



FLORENCE WARFIELD SILLERS, Regent,
MISSISSIPPI DELTA CHAPTER,
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

PREFACE

This is primarily a history of the early days of Bolivar County, compiled because there was no written record of the happenings of those early years when the county was in the process of building. The events recorded are the personal recollections of the people who lived through those pioneer days, or the recollections of their descendants.

As almost the entire settlement of the county during the period from 1830 to 1880 took place along the river front, the greater part of the early history must necessarily be a story of the River-side. There was very little development of the eastern side of the county until the railroad went through in 1883-1884. The real settlement of that side did not begin until around 1890 and thereafter.

In order to round out the story of the county, we have endeavored to cover the early period of the eastern side in the same manner in which the pioneer era has been covered—through personal recollections of the early settlers and their children. These records are as authentic as is possible when material is dependent upon the memory of the human mind. In some articles there are repetitions of stories by different authors and these we have retained purposely as corroborative matter. For authority to do this we can cite no better example than the Four Gospels of the New Testament.

To complete the story of Bolivar County, we have brought to the present time the record of county officers, the history of the towns, and the progress of the county. But we have not touched upon the First World War nor World War II. The county's record of the First World War has been thoroughly covered in *The Record of Bolivar County in World War 1917-1918*—a volume compiled by the Mississippi Delta Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and kept in the Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi. The records of the second World War will be available to future historians. That is a definite work for some patriotic group or person of the future. I sincerely trust that my own organization, the Mississippi Delta Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, will assume this important task some day.

We have endeavored to use 1940 as the deadline in this history, though occasionally some later events have crept into the text of an article. 1940

It is interesting to most readers to discover the *raison d'être* of a certain event or the writing of a book. In looking back over the years preceding the compilation of this history of Bolivar County, I can see many reasons that brought it about. The main

one, as stated above, was that there was absolutely no written history of the early pioneer era.

After 1900 there were many of the pioneer citizens still living who had actually lived through many years of the early development of the county. My husband, Walter Sillers, Sr., had lived here since 1854. I had lived in the county since 1885, as had many others. The whole story was there before our eyes and often it was said, "This ought to be written down for future generations." But nothing was ever done about it up to 1920.

How I happened to be the medium through which this historical matter was gathered is an outgrowth of my work in the Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Always interested in the development of Bolivar County and this great Delta, I named the chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which I was privileged to organize in 1916, the Mississippi Delta Chapter, in honor of this section of our state. The membership was county wide, and included fifty representative, patriotic women from over the county.

In 1918 Dr. Dunbar Rowland, State Director of the Department of Archives and History, offered a prize to the state membership of the Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution for the best scrap book or record of World War I in each county. Our new chapter, of which I was regent, entered the contest and won the state prize for the best county record. As chairman of the historical committee, I received my first training in compiling historical records.

In 1920, Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, State Historian of the D.A.R., appealed to the chapters for an early history of their county, offering a prize for the best county history. Again, under my chairmanship and regency, the Mississippi Delta Chapter accepted the task. We worked hard for two years, collecting data, copying records, interviewing older citizens, and enjoying the highly interesting and exciting work.

At last, in 1926, our book was finished; and we won the first prize for the best county history in the state. As there was no money for printing it, we had two copies typed and bound. We presented one volume to Bolivar County, to be kept in the record room of the Chancery Court at Rosedale. The other volume was sent to the D. A. R. library in Washington, where it has been highly praised for its interesting subject matter and its genealogical value.

I must add that except for the valuable assistance, contributions, and direction of my husband, Walter Sillers, Sr., this history could never have been compiled.

To all those men and women who have since passed away, who gave us their own experiences in the early days of Bolivar County,

we are deeply grateful. Had we waited longer, it would have been too late.

In 1936, stimulated by the county centennial, we began to collect more data, some of which covered the intervening years, 1926 to 1936. We planned to make this into a supplement to our 1926 volume.

About this time, as State Historian of the Daughters of the American Revolution, I became interested in a request by the national society, sent out over the entire nation, for county histories and for *place names* in the counties, the origin of these names and their meaning. We were ten years ahead of the national society, for we already had our county history and this history contained all of the information requested. This made me realize the value of the records we had compiled.

Through the past twenty years our history has been continuously consulted for county data and commended by the readers who always ended their praise with "Why don't you publish this book?"

When the W.P.A. was gathering data for their historical project, the workers on the west side of the county used our *History of Bolivar County* as their chief source for material.

When the attention of the present Board of Supervisors was called to the invaluable records within this book, they became interested in preserving it for future generations. They appointed a committee to consider the advisability of publishing it and to help gather additional material. This committee, which represents the five supervisor districts, is composed of Mrs. Florence Sillers Ogden, chairman, Mrs. Margaret Allen Green, Mrs. Susie Gibert Knowlton, all members of the Mississippi Delta Chapter; and Mrs. J. E. Adams, and Miss Lucille Wooten, who are not affiliated with the D. A. R.

After reports from the committee, the Board consented to advance the funds for the publication of this book, composed of the original history and additional material collected by the Mississippi Delta Chapter and members of the committee. Our chapter has agreed to apply all funds from the sale of the history toward the repayment of the money advanced by the Board. Our book is now ready to offer to the public.

To the members of the Board of Supervisors of Bolivar County, whose vision and interest in the preservation of history has made this publication possible, we are deeply grateful.

To our ninety-two members of the Mississippi Delta Chapter who have so loyally and zealously cooperated in the work; to every

contributor to its pages; to every worker in any and all departments; to the Committee selected by the Board, who have worked faithfully through a long, hot summer; to Professor Wirt A. Williams of Delta State Teachers College, who has efficiently edited this book; we wish to express our grateful thanks and deep appreciation.

There are a few who, I feel, deserve mention here. They are Mrs. Alma Jones Morris and Mrs. Eugenia Dixon Townsend, who worked faithfully with me in collecting the material for the original volume; Mrs. Emmye Bow Simmons and my daughter, Mrs. Florence Sillers Ogden, who were largely responsible for the collection of subsequent material gathered over a ten-year period.

To the contributors we owe an abiding debt of gratitude. Those still living will have the satisfaction which comes to those who have given unselfishly of their time and talents to a worthwhile cause. Those who have gone have left their footprints on the sands of time. We thank them all.

Florence Warfield Sillers

THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA CHAPTER DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1916-1946

The Mississippi Delta Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, was organized by Mrs. Walter Sillers, Sr., in Rosedale in 1916 and named in honor of the the Yazoo and Mississippi Delta.

The objects of the society are patriotic, and are mainly as follow:

1. "To perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American Independence; -by the acquisition and protection of historic spots, and erection of monuments; -by the encouragement of historical research in relation to the Revolution and the publication of its results; -by the preservation of documents and relics and of the records of the individual service of the Revolutionary soliders and patriots; -and by the promotion of celebrations of all patriotic anniversaries."

2. "To carry out the injunction of Washington in his farewell address to the American people, 'To promote, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge'; thus developing an enlightened public opinion, and affording to young and old such advantages as shall develop in them the largest capacity for performing the duties of American Citizens."

3. "To cherish, maintain, and extend the institutions of American freedom, to foster true patriotism and love of country, and to aid in securing for all the blessing of liberty." -Extract from the Constitution of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Article II.

From a membership of sixteen in 1916, the Mississippi Delta Chapter has grown steadily until in 1946 the membership is ninety-two, with ten applications pending. The members are representative women from every part of Bolivar County, and they are proud of their heritage of American ideals and lineage.

Through its thirty years of existence the chapter has had but one regent, Mrs. Walter Sillers. Through its membership the chapter has contributed a generous number of state officers and chairmen of state committees, as well as members of national committees. Members were instrumental in the purchase by the State Society of the historic mansion "Rosalie" at Natchez.

The first outstanding achievement of the Mississippi Delta Chapter was the compilation of an authentic record of every war activity of Bolivar County in World War I. The service records of over six hundred white soldiers and the names of fifteen hundred negro soldiers were collected. These were attractively arranged and illustrated. The volume, handsomely bound in red leather, won the state prize which was offered by the Department of Archives and History of the State of Mississippi, and it has been placed in that department at Jackson.

ROSTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA CHAPTER, 1916-1946 DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN MISSISSIPPI

Allen, Frances Clark, (Mrs. C. B.).....	Rosedale
Ammons, Alberta Nichols, (Mrs. R. L.).....	Beulah
Arnold, Eunice Logan, (Mrs. W. H.).....	Gunnison*
Austin, Zoe Roberts, (Mrs. L. B.).....	Rosedale
Blanchard, Mrs. Alice Trimble.....	Perthshire*
Brooks, Annie Walworth, (Mrs. J. C.).....	Deeson & Memphis, Tenn.*
Burbridge, Mrs. W. T.....	Alligator*
Burt, Emmie Nash, (Mrs. W. T.).....	Gunnison*
Beadel, Berta Dixon, (Mrs. Watt).....	Benoit*
Cassity, Annie Lenoir, (Mrs. W. T.).....	Beulah
Clark, Elizabeth Toney, (Mrs. Fred).....	Cleveland*
Connell, Lula Poitevent, (Mrs. Wm.).....	Shelby*
Clark, Pauline Alston, (Mrs. H.).....	Clarksdale*
Coppedge, Coralie Lobdell (Mrs. L. J.).....	Rosedale
Dossett, Mabel Dixon, (Mrs. W. L.).....	Beulah
Ewing, Emma Bell, (Mrs. E. C.).....	Scott
Farrar, Anna Sillers, (Mrs. C. C.).....	Rosedale*
Fox, Lucy Gay, (Mrs. J. W.).....	Scott*
Goza, Lorine Rush, (Mrs. A. F.).....	Rosedale
Gibson, Anna Bugg, (Mrs. C. P.).....	Beulah*
Holcomb, Perle, (Mrs. I. J.).....	Gunnison
House, Helen Clark, (Mrs. LaValle).....	Cleveland
Jacobs, Annie E. Clark, (Mrs.).....	San Francisco, Calif.*
Kirk, M. E. Wall, (Mrs. J. M.).....	Gunnison
Knowlton, Susie Gibert, (Mrs. S. D.).....	Perthshire

Lobdell, Coralie Nugent, (Mrs. J. V.)	Rosedale*
Montgomery, Miss Lottie	Rosedale*
Morris, Alma Jones, (Mrs. C. C.)	Rosedale
McGehee, Mary Ann (Mrs. J. G.)	Gunnison
Nugent, Mrs. L. W.	Rosedale
Nugent, Carolyn Carson, (Mrs. H. W.)	Rosedale
Poague, Mrs. Lucy Walworth	Deeson*
Pulliam, Lavinia Sneed, (Mrs. J. J.)	Gunnison
Priestley, Felice Lyell, (Mrs. W. M.)	Rosedale
Pearce, Jennie Pearcefield, (Mrs. L. B.)	Benoit*
Pearson, Evelyn Sillers, (Mrs. J. L.)	Rosedale
Reid, Emma Louise Roberts, (Mrs. Frank)	Friars Point
Sledge, Mrs. Anna Lindsay	Gunnison*
Shattuck, Mary Smith, (Mrs. A. R.)	Rosedale
Shelby, Mrs. Janie Poitevent	Shelby*
Shelby, Ella Jones, (Mrs. I. L.)	Rosedale
Shelby, Jeannette Eckles (Mrs. S. S.)	Beulah*
Skinner, Mary Sillers, (Mrs. N. C.)	Rosedale
Stowers, Miss Margaret	Benoit*
Sillers, Florence Warfield, (Mrs. Walter)	Rosedale
Sillers, Lena Roberts, (Mrs. Walter, Jr.)	Rosedale
Smith, Mrs. Isabell Trimble	Perthshire
Smith, Jessie Trimble, (Mrs. Will)	Perthshire*
Shelby, RosaBelle McGuire, (Mrs. Will)	Rosedale
Smith, Mildred Williams, (Mrs. C. C.)	Rosedale
Townsend, Eugenia Dixon, (Mrs. W. T.)	Cleveland
Vardaman, Fredricka Jones, (Mrs. H. D.)	Rosedale
West, Cordelia McNeese, (Mrs. J. P.)	Cleveland
Young, Louise Taney, (Mrs. B. J.)	Scott*

Note:—The stars show the deaths in chapter to 1946.

This was the roster of members when the history of the county was compiled.

Admissions since 1926, and added to the first roster 1926-1946

Barry, Maggie Burrus, (Mrs. T. F.) Associate Member	Benoit
Bond, Martha Jones, (Mrs. Frank)	Benoit
Busby, Mary Bond, (Mrs. Cal.)	Pace
Bond, Irene Townsend, (Mrs. Charles)	Pace
Black, Rosa Lea Brown, (Mrs. Carl)	Rosedale
Cumming, Cecile Todd, (Mrs. H. T.)	Pace
Conner, Gertrude Burt, (Mrs. J. B.)	Argos, Indiana
Cockerham, Evelyn Spink, (Mrs. H. L.)	Gunnison
Curd, Bonnie Hamlett, (Mrs. Price)	Pace*
Dabney, Miss Camalina	Benoit
Dickerson, Laura Hamlett, (Mrs. E. M.)	Benoit
Dunlap, Lucile Logan, (Mrs. Ellis)	Cleveland
Denton, Madge Henry, (Mrs. Charles)	Shelby
Denton, Flemma Henry, (Mrs. William)	Shelby
Denton, Lola Louise Walton, (Mrs. Jack)	Shelby
Ewing, Margaret Mayes Patterson, (Mrs. E. C., Jr.)	Scott
Ellis, Frances Hamlett, (Mrs. S. B.)	Rosedale
Francis, Blanche Scruggs, (Mrs. Charles)	Beulah

Goza, Doris Duke, (Mrs. H. S.)	Rosedale
Gourlay, Helen Powell, (Mrs. J. G.)	Beulah
Green, Margaret Allen, (Mrs. E. H.)	Cleveland
Jackson, Lucy Elliott, (Mrs. W. E.)	Rosedale
Jackson, Lois Harrison, (Mrs. J. F.)	Rosedale
Jones, Virgie Gibert, (Mrs. Milton)	Merigold
Green, Elizabeth Ann McMillan, (Mrs. Wm.)	Hernando
Knowlton, Martha Erwin, (Mrs. Maury)	Perthshire
Lytle, Emma Knowlton, (Mrs. S. B.)	Chicago, Ill.
Maddox, Elsie McNair, (Mrs. J. H.)	Perthshire
McMillan, Janie Rice, (Mrs. C.)	Rosedale
Morgan, Madel Jacobs, (Mrs. A.)	Jackson
Nutt, Inez Allen, (Mrs. J. H.)	Rosedale
Nobles, Lillian Lobdell, (Mrs. E. R.)	Rosedale
Paden, Bertha Robertson, (Mrs. F. G.)	Rosedale
Poitevent, Mrs. Mary Maddox	Shelby
Porter, Elizabeth Bolis, (Mrs. Walter)	Shrewsbury, Mass.
Parkinson, Katie Terrell, (Mrs. J. R.)	Benoit
Patterson, Mary Alice Mayes, (Mrs. C. D.)	Benoit
Potts, Mignette Pease, (Mrs. J. W., Sr.)	Mt. Lebanon, Pa.
Ramsay, Dorothy Ray, (Mrs. A. H.)	Cleveland
Rayner, Thelma Morehead, (Mrs. I.)	Merigold
Roberts, Dorothy Bowen, (Mrs. H. L.)	Shelby
Rucker, Carol Colquitt, (Mrs. W. A.)	Little Rock, Ark.
Speakes, Blanche Trigg, (Mrs. W. A.)	Benoit
Speakes, Katie Dee Cook, (Mrs. Sam)	Benoit
Scott, Floy Harris, (Mrs. W. G.)	Benoit
Sansing, Anita Bond, (Mrs. Jules)	Pace
Smith, Ruth Ratliff, (Mrs. Norwood)	Rosedale
Smith, Ruth Elise, (Miss)	Rosedale
Spinks, Helen Fox, (Mrs. A. G.)	Malvina
Simmons, Emmye Bowe, (Mrs. J. D.)	Cleveland
Taylor, Fannie C. Blanchard, (Mrs. George)	Shelby
Thompson, Grace Boyce, (Mrs. G. G.)	Rosedale
Vardaman, Flora Logan, (Mrs. Douglas)	Malvina
Weems, Evelyn Sillers Pearson, (Mrs. W. E.)	Rosedale
Wynne, Jessie Haynes, (Mrs. E. O.)	Rosedale
White, Grace Thompson, (Mrs. W. E.)	Rosedale
Wilkinson, Willie Woody, (Mrs. L. B.)	Gunnison
Wilkinson, Mrs. Walter	Gunnison
Yates, Susie Ellen Knowlton, (Mrs. T. E., Jr.)	Shelby
Yerger, Miss Pattie	Rosedale
Young, Sara Porter Farnsworth, (Mrs. Peter)	Scott
Williams, Velma Les, (Mrs. J. M.)	Benoit
Winn, Archie Barry (Mrs. Eustace)	Winterville

First Chapter Officers, 1916

Regent	Mrs. Walter Sillers, Sr.
Vice-regent	Mrs. S. D. Knowlton
Rec.-Secretary	Mrs. L. W. Nugent
Registrar	Mrs. A. R. Shattuck
Treasurer	Mrs. N. C. Skinner
Historian	Mrs. J. M. Kirk

Officers in 1945-6

Regent	Mrs. Walter Sillers
Vice-regent	Mrs. S. D. Knowlton
Rec.-Secretary	Mrs. L. W. Nugent
Treasurer	Mrs. W. E. Jackson
Registrar	Mrs. W. L. Dossett
Chaplain	Mrs. J. V. Lobdell
Historian	Mrs. A. G. Spinks
Parliamentarian	Mrs. W. G. Scott