

February 2013

School House to White House Exhibition to Close February 23

The Education of a President: William J. Clinton

William J. Clinton attended both private and public schools growing up in Arkansas and graduated from Hot Springs High School in 1964. He exhibited great interest in elected office, winning positions on the student council and as junior class president. He enjoyed music, playing saxophone in the school band and serving as band major. Later in life Clinton said, "I don't think I would have become President if it hadn't been for school music." After high school, Clinton attended Georgetown University, received a Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford University, and earned a law degree from Yale University.



Above: Bill Clinton (with saxophone) plays with his high school band.
William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives.

As it is for most of us, education in school and related activities were influential to future Presidents and provided a foundation on which they built the rest of their lives. Whether in private school or public, whether growing up in a small town or a large city, each of our modern Presidents experienced a unique education that prepared him for leadership in the highest elected office in the land. Yet each of these exceptional Americans was, like many of us, a child working on homework, a teenager trying to make new friends, and a young adult choosing a career path. Like many Americans, Presidents once competed on teams, participated in their school's band, or worked on their school newspaper.

In *School House to White House: The Education of the Presidents*, the holdings of these rich historical resources illustrate what our leaders accomplished in the classrooms of their youth. To learn more about the presidents and view photographs and documents from their youth, visit *School House to White House* on display through February 23, 2013. To schedule a group tour email mickey.ebert@nara.gov or call 816-268-8013.

Inside This Issue

GEMS FOR GENEALOGISTS	2
ONE OF 44 LECTURE	3
HIDDEN TREASURES	4-5

Upcoming Events

All events are held at the National Archives
400 West Pershing Road
Kansas City, MO 64108

- FEBRUARY 6 - 10:00 A.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
BASIC PRESERVATION
TECHNIQUES
- FEBRUARY 8 - 10:00 A.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
U.S. COLORED TROOPS
DURING THE CIVIL WAR
- FEBRUARY 20 - NOON
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
EXPLORING CIVIL RIGHTS
AND WRONGS
- FEBRUARY 21 - 1:00 P.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
AFRICAN AMERICAN CENSUS
RESEARCH
- FEBRUARY 21 - 6:30 P.M.
ONE OF 44 LECTURE:
1813, THE TRAGIC
CONFLICT CONTINUES WITH
DR. RICHARD BARBUTO
- FEBRUARY 28 - 10:00 A.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
BECOMING A U.S. CITIZEN:
A LOOK AT
NATURALIZATION RECORDS

Gems for Genealogists

The National Archives at Kansas City will be offering five free genealogy workshops in February. All classes will be held at 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64108.

Workshop Descriptions:

Basic Preservation Techniques

Wednesday, February 6 from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Learn how to properly care for and store your precious family documents, photographs, and other items. This course will teach you the proper methods for storage and types of supplies appropriate for use in your home archives to make your family papers last well into the future.

United States Colored Troops During the Civil War

Friday, February 8 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

African Americans provided vital support and service during the Civil War. President Lincoln commended African Americans as playing an important role in the Union victory. Their contributions can be explored through many types of Federal records. Come learn about your African American ancestors and their contributions to the Union during the Civil War.

Exploring Civil Rights and Wrongs in the Holdings of the National Archives at Kansas City

Wednesday, February 20 from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

The National Archives at Kansas City has a wealth of resources available for historians, students, educators, lawyers, and the general public. This session will explore the vast array of civil rights court cases that document the struggle for civil rights and demonstrate the many "wrongs" that took years to overcome in the holdings of the National Archives at Kansas City.

African American Census Research

Thursday, February 21 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Tracking African American ancestors through the U.S. Federal Census can be challenging due to the heritage of slavery. Learn how to evaluate data on the Census to learn more about African American ancestors who were free and slaves.

Becoming a U.S. Citizen: A Look at Naturalization Records

Thursday, February 28 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Throughout American history, immigration and naturalization laws have ebbed and flowed with the political climate. As a result, tracking down documentation and evidence of your ancestor's path to citizenship can be a challenge. Come learn about the paperwork involved with the process and how naturalization encompassed a variety of individuals from immigrants even to the native born.



Above: Private Hubbard Pryor after enlistment in the 44th U.S. Colored Troops, 1864. Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office; War Department, Record and Pension Office 1892-1904; Letters Received, compiled 1863-1888, documenting the period 1863-1894; National Archives at Washington, D.C.

To make a reservation for these **free workshops**, please call 816-268-8000 or email kansascity.archives@nara.gov.

Dr. Richard Barbuto to Conclude One of 44 Lecture Series

The One of 44 Lecture Series that coincides with *School House to White House* will conclude on **Thursday, February 21 at 6:30 p.m.** with **Dr. Richard Barbuto** for the second part of his lecture *Mr. Madison's War: 1813, The Tragic Conflict Continues*. (Part one was offered in June 2012 in conjunction with the anniversary of the War of 1812.)

Two hundred years ago, America suffered through a ruinous time. The war declared the previous year amidst predictions of an easy victory had taken a calamitous turn for the worse. President James Madison was caught in a scourge of his own making. The Royal Navy raided the American coast with impunity and Native Americans brought the war to the frontier, even as repeated American invasions of Canada were turned back. Partisan politics hit a crescendo of verbal violence which dwarfs that of recent years. Suffering stalked the land and American unity was nearly shattered.

A 6:00 p.m. reception will precede this event. To make a reservation for this **free event** call 816-268-8010 or email kansascity.educate@nara.gov.

Between the Rivers: Steamboating in Missouri and Iowa Exhibition The Struggle Between River and Rail

Steamboat travel reached its golden age in the decade preceding the Civil War. For nearly 40 years in the West, no other mode of transportation had rivaled the steamboat in speed and comfort. By the 1860s, the rising prominence of railroads, the bridging of rivers to connect rail lines, heavy losses from steamboat disasters, and increased government

regulation, all combined to spell the beginning of the end for western steamboats as the leading mode of transportation. Freed of the seasonal limitations of shipping by water, the competitive advantages of faster railroads resulted in significant increases in passenger travel and freight shipments by rail, to the eventual detriment of the steamboat trade. By the turn of the twentieth century, steamboat operations had declined by nearly 80%. The rise of more efficient towboats and barges as a form of water shipment by the early 1900s would spell the final end of the steamboat as a significant source of transportation.



Above: In the absence of bridges, steamboats ferried railroad engines and cars across the rivers, as shown in this photograph from Williston, North Dakota, 1913. Record Group 77, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers.

1900s. The exhibition features documents, photographs, postcards, and maps relating to the Federal government's role in improving navigation on the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. You can view the exhibit and original records on display through April 27, 2013. To schedule a group tour call 816-268-8013 or email mickey.ebert@nara.gov.

Between the Rivers: Steamboating in Missouri and Iowa explores the steamboat industry and its impact on the river environment, culture, and economy in Missouri and Iowa from the 1850s to the early

Hidden Treasures from the Stacks

Son of Sam?

Although we never know exactly what we may find in the course of our work, we generally do not expect to find lengthy and outrageous testimony detailing specious paternity allegations, promiscuity, adultery, divorce, prostitution, unscrupulous private investigators, and broken contracts. Generally these family disputes remain outside the purview of Federal jurisdiction, with rare exceptions. In the nearly 2,000 pages of this odd case, the widow of railroad tycoon and Texas cattleman Samuel Lazarus was forced to defend her \$3 million estate against claim of Silas Lazarus/Samples for a "child's portion." In a difficult to follow maze of allegations and testimony from elderly residents of Sherman, Texas, the case reads like small town gossip straight from the Wild West that could rival any soap opera or reality television show today.

administration of said estate therein; and an itemized list thereof, marked Exhibit "A", is appended hereto, as part hereof, for the purpose of identifying the specific items hereinabove mentioned.

III.

That on the 24th. day of March, 1926, by order of the Probate Court of said City of St. Louis, the defendant was duly appointed executrix of the last will and testament of the said Sam Lazarus, pursuant to her nomination made by said will, and thereupon duly qualified and continued to serve as such executrix until her discharge by order of said Probate Court, upon the final settlement of said estate, on the 17th. day of October, 1927.

IV.

Plaintiff states that he was born on the 8th. day of September, 1880, in the City of Sherman, Texas, and at all times since his birth has been known among the members of his immediate maternal family and relatives as the son of the said Sam Lazarus, and such reputed relationship was widely circulated and known in the various communities, cities and States where plaintiff was employed or resided, and such reports were known to the said Sam Lazarus, at and prior to the time of the contract between him and plaintiff, hereinafter more particularly set forth, and were within his contemplation at the time of making said contract. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and upon his best knowledge, information and belief states that at the time of his conception, prior thereto and thereafter during his mother's pregnancy, preceding his birth, the said Sam Lazarus lived and cohabited with plaintiff's mother upon a ranch near Gainesville, Texas, and other places; that plaintiff is unable to state whether their relationship was lawful or illicit, but is informed and believes, and upon his best knowledge, information and belief states that plaintiff's mother was known in such community as the wife of

-2-

Silas was born in September 1880 to Nona Downs, a woman of questionable reputation in her day and time having been married, allegedly married, or "kept" by various men in her 26 years. Silas' father was unknown and he adopted his mother's maiden name of "Downs" until she remarried in 1892 to a man by the name of Samples. From thereon, until his second marriage in 1912, Lazarus was known by the surname of Samples. According to court records, at some time near his second marriage, Silas allegedly entered into a verbal contract with Samuel Lazarus, who allegedly promised him a share of his estate should he change his name to Lazarus and live openly as his son.

The Downs family claimed it was widely known at the time Silas was born that Lazarus was indeed the father of Silas. Others were not so sure. Putting the deceased mother of Silas on trial by reputation, questions were posed to scores of lifelong residents of the town Silas once called home. Questions such as "Did you ever see Samuel Lazarus in the company of Miss Nona Downs"? "What was the reputation of Miss Downs?" "Was it commonly known in town that Lazarus was the father of Silas?" Answers from most residents said they never recalled any sort of connection between the two, and referred to the defenseless Nona as a "bad" or "sporting" woman amongst a host of other euphemisms. One somewhat benevolent woman recalled her as having beautiful clothes the little girls were envious of but told not to look at because of her poor character. In the days before DNA testing, fifty year old gossip and hearsay from people,

Above: Testimony from the case involving Silas Lazarus. Record Group 21, United States District Court-St. Louis, MO, Equity and Law Case 8303, *Silas Lazarus v. Lillie Lazarus*

(continued on the next page)
Page 4

(Son of Sam? continued)

many who were children at the time, had to suffice in lieu of hard evidence either way.

And it wasn't easy for either side. Silas lawyers eventually changed course contending that it was never claimed he was the illegitimate son of Lazarus, to a focus on the alleged verbal contract made around 1912. Lillie, widow of Samuel, maintained no such arrangement existed, and to bolster her case, early on she hired a detective to check out Silas Lazarus. The unethical means used by her detective to gain confidence of witnesses led the case down yet another path, regarding stolen photos and false pretenses used to gain the confidence and testimony of several individuals. With all the loops and turns, Silas Lazarus eventually withdrew his case once he "determined" that he was not at all the son of Samuel and that his facts were wrong. What caused this sudden change of heart we may not learn from the records, but the case was dismissed with prejudice in favor of the defendant.

Record Group 21, Records of the U.S. District Courts often yield fascinating stories for historians, genealogists, and students seeking to glimpse forgotten conflicts in our past. To explore these records for yourself, visit www.archives.gov/research/

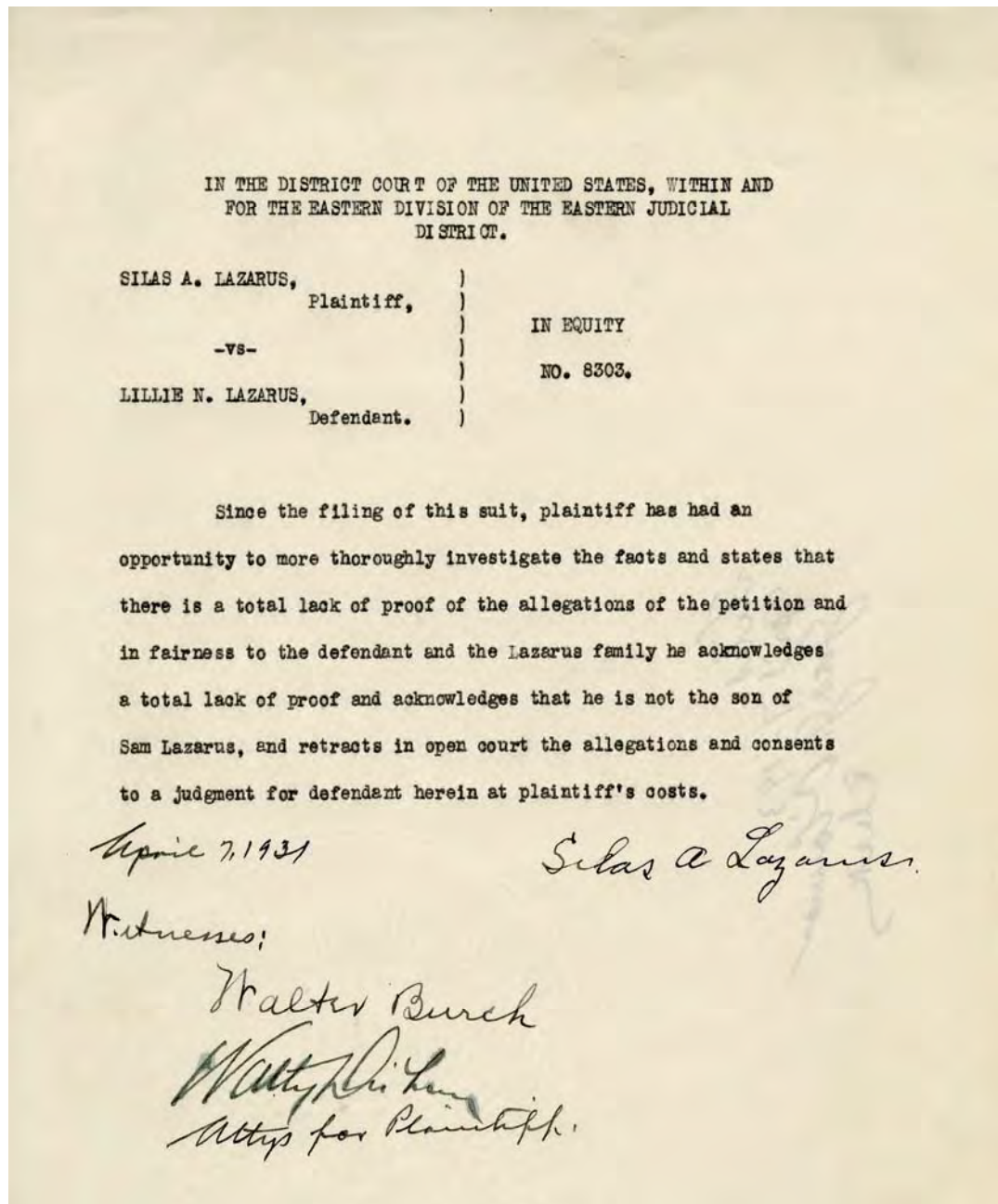


The National Archives at Kansas City is one of 15 facilities nationwide where the public has access to Federal archival records. It is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

For more information, call 816-268-8000, email kansascity.educate@nara.gov or visit www.archives.gov/kansas-city. Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity.

HOURS OF OPERATION

RESEARCH ROOMS and EXHIBIT GALLERIES: Tuesday through Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Closed on Sunday, Monday, and Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather.



Above: Document showing the retraction from Silas Lazarus regarding his case against Lillie Lazarus. Record Group 21, United States District Court-St. Louis, MO, Equity and Law Case 8303, Silas Lazarus v. Lillie Lazarus.