

## WILLIAM ROBINSON & LUCY ANN COMPTON by June Ann Reese

Our research on Lucy Ann Compton starts with Kim's notebook that she wrote for school. "The Compton's had a town house in Richmond and a country plantation near Clarksburg. They were quite wealthy and an acre outside of England was named after them.

On the plantation they had 105 slaves. Although they lived in the South and they owned slaves, they never treated them rough or mean. Everyone had at least a week's vacation for Christmas. They all learned how to read, write and do arithmetic and the women learned how to cook properly. Every slave was paid for the work they did. Some were paid for teaching slaves. The foreman slave had a bank account worth more than \$5,000.

The floor of the plantation was made entirely of stone. Whenever they wanted to have a fire in the fireplace, they had horses pull the logs right into the house. Mrs. Compton's maiden name was Wigfield. Altogether they had six children. The oldest was Saffrona, whom everyone called Spicer. Then came Maggie, Dorcas, Mary, Alice and Lucy Anne.

Saffrona moved to Coleman, Texas after the Civil War. Dorcas married a man named Luther. They moved to the east coast and started a chain of jewelry stores.

Mary married a man by the name of Frome. They never had any children. Mary was always known as the neat, clean one. She always walked straight and had good speech. She was a typical Southern Belle. She would never sit down at the dinner table without a white blouse or scarf around her neck. When she grew older she learned how to ride a horse and shoot a gun. She later got a job as a prison guard at the Andersonville prison. Once when a prisoner caused some trouble she shot his ear off.

Alice married John W Davis' uncle. They moved to Red Bluff, California. The youngest of the family was Lucy Ann." It sounds as if Lucy had an ideal childhood.

Probably William's life was another story. Family history tells us he was paid \$650 to take another person's place in the army. The military records state, "Premium and bounty paid." Less than 4 months after entering the service he was captured by the enemy "in Pocahontas County, Va. together with his horse

and equipment complete."

According to the Prisoner of War records he was "Admitted to Hospital 21 at Richmond, Va. Apr 1/63 Bronchitis, Farmer, age 18 - Paroled at City Point, Va. April 3, 1863; reported at Camp Parole, Md. April 6, 1863. He was present and drew Clo. at C.P. May 16/63." Can anybody figure out the meaning of "drew Clo at C.P.?"

He must have been moved around a bit as a patient as the Hospital Muster Rolls have him present at the General Hospital at Annapolis, Md, at the Post Hospital at Camp Curtin in Harrisburg, Pa, and at Mower General Hospital at Chestnut Hill in Philadelphia, Pa. It covered the time from April 13, 1863 to Dec 1864.

The U.S. Government may have cared for him, but they also cared for their own interests. Notice the Debit for a carbine sling and excess clothing for \$16.70. Also check the Company Muster Out Roll. It seems he owed the government \$64.96 for clothing and \$9.46 for equipment. The government paid him a \$25 bounty and owed him \$75. Who came out ahead?

Grandpa tells us that William had served under Sherman in the Shenandoah Valley, which was stripped clean of food during the war. When released he was penniless (or nearly so) and probably still weak. He was befriended by the Compton's who took him in. He and Lucy Ann became quite close. Then one night they stole one of her father's mules and eloped toward Aunt Mary Polk's house in Missouri. Among the papers Lucy sent to Washington, D.C. are the four affidavits about her marriage. One was signed by M.A. Spicer who says the marriage took place at her home in Lafayette County, Mo. There were two letters from the Polks (one by Aunt Mary and another by her husband James.) Then the fourth letter Mary Ann had written to amend the date of her marriage from Feb 16th to Feb 15th.

William and Lucy Ann had five daughters. Kim's notebook indicates their oldest daughter Maggie died one day before her 3rd birthday. Another daughter, Lucy Ann died before she was 2. Life was difficult in those times. I only found 3 deeds of William Robinson and 2 of these were recorded after his death! Evidently he bought a town lot in West Plains on June 11, 1881 for \$35. Then on Nov. 4, 1881 he sold the east half of the lot for \$25. Five days later he died at the young age of 37 from "disease of lungs". Lucy Ann at the age of 37 was widowed with three daughters - aged 10, 6 and 1 to care for.

Politicians running for office would often propose a pension for Civil War veterans and their widows. However, as the war had been fought only 25 years before, and there were still a lot of people around eligible to receive these pensions, the government would add a lot of regulations to reduce the number of people receiving aid.

An odd quirk in our history is that in 1890 the government ordered a census of Civil War veterans and widows to see how many were still alive. Since they only wanted to pay the veterans of the Union side they only polled people in northern and border states. For each person they listed the Company Regiment and Outfit he served in. (That was how I was able to find information on William Robinson and Benjamin Franklin Reese.) But they neglected to ask which side the person served on. When the records were turned in to the National Archives, government employees carefully drew a line through any name that served in a southern unit. But with care you can still read the names and their companies. To add to the irony, a fire in Washington, D.C. destroyed the rest of the 1890 Census records. So we have none of the rest of that census only the Civil War inventory.

But back to our story of Lucy Ann. On April 16, 1886 she started her Petition for the Widow's Pension. But the government is slow and she was desperate. So on the 15th of Dec 1886, she married Wayne W. Pennington. Grandpa Ray describes him as a scoundrel whom Lucy Ann ran off her farm shortly thereafter.

It was during this

period in her life that Lucy Ann received the note for \$500 from Dr. Sherwood for 10 acres of land he supposedly bought. Lucy Ann's daughter had not yet married Dr. Sherwood's son, Sher, but they were neighbors in the small community of Mountain View.

Which brings us to the story of Lucy Ann's problem with the U.S. Marshal. She evidently filed the Widow's declaration for Pension on April 16, 1886 as Lucy A. Robinson. Then in December of 1886 she married Pennington. It must have taken Lucy quite a while to gather all the papers she thought the government would want. She even took her two daughters marriage certificates and mailed those to Washington, D.C. (They didn't have copy machines in those days.) However, she signed the Birth Affidavit of her daughter Mary as "Lucy A. Robinson nee Pennington." She received some funds from the government as the "notice of pension dropped" on Lucinda indicates she "was last paid at \$14 to 28 May 1896."

Anyhow, when Kern and I tried to figure out why a U.S. Marshall would be involved with Lucy way back in 1899 - before the IRS came into being - we asked Grandpa if he knew what happened. His explanation was this: Lucy collected and spent the pension money the government sent. Then they discovered she was ineligible because she was married to Pennington. So the U.S. Marshall arrested her and took her to jail! She remained there one day before Dr. Sherwood came to her rescue by producing a note wherein he had supposedly borrowed \$500 from her. He paid the Marshall the balance due the government from that note. The community was outraged that the Marshall had put her in jail.

It is interesting that although Lucinda was married at the age of 15 (and Lucy sent the marriage license in to the government), they continued to give her a children's pension until she turned 16.

At the age of 73 Lucy filed once again for a Widow's Pension. The Washington attorney, M. Elliott Wagmann, was certainly on the ball. Congress approved the Declaration Act on Sept 8, 1916 and she signed the typed Declaration in Mountain View on Sept 11, 1916. But look how shaky her signature is.

Less than 4 years after she married him, Lucy appeared in court as Defendant against W. W. Pennington, the plaintiff. Pennington was declared "the innocent and injured party" and it was declared that "the bonds of matrimony existing between the plaintiff and defendant, be dissolve and held for naught and that plaintiff be restored to all the rights and privileges of a single person." (Oh shades of Women's Lib.)

There is still more research to be done for William and Lucy Ann. I have not yet located Death records for them. Nor have I obtained their census for 1900 and 1910.

#### CHRONOLOGY OF WILLIAM ERWIN ROBINSON & LUCY ANN COMPTON

1 Apr 1844	Lucy Ann was born	Va	
7 Oct 1844	William was born	Harrison Co,	Va
1846	Lucy's sister Sophrenia born (2)	Va	
1848	Lucy's sister Penelope born (4)	Va	
1849	William's sister Martha born (4)	Va	
16Jun1850	Wm is on census (5)	Clarksburg, Harrison,	Va

16Jul1850	Lucy is on census (8-?)	Warren Co, Va
1851	Lucy's brother John born (7)	Va
1854	Lucy's sister Rachel born (10)	Va
28Dec1856	Lucy's sis Charlotte married (12)	Harrison Co, Va
3 Mar1858	Wm's father remarried (14)	Harrison Co, Va
1860	Both were on census (15-16)	Clarksburg, Va

1861 New state "Kanawha" formed which later became West Virginia and the Civil War began

14 Sep1862	Wm enlisted in Calvary (17)	Clarksburg, Va
22 Jan1863	Wm captured (18)	Pocahontas Co, W. Va
Dec 1864-Apr 1865	Wm in hospital	Winchester, Va
30 Jun1865	Wm mustered out (20)	Wheeling, W. Va
15 Feb1869	Wm married Lucy Ann (22)	Lexington, Missouri
2 Dec1869	daughter Maggie born (25)	
9 Jun1871	dau Mary Alice born (27)	Johnson Co, Mo
1 Dec1872	dau Maggie died (28)	
20 Dec 1873	dau Dorcas born (29)	Mt View, Howell, Mo
16 Oct 1876	dau Lucy Ann born (32)	
7 Oct1878	dau Lucy Ann died (34)	
29 May1880	dau Lucinda born (36)	
1880	Census (36)	Goldsbury Twp, Mo
7 Feb1881	gave Howell Co road land (36)	Mt View, Mo
11Jun1881	bought land in West Plains (37)	Howell Co, Mo
4 Nov1881	sold land in West Plains (37)	Howell Co, Mo
9 Nov1881	Wm died (37)	Mt View, Mo
16Dec1881	Lucy Ann bought land for \$1 (37)	Howell Co, Mo
1885	Lucy appeared on Personal Prop Tax	Howell Co, Mo
16Apr1886	Lucy filed for Pension (42)	Howell Co, Mo
15Dec1886	Lucy married Pennington (42)	Howell Co, Mo
25Jul1889	Loaned \$500 to Dr Sherwood (45)	Howell Co, Mo
30Apr1890	Lucy divorced Pennington (46)	Howell Co, Mo
9 May1891	Marshall gave deed to Dr. Sherwood for her debt	
30Sep1891	g-dau Dottie Bailey born (47)	
24May1893	dau Dorcas married Sherwood Reese	Howell Co, Mo

13Nov1893	Lucy appointed Guardian of Lucinda estate	Mo
13Jun1894	g-son James Lloyd Bailey born (50)	
20Dec1895	dau Lucinda married (51)	Mt View, Mo
1 Sep1916	Filed Declaration for Pension (73)	Mt View, Mo
3Jul 1920	Lucy Ann died (77)	Mt View, Mo