



MY GRANDMOTHER, ELMIRE GUILBEAUX LANDRY

By

Barbara Lee McClard Thibodeaux

What was the world like in the year 1890? The Daughters of the American Revolution was founded, the United States Census Bureau began using tabulating machines to count census returns, the eleventh U. S. Census was taken, Idaho was admitted as the 43rd U. S. state, Wyoming was admitted as the 44th U. S. state, the United Mine Workers of America was founded, Nellie Bly completed her round the world journey in 72 days,

and my Grandmother, Elmire Guilbeaux Landry was born April 23, 1890, in Broussard, LA to Ceasar and Emelie Fauvel Guilbeaux.

Grandma's family were farmers and worked very hard. She was one of 9 children. Her siblings were Elisais, , Amalina, Fise, Ernest, Amelia, Clemile, Adonis, and Sedonia. She was raised in an Acadian French speaking society, as a Roman Catholic, and she never abandoned those roots.

She married Olince Landry January 8, 1910, at Sacred Heart Church in Broussard, LA. She was 19 years old and he was 21 years old. They first lived in the area where La Neuville Road & Youngsville Hwy (Rouso Bernard) are today and were farmers. They had 10 children in 20 years Dudley Hilaire was born November 28, 1910; Dalton Joseph born November 17, 1912; a stillborn baby unknown date; Rhena born December 4, 1915, Paul Andis born July 11, 1918; Rose Ami, born November 13, 1920; Eula Mae, born November 18, 1923; Mercedes Cecile, my mother, born January 1, 1925; Flossie Therese, born October 13, 1927; and Ruby Cecile, born September 30, 1930. They probably had Dudley, Dalton, and Rhena while they lived in the La Neuville Road area (World War I was fought in Europe 1914-1918), then moved to across Hwy 90 to an area along Girouard Road heading towards St. Martinville, known as Ba-Fon where they probably owned some land and farmed, we think Paul, Rose, Eula Mae, Mercedes and Tessie were born at this location. The Great Depression in the United States was from 1929-1939, and many people lost their property during this time.

Lastly, they moved to Youngsville, Hwy 339, Verot School Road going to Erath, and it is where we think Ruby was born. Living and farming on property owned by Dr. Roy Young. On the other side of Hwy 92 going to Milton, Dr. Young owned a store with clothes, food, various merchandise. Throughout the year they had to buy whatever they needed from the store as a charge against their earnings. They were not extravagant, and only got the absolute necessities, but by the end of the year there was hardly any money left after the charges were deducted. They had chickens, would kill a pig and keep the meat in salt, there was no refrigeration. At night they ate coush-coush or cornbread. The house had no running water, no electricity (had to do homework and reading by cole-oil lamp, the stove ran off of cole-oil, outhouse for bathroom, fireplace only for heat in the house.

When she was only 44 years old (1935) her husband grew very ill and died. She found herself with 9 living children, the oldest, Dudley was 24 years old, Dalton “Slim” was 22 , Rhena was 19, Paul 16, Rose 14, Eula Mae “Lou” 11, Mercedes “Sue” 9, Flossie Therese “Tessie” 7, and Ruby almost 4 years old, living as a tenant farmer “sharecropper” on the farm of Dr. Roy Young in Youngsville, LA. She and the children continued the work on the farm until her oldest son, Dudley, was kicked in the stomach by a horse (mule?). He grew very ill, traveled alone to New Orleans to seek medical attention and died in New Orleans, June 1937.

She had been a widow for 3 years and must have decided that she wanted her children to have more opportunities than tenant farming. So in the winter of 1937 she packed her remaining children, and their meager belongings in a wagon while pulling a cow behind, and moved “to town”, Lafayette. She found a small house on Sampson Street where the owner agreed she could rent, with option to purchase. The rent was suppose to go towards the purchase of the home. She took in washing and ironing to earn some money. Slim was already working in the C.C. Camp. World War II was looming and both “Slim” and Paul were drafted into the army and were sent overseas. The girls had various jobs: babysitting, working as waitresses, working in department stores, working at the telephone company, and everyone contributed funds to operate the household.

Elmire average in stature, but an inspiration in her determination and resolve to open doors for her family.

List of 10 things about her character

Religion: Roman Catholic

Physical: Average height and weight, hair always pulled back in a bun

Family Tree: Guilbeaux, Ceasar, father (Acadian ancestry); Emelie Fauvel, mother (France ancestry)

Economic Condition: Farmers/tenant farmers

Work Ethic: Hard worker

Emotional Stamina: Strong, determined, focused

Barbara Lee McClard Thibodeaux

Life Writing Class Assignments 25

September 18, 2008

References:

Verbal memories of Mercedes “Sue” Landry McClard, Flossie “Tessie” Landry Broussard, Ruby Landry Domingue and Barbara Lee McClard Thibodeaux

Southwest LA Records Vol XXI , Church & Civil Records 1890 by Rev. Donald J. Hebert, page 186 (GUILBEAU, Marie Emier (Caesaire & Amelie FOVELL) b. 23 April 1890 (Laf. Ch. : v.9, p. 158)

Year: 1900; Census Place: Youngsville, Lafayette, Louisiana; Roll: T623 567; Page: 2B; Enumeration District:

Southwest LA Records Vol XLII, Church & Civil Records 1910 by Rev. Donald J. Hebert, page 301 (GUILBEAU, Elmire 19 years old (Cesaire & Amelie FOREL) m. 8 Jan 1910 Oline LANDRY (Broussard CH.: v. 1, #1) correction #71.

Copy of Certificate of Marriage from Sacred Heart Church