



THE BIRMINGHAM GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

**P.O. Box 2432
Birmingham, AL 35201**

Founded March 15, 1959

www.birminghamgenealogy.org

<http://birminghamgenealogy.wordpress.com/>

NEWSLETTER No. 463

February 18, 2011

General Meeting for February: The Birmingham Genealogical Society will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 26th on the second floor of the main Birmingham Public Library in the Youth Department (the Story Castle). The Board of Directors will meet at 1:00 p.m. in the same room.

DON'T FORGET FELLOWSHIP BEGIN AT 1:30!

The program for February: On December 4, 1888, boaters found the body of a seven year-old floating in East Lake in eastern residential Birmingham. After an autopsy determined the cause of death to be murder, thousands attended a viewing at the local funeral parlor. It was not until the next day that the girl was identified as May Hawes, the daughter of Richard Hawes, a Georgia Pacific engineer and his wife Emma. At a murder inquest, witnesses revealed that Hawes often left his alcoholic wife to care for their daughters. Others said that the couple were divorced and Hawes was in Mississippi taking a new wife. After this fact was confirmed, Hawes was taken into custody. On December 8th, four days after May Hawes' body was discovered, the scandal grew with the discovery of the bodies of Hawes' wife, Emma and his other daughter, Irene, bound with weights and submerged in another neighborhood lake. Community outrage boiled over when a mob estimated between 1,000 and 3,000 converged on the City jail. Sheriff Joseph Smith, concerned with the safety of staff and prisoners, armed his deputies and ordered them to shoot into the crowd if necessary. Ten died in the ensuing violence including the postmaster and a deputy U.S. Marshall. The sheriff and the police chief were arrested the following day as the state militia restored order. Richard Hawes was found guilty on May 23, 1889 of murdering his family and sentenced to die by hanging. Please join us as former BGS **President Ann Gilbert**, discusses the details of this horrific crime which would set the city of Birmingham on a course that would change the city forever.

Research & Genealogical Tips: Did the Aunt Receive a Pension?

Did any of your aunts receive a Civil War pension, Revolutionary War pension, etc.? Don't think it couldn't help you in your research. If the aunt tried to qualify for a pension, she would have had to have proven her marriage--that place alone could be a clue because if your ancestor's sister was living there, other family members could have been too. And if the aunt couldn't find paper proof of her marriage, she might have had relatives provide affidavits testifying to the date and place of marriage and perhaps your ancestor made out one of those. Neat way to get information and an even neater way to get a signature.

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Scott A. Martin, BGS Newsletter Editor



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THE DEADSPACE COLUMN

Tips & Suggestions for researching the Dead: To Whom was the Quit Claim Made?

If you see your ancestor as a party on a quit claim deed, pay close attention to whom he was buying land from or to whom he was selling it. A high proportion of quit claim deeds are among relatives, generally to clean up an inheritance. Not always--but it's worth a clue. A quit claim means you are giving up your claim, something that heirs are likely to do among themselves after the owner passes away.

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