

*Robert Coleman
of
Charles City Shire
In Three Volumes*



*Volume 3
A Synopsis*

James Michael Paschall Coleman

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A Synopsis

James Michael Paschall Coleman, III

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Please send all additions or corrections to
James M Coleman
1530 Military Rd
Bogalusa, Louisiana
jamesmpcoleman@gmail.com
985 516-2632

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Research For This Book Which Includes But Is Not Limited To
The Following**

Fred W. Field
Loma Linda & Fullerton,
California
Author of "Coleman World"

Barbara Jean Coleman Ayscue
Henderson, North Carolina
Descendant of Captain Levi P.
Coleman, CSA

Traci Thompson
Local History/Genealogy
Librarian
Braswell Memorial Library
Rocky Mount, North Carolina

Thomas C. Coleman
Franklinton, North Carolina
Son of Rodney Lee Coleman

Eleanor P. Mustian
614 E Maryland Ave
Crewe, Virginia
Granddaughter of Sally R.
Coleman (1874 - 1951)

Richard Coleman Allen
13523 Knottinghill Dr.
Sugar Land, Texas
Grandson of DeArcie Paul
Coleman

Kenneth D Kennedy
Author and Genealogist
Raleigh, North Carolina
Nephew of Mary Barrow
Coleman

Elizabeth Coleman Cates PhD
Jonesborough, Tennessee
Granddaughter of Lucy Ann
Coleman

John Spencer Leitzel
Baltimore, Maryland
Grandson of Lillian Pearl
Coleman

Sara Herritage Coleman Cann
Richmond, Virginia
Daughter of William Rose
Coleman

Stella Virginia Herritage
Coleman
Rocky Mount, North Carolina
Genealogist and wife of William
Rose Coleman

Mary Lib Taylor
Genealogist Warren County
Norlina, North Carolina

Frank and Delores Ann Britt
Waldrop
Mannboro, Virginia
Granddaughter of Van Allen
Coleman

Nancy Vernon
3 - 208 Carolina Meadows
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Daughter of Eleanor Morton
Coleman

Ginger Coleman
Rocky Mount, North Carolina
Wife of David Wilson Coleman

Helen Holt
Wake Forest, North Carolina
Granddaughter of T.J. Holt MD

Russell G. Bell
Richmond, Virginia
3rd Cousin of James M.P.
Coleman, III, and
Great-grandson of Lee Paschall

Brenda Weeks Coleman, PhD
Bogalusa, Louisiana
Wife of James M.P. Coleman,
III

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Ronald Zane Perkinson (1951-
2019)
170 Drewry's Bluff Rd
Paschall, NC
ggGrandson of Captain Levi
Coleman, CSA

Review Comments of Related Publications

**Mary Lib Walker Taylor, Genealogist
Norlina, North Carolina
February 22, 2014**

I was happy to receive a preliminary copy of *The Coleman Family of Warren County, North Carolina* from Deloris Williams, North Carolina Gen Web, Assistant State Coordinator, and have reviewed the work.

The manuscript is quite thorough and adds much to the growing number of genealogical studies of families from Warren County, North Carolina.

The Coleman family is familiar to me as I participated at the grave marker dedication for Captain Levi Coleman, CSA of "G" Company, 43rd North Carolina Infantry which was held on September 25, 1999. This dedication was held at the old Levi Coleman house, currently owned and under the care of Ron Perkinson.

I know that descendants of the family and all those interested in Warren County, North Carolina history will enjoy reading the completed book.

Mary Lib Walker Taylor
Norlina, North Carolina
February 22, 2014

Author's Note:

Mary "Lib" was born in Warren County, North Carolina and all her roots are in that County. She tirelessly helps people that get referred to her from the Warren County Courthouse for genealogical research assistance.

Mary Lib Walker Taylor served as the project coordinator for the research and publication of the three volume set, Warren County, North Carolina Cemeteries by the Warren County Heritage Committee.

She also served as editor on, Warren County, North Carolina Minutes to the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions 1780-1786, by Ginger L. Christmas-Beattie.

Mary Lib and her husband graciously conferred with the author in their Norlina home on the development of Coleman related books and offered several ideas for improvement for which the author is grateful.

The author has received word that Mary Lib Mary Elizabeth Walker Taylor, 92, died Wednesday, November 24, 2021 at her home. She was born in Norlina to the late Jerman Taylor Walker and Blanche Harris Walker. Mary Lib graduated from Norlina High School and Peace College where she was elected as Miss Peace 1949. Mary Lib was active in the community serving as a member of the Norlina United Methodist Women, the Warren County United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Warren Chapter Daughters of American Revolution Chapter #939.

Review Comments of Related Publications

**Robert P. Winthrop, Architect
Farmville, Virginia
July 2, 2014**

Family genealogical histories can range from fanciful collections of myth and supposition to detailed works of historic research. James M Coleman's book, *The Coleman Family of Warren County, North Carolina*, is clearly in the latter category.

Coleman uncovered detailed information on the life of Lee Paschall, whose sister married a Coleman.

Paschall, a native of North Carolina, became the most important building contractor and hotel developer in Richmond in the first half of the twentieth Century. He was the contractor for some of the largest buildings in Richmond of the period, including the 4,000 seat Moorish style ACCA Temple, best known as the Mosque, and now called the Altria Theater, as well as the Art Deco masterpiece, the John Marshall Hotel.

It is easy to forget that corporate history is often family history. Paschall, his brothers, cousins and nephews were deeply involved in the creation and management of the Wise Contracting Company and Richmond Hotels. Starting with the Wise Granite and Construction Company, the firm grew until it played a major role in the building of the Pentagon in 1941-43. The Pentagon was among the most impressive construction projects of the twentieth century in America.

Paschall's business partner in Wise Granite and Construction, Thomas Gresham, owned lumberyards in Richmond before he joined the Wise firm. He had been involved in running railroad restaurants as a young man. In the 1920s, Gresham and Paschall became the developers and owners of the William Byrd and John Marshall hotels

in Richmond and the monumental Chamberlin Hotel in Hampton. Paschall did not just create hotels; he built landmarks.

Wise Contracting Company survived from 1903 to 1980. This is remarkable, considering the financial instability of most contracting firms. It's reliance on family relationships played an important role in the firm's longevity.

Author's Note:

Robert P. Winthrop is partner at Winthrop, Jenkins, and Associates, a Virginia based architecture firm specializing in historic renovation.

Historic buildings have also been his focus in numerous writings and lectures.

His books and articles include The Architecture of Jackson Ward, Cast and Wrought: The Architectural Metalwork of Downtown Richmond, Virginia, and Architecture in Downtown Richmond.

Ten articles, written for the Richmond Times Dispatch, were published as Richmond's Architecture.

He has given major lecture series for the Monument Avenue Foundation and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

He is the coauthor, with Sarah Driggs and Richard Guy Wilson of Richmond's Monument Avenue, published in 2001.

The author thanks Bob Winthrop for his comments on the first Coleman related book and on his thoughts concerning the contribution of Wise Construction Company to the history of Richmond, Virginia, in the first half of the twentieth Century.

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A. Comments by James M. P. Coleman, III, Author

Bogalusa, Louisiana

January 1, 2022

It is with joy that I recount the deeds of grace of my Coleman antecedents and their children.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was entirely correct in stating in his prolific writings from the Grand Duchy of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach back in the 1700s, "Happy he, who with bright regard looks back upon his father's fathers, who with joy recounts their deeds of grace, and in himself, valued the latest link in the fair chain of noble sequence."

This journey back into time was not an easy trip. Facts concerning the history of the Coleman family were, in some cases, difficult to uncover. When found, however, they shone as brightly as newly discovered and polished gemstones. Taken as a whole, the brightest gems were photographs of almost all of my direct antecedents from circa 1860 to the present along with photographs of many of their homes.

Perhaps it would be best for all of us to heed the teachings of Harvard University philosopher Jorge Agustín Nicolás Ruiz de Santayana y Borrás, who said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.... It is far better to live in the light of the tragic fact, rather than to forget or deny it". Little did I know that many tragic facts would be discovered during my research.

Not knowing those facts at the time, I started my journey into the past with a smile on my face. I was on the way to the great libraries of North Carolina, Virginia, and Washington, District of Columbia.

This journey was to focus on eight areas of research:

- Primary records including wills, court documents, church records, census records, family Bibles and personal letters.

- Secondary records such newspapers, city directories, and DAR documents.
- Published and un-published research such as books and manuscripts.
- Oral and written recollections by friends and family members.
- Cemetery records and monuments.
- Photographs of family members.
- Photographs of family homes and associated buildings.
- Handwriting samples.

These eight areas of research seem, on the surface, to be rather mundane and unremarkable. When taken individually they do indeed seem to be such but when viewed as a whole they fulfill the author's objective. The author's objective is to help the reader develop insights into the soul and the day-to-day life of Coleman family members. The hundreds of family member photographs add much to these insights since "the eyes are the windows to the soul".

In addition, since the soul of architecture is closely integrated with the souls of the inhabitants who interact within the space they occupy, the pictures of Coleman family homes are likewise "windows to the soul". Lastly, it was once said that, "Purity of writing is purity of the soul". Thus, the handwriting samples in this book add to the reader's understanding of the Coleman soul.

As someone who enjoyed the great libraries of Richmond when I was a youth, returning to them as a genealogical researcher was a homecoming that I thoroughly enjoyed.

In addition, a return to the beautiful Louis Round Wilson Library in Chapel Hill after an absence of forty years since my graduate school days was also a joy. To top it off, visits to the State of North Carolina Archives and Library Building in Raleigh and the National Archives Building in Washington, DC were soon to come.

It was always a treat to connect with previously unknown family members. Each added immeasurably to this document. Special thanks go to Tom Coleman, Nancy Vernon, Eleanor P. Mustian, Ron

and Sandy Perkinson, Hiram and Kathryn Perkinson, Sara Herritage Coleman Cann, Ginger Coleman, Richard Coleman Allen, Elizabeth Coleman Cates, Frank and Delores Waldrop, John Spencer Leitzel, Russell G. Bell and my always helpful first cousin Susan Kennedy Smith.

Susan's brother, Kenneth and his wife, Sara Lynn Kennedy served more as my brother and sister than my actual first cousins during this project. They were always ready with an encouraging word and a home away from home during my Virginia and North Carolina research trips. In addition, Kenneth's insight into the research and publication process, as author of *Progenitors: A Kennedy Genealogy and History*, was invaluable.

The many trips to my previous home city of Richmond, Virginia, were always enjoyable when they included visits with my Collegiate School buddies Ben Greenbaum, John Robertson and their respective wives Bonnie and Fran. Many days and nights were spent discussing the Richmond of old. My hours of research went by so much better when they were there to help.

Ben and John are well known experts in many of the historical topics which are found in this book. Ben, an ISA appraiser and co-owner of Perry Adams Antiques, Petersburg, Virginia, was my expert in all things regarding antique photographs, Amelia County and the Civil War.

John Robertson, owner of Robertson & Company Custom Builders, Inc. served as my resource concerning topics related to historical Richmond neighborhoods.

It was an unexpected treat to reconnect with Raymond Wallace, Jr., author of *Essex Memories & Beyond*. Ray and I go back to the 1946 – 1960 period during which time he was a keen observer of all things related to Lee Paschall and Wise Contracting Company of Richmond.

Lee Paschall was described as “the most important building contractor and hotel developer in Richmond in the first half of the

twentieth Century” by Robert P. Winthrop, partner at Winthrop, Jenkins, and Associates, a Virginia-based architecture firm.

Both Raymond and I remember that whenever we would visit Lee Paschall in his back office at Wise Contracting Company with our respective fathers, a shiny, silver quarter would be deposited in our young hands by this kindly man. Additional information on Lee Paschall and Raymond Wallace Sr. can be found in Volume 1, Chapter 27 of this book.

When researching in Washington, District of Columbia, my old Richmond friend Claiborne Henderson could always be counted on for special help understanding the intricacies of the city. Such insight is not surprising when I think back to our original “road trips” to Alexandria, Virginia, in the 1960s and to our many wilderness treks in Virginia’s mountain, river and lake country.

Another old Richmond friend was discovered in Washington, District of Columbia, along with her daughter during one of my research visits. Pat Williams Hudson and her daughter Dana W. Hudson, President and CEO of C6 Strategies, a government relations firm specializing in the Defense, Special Operations and Homeland Security communities, provided interesting observations of events in Washington.

Pat’s husband, James W. Hudson, was an American whose World War II exploits as a spy behind enemy lines included the rescue of Allied nurses, the capture of Nazi scientists and the arrest of the prominent German aviator, Hannah Reich. After Mr. Hudson’s World War II service with the Office of Strategic Services, the wartime forerunner of the CIA, he wrote memoirs detailing his clandestine OSS work, including, *In the Name of the Luftwaffe*.

Pat’s future life with a distinguished OSS operative was foretold by her 1960 vintage reconnaissance missions to Mt. Olive Cohoke Road in King William County, Virginia, to view the ghostly “West Point Light” which was, according to legend, held by a railroad conductor looking for his severed head alongside the railroad tracks.

New friends that assisted in the development of this book included Doris Ann Britt Waldrop (# 1.1.4.7.3.1.1.1.7.9.5.2) and Frank Waldrop of Mannboro, Virginia. Frank, a local historian, helped with much of the Amelia County family related information, maps and photographs.

Also, John Spencer Leitzel (# 1.1.4.7.3.1.1.1.7.8.4.3) of Baltimore, being a family researcher, helped immensely with information and photographs of his side of the family.

Lastly, this book could not have been written without the help of my wife and professional librarian, Brenda Weeks Coleman, PhD, author of, *Keeping the Faith: The Public Library's Commitment to Adult Education, 1950—2006*.

Being an academic author, Brenda encouraged me to always use source documents to collaborate unsourced material. Volume 2 of this book is the direct result of Brenda's advice. Brenda has given me good advice for the past fifty years since we met and later married.

Keeping a close eye on the recording of every word in this book was the office cat, "Snook". Snook had the final word on all things feline and canine related. He closely watched every keystroke and examined every photograph from his favorite position on the author's desk. He was a friend to all that visited the office. Visitors could not miss this tuxedo clad "Editor-In-Residence".

