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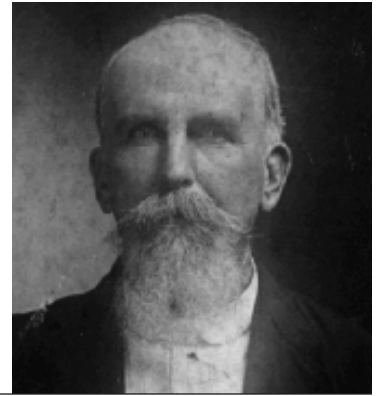
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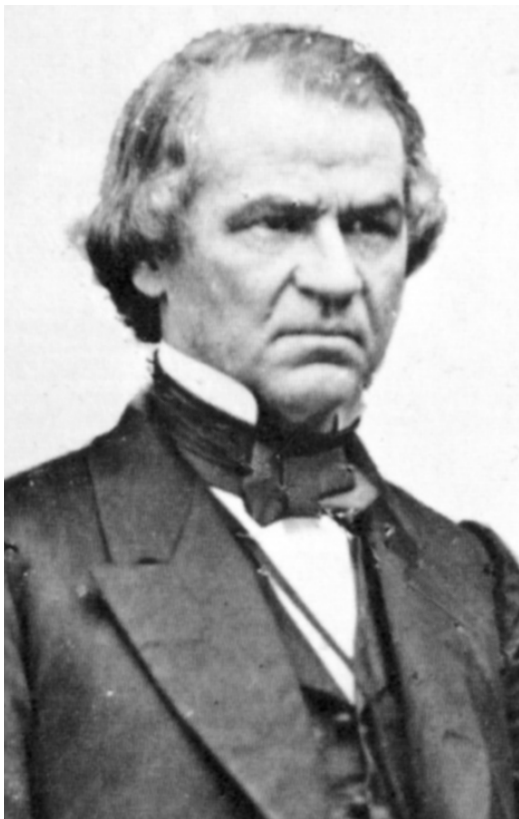
THE FAMILY OF FRANCIS MARION SHAW



FRANCIS MARION SHAW MAKES HIS OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Volume 6 Number 2
July 1997

The Family of Francis Marion Shaw is a non-profit newsletter published semi-annually or more frequently for the benefit of the descendants of Francis Marion Shaw and his wife, Rachel Moore Allen Shaw.



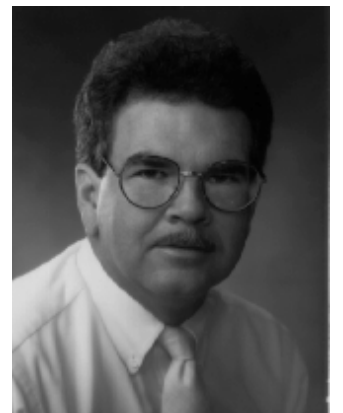
*Historical contributions are requested. Your family histories including character traits, religious affiliations, professional pursuits and vital information such as birth dates and places, marriage dates and places, and death dates and places, are all welcome. Photographs help make the newsletter come alive. If you have some special photos of your ancestors which you would like to share with all of the family, please make a copy print of it and send it on to the address below. Do not send the original photo unless you have no desire to have it returned. Send your non-returnable manuscripts and photo submissions to:
Bryan Lee Shaw, Editor
onearmshaw@mchsi.com
P.O. Box 417 Nashville, GA
31639-0417*

Bryan Lee Shaw, Editor

When we think of the life of our ancestors in the Old South, we picture them blissfully plowing acres of fertile soil, at the reins of an obedient mule. We see them resting on the porch on a warm summer evening, sipping lemonade, children gathered around, all humming the familiar strains of "Dixie".

In fact, the life of a Southern farmer and

The political firestorm with Congress that President Andrew Johnson (above, left) found himself in during the Reconstruction years after the Civil War, has been a topic of discussion in every history classroom in the country, since the turn of the century. But what impact did the partisan politics of the late 1860s have on the former Confederate soldiers, like Francis Marion Shaw (above, right), who had just returned home from years of deadly turmoil? How did the decisions of a Northern congress effect the lives of the Southern farmer and the political influence he had or didn't have in his own destiny?



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No. 92

STATE OF GEORGIA,

ALSO KNOWN TO STATE

COUNTY OF Berrien

PERSONALLY APPEARED before me this 23rd day

of July 1867, F. M. Shaw to

who states that he resides in the 3rd Election Precinct of Berrien County,

GEORGIA, and who makes oath as follows:

"I, F. M. Shaw do solemnly swear

in the presence of Almighty God, that I am a citizen of the STATE OF GEORGIA; that I have resided in said State for 21 years the next preceeding this day, and now reside in the County of Berrien in said State; that I am 21 years old, that I have not been disfranchised for participation in any rebellion or civil war against the United States, nor for felony committed against the laws of any State or the United States; that I have never been a member of any State Legislature, nor held any executive or judicial office in any State, and afterwards engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof; that I have never taken an oath as a member of Congress of the United States, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State Legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, and afterwards engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or given aid and comfort to the enemies thereof; that I will faithfully support the Constitution and obey the laws of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, encourage others so to do. So help me, God."

The said F. M. Shaw further swears

that he has not been previously registered under the provisions of "An act supplementary to 'an act to provide for the more efficient government of the rebel States'—passed March 2, 1867—and to facilitate restoration," under this or any other name, in this or any other Election District; and further, that he was born in

and naturalized by on the day of 18 in the

F. M. Shaw

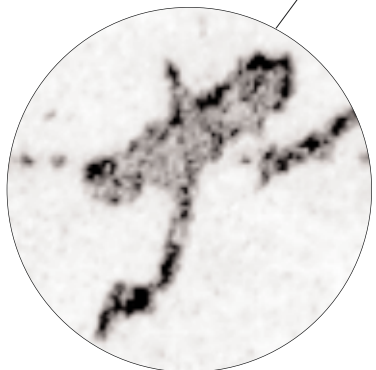
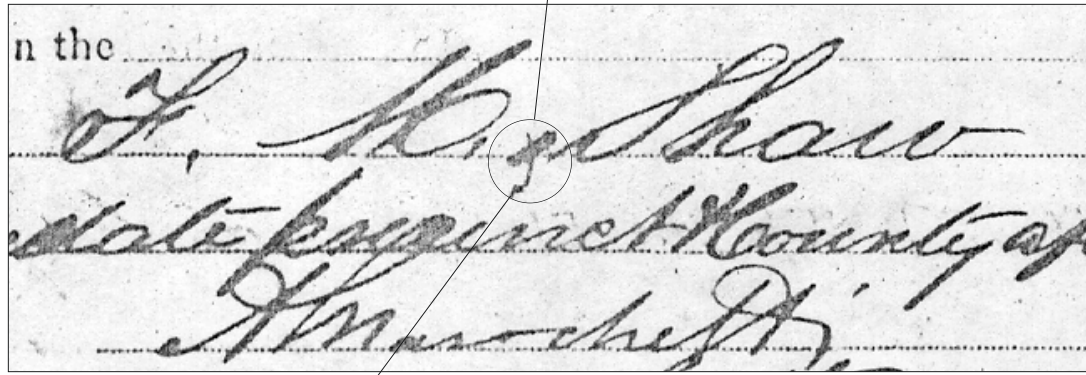
SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me date precinct County of

Manchester

Register of the Sixth Registration District.

HIS MARK

The signature "F.M. Shaw" shown to the right is actually the written name entered by the District Register. Barely visible, resting on the line, preceding the letter "S" is the "x" mark of Francis Marion Shaw. It is drawn by a left handed person as the broad stroke of a quill pen starts wide at the top and narrows as it is drawn down diagonally toward the palm of the signee. The second stroke bows to the right, also indicating the left handed characteristic of the signee. Normally the "x" mark is used by illiterate signees. However in this case it is drawn by the untrained hand of a Confederate veteran who had lost his writing arm and hand three years earlier.



his family immediately following the War Between the States was far from this picture of fantasy. The farmer was more likely than not, a returned Confederate soldier who came home as part of a man, either physically, mentally, or both. The family that met him at the gate was not the same that he had left behind. The farm was neglected, not from lack of interest, but lack of horses, mules and workhands. Not so much slave workhands, as most farmers

never owned slaves. But lack of family workhands. Farmers that had reared large families to help clear and cultivate the land found themselves mourning their lost loved ones and their lost workforce.

Such was the case of Francis Marion Shaw of Berrien County, Georgia. The year was 1866. The young 20-year-old Confederate veteran was gauntly thin from the trauma his body had experienced with the wounding and amputation of his right arm, in a skirmish at Cedar Keys, Florida two years earlier.

He had been recovering at the home of his parents, Rachel and Jeremiah Shaw, Jr., but now, with the limitation of a single arm, was clearing and cultivating land that he had acquired from his father.

Many other friends and relatives had also suffered losses as severe as young Shaw's. Many with debilitating wounds and illnesses. Some who did not return home. Marion had been befriended by a widow of one of those who had not returned. Rachel Moore Allen. She was ten years his senior, and already had a family of two boys, William and John, and a newborn daughter, Eliza. But their separate losses gave them both a common need for one another, and they were married that same year.

While families were trying to put their lives back together, back in Washington President Andrew Johnson was trying to the nation together. He supported the position of Lincoln, that the former Confederate States be brought back into the Union without reparation and that the individual citizens of those states have full rights of citizenship restored.

However the Unionist Congress felt that the Confederate states had committed treason and should be governed by military authority, with the Confederate leadership being prohibited from actively participating in the Reconstruction.

On March 2, 1867 Congress passed the First Reconstruction Act, establishing five Military Districts, governed by a Federal Army General. The act prohibited (disfranchised) any former federal or state legislator or judge who had supported the Confederate cause from voting or holding office. All other participants of the "rebellion" would be allowed to register to vote if they signed an oath of allegiance, stating that *"I have not been disfranchised for participation in any rebellion or civil war against the United States, nor for felony committed against the laws of any State or the United States; that I have never been a member of any State Legislature, nor held any executive or judicial office in any State, and afterwards*

engaged in insurrection of rebellion against the United States, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof; that I have never taken an oath as a member of Congress of the United States, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State Legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, and afterwards engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or given aid and comfort to the enemies thereof; that I will faithfully support the Constitution and obey the laws of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, encourage others to do so."

The Southern citizenry were obligated to sign the oath if they were to restore their voting privilege. So in late July, Francis Marion Shaw, along with his brother, Richard James and his father Jeremiah, Jr., appeared before District Register, A. Marschetti, and signed their Oath of Allegiance to the United States.

Jeremiah signed first, in his own hand, and then Marion, followed by Richard James, again in his own hand. However the signature "F. M. Shaw" on the signature line has been signed by Marschetti. Almost lost in the fluid script is the simple, but absolutely legal, "x" sign of the young handicapped Shaw. Upon close scrutiny the "x" character is definitely drawn by a left-handed person, who was either illiterate or a right-handed individual who had not yet taught himself to sign his name with his left hand. The document also states that Marion has been a resident of Georgia for 21 years, Richard James for 37 years, and the elderly Jeremiah Shaw for 59 years.

Though their voting rights were reestablished with this oath, many Southern Democrats refused to participate in the process, thereby prohibiting the establishment of Republican leadership since a majority of registered voters was required to seat a candidate.

Because of this attempt to obstruct the Reconstruction process, Congress passed the Third and Fourth Reconstruction Acts that allowed Republican leaders to be seated by a majority of those who actually voted. Finally the Republican Congress had guaranteed a solid representation of Republican leadership from the South.

Whether the Shaw family actively participated in the voting obstruction is not known, but certainly they would have been aware of it and their sympathies were with the Democratic Party. This was evidenced in a letter received from their son, Chester, living in Louisiana in 1896. Chester related the family preference when he wrote, "Politics is not so hot right now, . . . the Republicans carried the state nearly solid except the Governor. He is a Democrat.

—BLS

DISCOVERING HIDDEN FOUNTAINS

The life of a family historian is filled with hours of thumbing through index cards that have every subject identified except the one you're looking for; books of historical occurrences that always touch on the major battles or events, but never on the little ones that changed the life of your own ancestor; or reading microfilm that yields thousands of names and places that sound familiar but reveal only the secrets of another family.

So when I was doozily scanning down the faded microfiche of the monotonous lists of the Historical events of Georgia Statehood, I didn't find it unusual that at a nondescript place, I would get thirsty and take a break at the water fountain.

Upon my return, my thirst quenched, and being more alert, I came across an index for Oaths of Allegiance, Reconstruction Period. Anything that has an index on microfilm is always worth a look. You don't have to commit hours and hours just to find that there was no reason to spend even five minutes. Plus this index identified Berrien County Citizens.

So jotting down the serial numbers, I dug out the films, mounted them on the projector and ran through the index. Bingo! Not only did I find Francis Marion Shaw, but most of my early ancestor's family and future in-laws' families. The discovery was like finding nuggets of gold. I made paper copies of the filmed documents, and went home satisfied that I had found another piece of the life of Francis Marion Shaw.

For the next several weeks I read as much about the Reconstruction Period of United States and Georgia History as I could consume and retain. More than you would care to read here. As I read, I tried to comprehend what impact such political upheaval would have on the life and future of Francis Marion Shaw.

Unfortunately all I can do is surmise. All I can do is try to find more hidden documents, in some dark archive, and hope that I am fortunate enough to get thirsty for a drink of water. That for a moment, I might be able to quench my thirst.

—Bryan Lee Shaw

WHY FAMILY REUNIONS?

Have you wondered why so many family and almost-family members travel tens, hundreds, even thousands of miles to gather together in a small building in Ray City, Georgia, just to visit and share a meal together?

I used to question it too, until last year, when I became acquainted with C.T. Allen, grandson of John Allen, through an extended correspondence.

I was researching the family of John Allen, and was anxious to glean whatever information I could from "Tee". He loved writing about his family and his days as a young man in Berrien County. When Tee learned that there was a Shaw-Allen Reunion to be held in August, in Ray City, he decided that he was going to be there! I was pleased but skeptical.

You see, Tee was dying of liver cancer. He was not expected to live to August. But Tee promised me in every letter that he was going to be at that reunion. And he always said that he was bringing his wife, Ruby, and their children and their spouses. His desire to "return home" became an obsession.

Two weeks before the reunion,



I visited him at his home in St. Petersburg, Florida. We spent a wonderful afternoon chatting, laughing, and crying about an earlier time. But Tee was ravaged by the cancer and I wondered if he would realize his fondest wish.

However, on Sunday, August 11, in Ray City, Georgia, Tee Allen, along with his family, entered the Senior Citizens Center. He spent the day visiting with old friends and cousins. Tears of joy flowed freely down his cheeks and his wife and children shared in his happiness. Tee had "come home".

Tee passed away on December 27, 1996. In those few months, I had developed a kinship with Tee that became one of the most rewarding in my life. His will and determination to return to his birthplace was a tribute to the memory of his ancestors. The

oneness of his family all gathered about him was their tribute to Tee.

Yes, I have wondered why we travel so far from home just to attend a family reunion. It's simple I suppose. So we can reunite with our family. So we can come home.

—Bryan Lee Shaw

"COME HOME" TO THE 4TH ANNUAL FRANCIS MARION SHAW FAMILY REUNION

Sunday August 10, 1997
Ray City, Georgia
Senior Citizen Center
10:00 A.M. Registration
Pot Luck Luncheon

Bring your scrapbooks, photo albums and research papers for display and information exchange.

Write to: Bryan Shaw
5366 New Hampton Dr.
Murray, UT 84123

to confirm your attendance. Provide full names of each person attending and identify each person's relationship to which child of Francis Marion or Rachel that they descend from.