon

Roy Hughes C14232 and Lue

Rick Cauble E5142 and Elaine

Wilma Futrell H2311

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Rick Cauble E5142

Glen Rotan RF2.12.11

James Cauble of Brevard, NC

Julia Cauble Smith H2353

## *Thanks To Contributors to DNA Project*

Cauble, Don E1.12.6 and Falby

Cauble, James E7223 and Ernestine

Cauble, Rick E5142 and Elaine

Cauble, Shawn E72241 and Shannon

Davis, Bobi Jo H1215 and Jim

Leonard, Revis Cauble H23611 and Tommy

Long, Carolyn Cauble H2362 and Sid

Smith, Julia Cauble H2353 and Al H.

*Visit our website: [www.cauble-rotan.org](http://www.cauble-rotan.org)*

## *Remember this date:*

12-13 June 2009 are the days for the next

Cauble-Rotan Family Reunion

at Whitney Theatre, Albany, Texas



## **Statement of Purpose**

This genealogical newsletter is distributed online. It is dedicated to documenting the lives of Peter Cauble, Sr. (1786 NC-1870 Tyler Co. TX), his wife, Mary Ann Rotan (1794 SC-1860 Tyler Co. TX), and their thousands of descendants. The aim is also to report the news and genealogical research of Texas Cauble Family Association.

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