

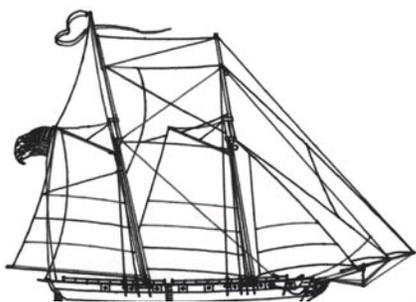
Florida Keys

Sea Heritage Journal

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Kinfolks: The Key West Connection

How a wrecker's venture into the cattle business enabled the publication of one of the South's most prized family history resources.

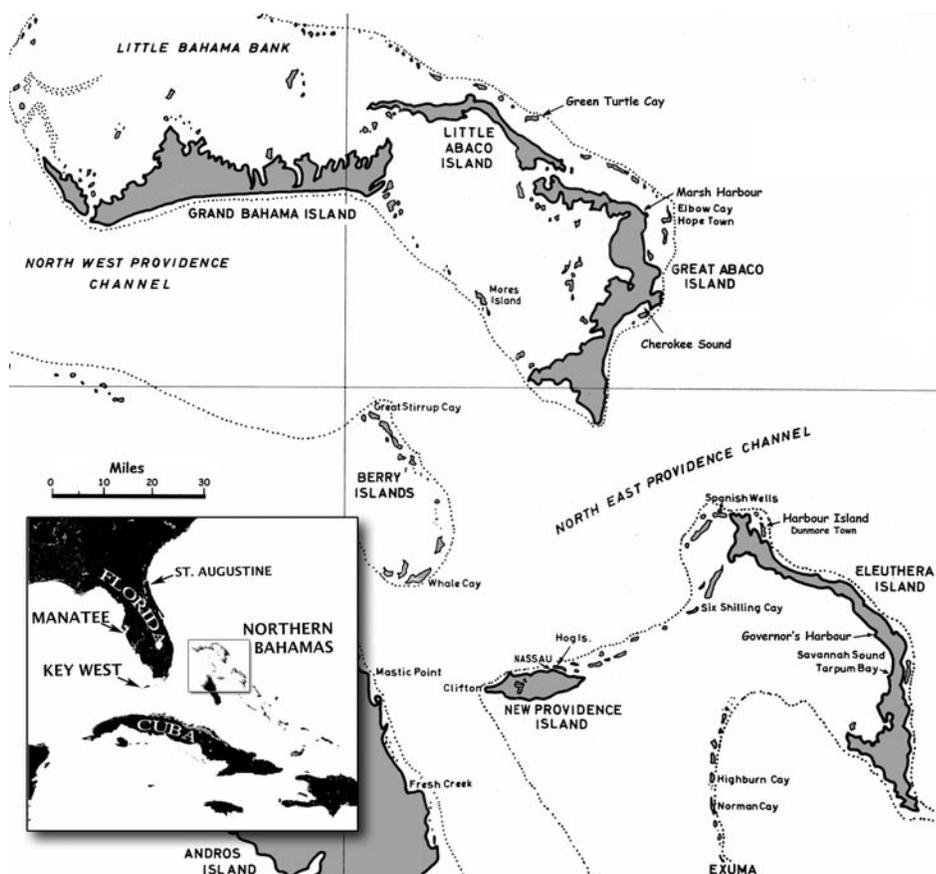
By

Thomas Neil Knowles

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In the mid-1930s, William Curry Harlee completed one of the most extensive family history projects of the 20th Century. His remarkable genealogy covers a population the size of a city and spans generations more than two hundred years back. Commonly referred to as "Kinfolks" (see the notes at the end of this article for the full title), the four-volume work provides information on 27,841 people primarily from families that resided in the Carolinas, Tennessee, Florida, and the Bahamas. An invaluable reference for genealogists and historians researching Southern families, "Kinfolks" exists because of a Key West girl born in 1852. She was destined to become the author's mother through circumstances derived from a wrecker's decision to go into the cattle business, the chaos of the post-Civil War era, and the realignment of fortunes caused by yellow fever and accidental death.

Mary Ellen Curry was a descendant of Colonel Joseph Curry of Scotland, a surveyor who came to the American Colonies



The mild climate of the Northern Bahamas appealed to many Loyalists searching for a place to relocate after the Revolutionary War. Winter temperatures seldom fall much below 60°F and usually reach about 75°F during the afternoon. Summer temperatures are typically 78°F or less at night and seldom rise above 90°F during the day. Photo credit: the Author.

sometime before August 1755 as an official of the British Government. In going about his duties, he was able to identify and take advantage

of real estate opportunities for personal gain. When he died about a year before the signing of the
(Continued on page 9)

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES

By Lynda and Tom Hambright

KWMHS President Ed Little Receives Award for Service



*KWMHS President Ed Little with his Meritorious Federal Service Award.
Photo credit: Tom Hambright.*

Key West Maritime Historical Society President Ed Little was awarded the United States Department of Commerce Silver Medal Award for Meritorious Federal Service for providing critical

eyewitness reports on the devastated Florida Keys fishing industry during the 2005 hurricane season. Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez presented the award on October 11, 2006 in Washington, DC.

Copy of "Kinfolks"

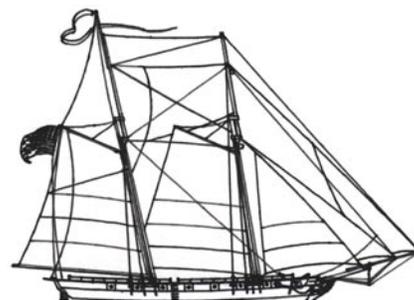
Copies of the four-volume "Kinfolks" can be found on the rare book market but are very expensive. For genealogist working with Key West and Bahamas families all that is needed is volume three and the index. These have been republished in one volume by Joy Lowe Jossi

of Gresham Oregon. This volume of "Kinfolks" can be sometime found in local book stores or if not from Joy Jossi at 503-665-1371 or joyjos@juno.com. The Library's Local History Department has an original four-volume edition and the reprinted volume three.

New Members

Lawrence L. Plummer and Prudences Churchill, Key West;

Susan Flynn and Greg Griffin, Key West.



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Letters and articles are welcome. Please write to: Editor, Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal, KWMHS, P.O. Box 695, Key West, FL 33041.

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6 6660aall18bc, Argent 601gaa, Augustus Wellington 7 MC7023b2a24,
 Benjamin Churchill v6 666022ab31, Bessie (Henderson) v6 666022aelb1,
 Catherine v660bca8b, Charles Rogers 7 MC7023
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 beth v6 666022acac, (Mendenhall)
 v6 666022aca, Elsie Neal 6 666022acacb,
 Emma m6 666022acac, Ethel Louise 6 6660aall18blc, Etta m33052b2
 F. v102, Frances Elizabeth 7 MC7023b2aa, Francis
 -1, Frank B. m6 666022aca, Frank Byron 6 666022aca,
 v1L1102, vC2 2C202121, v7M 777034, Gideon v6 666022aca,
 Gilbert v7 MC7, Grace Humble 6 666022acacd, Harold Allen m3302311b,
 Hattie m6 666022aca, Thomas m6 666022aca, Thomas m6 666022aca

Here's how to access one of best sources of genealogical information about many Key West families.

By
 Thomas Neil Knowles
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One of the most ambitious genealogy projects undertaken during the 20th Century resulted in a four-volume, 3,270 page work that carries the equally prodigious title of:

“Kinfolks, a genealogical and biographical record of Thomas and Elizabeth (Stuart) Harllee, Andrew and Agnes (Cade) Fulmore, Benjamin and Mary Curry, Samuel and Amelia (Russell) Kemp, John and Hannah (Walker) Bethea, Sterling Clark and Frances (King) Robertson, Samuel and Sophia Ann (Parker) Dickey, their antecedents, descendants, and collateral relatives, with chapter concerning state and county records and the derivation of counties of Alabama, Florida, Georgis, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, prepared and published by William Curry Harllee, assisted by numerous collaborators.”

“Kinfolks,” as it is often referred to, has become a mainstay of genealogical research, especially

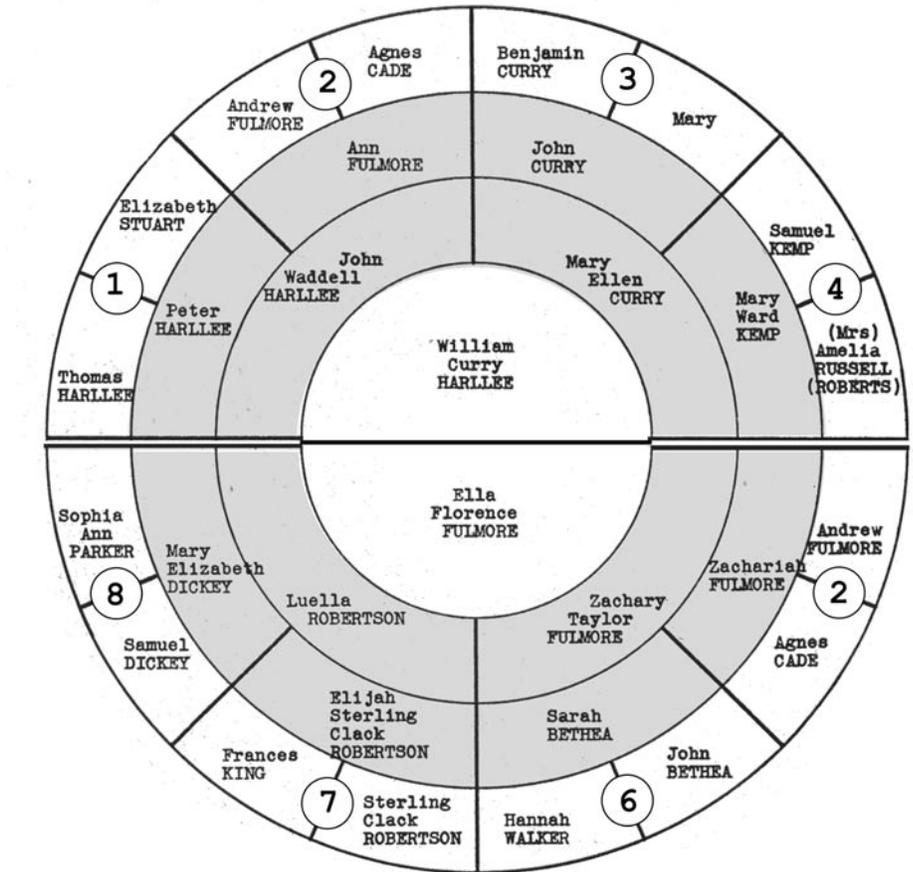


Figure 1. The author and his wife (white semicircles at the center of the diagram) each have four great grandparent couples (outer white arcs); however, there are only seven unique great grandparent couples because Andrew Fulmore and Agnes Cade are ancestors of both William Harllee and Ella Fulmore.

where southern families are involved. The work contains a wealth of information about families from the Southeastern

United States, including some of the Loyalists who fled to the Bahamas after the American
 Continued on page 4)

Central Couple Designations			
Husbands		Wives	
Desig.	Name	Desig.	Name
1	Thomas Harllee	S	Elizabeth Stuart
2	Andrew Fulmore	C	Agnes Cade
3	Benjamin Curry	—	Mary _____
4	Samuel Kemp	R	Amelia Russell
6	John Bethea	W	Hannah Walker
7	Sterling Clack Robinson	K	Frances King
8	Samuel Dickey	P	Sophia Ann Parker

Figure 2. The designation of the husband is the section number assigned to the central couple. The designation of the wife is the first initial of her maiden surname.

(“Kinfolks” from page 3)

Revolution and whose descendants migrated to the Florida Keys during the 1800s. Since many of these families (Curry, Roberts, Kemp, Russell, Lowe, Pinder, Williams, Archer, Sands, to name a few) as well as people in multiple states and the Bahamas are covered, it is a resource worth investigating for almost anyone interested in family histories. “Kinfolks” can be found in some public libraries; the Monroe County Public Library located at Key West has a copy.

Finding information in the multi-volume work can be a frustrating experience because the General Index does not directly link the names of individuals to page numbers, but lists a mix of alphanumeric codes and abbreviations associated with a particular surname. For example, the entry for Samuel Kemp appears in the General Index under the Kemp surname listing as:

Samuel 4 44402226, 4 44403, v44402, 4401 (=4) mR40b (=R), 401, -1, vPreface p. xiii

The entry for his wife, Amelia, is shown in the Russell surname listing as:

Amelia 30ed, R40b (=R) m4401 (=4)

That is enough to stymie a part-time genealogy enthusiast, and has

caused many a reader to resort to browsing through the volumes hoping to come across a person of interest and scavenge whatever morsel of data luck sends their way. Why is the General Index such a cryptic compilation? What does all this coding mean?

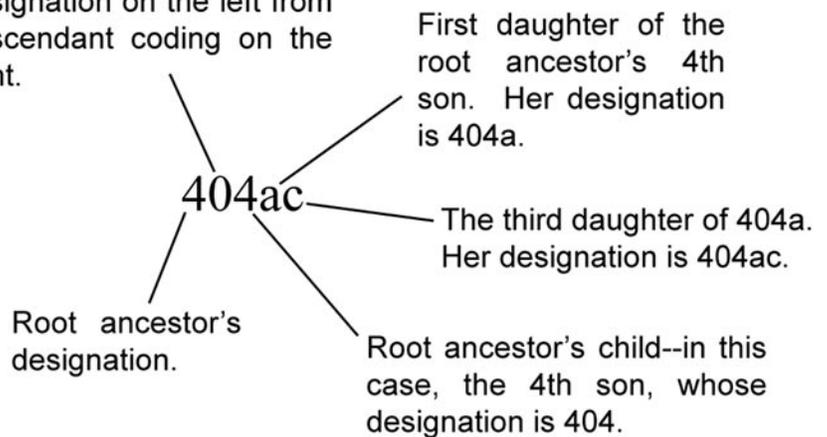
When William Curry Harllee began to work on the project in

1930, he chose as a starting point for the genealogy his and his wife’s great grandparents. Because of their pivotal role, the author refers to them as the “central couples” (see Figure 1). “Kinfolks” is a compilation of biographical and genealogical information about these 14 people and their respective ancestors and descendants. The material is divided into sections with each section being devoted to one of the central couples and their ancestors and descendants. Volume 1 contains the prefatory material and Section 1 Harllee. Volume 2 contains Section 2 Fulmore, Section 3 Curry, and Section 4 Kemp. Volume 3 is composed of Section 6 Bethea, Section 7 Robertson, and Section 8 Dickey.

There is no Section 5 because William Curry Harllee and his wife, Ella Fulmore, have only 14 great grandparents instead of the usual

Coding Scheme For Descendants

The 0 is always used to separate the root ancestor’s designation on the left from descendant coding on the right.



Sons are represented by a numeral that corresponds to the order of birth when that information is known. Daughters are represented by small letters, with the letter’s order in the alphabet corresponding to the order of birth when known.

Figure 3. The characters that make up a descendant’s designation form a chain back to his/her root ancestor.

16. Andrew and Agnes Fulmore, one of the central couples, are ancestors of both the author and his wife.

By the time "Kinfolks" was published in the mid 1930s, the genealogy contained information on 27,841 people. Early on Harlee recognized the need for a means of identifying each person in the genealogy so that relationships could be accurately tracked through the generations. Names are not sufficient for this purpose because too many people have the same names. In order to make the information retrievable and to maintain the visibility of relationships, he developed an ingenious coding system that not only uniquely identified each person, but also provides the identifiers of the other people in their lineage. He called it "The System Of Designations".

The central couples were assigned the initial designations to establish the foundation of The System of Designations (see Figure 2). The great grandfathers were assigned the section numbers (1 through 4 and 6 through 8) as their designations. To avoid confusion, Harlee elected not to use the designation 5 since Andrew Cade was already assigned the designation 2. The great grandmothers' designations were defined as being the capital initial of their respective maiden surnames. In the case of Benjamin Curry's wife, this resulted in her designation being a blank since her maiden surname is not known.

Designation Coding

The designations of descendants were formed as shown in Figure 3. On the extreme left is the root ancestor's designation. This may be one of the central couples or one of their ancestors. A zero is always used to separate the root ancestor's designation from the descendants. To the right of the zero, a character is inserted for each lineal

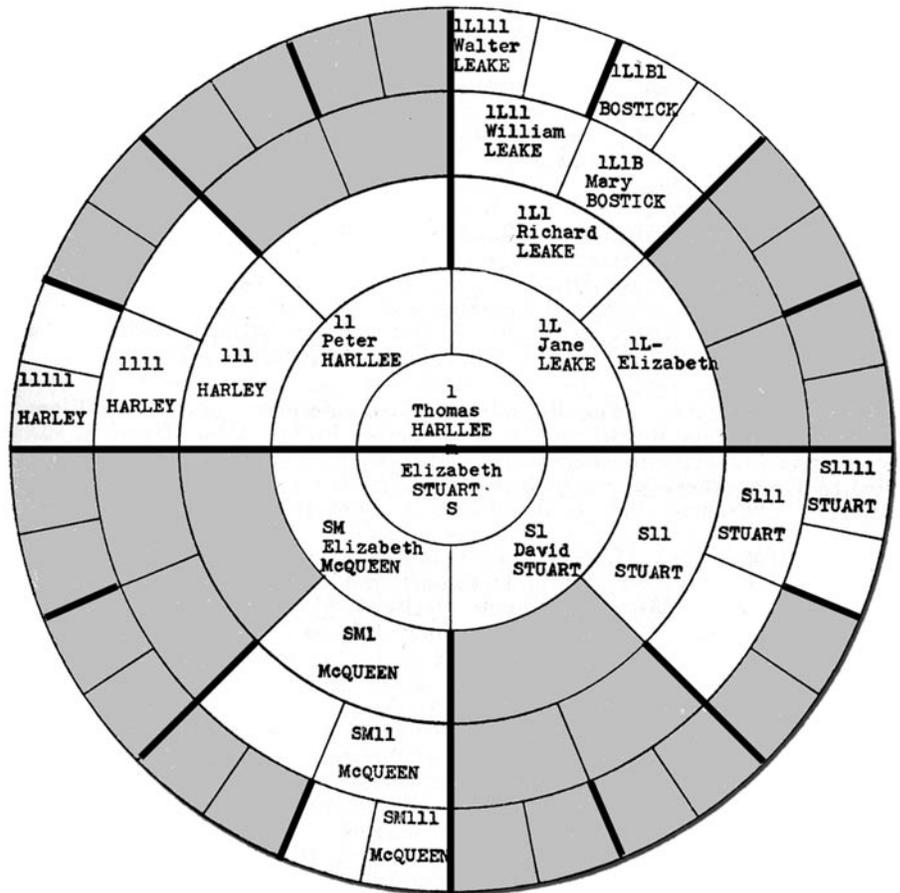


Figure 4. This chart demonstrates the designation scheme used for ancestors of the central couples; in this case, Thomas Harlee and his wife, Elizabeth Stuart (great grandparents of William Curry Harlee).

descendant down to the person who will be represented by the designation being constructed. If the descendant is a son, the character will be a numeral; if the descendant is a daughter, the character will be a small letter.

A different scheme was used for constructing the designations of ancestors of the central couples. The designations of the fathers of the central couples were formed by taking the designation of their child and adding the section number on the right. The designation of Thomas Harlee's father (see Figure 4) is therefore 11. For his wife's father, David Stuart, the designation is S1. The designations of the mothers of the central couples were formed by adding the capital initial of the mother's maiden surname to the

right of their child's designation. In the example shown in Figure 4, Thomas Harlee's mother, Jane Leake, has the designation 1L. Elizabeth Stuart's mother, Elizabeth McQueen, has the designation SM. These parent/child schemes were applied to each of the earlier generations.

Once the designations of the ancestors of the central couples were formed, the author could provide designations for the descendants of a given ancestor using the scheme shown in Figure 3. This feature allowed the descendants of the central couples' ancestors to be identified and included in the work. It also created a situation where members of the central couples and some of their ancestors can

(Continued on page 6)

("Kinfolks" from page 5)

have more than one designation. For example, Thomas Harllee, a member of the central couples, has the designation 1. He is also identified with the designation 1102, which indicates that he is the second son of his father, 11 Peter Harllee. The author uses special notation where more than one designation is assigned to a person; in the case of Thomas Harllee, the notation is "1102 (=1)".

The General Index

Volume IV is devoted exclusively to The General Index, a listing of all the included surnames appearing in alphabetical order beginning with Abbott and ending with Zwingle. The purpose of the General Index is to supply one or more designations that will allow the researcher to find information related to the person or persons of interest in *Kinfolks* Volumes I – III. It rarely provides a page number. In many cases there will be more than one designation associated with a name, so if information is being sought for a particular person, the more that is known about the person of interest the easier it is to eliminate the irrelevant designations.

The first part of a surname entry is devoted to people for whom only the surname is known (see Figure 5). This is indicated by three spaced periods (. . .) followed by one or more designations. Commas separate the information for each person. Following the people for whom only the surname is known are people having the surname for whom the first and middle names are known; these are listed alphabetically by their first name or initial. The names shown in the body of an entry for a given surname are first and middle names or their initials; adding the surname forms the complete name.

Surname

Lowes whose first names are not known.
(highlighting added)

LOWE, . . . m3302a, 33021d1d, v30cL2214a, 30db11, 30f1111a, 30f1312-, 30f17b, 30f211b, 30f211d, Ada 33051da, 30f212d, Adele v30cL342b, Adelle 33051c3d, Albert 30f51, Albert Cecil 30c232, Alfred 30f45, Alfred B. v404b, Alfred Sands v30cL34227, Alice 30c231b, 30f111c, 30f5b, 33051aaac, Alice Jane v30cL2211e, Alice Yulee v30cL3421e, Almead v30cL3e3c1, Alonzo v30cL343, Alpheus v30cL522, Alvin v30cL231, Amanda 30f1c, Amelia m330522, m3305b1, m404, Amelia Elizabeth 40ac, Amelia Magdalene 404ac, Amelia (Lowe) m30f22, m30f31. Amos m33051d, Amy A. 30f32a, Amy Isobell 30f211c, Ann m406, v30cL5a, Annie 33051dc, v30cL221c, v30cL2b, 30f33a, Annie Elizabeth 40aba, Archibald 30f3232, Archie 30f333, Archie R. R0a42a2, Arlene v30cL2211b, Asa 33051c11, Asa Milton R0ad3, Ashlin 30c214, Audrey 30f1312a, B. A. (JP) v30324,

Figure 5. A portion of the Lowe entry in the General Index. Each alphanumeric code set off by commas identifies a specific person.

In addition to numerals, upper and lower case letters, and blank spaces, the designations in the General Index may have prefixes attached. Two frequently used prefixes are "m" for married and "v" for see/refer to. For example, m3302a translates to "married the person whose code is 3302a", and v30cL231 translates to "see/refer to the information for the person whose code is 30cL231". Supplemental information appears in parentheses. Some of the abbreviations used are: (Col) = colonel; (Rev Cong) = reverend Congregational; (JP) = justice of the peace. A list of abbreviations can be found on page xi in Volume I of "Kinfolks."

Tracking down Amelia Lowe An Example

The following step-by-step example demonstrates how the System of Designations can be used to locate information in "Kinfolks" about a specific person. If Amelia Lowe is the person of interest, the first step is to look up the Lowe surname in the General Index (Volume IV). The Lowe entry covers 2/3 pages listing approximately 500 people; Figure 5 is the first portion of the entry. Near the middle of Figure 5, the name Amelia appears at the head of four

groups of designations (note that the groups cross the line break into the next paragraph). Within the groups, commas separate the information for each person.

There are a total of seven people whose names contain the word "Amelia" or who are associated with a person named Amelia Lowe:

- Amelia: Indicates three people named Amelia Lowe married (indicated by the small m) people included in the database. The designations of their respective spouses are 330522, 3305b1, and 404.
- Amelia Elizabeth: Indicates one person named Amelia Elizabeth Lowe is included in the database under the designation 40ac.
- Amelia Magdalene: Indicates one person named Amelia Magdalene Lowe is included in the database under the designation 404ac.
- Amelia (Lowe): Indicates two people whose first names are Amelia and maiden names are unknown, married Lowes included in the database whose designations are 30f22 and 30f31 respectively.

If Amelia Lowe is all the information about the name that is available, then the person of interest could be 40ac, 404ac or be the wife

of 330522, 3305b1, 404, 30f22 and 30f31, but if it is known that the person's middle name is Magdalene, then there is only one designation to pursue, 404ac. This will be the case for this example.

As shown in Figure 3, the characters that comprise a descendant's designation are like a chain stretching between the root ancestor and the designated person. As each rightmost character is removed, the remaining characters form the designation of the immediate ancestor. The designation 404ac indicates that Amelia Magdalene Lowe is the third daughter of 404a, who is the first daughter of 404, who is the fourth son of the root ancestor whose designation is 4 (the character to the left of the zero). The designation 4 is assigned to Samuel Kemp (see Figure 2). The information about Amelia Lowe is therefore somewhere in Section 4 Kemp, which is located in Volume II.

At the beginning of each section immediately after the title page is a Summary of Contents. Figure 6 shows this page for Section 4. Midway down the page is an entry for 4 Samuel Kemp. The corresponding page number (1849) is the where a narrative concerning Samuel Kemp begins. The next entry shows that the register of his descendants begins on page 1856.

Registers are the vaults of genealogical information in "Kinfolks." There are two types of registers; one for ancestors (the author uses the term "antecedents") of the central couple and one for their descendants. There may also be other registers devoted to associated clans. In Figure 6, there are three registers listed. Since Amelia Magdalene is a descendant of Samuel Kemp, her information should be in the register that begins

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS OF 4 KEMP SECTION

	PAGE
REGISTER OF ANTECEDENTS OF SAMUEL AND AMELIA (RUSSELL) (ROBERTS) KEMP	1821
<i>Only the antecedents, and their sons and daughters in whose cases there are registers of their descendants, are named below.</i>	
44 444 THE KEMP FAMILY	1823
44 44402 ANTHONY KEMP	1828
4 444 JOHN KEMP m MARIAN - - -	1836
4 44401 JOHN KEMP m SARAH - - -	1837
444 BENJAMIN KEMP	1839
44 BENJAMIN KEMP m MARTHA - - -	1843
4402 BENJAMIN KEMP m 1. BIANKY - - - m 2. SARAH CURRY (3301a)	1848
4 SAMUEL KEMP m 1. - - - m 2. - - - SAWYER m 3. MRS. AMELIA (RUSSELL) ROBERTS	1849
REGISTER OF DESCENDANTS OF SAMUEL AND AMELIA (RUSSELL) (ROBERTS) KEMP	1856
RECORDS OF FAMILY BIBLES OF MARRIED SONS, DAUGHTERS, GRANDSONS, AND GRANDDAUGHTERS OF SAMUEL KEMP	1869
BIographies OF DESCENDANTS OF SAMUEL KEMP	1870
R4 THE RUSSELL FAMILY	1923
R AMELIA RUSSELL m WILLIAM ROBERTS	1924
REGISTER OF DESCENDANTS OF AMELIA RUSSELL AND HER FIRST HUSBAND WILLIAM ROBERTS	1925
BIographies OF DESCENDANTS OF WILLIAM AND AMELIA (RUSSELL) ROBERTS	1937

Figure 6. The Summary of Contents for Section 4 is on page 1820 in Volume II.

on page 1856.

The register containing Samuel Kemp's descendants covers thirteen, compactly printed pages with each entry identified by a surname and a designation. The following surnames appear in the register of Samuel Kemp's descendants: Kemp, Torres, Braman, Curry, Roberts, McClintock, Saunders, Gato Lightbourne, Roker, Demeritt, Sweeting, DuBreuil, Pinder, Lowe, Russell, Watson, Bello, Eneas, Pent, Hattrick, Arapian, Bayly, Pierce, Williams, Semple, Delaney, and Monsalvatge. Some of the surnames have multiple entries. The entries appear to be randomly scattered

because, while the surname is first, the entries are arranged in order of the designation that immediately follows the surname.

Beginning with the root ancestor one can follow the designations from 4 Samuel Kemp to 404 William Kemp, Amelia's grandfather, then to 404a Tahpenes Ann Kemp, Amelia's mother. This entry (see Figure 7) indicates Tahpenes married Gideon William Lowe and the couple had seven children, two boys and five girls. One of the boys died young. One the entries for the children is "c*Amelia

(Continued on page 8)

("Kinfolks" from page 7)

Magdalene". The asterisk means she was deceased at the time the information was assembled; the "c" indicates she was the couple's third daughter. According to the data, Amelia died just five years after she married George Eneas. At this point the investigator knows a good bit about Amelia and her parents, and could trace up the chain of designations to Samuel Kemp and his ancestors. (Genealogical data for members of the central couples including Samuel Kemp are located in the Register of Ancestors.)

Continuing down the register, Amelia's designation (404ac) is found on page 1864 adjacent to the ENEAS surname (see Figure 8). The entry for their family indicates that they had two girls, one of whom died young. From the information gathered from the 404a and 404ac entries, it appears that Amelia died of complications arising from the birth of her second daughter. Amelia died two days after her namesake was born, and the daughter died less than six weeks later. The surviving daughter married a man named Gutierrez and they had two sons and five daughters.

This example demonstrates the basic technique used to locate genealogical information in "Kinfolks." In addition to the genealogical data contained in the registers, volumes I-III have a wealth of biographical information including photographs, excerpts from letters and legal documents, and first-hand accounts of battles and adventures. Within each section, the pages containing biographical

LOWE 404a * TAHPENES ANN KEMP m GIDEON WILLIAM LOWE (33021b1) *
 1 Darrell Leman b 29 Mar 1868 Fla.Key West a do Eaton St.m 1. 12 Nov 1889 do by Rev. A.E.Householder (Meth) * Emma Irene Pinder b do d 28 Oct 1894 do Cy do m 2. 29 Apr 1896 do by Rev.Henry Hice (Meth Ep) * Cora Juliette Fabal b 5 Aug 1878 do d 7 Jan 1920 do Cy do m 3. 22 Apr 1922 do by Co.Judge Hugh Gunn -o- Verna Pace b Appalachicola
 2*William b 22 Apr 1870 Fla.Key West dy
 a*Mary Neives b 4 Jan 1867 Fla.Key West d 1925 Tampa Cy do ml. Key West, _____ Lowe m 2. Tampa -o- George Slater
 b Emmie Loise b Fla.Key West a do 1115 Southard St.m 1. 26 Oct 1889 do by Rev.G.W. Mitchell of 1st M.E.Ch * Miguel Bello b do d 18 Jun 1890 Tampa Cy do m 2. * Henry Kemp (40112) q.v.
 c*Amelia Magdalene b Fla.Key West d 5 May 1899 do Cy do m 31 Oct 1894 do by Rev. H.B.Frazer (Meth),George Anthony Eneas a Miami
 d Edith May b Fla.Key West a Miami,Hialeah,357 Hialeah Drive m 1. 3 Apr 1895 by a Judge * William Harvey Pent b 12 Feb 1871 Key West d 26 Jul 1910 Cy Miami "City" m 2. 21 Aug 1910 do by Rev.Dr.W.Ferris (Pres) -o- William Ferdinand Herman b 22 Oct 1863 Prussia,Memel
 e Sibyl Isobel b Fla.Key West a N.Y.Brooklyn,263 E.4th St.m 8 Jan 1897 Fla.Key West by Rev.B.F.Mason (Meth),Victor Toledo b 9 Nov 1876 do / TOLEDO ea Sibyl Isobel b N.Y. Brooklyn a do 855 Ocean Ave.m 16 May 1928 do (Immaculate Heart Ch) by Rev.Philbrick -o- Raymond Bau b 2 Dec 1900 do
 -o-

Figure 7. The entry for designation 404a in the Kemp register begins to reveal the story of Amelia Magdalene Lowe.

material have a heading listing the designation and name of the person being discussed. The simplest way to find biographical information for a specific person or their relative, if it is available, is to skim the running headings at the top of the narrative pages preceding the register holding their genealogical data.

Conclusion

Kinfolks is an extraordinary collection of materials gathered from many sources. Author William Curry Harllee and his collaborators have gone to great lengths to make the information accessible through the System of Designations. The time invested to acquire an understanding of the organization of the material and the associated coding will make researching the work an efficient and rewarding experience.

The following sources were consulted in the preparation of this article.

Harllee, John. The Marine from Manatee : a tradition of rifle

marksmanship. by John Harllee. Washington, D.C. : National Rifle Association of America, c1984.

Harlee, William Curry, 1877-1944 Kinfolks, a genealogical and biographical record of Thomas and Elizabeth (Stuart) Harllee, Andrew and Agnes (Cade) Fulmore, Benjamin and Mary Curry, Samuel and Amelia (Russell) Kemp, John and Hannah (Walker) Bethea, Sterling Clark and Frances (King) Robertson, Samuel and Sophia Ann (Parker) Dickey, their antecedents, descendants, and collateral relatives, with chapter concerning state and county records and the derivation of counties of Alabama, Florida, Georgis, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, prepared and published by William Curry Harllee, assisted by numerous collaborators. New Orleans, La., Printed by Searcy & Pfaff, ltd., 1934-37.

Thomas Neil Knowles is a retired college administrator who was born and raised in Key West. With the help of "Kinfolks," he traced his roots and discovered that he is a sixth generation descendant of Joseph Curry, the surveyor mentioned in the article, who is also William Curry Harllee's ancestor.

ENEAS 404ac * AMELIA MAGDALENE LOWE m GEORGE ANTHONY ENEAS
 a*Leone b 4 Nov 1896 Fla.Key West d Tampa m _____ Gutierrez / GUTIERREZ a1 Alfred / a2 _____ / aa Magdalene / ab _____ / ac _____ / ad _____ / ae _____ / -o-
 b*Amelia Magdalene b 3 May 1899 Fla.Key West dy 13 Jun 1899 do

Figure 8. Amelia's designation appears next the ENEAS surname because she married George Eneas.

(Connections from page 1)

Declaration of Independence, the surveyor had become a very wealthy man with substantial holdings near Columbia, South Carolina. Because of their father's close ties with the British Government and the beneficial nature of that association, it is not surprising that his sons were staunch Loyalists throughout the American Revolution. Toward the end of the War as British troops withdrew, the Revolutionary state governments began seizing the property of those colonists who had supported England. Accordingly, many Loyalists sought refuge and moved their families and as much of their assets as possible to other lands still under British control. One of Curry's sons was also named Joseph, and he along with several of his brothers relocated their families to Harbour Island in the Bahamas. Joseph's family included his young son, Benjamin.

Years later, Benjamin married, and moved with his brothers Richard and Howell to Green Turtle Cay, an island in the northeastern Bahamas barely 3 miles long and less than a mile wide (see page 1). Benjamin and his wife Mary had 10 children, all born on Green Turtle Cay. Their third son arrived on January 25th 1811 and was named John. As John Curry grew to manhood, he learned seamanship and how to build boats. When he was 20, he married Mary Ward Kemp whose family also lived on the island. By 1839 the couple had four children and were struggling economically. It was becoming difficult to earn a decent living in the Bahamas; the thin layer of topsoil was depleted and population growth outstripping resources. People began to move from the Bahamas to the Florida Keys where the salvaging of ships wrecked on the reefs that line the

northwestern edge of the Florida Straits was making Key West a boomtown. Seven of John Curry's siblings had already moved to Key West. Sometime between June 1839 and August 1840, John and Mary moved their family across the Gulf Stream to the Island City. His wife's father, Samuel Kemp, had immigrated in 1836, and was so delighted to have his daughter's family there that he gave them a house at 311 William Street.

Samuel had inherited considerable wealth and had done well as a mariner/wrecker. He helped John get established in wrecking. Industrious, John Curry branched out into sponging, shipbuilding, and maritime trading. An accomplished navigator/mariner, and a good businessman, by the time he was 48 he had amassed a "considerable fortune" and owned several vessels. His family had grown along with his wealth; he and Mary had produced 8 sons and 4 daughters. Their eleventh child was born at Key West in November 1852 and named Mary Ellen.

In 1859 John Curry decided to engage in selling cattle to the Cuban market, so he and his two eldest sons, John and Benjamin, sailed one of their vessels to the Manatee River where he had heard Dr. Franklin Branch had cattle for sale. At the time, the sprawling counties of Hillsboro and Manatee were the primary cattle producing areas of Florida, although with only 65,000 head between them they were not considered major beef centers.

When Curry and his sons anchored in the broad reaches of the Manatee River estuary in November, it was the first time they had seen the area. They were so taken with the serenity and natural beauty of the region that when John

learned that Dr. Branch's holdings were being offered for sale, he purchased them including Branch's home (within a stockade built for defense against Indian attacks) near the Mineral Spring in Manatee, the Mineral Spring, and adjacent land extending from the Manatee River well into the village of Manatee. He also purchased Branch's sugar plantation, and large stocks of cattle. He paid cash; probably Spanish gold pieces. A year later he loaded most of his family including his seven year-old daughter Mary Ellen and their possessions aboard his largest vessel, the 79-ton schooner **Ariel**, and moved to Manatee.

Why John Curry decided so suddenly to relocate to Manatee after residing in Key West for 20 years is not known. Mrs. Lillie B. McDuffie, author of "The Lures Of Manatee" published in 1933, thought it was religion that brought the Currys to the small village; "The Curry men possessed religious tendencies that were most unusual for seafarers and, being devout Methodists, they represented a pious religious element in Key West that was weary of the foreign element which was becoming so predominant there." It is true that during the two decades John and his family were in Key West they witnessed a phenomenal growth in the population. In the decade following their arrival in 1840, the number of residents had quadrupled from 688 to 2,645 people. By 1860 there were over 2,900 people jammed into the northwest corner of the island.

Arvid Pembroke Curry, John's oldest grandson, believed that his grandfather did not want his sons engaging in wrecking. Arvid states in a memoir ("Kinfolks" page 1721) that "The method of salvaging ships

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in his time did not meet with his approval because of the unfair advantage taken by wreckers over the ship owners. . . . he did not want any of his boys involved in shady deals, he determined to remove them as far away from temptation as he could, hence his removal to the mainland of Florida.”

Whatever the reason(s), John Curry and his family settled into their new home on the tranquil Manatee River. The tranquility did not last long. In 1861 the Civil War erupted and the Union established a naval blockade to shutoff overseas aid to the Confederacy. John sold the *Ariel* to the Confederates for use as a blockade-runner between Mobile and Havana. At first there was not much in the way of military activity in South Florida, but as the war progressed and other sources were cut off, the cattle in the Hillsborough/Manatee area became more important to the Confederacy. Union raiding parties from blockading vessels began to come ashore and wreck anything that could be used to support the Southern cause. Most of John Curry’s properties were destroyed including the mill, wharves, and storehouses. To make matters worse, the productivity of his sugar plantation began to decline. Several of his sons decided to return to Key West, but John stayed on. Perhaps his keen business sense told him that Manatee County would be a good place to be when the War was over.

In 1865 as Lee’s army withdrew from Richmond, Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his Secretary of State, Judah P. Benjamin, fled Richmond, Virginia. Davis and some of the party were subsequently captured near McDowell, Georgia, but Benjamin

was able to escape and made his way into Florida. He was given refuge at the mansion on the Gamble plantation situated on the north side of the Manatee River (see page 11). He made arrangements with a local sea captain to be taken to the Florida Keys in a small, open sailboat that John Curry had hidden in the woods to avoid destruction by the Union raiding parties. The plan was to sail to Indian Key, obtain a larger vessel and go to the Bahamas, and then secure passage to England. Federal gunboats still maintained a blockade along the West Coast of Florida and the Keys, and a reward of \$50,000 was being offered for the capture of Benjamin. As detailed in “Kinfolks,” pages 1732-1738, the ex-Secretary of State made his escape to England, albeit with several close calls.

As the Civil War came to an end, others would seek refuge in Florida from the ensuing turmoil. Although not a fugitive being pursued by Federal authorities, Joseph Richardson Fulmore was one of many people displaced by the Civil War. He had been a successful merchant in Kingstree, South Carolina when he married Caroline Sophia Burgess in 1844. Entering the political arena, he was elected to the State House of Representatives. He and Caroline subsequently relocated to Cartersville, Georgia, where Joseph became a planter, and again was elected to serve in the Georgia Legislature. Upon the commencement of the Civil War, 60 year-old Joseph divested his holdings as a planter, and he and his wife moved to Eufaula, Alabama where they remained for the duration as guests at the home of the Governor of Alabama (Shorter). When the War came to an end, Joseph and Caroline decided it was time to move on and begin anew. They were drawn to the Manatee River area, perhaps attracted to it by the combination of

an idyllic setting and the hope that the location was remote enough to afford some protection from carpetbaggers.

In 1866, the couple moved to Manatee where Joseph intended to setup a mercantile business. They stayed at John Curry’s home while a new house was being constructed for them. Before the house could be completed and the merchandise for their store was received, Joseph and Caroline contracted yellow fever and died in August 1867. Their 22 year-old daughter, Mary, who had survived a bout of yellow fever during the same outbreak, and her husband of two years, Frank Brady, moved into the home built for her parents and proceeded to engage in the mercantile business her father had planned to operate. The next year Mary’s husband was on a business trip to New Orleans when he drowned in Lake Pontchartrain. The demands of starting up a new business on top of the emotional pain from the loss of her parents followed by the death of her husband were too much for the young girl, and she sought to relieve herself of any ties to Manatee. She needed someone she could trust to takeover the mercantile business.

Mary Fulmore’s cousin, 31 year-old Capt. John Waddell Harllee was also in difficult straits. Wounded twice in the Civil War, the second wound had left him with a crippled leg that forced him off the battlefield and into an administrative position. The former schoolteacher accepted the position of enrolling officer for Marion District in South Carolina because that was where his family’s homestead was located.

Following secession, the Confederate States were divided

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Manatee was a small village in 1860, a quiet, peaceful place compared to the robust port of Key West. The Gamble sugar plantation located on the north side of the Manatee River covered 3,500 acres. Photo credit: the Author.

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into districts and an enrolling officer was appointed for each district. The primary function of the enrolling officer was originally to round up conscripts for the army. After the Confederacy's defeat and the cessation of hostilities, there followed a period during which the governmental structure of the Confederate States began to self-destruct from the top down. In many cases, the enrolling officers were the last vestiges of governmental authority that remained until the carpetbaggers and Federal military moved in to fill the power vacuum. As enrolling officer of Marion District, the burden of maintaining order and overseeing the relief of those in distress, many of them family and friends, fell upon John Harllee's shoulders. As time went on, most of his days were spent fending off the land-grabbers and other shady opportunists who invaded the South. The situation was extremely depressing and chaotic.

Sometime in 1868 carpetbaggers backed by the Federal military seized control of the Marion District. John Harllee had not made any friends among this lot because of his prolonged resistance to their takeover efforts. He was looking for an opportunity to leave the area when he learned of his cousin Mary's situation in Florida caused by the untimely deaths of her mother, father, and husband. Without delay, John and his brother Andrew set off in a carriage for Manatee. Soon after their arrival, John was engaged to manage the mercantile business that his Uncle Joseph and Aunt Caroline had left to their daughter.

Andrew Harllee became a schoolteacher and taught school

for several years in South Florida before returning to South Carolina. John stayed in Manatee, bought the business from his cousin, and became a very successful merchant. The timing could not have been better for the area was experiencing a surge in population as families from other Southern states moved to South Florida to begin anew. Over 800 families, among them many former confederate soldiers, moved to the Manatee area in 1867 bringing their herds of cattle with them. In 1860, the population of Manatee County was 854 people; by 1870 it would more than double to 1,931.

In May 1867, while he was enrolling officer of Marion District, John had joined the Masonic Lodge in Little Rock, South Carolina. When he arrived in Manatee, he promptly became involved in Manatee Lodge No. 81, to which John Curry and his sons also belonged. John Harllee's son William wrote that most of the members of the Lodge including Curry and his sons were "... pious, sedate men. My father was of the opposite temperament, impetuous, outspoken, and convivial." It was apparently a case of opposites attracting each other for Harllee became good friends with the Currys, and visited their home often.

One reason for the frequent visits was John Curry's daughter, Mary Ellen, who was now 15. She was described by her nephew as beautiful, "a model of young womanhood", and possessing a happy, cheerful nature that buoyed up the spirits of those around her. She had already received several proposals of marriage, which may have motivated John Harllee to waste no time. On the sixth day of October 1868, John and Mary Ellen were married; she was a month shy

of her 16th birthday and he was 31.

Over the next nine years she gave birth to 5 boys and 2 girls; one of the boys and one of the girls died young. Mary Ellen's last child was a boy born on June 13, 1877. He was named William Curry Harllee after his mother's favorite brother, William Samuel Curry. Will Harllee was 2 ¼ years old when his mother contracted typhoid fever and died. His grandfather, John Curry, died three years later at the age of 71.

Will's father never remarried, but continued to add to his considerable fortune by expanding into fruit growing and real estate. In the meantime, his son Will was sent off to Little Rock, South Carolina to attend school. In 1887 at the age of 10 he returned to Manatee and lived with his father briefly; John Harllee died 5 days before Christmas of yellow fever. He was 50 years old.

Will went to live with an uncle and aunt for a while before being sent back to South Carolina the following year to complete his education. He was admitted to the South Carolina Military School (the Citadel) when he was 14. Two years later he was dismissed from the school for accumulating too many demerits. He enrolled at North Carolina University for one year, by which time he had acquired enough education to become a teacher. At the age of 17 he returned to South Florida and taught school in Manatee, Seminole, and Hillsborough counties. After two years, he reenrolled at North Carolina University. A year later at age 20 Harllee was appointed to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. After two years at West Point he ranked second in his class, but the physically imposing (6' 2", 197 pounds) cadet was discharged for "deficiencies in discipline" and deemed "too strong, too colorful,



William Curry Harllee around 1919 when he was a Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps. Photo credit: U.S. Marine Corps.

too willful, too independent a character” to become an officer in the U.S. Army. In 1899 he was sent as a private to the Philippines where the Army was fighting rebels.

In the tropical heat and jungles Will Harllee seemed to be in his element. His distinguished service in the field was recognized and he rose quickly through the ranks being

promoted to corporal, sergeant, and then first sergeant. In January 1900 he took a competitive exam to become a commissioned officer in the Marine Corps and finished first among the applicants. The next month he was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant at the Brooklyn Navy Yard; it marked the beginning of a 35-year career in the Marines.

Harllee was somewhat of a maverick and reportedly came close to being court-martialed on several occasions. He became a fervent advocate of small arms training and authored several books on the subject. According to one source, he was regarded as the Nation’s

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“preeminent authority on small arms marksmanship training.” He served several years as Director and Vice President of the National Rifle Association.

Late in 1930, Colonel Harllee was assigned to command the Marine Corps southern recruiting division headquartered in New Orleans. Especially adept at public relations, the 53 year-old Colonel instituted radical changes in the recruiting techniques used by the division with the result that his quotas were filled and the New Orleans office had an extensive waiting list of young men who wanted to become Marines. He began to work on his family’s genealogy.

In the beginning, Harllee’s goal was a modest one; take the various family related documents and photographs he had accumulated over the years and assemble them so that his son and daughter would have a record of their close relatives. When he began to work in earnest on the project, he broadened the scope to “... translate from tradition to record all that could be learned of their progenitors, then trace to the present time the descendants of the progenitors.” This significantly increased the number of ancestors and descendants included in the genealogy. In his biography of his father, Will’s son John wrote, “In New Orleans, he was so successful in his Marine Corps assignment with the expenditure of so little time that he spent more and more of his spare time as he traveled through the South expanding the scope of his family history.”

Will Harllee gives credit in the title of the work to the “numerous collaborators” who helped him produce “Kinfolks.” Among them were the nine Marine Corps recruiting sergeants stationed at

New Orleans who voluntarily worked on the Colonel’s project in their spare time. Relatives and other civilians also participated in assembling and organizing the information. Harllee estimated he traveled 60,000 miles to interview descendants and other people of interest and to scour repositories of information. He spent over \$1,000 (1933 dollars) on postage alone for correspondence related to the project. Volume 1 was published in 1934, with the remaining three volumes being published one each year thereafter. Costs including printing and binding totaled \$30,000 (over \$200,000 in 2006 dollars). A cousin who was an executive of a tobacco company financed the major portion of the costs.

Although printed on fine paper and containing many photographs and historical accounts, “Kinfolks” was a marketing challenge. The encyclopedic genealogy lacked the glamour of a flashy novel and was considered a reference work. The complete set sold for \$15 (about \$200 in 2006 dollars), which during the Great Depression was a price that put it out of the reach of most people who were interested in buying it. As a result, sales were disappointing. Fortunately for today’s generation, the president of the International Correspondence Schools, who had been associated with Harllee when the Colonel set up the Marine Corps Institute, purchased 500 copies and donated them to libraries around the country. Other friends also made major purchases that ended up in public libraries. When the dust settled, several thousand copies had been sold/distributed. Thanks to Harllee’s perseverance and the generosity of his friends, copies of this important record of family histories reside in the protective environment of libraries throughout the United States where they remain

accessible to the general public.

This is particularly significant to the descendants of Conch clans because over the years official records, Bibles, and family documents that could have provided genealogical information have been destroyed by hurricanes, fires, and even termites. For example, in 1932 the storm surge from a hurricane swept over Green Turtle Cay destroying most of the buildings including the four churches. Most family history documentation such as Bibles and official records, and even the tombstones, were lost. Harllee reconstructed much of this lost information by contacting members of older generations and securing their recollections and memoirs before they passed away. His success in this endeavor makes “Kinfolks” a unique and invaluable reservoir of Conch family histories.

William Curry Harllee retired in 1935 after 38 years of military service. He died in 1944 and is buried in the Arlington National Cemetery. His repute regarding small arms marksmanship training may be fading, but in “Kinfolks” he has left an enduring imprint that is certain to be a source of information and inspiration to genealogists for many years to come.

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Notes:

1. The full title of "Kinfolks" is: "Kinfolks, a genealogical and biographical record of Thomas and Elizabeth (Stuart) Harllee, Andrew and Agnes (Cade) Fulmore, Benjamin and Mary Curry, Samuel and Amelia (Russell) Kemp, John and Hannah (Walker) Bethea, Sterling Clark and Frances (King) Robertson, Samuel and Sophia Ann (Parker) Dickey, their antecedents, descendants, and collateral relatives, with chapter concerning state and county records and the derivation of counties of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, prepared and published by William Curry Harllee, assisted by numerous collaborators."

2. There are many photographs in "Kinfolks." Photographs of the following people mentioned in the article may be found on the pages indicated.

John Curry and Mary Ward Kemp - Volume II, pages 1710-1711.

John Waddell Harllee and Mary Ellen Curry - Volume I pages 682-683.

Joseph Fulmore and Caroline Sophia Burgess - Volume II pages 1382-1383.

3. The following sources were consulted in the preparation of this article.

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Coles, David J. Far from fields of glory: military operations in Florida during the Civil War, 1864-1865. by David James Coles. c1996

Harllee, John. The Marine from Manatee : a tradition of rifle

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Harlee, William Curry, 1877-1944 Kinfolks, a genealogical and biographical record of Thomas and Elizabeth (Stuart) Harllee, Andrew and Agnes (Cade) Fulmore, Benjamin and Mary Curry, Samuel and Amelia (Russell) Kemp, John and Hannah (Walker) Bethea, Sterling Clark and Frances (King) Robertson, Samuel and Sophia Ann (Parker) Dickey, their antecedents, descendants, and collateral relatives, with chapter concerning state and county records and the derivation of counties of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, prepared and published by William Curry Harllee, assisted by numerous collaborators. New Orleans, La., Printed by Searcy & Pfaff, ltd., 1934-37.

McDuffee, Mrs. Lillie (Brown) The lures of Manatee; a true story of south Florida's glamorous past. by Lillie B. McDuffee. [Nashville, Printed by the press of Marshall & Bruce co.] c 1933.

Population of Manatee County: <http://fcit.usf.edu/Florida/docs/c/census/Manatee.htm> (Floridapedia Website).

Additional information on Harllee's Military Career: <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/wcharlee.htm> (Arlington National Cemetery Website)

Thomas Neil Knowles is a retired college administrator who was born and raised in Key West. With the help of "Kinfolks," he traced his roots and discovered that he is a sixth generation descendant of Joseph Curry, the surveyor mentioned in the article, who is also William Curry Harllee's ancestor.

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