

Texas Relatives of Bill Smothers Visit Owensboro

By Jerry Long
c.2025



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 26 March 1961, p.11C:

BIRDIE'S BREEZY BITS
By L. D. "Birdie" Gasser

–BBB–

Mrs. G. T. Seaver of 307 Enid St., Houston 9, Tex., a descendant of the Smeathers family, early settlers of Yellow Banks (Owensboro), is seeking to locate descendants of the Smeathers here.

She writes:

Dear Editor:

I am trying to locate the descendants of the Smeathers family. The name has been spelled a number of ways: Smeathers. Smethers, Smithers. Smothers and Smuthers.

I am a descendant of William Smeathers who lived at Yellow Banks, now Owensboro, Ky. He was a captain in the Kentucky Mounted Company. He was in the War of 1812. He was under General Shelby at King's Mountain, when a hoy.

William Smeathers came to Texas with Austin's Colony and received a grant of land from the Mexican government in 1824 in Austin County, Texas. I believe he was in Indiana some before going South. He had sons, John and Archibald, who also went to Texas. As did his son in-law, John Berry, who had married Betsy (Elizabeth) Smeathers.

Elizabeth left three sons, when she died near Bloomington, Ind., (before 1820. Her husband, John Berry, took the boys to Texas about 1824 or '25. All three made history in Texas fight for independence from Mexico.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Sunday, 27 August 1961, pp.1C & 5C:

**Bill Smothers Had His Place In The Sun
In Texas As Well As Owensboro**

By Mrs. W. E. Daniel



LAST WILL – Mrs. Grace Seaver, left, of 397 Enid, Houston, Tex., shows Miss Georgia Smeathers a photostatic copy of the last will and testament of William Smeathers, popularly known as "Bill Smothers," credited with building a log cabin on the site of what has grown into Owensboro, a city of approximately 50,000. Mrs. Seaver is a direct descendant of the city's founder; Miss Smeathers is a descendant of Bill's brother James.

Have Owensboro and Daviess County history experts been "selling short" Owensboro's first citizen. Bill Smothers? The "History of Daviess County" tells a very dramatic story of the "famous trial" of Smothers in which he was charged with the murder of a boastful riverman. The death of this character had resulted from a fight between the two men after the riverman and his cronies had accepted the hospitality of Smothers and then proceeded to carousing and insulted Smother's "maiden" sister who was making a home for him and his children.

While Smothers (Smithers, or Smeathers – researchers have found nine different spellings used, although Smithers appears to be correct) is credited with building the first cabin home on the site of what is now Owensboro, the main interest in his career has always centered in the trial. Joseph Hamilton Daveiss, a brief sojourner in Daviess County, famous for his part in bringing Aaron Burr to trial, defended Smothers. He was prosecuted by John Daveiss, Jo's brother, county attorney, and well- known Baptist minister of those pioneer times.

In his address to the jury, Jo Daveiss brought out that Smothers had helped to found Hartford and to build Fort Hartford as protection against the Indians and later, old Fort Vienna, where Calhoun now stands. He had determined that it was there that the Indians were crossing Green River to attack the settlers in this area.

While Smothers was duly acquitted by his friend, he was not happy that so many of the settlers were so long in coming to his defense. His friend, Jo Daveiss, knowing this, and knowing, too, that his life would be in danger from the rough river roustabouts, friends of the deceased, advised Smothers to move to another area.

Bill Smothers, The Man

History of Daviess County tells us that he went to Texas. Senator McCreery, in a series of news articles some years ago, tells of his death in Texas. He relates in the series, tales of the practical jokes the pioneer used to play on his friends and enemies. All in all, the total picture of Smothers is one of a hearty pioneer who hated all Indians because of their having killed his father and caused the death of his mother back in Virginia when Bill was only twelve years old. Many persons think of him as a rough-and-ready frontiersman, quick with the gun, a great hunter, skillful Indian fighter, and the player of crude practical jokes.

But that, while true, is only a part of the story, and really a minor part. Smothers was educated in Virginia by his uncle in one of the best schools of the day. He had been in the Revolutionary War with Kentucky's own Isaac Shelby.

For many years the writer of this article had wondered idly – and futilely – about what had happened to Bill Smothers in Texas. What of his descendants? Seemingly, to people of Owensboro and Daviess County generally, his only claim to fame was his cabin on the site of present-day Owensboro, and the friendship with the brilliant, Joseph Hamilton Daveiss.

From Texas To Owensboro

With the coming to Owensboro of Grace Turk Seaver (Mrs. C. L. Seaver) of Houston, Texas, the mystery was solved. And a most fascinating story it revealed. Mrs. Seaver is a direct descendant of Bill Smothers, although it was not until this year that she learned of the Owensboro connection.

Early in the year a letter came from Texas to the editor of the Messenger and Inquirer asking about anyone here knowing anything about the Smothers or Smeathers family. Passed over to L. D. Gasser. it was put into Birdie's Breezy Bits.

Mrs. Seaver had written the letter. She had three replies, one from Miss Georgia Smeathers and one each from the wives of Haywood and Harmon Smeathers. She had the link she needed. And now, Mrs. Seaver has been spending the past two weeks visiting relatives here and looking up records at the courthouses in Owensboro, Hartford, Calhoun and Rockport, Ind., as well as further afield in Spencer and in other Indiana counties.

But that does not explain why Mrs. Seaver had decided to write to the Owensboro Messenger and Inquirer.

In Texas there is an organization of the Berry family. Marshall Jackson, a descendant of John Berry, and a resident of Ovalo, Texas, learned that Judge Paul Boethels, of Hallettsville, Texas, had written a history of Hallettsville in which he mentioned the names of Berry and Smothers. Jackson wrote to Judge Boethels.

Instead of answering the letter, Judge Boethels sent it to Mrs. Seaver, whose mother was a Smothers, also sending to her the name of Major Day Jewell, of Corona, Calif., head of the Berry reunion. Major Jewell referred Mrs. Seaver to Mrs. Ruth Drago, age 78. of Joplin, Mo. It was from Mrs. Drago, who is a Berry descendant (albeit not of the Smothers line), that Mrs. Seaver got the information that Bill Smothers had gone to Texas from Yellow Banks, now Owensboro. Hence the letter to the Messenger and Inquirer.

Mrs. Drago had been in correspondence with Miss Laura Mercy Wright, Rockport, Ind., who was related to both the Smothers and the Berry's. Well known in Owensboro, also, was Mrs. Alda McCoy Honig (great-granddaughter of Bill Smothers I and her husband, George Honig of Rockport and Evansville. Ind. Mrs. Honig was a talented musician and her husband a sculptor of

note. It was he who, during the depression days, influenced the government to use the WPA to erect the Lincoln Village in Lincoln Park in Rockport.

Mrs. Seaver was Grace Turk before her marriage to Cedric L Seaver. Both she and her husband have been music teachers in the public schools of Texas. Her mother was Lucinda (Lucy) Smothers before her marriage to C. C Turk. And Lucy Smothers was the daughter of John Smothers Jr., a son of John Smothers Sr., a son of William Smothers (Smithers or Smeathers) of Owensboro and Virginia.

Berrys Enter Picture

And how do the Berrys enter into the picture? When Bill went to Texas, he had a daughter, (one of the five daughters born to him) who married John Berry. She persuaded her husband, according to the story, to move to Texas also, to look after her father.

Texas historians mention William Smeathers as a member of DeWitt's colony, of which Gonzales was the capital. A list copied from an old Spanish document by Mrs. Ethel Rather Willavas of Austin, which constitutes Appendix Seven of her "History of of-De Witt's colony, and which was published in the Texas Historical Quarterly of October 1904, lists 75 inhabitants. This is the first census of De Witt's colony and is dated 1828. If it did not make too long a story, his connection with the Austins of Texas would prove of interest.

The last will and testament of William Smeathers (spelling is given as it is in the documents quoted) was dated August 5, 1837. He died August 13 of that same year, age 71 years.

In this will he appointed his son, Archibald Smeathers as executor. He had money lent out on interest, the total amount of which was over \$2,000, of which he bequeathed stated amounts to his son, Archibald, his grandsons, Andrew Jackson Berry and John Bate Berry, and to his son-in-law, John Berry Sr. His sorrel riding "nag" was to go to Archibald, his hunting rifle to John Bate and "one league and Labore of land" to be divided equally among the four of them. The old Spanish land league was 2.63 miles as a measure of length and was used in surveys of the Philippines, California and in Texas. A square league, commonly just called a league, consisted of 4,428.4 acres in Texas, slightly less in California.

A copy of this will is in Probate Record Book A, page 83, and is No. 467. Mrs. Seaver has also the copies of the records where the will was probated, and proved by the subscribing witnesses, after William Smeathers' death

Bill's Grandsons Outstanding

John Berry's sons by the daughter of William Smeathers (he was married again after her death) have made the most outstanding record, historically, of the Smeathers descendants. The elder Berry himself was an interesting character.

He was a veteran of the War of 1812. His second wife was the last of the widows of that war to draw a pension from the United States government. He built the first gristmill in Williamson County. It was powered by water from a stream which was fed by natural cold springs which flowed into one of the creeks between which his farm was located.

On the Georgetown Texas, courthouse lawn there is a concrete base which holds the millstone from the old mill. The inscription makes a statement to that effect, with the date of the mill's erection given as 1846.

Andrew Jackson Berry and John Bate Berry were in the battle of San Jacinto. "Jack" Berry was one of the men assigned to guard Santa Anna when the Mexican dictator was captured. He lived to be 81 years old and was killed in 1899W when the team he was driving became frightened

by a train and ran away. His wife was destined to be the last surviving widow of a San Jacinto veteran and was honored as such when the Texas Centennial was held in Dallas in 1936. More than 60 years after his death, there were still four of his children living Baird. Texas.

Bill's Descendents Fight Mexico

John Bate Berry and his older brother, Joseph, were in the Mier Expedition, which was a brave but futile foray against the Mexicans. Here Joseph was killed. He had broken a leg on a scouting errand, and when the Mexicans discovered the hideout, insisted on the others trying to escape. The Mexican lieutenant, who succeeded in entering the house where he was, immediately killed him. John Bate, along with a group of other Texans, was captured and put in Mexican prison.

An interesting sidelight on how the Mexicans decided whom they would kill of the prisoners and whom they would keep to work as slave labor, is noted. The Mexicans had a jar of black beans and white beans. The prisoners had to "draw for a bean." Those who drew a black bean were shot immediately. The others who drew the white beans were allowed to live. John Bate Berry drew a white bean. He was a Mexican prisoner for two years.

A history of Kimble County, "It Occurred in Kimble," author unknown to the writer, devotes an entire chapter to John Bate Berry, telling something of his family and personal life, but mostly of his experience in the Texas War of Independence and in the Mexican War (with the United States). It also relates something of his life as a rancher later.

Davey Crockett Enters

It was in the childhood home of Andrew Jackson Berry and John Bate Berry that the first Baptist services in that area were held. John Berry gave land for the first Baptist church there. One other intriguing story is told of the elder Berry that bears repeating – his experience with David Crockett, of Alamo fame.

On his way to the Alamo, David Crockett stopped at the Berry home. John Berry was a gunsmith of great repute. Davey had a treasured rifle whose stock had been badly broken. He stopped to see if Berry could fix it for turn. Berry was a great admirer of Crockett's and after mending the stock, he banded it with ornamental silver band. When Crockett was killed at the Alamo, according to historians, the Mexicans noticed the silver-banded gun and took it to Mexico City.

But there are also descendants from lines other than that of John Berry and Betsy Smeathers.

William Smeathers took with him to Texas his son, John Smeathers. Mrs. Seaver is of that line. Her grandfather was John Smeathers, Jr., as has been stated. His (John Jr.'s) brother, Charles C. Smothers (another change in spelling) had a daughter, Mary Frances Smothers Munson who, with her husband, G. F. Munson, in 1955 celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. And while John Berry was instrumental in establishing the first Baptist church his area, the Munson's grandparents were active in founding the Hope Methodist Church south of Yoakum, Texas.

Smother Story Completed

And the source of all this material? It is only a small part of the documentary evidence acquired by Mrs. Seaver. She has photostatic evidence copies of certain ; pages of a Texas history, of pages from an encyclopedia, copies of court records of wills and land grants from the Mexican government and later from the Republic of Texas, as well as census records.

Locally she has gotten a copy from part of a paper written some years back for the DAR by Miss Laura Wright of Rockport, Ind. (now deceased) of the history of Bill Smeathers' family record and something of his leaving Owensboro. While here she had the assistance of Miss Georgia Smeathers and her brother, Drury, who are of the James Smeathers (brother of the redoubtable Bill) line.

The trouble is that it is not complete. Mrs. Seaver would like to get in touch with anyone who has the complete 42-page copy of the story Miss Wright wrote. And most of all she would like to obtain a picture, if there is one in existence, of the man, Bill Smothers; who, references say, was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, and of the War of 1812, as well as a progenitor of heroes of the Texan War or Independence.

Among the names mentioned in collateral lines were several which may also be of interest to Owensborans: Ashby, Woolfolk, Taylor, Clark, Farley, etc.

Where Was Smothers' Cabin?

And so, the mystery solved, it appears that Bill Smothers was definitely not a mere buffoon, playing practical jokes, a rough-and-tumble fighter, an Indian nemesis, who sank into oblivion, his one act of importance being that it was he who built the cabin, which became the first step toward the Owensboro, a city of approximately 50,000, which stands on the Ohio today.

It is not generally known exactly where this cabin was. Miss Wright states that it was later the site of Bransford's Stemmerly, if that can be located. If anyone who has made a study of early Owensboro can locate this site, it would certainly be most appropriate for some organization to erect a marker.

The Smothers line has its reunion, also. Last year it was held on Memorial Day with an attendance of approximately 175. This year it was on May 30 and the reunion is planned for next April 8 at Corpus Christi, Mrs. Bernie Ponton, chairman.

Would it not be rather nice if they, the Berrys and the Smotherses, and all the connections would make it a homecoming and a reunion on a truly grand style in 1963 and have it in Owensboro? There would be plenty of material at both ends of the line to stage a pageant with all the drama and history that one could wish for.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 14 May 1965, p.3A:

Pair Travels From Far West To Dig Into History Of Area

Two history-minded women, descendants of pioneer families in this area, have journeyed more than 1,000 miles to dig into the histories of their ancestors here and in Spencer County, Indiana.

Mrs. Leland S. Lewis of Nevada City, Calif., and Mrs. A. L. Walker of Lovington, N. M., arrived in Rockport Wednesday and will spend some two weeks doing research on William Berry, John Berry and, naturally, the accepted first settler of Daviess County – William Smeathers.

Smeathers, for whom an historical marker was erected in Riverside Park by the Daviess County Historical Society, has been called, in various historical documents, Smeathers, Smither and Smothers.

But according to Mrs. Walker, who owns correspondence written by the county's first settler, he called himself Wm. Smeathers.

Mrs. Lewis, who originated the trip to this area, plans to use the information she collects during her stay as research material necessary for membership in the D.A.R., to which she has made application.

The former Sara Mae Brown and a Hoosier by birth, Mrs. Lewis is a fifth-generation descendant of William Berry,



Poring over ancient records are these two history-minded women, who traveled more than 1,000 miles to do research on the parts played by their ancestors in the settling of Daviess County and neighboring Spencer County, Indiana. Seated is Mrs. Leland S. Lewis of Nevada City, Calif., a descendant of William Berry. Standing is Mrs. A. L. Walker of Lovington, N. M., a descendant of William Smeathers.

Rockport Founder

Berry, a soldier in the Revolutionary War, came to this area from Bardstown, Ky., in 1805. He and two other pioneer settlers established Rockport and William Berry donated the land now contained in Boonville, Ind.

The Berry family came from Virginia to Bardstown in 1785. Mrs. Lewis is the great-great great-granddaughter of Susan Berry, born in 1800 and the youngest daughter of William Berry.

Ancient deeds belonging to him and showing land that he owned in Daviess County are in the possession of Mrs. Lewis. She hopes to delve into records here and discover any part William

Berry may have had in settlement of areas on this side of the river in addition to his integral contributions to the early history of southern Indiana.

Mrs. Walker traces her lineage to Betsey Smeathers, a daughter of one of this county's earliest inhabitants. The former Miss Mary Artess Coons, she is a native of New Mexico.

She is a great-great-great- granddaughter of William Smeathers, from the family of Betsy, who married John Berry.

The two historians hope to discover the kinship of John and William Berry; they believe two were brothers.

Mrs. Walker revealed that Audie Murphy, the most-decorated soldier in World War II and later a movie star, is a fifth-generation descendant of John Berry and Betsey Smeathers Berry.

She also explained that Judge Jack Pope, a justice on the state supreme court in Texas, is a great-great-grandson of John and Betsey.

The Berry clan, she reported, is known and revered in Texas for the important part early family members played in the history of that state.

Two grandsons of William Smeathers, through John Berry, are named on the monument to the Battle of San Jacinto. They fought under Sam Houston as Texas battled for its freedom from Mexico in 1868.

Mrs. Walker will leave the area in time to attend the annual Berry Reunion in Abilene, Tex., on June 12 and 13. She explained that some 200 descendants of John Berry gather yearly for the two-day event which is an important historical happening for Texans.

Mrs. Lewis will be in the area until the end of the month. They are staying with another Berry descendant at the Occidental Hotel in Rockport, and are anxious to contact anyone who may have information concerning either John or William Berry and their connections with Owensboro and Daviess County.

Dinner Scheduled

Their trip to the area coincided, luckily, with the Sesquicentennial Celebration in Daviess County, marking 150 years since the county was established by an act of the state legislature.

The first of many events, scheduled to commemorate the county's first 150 years is the Sesquicentennial Dinner, set for June 1, the anniversary date.

Scheduled to speak at the dinner is Dr. Thomas D. Clark, distinguished professor of the University of Kentucky and noted Kentucky author and lecturer.

The Sesquicentennial Dinner and other 150th birthday celebrations are being arranged by the joint Owensboro - Daviess County Chamber of Commerce – Daviess county Historical Society committee on arrangements.

A parade, a countywide school observance and the burial of a time capsule in the yard of the Daviess County Courthouse are among the events being planned for later in the sesquicentennial year. ,

Hugh O. Potter, chairman of the arrangements committee. spent Thursday morning with the visitors from the far west, offering them valuable information concerning the early history of Daviess County.

Potter extended a special invitation to them and to other descendants of pioneer families from this area to attend the Sesquicentennial Dinner.



Smothers' Descendant Visits Ohio County



Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Smothers

Robert F. Smothers and his wife, Elsie Smothers, of Wharton, Texas, Tuesday visited the site of Fort Hartford, built as a fort in 1782.

One of the men who helped build the fort here was William Smeathers (spelled Smothers, Smithers) great-great-grandfather of Robert Smothers.

William Smeathers also helped erect Barnett Station, two miles east of Hartford, which was occupied in February, 1783 by several families including Joseph and Alexander Barnett.

William Smeathers married Cecelia Fitzpatrick of Virginia and their first child, Jane, was born in the fort at Hartford and when she was 14 years of age, the family moved to Yellow Banks, later known as Owensboro.

In the meantime, Smeathers had helped build the fort at the lower falls of the Green, known later as Rhoadsville, then Vienna, then Calhoun. The fort at the lower falls was built to protect the families at Hartford because Indians were using the point for crossing.

The river front park in Owensboro was named Bill Smothers Park in honor of the first settler there.

A marker at Richmond, Texas also honors the early pioneer who helped erect the fort at Fort Bend. William Smeathers was also one of Stephen Austin's selected "Old Three Hundred," and one of the original eleven men who helped settle Texas.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smothers visited Mrs. Dorothy Gentry Tuesday and after doing some research on the early pioneer, left for Owensboro and Rockport.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Friday, 13 June 1975, p.1B:



By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer Staff

A retired Texas couple who spent a combined 80 years in education spent some time this week at the Owensboro riverfront. They weren't interested in the Regatta though.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Smothers of Wharton, Tex., were on a pilgrimage to the site of Smothers' great-great-grandfather's Kentucky cabin in Owensboro.

The cabin was built on the Ohio here by William Smothers in 1797 or 1798 – the first home in what is now Owensboro.

Mrs. Smothers said she and her husband have been researching the Smothers family for some four years since their retirement from teaching in Texas junior colleges.

"I have enough material for a book," she said. "But I haven't decided if I'll write one" on Smothers.

While in Owensboro, the Texans met some distant cousins – descendents of Smothers' brother, James Smeathers. Spelling is a problem in their family.

Mrs. Smothers' research shows that Bill Smothers' father spelled his name as "Smithers." Bill Smothers' will uses all three spellings, she said.

In 1821, she said, Smothers, his sons, John and Archibald, and his son-in-law, John Berry, left the Kentucky-Indiana area and migrated to Texas through Louisiana.

A copy of Stephen F. Austin's diary lists Smothers (spelled "Smithers" by the "Father of Texas") as a hunter for the first expedition of 11 Americans into the region around present-day Houston.

There is a monument, Mrs. Smothers said, on the Brazos River at Richmond, Tex., dedicated to Smothers and four other members of the party who stayed at that site to build Fort Bend.

Robert Smothers said he met some 15 Daviess County relations who spell their name "Smeathers." "We haven't met any of the Smithers yet though," he grinned.

But the "Smithers" spelling is preserved in Texas history through a lake on which the frontiersman settled in the Lone Star State. Smithers Lake, the Texas couple said, is the site of a large Houston Lighting and Power Co. plant.

Smothers believes he is the first direct descendent of Bill Smothers to return to the Owensboro cabin site since the family pulled up stakes 154 years ago. A cousin however once spent three weeks here researching the family, he said.

The Texan knows he is descended from Smothers but he has not yet been able to learn which of Smothers' two wives was his great-great-grandmother. He believes it was Mary Winters Smothers, the Tennessee girl Smothers married after his first wife, Cecelia, died.

Mrs. Smothers provided several bits of information about the family's history for those interested in the earliest Owensboroan.

—All those who bear the Smothers name are descended through Bill's son, John. Archibald had no sons. John brought three motherless children with a him to Texas and there married a Kentucky woman, keeping the Bluegrass State in the family heritage.

—Smothers, who occasionally hunted with Jim Bowie, was 70 years old with barely a year left to live when Bowie called on him to join other Texans at the Alamo in San Antonio some 150 miles from his home.

Ill health forced the pioneer to stay at home, Mrs. Smothers said. "But Santa Anna (the Mexican general) tried to cross the Brazos near his (Smothers) house. A group of men met him at the river to stop him. I'll bet Bill Smothers was one of them," she said.

Smothers, whose mother was descended from royalty (according to Mrs. Smothers' research), died Aug. 13, 1837. To this day, no one has been able to locate his grave. The grave is an object of curiosity among East Texas historians who would regard it as a major find, Mrs. Smothers added.

Though he wasn't a direct descendant of Smothers, actor and World War II hero Audie Murphy was part of the family, Smothers said.

Murphy was descended from John Berry, Smothers' son-in-law, through Berry's third wife, he explained.

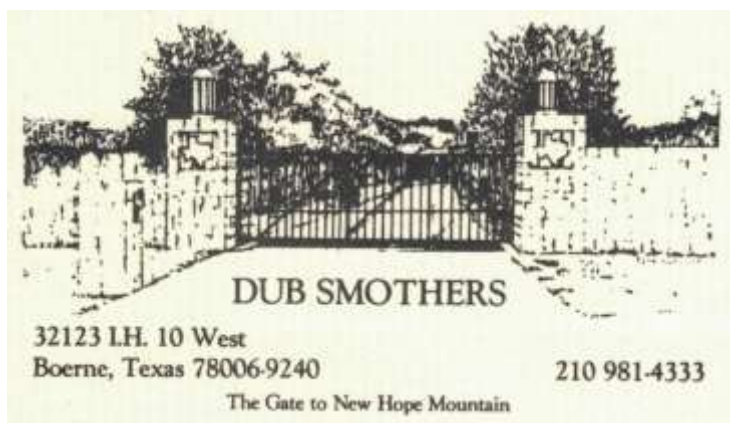
A direct descendant of Smothers has reached a high position in Texas. Andrew Jackson Pope, a justice on the Texas Supreme Court, traces his lineage back to Smothers through his daughter, Mrs. Smothers said.

After a trip to Rockport, Ind., where two of Smothers' daughters and their husbands had lived more than 150 years ago, the Texans yesterday began their trip home to the last frontier their ancestor had explored.

[Note: Robert Fey Smothers' line of descent was William Smothers (c1760-1837) – John Bate Smothers (1789-1846) – John Bate Smothers, Jr. 1836-1913) – Henry Stoner Smothers (1878-1939) – Robert Fey Smothers (1903-1978). Robert Fey Smothers died on 17 June 1978 in Wharton, Wharton County, Texas. Robert's wife, Elsie Marie Turk Smothers (1906-1997), did extensive research on the Smothers family.]



**Log of Jerry Long
Entry for 14 December 1995:**



I met and assisted Mr. & Mrs. Dub Smothers, of Boerne, Texas, on their visit to the Kentucky Room, Daviess County Public Library in Owensboro, KY. His line of descent from William Smothers, who is recognized as the first resident of Owensboro. His line is: William Smothers (c1760-1837) – John Bate Smothers (1789-1846) – Charles Carroll Ashby Smothers (1833-1918) – Joel McClure Smothers (1871-1956) – Carroll Abner Smothers (1901-1963) – Warren Carroll Smothers, 'Dub' (1930-).

Mr. Smothers had called the Kentucky Room to inquire about our sources on Owensboro's pioneer, William Smothers. I pulled and marked sources for him to review. From our vertical files and several books of family history and histories of Owensboro, copied 407 pages. Gave him directions to the Smothers Park memorial. Mr. Smothers contributed a donation of \$100 to the Owensboro library.

Told Mr. Smothers of the plans for the 200th anniversary of the founding of Owensboro in a couple of years. He requested to be notified when plans were finalized.

[Note: Dub Smothers died at the age of 91 on 19 December 2021 in Boerne, Kendall County, Texas.]



Family data compiled by Elsie Marie Turk Smothers of Wharton, Texas:

HUSBAND'S NAME William Smeathers (Smithers) (Bill Smothers)
 Date of Birth 1759 or 1762 Place On the Holston, SW Virginia
 Date of Death Aug 13, 1837 Place Columbia, Texas
 Present Address (or) Place of Burial Buried on Brazos River; Grave has not been located
 His Father ?? Smithers His Mother's Maiden Name Anna Marie Chrisman
 Date of Marriage of HUSBAND and WIFE on this sheet 1791 Place Kentucky
 Check here if there was another marriage: By husband By Wife Was this couple divorced? Yes No When?
WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME Mary Winters (Use separate sheet for each marriage)
 Date of Birth 1769 Place Wautauga, Tennessee
 Date of Death Place
 Present Address (or) Place of Burial
 Her Father Moses Winters Her Mother's Maiden Name Elizabeth ??

Items of interest about the above couple (occupations, hobbies, achievements; social, civil, and political activities; physical descriptions—include photos if possible; military service; cause of death):

Revolutionary War, First to go into Green River area of Ky.
 War of 1812
 One of first to settle Texas 1821
 Indian fighter; Pioneer. Died of heart attack. Use reverse side for additional information

Have family sheet	CHILDREN (Arrange in order of birth)	Age	Birth Information	Death Information	Marriage Information
1	John Smeathers <input checked="" type="radio"/>		1792 Owensboro Ky.	1846 <input checked="" type="radio"/> Lavaca Co. Tx. <input checked="" type="radio"/>	Jan. 25, 1836 <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mary H. Ashby <input checked="" type="radio"/>
2	Archibald Smeathers <input checked="" type="radio"/>		1793 Owensboro Ky.	?? Texas	?? Goodman
3	Mary Smeathers <input checked="" type="radio"/>		4-22-1795 <input checked="" type="radio"/> Owensboro Ky. <input checked="" type="radio"/>	8-7-1876 <input checked="" type="radio"/>	5-14-1812 <input checked="" type="radio"/> Henry Jones <input checked="" type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>				
5	<input type="radio"/>				

Check here if there are additional children by first marriage (4)

Footnoting: To substantiate the information recorded on this page, please use the footnotes listed below. One of these numbers should be placed in the circle provided next to each answer on the questionnaire. If you got the information from a source not listed, place that source on a vacant line and use the number next to which it has been placed as your footnote number.

Use only if you have filled in the blank from personal knowledge (such as the name of your brother). If you must look up his marriage date, give as the source whatever you looked it up. If you asked him, give his name as the source.

Name and address of person filling in this sheet. Date _____

- DAR record No. 469620 "Bill Smothers" by Thomas C. McCreery
- Copy of his Obituary Houston Telegraph, Houston, Texas
- DAR Records 419207 and 469620 (Jean McCoy Brynes Evansville, Ind.)
- Will of William Smeathers 1837 (on file, Angleton, Texas)
- "History of Texas" by John Henry Brown Marriage Bond 1836
- Legal papers pertaining to settlement of Estate of John Smothers 1846

HUSBAND'S NAME William Smeathers (Bill Smothers)

Date of Birth circa 1760 ⁽¹⁰⁾ Place On the Holston Virginia ⁽⁶⁾

Date of Death Oct 13, 1837 ⁽⁴⁾ Place Columbia Tex. on the Brazos R. ⁽⁴⁾

Present Address (or) Place of Burial Grave has never been located

His Father ? Smithers ⁽¹⁰⁾ His Mother's Maiden Name Anna Marie Chrisman ⁽¹⁰⁾

Date of Marriage of HUSBAND and WIFE on this sheet 1781 ⁽⁶⁾ Place Virginia ⁽⁶⁾

Check here if there was another marriage: By husband By Wife Was this couple divorced? Yes No When? ⁽⁰⁾

WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME Nancy Cecilia Fitzpatrick (Use separate sheet for each marriage)

Date of Birth 1735 ⁽¹⁰⁾ Place ⁽⁰⁾

Date of Death ?? ⁽⁰⁾ Place Calhoun Kentucky ⁽⁰⁾

Present Address (or) Place of Burial ⁽⁰⁾

Her Father ⁽⁰⁾ Her Mother's Maiden Name ⁽⁰⁾

Items of interest about the above couple (occupations, hobbies, achievements; social, civil, and political activities; physical descriptions—include photos if possible; military service; cause of death): Bill Smothers has four historical markers, two in Ky. and two in Texas: On the Brazos, in Lavaca County in Texas. At Hartford and at Owensboro in Ky.

Use reverse side for additional information

Have family sheet	CHILDREN (Arrange in order of birth)	Code	Birth Information	Death Information	Marriage Information
1	Jane Smeathers ⁽⁸⁾	⁽²⁾	1783 Kentucky (Va.) ⁽³⁾	Spencer Co. Rockport Ind. ⁽⁴⁾	Feb. 5, 1800 Daniel Grass ⁽²⁾
2	Betsy Smeathers ⁽⁷⁾				John Berry ⁽⁶⁾
3	Mary Smeathers ⁽⁸⁾				single ⁽⁸⁾
4	Elizabeth Smeathers ⁽⁵⁾				George Stateler ⁽⁵⁾
5					

Check here if there are additional children

Footnoting: To substantiate the information recorded on this page, please use the footnotes listed below. One of these numbers should be placed in the circle provided next to each answer on the questionnaire. If you got the information from a source not listed, place that source on a vacant line and use the number next to which it has been placed as your footnote number.

Use ⁽¹⁾ only if you have filled in the blank from personal knowledge (such as the name of your brother). If you must look up his marriage date, give as the source wherever you looked it up. If you asked him, give his name as the source.

- ⁽¹⁾ Name and address of person filling in this sheet: Elsie Turk Smothers Date
1335 Kelving Way, Wharton Tex.
- ⁽²⁾ Marriage bond signed by William Smeathers and Daniel Grass at Hartford 1800
- ⁽³⁾ Census record
- ⁽⁴⁾ Houston Telegraph 1837 ⁽⁵⁾ Will of Mary Smothers 1847
- ⁽⁶⁾ "Glimpses into the Past" George H. Honig ⁽⁷⁾ Will of Jane Grass 1857
- ⁽⁸⁾ "Life of Bill Smothers" McCreery ⁽⁹⁾ DAR Records Salt Lake Records
- ⁽¹⁰⁾ Will of William Smeathers 1837

HUSBAND'S NAME John Smothers Sr.
 Date of Birth 1792 Place Owensboro, Kentucky
 Date of Death 1846 (no will) Place Lavaca County, Texas
 Present Address (or) Place of Burial St. Mary's Cemetery Lavaca County, Texas
 His Father William Smeathers His Mother's Maiden Name Mary Winters
 Date of Marriage of HUSBAND and WIFE on this sheet about 1796 Place Kentucky
 Check here if there was another marriage: By husband By Wife Was this couple divorced? Yes No When? _____
 WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME Sanny Moore (Use separate sheet for each marriage)
 Date of Birth _____ Place _____
 Date of Death _____ Place _____
 Present Address (or) Place of Burial Buried Ky. or Ind. (Did not come to Texas with John)
 Her Father _____ Her Mother's Maiden Name _____

Items of interest about the above couple (occupations, hobbies, achievements, social, civil, and political activities; physical descriptions—include photos if possible; military service; cause of death):
 One of persons signing papers to create Lavaca County
 War of 1812 with his father. One of Early settlers of Texas, 1825.
 Battle of Plum Creek in Tex.
 Many skirmishes with Indians Died from Fighting Grass Fire

Have family sheet	CHILDREN (Arrange in order of birth)	Code	Birth Information	Death Information	Marriage Information
1	William Smothers (6)		Feb. 6, 1820 Kentucky (4)	Aug. 19, 1863 Hallettsville, Tx (5)	Cynthia Kelley (5)
2	Mary Smothers (6)		Kentucky (4)		Elijah Kelley (6)
3	Archibald Smothers (6) (3)		Kentucky (3)	1839 Killed by Indians in Lavaca Co. Tex. (3)	
4					
5					

Check here if there are additional children

Footnoting. To substantiate the information recorded on this page, please use the footnotes listed below. One of these numbers should be placed in the circle provided next to each answer on the questionnaire. If you got the information from a source not listed, place that source on a vacant line and use the number next to which it has been placed as your footnote number.

Use (1) only if you have filled in the blank from personal knowledge (such as the name of your brother). If you must look up his marriage date, give as the source, wherever you looked it up. If you asked him, give his name as the source.

(1) Name and address of person filling in this sheet. Elsie Turk Smothers Date Oct 4, 1982
1335 Kelving Way Wharton, Texas

- (2) DAR Records on file Washington D.C. (Record of Jeanne McCoy Byrne Evansville Ind.)
- (3) "History of Lavaca County" by Paul C. Boethel
- (3) "The Free State of Lavaca" Paul C. Boethel
- (3) Headstones in Hallettsville, Tex.
- (3) Legal Records settling estate John Smothers Sr. 1846 Hallettsville, Tex.
- (2) "History of Texas" by John Henry Brown

HUSBAND'S NAME John Smothers Sr.

Date of Birth 1798 (7) Place Owensboro, Kentucky (7)

Date of Death 1846 (no will) (5) Place Lavaca County, Texas (5)

Present Address (or) Place of Burial St. Mary's Cemetery, Lavaca County, Texas

His Father William Smothers (7) His Mother's Maiden Name Mary Winters (7)

Date of Marriage of HUSBAND and WIFE on this sheet Jan. 25, 1836 (6) Place Gonzales, Texas (6)

Check here if there was another marriage: By husband By Wife Was this couple divorced? Yes No When? _____ (8)

WIFE'S MAIDEN NAME Mary Harris Ashby (Use separate sheet for each marriage)

Date of Birth Sept 8, 1815 (4) Place Shelby County, Ky. (3)

Date of Death July 21, 1899 (4) Place Lavaca County, Texas (4)

Present Address (or) Place of Burial St. Mary's Cemetery, Lavaca County, Texas

Her Father John Ashby (3) Her Mother's Maiden Name Mary Garnet Ashby (3)

Items of interest about the above couple (occupations, hobbies, achievements; social, civil, and political activities; physical descriptions—include photos if possible; military service; cause of death):

Use reverse side for additional information

Have family sheet	CHILDREN (Arrange in order of birth)	Code	Birth Information	Death Information	Marriage Information
1	John Smothers Jr. (5)		Nov. 8, 1836 (2) Lavaca Co. Tx. (1)	Aug. 29, 1913 (2) Lavaca Co. Tx. (2)	Mary Ann E. Hinch (1)
2	Tobin Smothers (5)		Aug 8, 1839 (2) Lavaca Co. Tx. (2)	May 14, 1858 (2) Lavaca Co. Tx. (2)	
3	Martha Ann Smothers (5)		1841 (2) Lavaca Co. Tx. (2)	1870 (2) Lavaca Co. Tx. (2)	Jefferson Butler (1)
4					
5					

Check here if there are additional children

Footnoting. To substantiate the information recorded on this page, please use the footnotes listed below. One of these numbers should be placed in the circle provided next to each answer on the questionnaire. If you got the information from a source not listed, place that source on a vacant line and use the number next to which it has been placed as your footnote number.

Use (1) only if you have filled in the blank from personal knowledge (such as the name of your brother). If you must look up his marriage date, give as the source wherever you looked it up. If you asked him, give his name as the source.

- (1) Name and address of person filling in this sheet: Elsie Turk Smothers Date _____
Info. given me by Lucy 1335 Kelving Way, Wharton Tx.
Turk Smothers-my aunt
- (2) Headstones St. Mary's Cemetery AND Hallettsville, Tx.
- (3) Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas by John Henry Brown
- (4) Mary Garnet Ashby headstone Hallettsville, Texas
- (5) Legal records settling John's Estate, Hallettsville Texas
- (6) Marriage Bond between John Smothers and Mary Harris Ashby Gonzales, Tex.
- (7) DAR Records on file. Wash. D.C.