

# Casto Connections

Volume 1, Issue 3

January, 1998

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We hope everyone had a nice holiday season and is looking forward to the coming year. January is always a good time to set new goals and make plans for the future. Our goals here at Casto Connections are to make this the best publication we possibly can and to provide interesting, informative material to our readers.

Have you checked out our Casto Connections web site?

(<http://members.aol.com/CastoCnx>)

This is a new web address. We've been having a lot of fun with it and after starting it in October, decided to update the look for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years. For those of you who don't have computers or don't use the world wide web, we'll be trying to include any information we think important in the newsletter, too, although it may take a little longer due to space limitations.

Along those same lines, we've added a section to our newsletter, **Web Wanderings**, telling of interesting places on the web that we've discovered. We'd be particularly interested in hearing input from our readers on new items like this.

We recently came across something else our readers might be interested in, a list written by the caretaker of Casto Cemetery in Ravenswood, West Virginia, listing the people buried there. The caretaker, Mr. James Crane, also sent a history of the cemetery that had been written by his brother, Golden Crane. The list, due to size, cannot be printed all in one issue, so we'll print it in installments starting with this issue.

This year we'll be looking forward to expanding our subscriber list to more people interested in the Casto family. We sincerely appreciate all the names you've sent us so we can send out those free issues. The more information we gather about the Casto family, the more we can share with you! With that thought in mind, our April issue will be devoted entirely to the Casto ancestry of our readers and trying to link as many people as possible. We're really looking forward to putting that information together and sharing it with you!

Happy Hunting in 1998!

*Danita and Dru*



### **Casto Connections Newsletter**

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## The Status of David L. Casto's Research

As you may recall from our last newsletter, David Leroy Casto had done a considerable amount of work on the Casto lineage before his death in 1996. One of our readers, James Casto, co-author of *The Casto Story and Collections, 1990*, along with Ina Hunt Tuft, is now in possession of David's work and has sent the following information:

The bulk of the approximately 50 year accumulation of genealogical material related to the Casto family as collected by the late David Leroy Casto is in my possession. Some of the remainder is currently being filmed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. Once that filming is complete, that remainder will be sent to me.

With the kind permission of David's family, I have accepted the responsibility of completing David's last uncompleted task which was to compile his collection into some publishable, distributable form. This will be accomplished in two Phases.

Phase One will be a Modified Register format genealogy showing many of the descendants of David Casto and Phebe Gandy Casto. This Phase was initiated by Ina Hunt Tuft entering the data into Personal Ancestral File from David's charts, some of her own research, various published secondary sources, data in the public domain, etc. I am in the process of converting that Personal Ancestral File data into Ultimate Family Tree. This data will be put into some form of book that can be distributed in hard copy. Some of the data, in particular the lineage of the early Castos, will be placed on an Internet website/home page. At various points in time, this Internet data may include early Castos from both the New Jersey lines and the West Virginia lines. The Internet version of the data will probably not include any individuals known to be living.

Anyone researching the Casto surname is welcome to add to this compilation or to assist in ascertaining that the database is as

accurate as possible.

Phase Two will be a publishable, distributable hard copy of some of David's research conclusions he called "white papers". I believe it was David's intent that these files be shared on a "no profit" basis with the genealogical community. It was a long standing policy of David's that he share his research without charge and we intend to maintain that policy. Any hard-copy format of these papers will be distributed on an "at-cost of reproduction and shipping" basis. Phase One and Phase Two will not necessarily be completed in sequential order. Some "white papers" may be released prior to publication of a descendant database.

To preclude David's work from being produced on a "for profit" basis, a copyright will be retained by Beaver State Computing, my computer consulting firm. These files may also appear on the aforementioned website. They will also eventually be available from the the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I will continue to maintain my "one name study" of the Casto surname in its own database as well as add to the collection of Castos from the New Jersey line that resulted in the book I co-authored/compiled with Ina Hunt Tuft with the help of many, many contributors.

Anyone interested in being apprised of the progress of these Phases as well as having any queries or input to the Casto project are encouraged to e-mail me at:

jimcasto@ptld.uswest.net

or communicate by mail using my office address at:

Jim Casto  
4130 SW 117th Avenue #199  
Beaverton, Oregon 97005

## Castos and the Civil War

*"There you can hail the Union flag,  
For such, they call a striped rag.  
Some two feet square stuck on a pole  
In the region of the Casto Hole."*

verse from "The Casto Hole" written by Elijah Powers

Most researchers and members of the Casto family are familiar with the ballad, "The Casto Hole". It was written by Elijah Powers, a Confederate sympathizer, in response to a now-lost poem written by one of the Castos deriding the Powers for their Southern loyalties. I'm including a copy of "The Casto Hole" at the end of this article because not only is it a part of the Casto's history, but it is regarded as one of West Virginia's first ballads and a part of that region's history as well.

It would be impossible to list all the men and events surrounding the Castos during the Civil War years but I have found some interesting incidents, articles, and records relating to various members of the family and have chosen some to share with you. One well-published incident took place late in 1861 in Maysville, Kentucky, and involved William T. Casto, son of Abijah Casto, son of William Casto b. 1717.

On October 2, 1861, William T. Casto, along with six other men, was arrested by order of Brigadier-General William Nelson as "active secessionists" and "forming treason and disturbances in Eastern Kentucky". The other men involved were Richard H. Stanton, William Hunt, Isaac Nelson, George Forrester, B.F. Thomas, and James H. Hall. The men were sent to Camp Chase in Columbus, Ohio and later to Fort Lafayette in New York. The gentlemen all claimed their innocence and began a campaign to ensure their release. Mr. Stanton wrote to the Secretary of State in November of 1861, followed by a letter to the President of the United States in December of 1861. The gentlemen were apparently not Confederate sympathizers but neither were they in favor of Union troops in Kentucky. Stanton was apparently considered the "gang

leader" and in a letter to the Secretary of State by General Nelson dated Nov. 29, 1861, Nelson requested that all the men, except Stanton, be released upon taking the oath of allegiance. Five of the men (Hunt, Nelson, Forrester, Thomas, and Hall) took the oath and were released Dec. 7, 1841. Stanton took the oath and was released Dec. 26. But William T. Casto "declined to receive his discharge from confinement on such terms" and remained in custody. On January 17, 1862 he was again requested to take the oath and again refused. In February, 1862 he was finally released after signing the following statement (along with 35 other prisoners):

"We the undersigned do solemnly promise upon our word of honor that we will render no aid or comfort to the enemies in hostility to the Government of the United States."

After his return to Kentucky, William Casto sought out the man he felt was responsible for his arrest, Col. Leonidas Metcalf, and challenged him to a duel. On May 8, 1862, the two men met and William Casto was killed instantly when he was shot through the heart. His tombstone read, "William T. Casto. A Patriot, his Country's firm unwavering friend, he was willing to die for his Principles and as a man of Honor nobly fell a Veteran of the sacred and invincible right of personal liberty."

According to one source, there were 31 Casto men who served in the Union Army, including one Captain, two Lieutenants, and one Lt. Colonel. One source which I would have liked to have seen but didn't find out about in time for this article was *Jackson Countians in American Wars, 1775-1918*. If any of our readers have access to this book maybe they'll be kind enough to share any Casto-related information with us for a later publication. I was able to look up the regiments that some of our Casto ancestors served in. The list of men that I know of is as follows:

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Castos and the Civil War

*(Continued from page 3)*

Jesse Casto	8th VA Cav.	Co. E
(died May 11, 1864 - buried Andersonville)		
Absalom H. Casto	17th VA Cav.	Co. G
George B. Casto	17th VA Cav.	Co. G
James H. Casto	17th VA Cav.	Co. G
George B. Casto	10th VA Cav.	Co. G
Manley Casto	3rd VA Cav.	
Winfield T. Casto	20th VA Cav.	Co. D
Asahel Casto	31st VA Vols.	Co. I
Gideon Casto	31 VA Vols.	Co. I
I.L. Casto	31 VA Vols.	Co. I
Manley Casto	31 VA Vols.	Co. I
Isaac J. Casto	22nd VA Vols.	Co. B

There were, of course, many others who served but that I have no details for yet.

One of our readers recently called me with the following story which touches on the Civil War and was looking for information relating to the Castos involved. Maybe someone reading this will have information which will help. A woman recently purchased a house in downtown Parkersburg, West Virginia and is in the process of restoring it to its original condition. It is on top of an area called Quincy Hill overlooking the Ohio River. The house was built in 1900 by David Casto and his wife, Lucy Clyde Dorr. David was a prosperous lawyer before his death in 1913. According to this woman, Quincy Hill was a major Civil War battlefield and after the war the land was bought up by the Casto family. She has been doing research and has been told that the house originally had a wrought iron porch with roses which was so beautiful that people would come from miles around to have their pictures taken in front of this Victorian style home. She is hoping to find one of these pictures to aid her in the restoration process. What makes this story really interesting though is the built-in mirror hanging over the fireplace. People have said that sometimes when you look in the mirror you will see the reflection of a man dressed in a Civil War uniform and a

woman standing like they are posing for a photograph. She is looking for pictures of people posed like that in order to see if she can identify her "ghosts".

Another interesting incident which involved Castos which I learned about from reading war correspondence had to deal with the murder of a Mr. and Mrs. Casto in King Co., Washington Territory, in 1864 by Indians. In a letter from William Pickering, Governor of Washington Territory to Brig. Gen. Benjamin Alvord, Gov. Pickering wrote, "I am well convinced there is at this time the most imminent peril and danger of a violent outbreak being suddenly made by the whisky-drinking, unruly, and lawless white men against the Indians on the Snohomish River on one hand, and of unrestrained revenge on the part of the Indians against any white people within their reach in retaliation for murders committed by whites upon unoffending Indians." Apparently the situation was begun when a number of white men killed two Indian men and an Indian woman in their canoe on the Snohomish River. Not long after, Indians killed two innocent white men and a white woman, one of the men being William Casto and the woman his wife, Abbie Bonser Casto. William Casto ran a small trading post in the primitive area and had Indians working for him. He also was in the habit of giving whiskey to the Indians, laughing off his neighbors warnings against such things. He believed that he understood the Indians and that their respect for him would prevail over any trouble. He was proven wrong. Two of the Indians William had given whiskey to stole some guns and shot William, his wife, and their friend, John Halstead. The two murdering Indians were then in turn killed by an Indian named Aleck who worked for Mr. Casto and was loyal to him. The community around where the Castos lived feared an Indian uprising and gathered their families and took them to safety in Seattle and then the able-bodied men returned to the scene of the murder. The tribe to which the vengeful Indians belonged wanted to kill Aleck but were unable to do so, so they killed his son instead.

## The Casto Hole

by Elijah Powers

Far in the woods of Upper Tug  
We wrap old Union in a rug.  
Where Nicholas reads his Union Roll  
And Rallies round the Casto Hole.

The Casto Hole is a cavern deep  
Where Union men can quiet sleep,  
There all their war-like plans unfold  
While forted in the Casto Hole.

There you can hail the Union flag,  
For such they call a striped rag.  
Some two feet square stuck on a pole  
In the region of the Casto Hole.

Union, Union is their song,  
It's two feet broad and four feet long.  
Hold up your heads and sing it "bold"  
A hundred feet in the Casto Hole.

A lame-leg miller took afright  
For Upper Tug he cut one night.  
His fears were far beyond control  
So he bolted for the Casto Hole.

Since Wise is gone, they now know fear  
Except at night, lest they might hear  
Some demon howl, or ghost of old  
Prowling around the Casto Hole.

A southern scout - horrors profound,  
That name, it shakes the very ground;  
That name's a thunderbolt to Joel -  
The general of the Casto Hole.

But, oh, the terrors of a scout  
To those poor devils crowded out.  
In their retreat, headlong they roll  
Chock full they fill the Casto Hole.

Go to their houses, give a call,  
There reigns a solemn silence, all.  
But take their tracks, however cold,  
They'll lead you to the Casto Hole.

No danger near - see how they prance?  
Like Indians in an Indian dance -  
Ignorant as Indians, 'pon my soul,  
These warriors of the Casto Hole.

Lord, calm their fears, thy grace is good;  
Call these scared devils from the wood,  
Call them, like sheep, unto thy fold -  
Those heroes of the Casto Hole.

Poor old Joel, he died of late,  
And took his flight to Heaven's Gate.  
St. Peter knew the poor old soul,  
And kicked them back to the Casto Hole.

Down from the pearly gates he flies,  
A howling demon of the skies.  
A ghastly ghost, black, grim, and cold -  
Came sliding back to the Casto Hole.

On terra-firma, safe again,  
Young, yelping devils, in this train  
To the Old Rogues' March they beat a roll  
And escorted him back to the Casto Hole.

Old wizard Nicholas was on hand  
In the witches department, holds command  
He sped his signs from pole to pole,  
For all witches to meet him in the Casto Hole.

That great magician of the North  
Nods, earthquakes shock all round the earth;  
Conjures the light from his northern pole  
To illuminate the Casto Hole.

Witches and wizards and goblins grim,  
Assembled there and were sworn in.  
Presiding, sat the ghost of Joel -  
At a Union meeting in the Casto Hole.

The traitors' ghosts, they too were there.  
Old Hull and Arnold took a share.  
All rogues were there, number untold-  
All refugees in the Casto Hole.

And wooly heads, they came long  
With chalky eyes and odors strong  
In that deep den, high place did hold -

### **Sources used for this article:**

Casto Family by Stanley Dale Casto (1979)  
Roll of Honor - Union Index by M. Reamy (1995)  
The Roster of Conf. Soldiers by J. Hewett (1995)  
War of the Rebellion - Official Records - U.S. War Dept. (1901)  
A Guide to VA Military Organizations 1861-65 by L. Wallace (1964)  
The Casto Story and Collections by J. Casto (1990)

## BIRTH RECORDS OF JACKSON CO., WEST VIRGINIA

1860-1861

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Child</b>	<b>Parents</b>
F	1860	Jackson Co.	_____	F: D.W. Casto M: Eliza Jane
F	1 Aug 1860	Jackson Co.	A.	F: N. Casto M: Felitha
F	1 Aug 1860	Jackson Co.	Sarah	F: N. Casto M: Felitha
Note: the above are twins born to Nicholas and Telitha Casto				
M	10 Jun 1860	Jackson Co.	Elizah B.	F: Elasto Casto M: Mary
F	17 June 1860	Jackson Co.	Eliza J.	F: Jas. M. Casto M: Elizabeth
F	1860	Jackson Co.	Elizabeth	F: Jas. W. Casto M: Roanna C.
F	1860	Jackson Co.	Emily	F: G.W. Casto M: Caroline
M	27 Oct 1860	Jackson Co.	Jennings B.	F: C.C. Casto M: Martha E.
F	15 Jul 1860	Jackson Co.	Nancy J.	F: Joll Casto (Joel?) M: Mary M.
M	19 Aug 1860	Jackson Co.	W. L.	F: Wiley Casto M: Elizabeth
?	1861 Child was born alive	Jackson Co.	_____	F: Edmon W. Casto M: not given
?	1861	Jackson Co.	_____	F: Nicholas Casto M: Jane
?	1861	Jackson Co.	_____	F: Geo. Casto M: not given
?	1861	Jackson Co.	_____	F: Chas Casto M. not given

**DEATH RECORDS OF JACKSON CO., WEST VIRGINIA  
1876-1883**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of Death &amp; Age</b>	<b>Place &amp; Cause</b>	<b>Parents</b>
M	infant	May 1876 1 day	Ripley, Jackson Co.	F: N. Casto M: A.
?	R. H.	28 Oct 1876 3yrs 3dys	Grass Lick, Jackson Co. Diphtheria	F: A. Casto M: J.
F	Ida M.	Oct 1876 4yrs 4ms 7dys	13 Mile Creek, Jack. Co. Diphtheria	F: Jas. Casto M: M.
F	Isabel	14 Jun 1877 56 yrs	Lick Run, Jackson Co. Dropsey	F: Burns (born: Penn) _____
F	Ella	28 Sep 1877 1month	Parchment Bold Hives	F: Benj. Casto M: Mary
M	infant	30 Jul 1878 6 days	Ripley	F: N. L. Casto M: America
F	Jemmetta	8 Nov 1880 5yrs 11ms 10dys	Jackson Co. Erysipelas	F: A. Casto M: M.
F	Mary L.	18 Mar 1880 5yrs 10ms	Jackson Co. Brain Fever	F: J. A. Casto M: R.
F	Phebe	15 Jun 1880 58yrs 10ms	Jackson Co. bowel inflammation	F: Wm Cunningham M: Betsey
F	infant	Jun 1881 1day	Near Ripley	F: N. L. Casto M: M.
F	Ellen	30 Nov 1881 35yrs 9ms	Near Ripley Fever	F: Robert Barnett M: E.
F	Florida E.	10 Sep 1881 9 months	Jackson Co. Cholera	F: Casto M: not given
F	Margaret	25 Sept 1882 42 years	Jackson Co. Consumption	F: N. Counts M: S.
M	Benj.	Apr 1883 86 years	Jackson Co. Old Age	F: Casto M: _____
F	Oliva	Oct 1883 6 months	Jackson Co. Fever	F: F. M. Casto M: L.
M	John	Jan 1883 6 months	Jackson Co. Croup	F: Robert Casto M: G.
F	Louisa	18 May 1883 52 Years	Jackson Co. Measles	F: Geo. Casto M: Sarah

## **History of Casto Cemetery located in Fairplain, West Virginia**

One hundred and fifty years ago (1847) John Crites, it is believed, was the first person to be buried in this cemetery.

John Crites, Jonathan Casto, and Edward Green were the early settlers in this area and owned large tracts of land often obtained by land grants.

Most of the burials occurring here since that date are descendents of those three men, either by blood or marriage.

Michael Scott Crane and Chloe Highlands Crane are the Eighth Generation descendents (by blood) of both Jonathan Casto and John Crites. All other generation levels of these two pioneers along with Mr. Green are interred in various sections of the cemetery.

Like most family-type cemeteries in West Virginia originated at that time, early maintenance was performed by first and second generation descendents who would meet once a year in the spring and "tidy up" the graves of "Grandma and Grandpa".

Since 1900, there has been a tendency to move away from the rural areas to cities and to other states. Fund for maintenance and upkeep depend on the scattered survivors of these early settlers.

An early record shows that "Uncle Hube" Crane was paid \$6.00 for his caretaking in 1940. A good deal more is required in 1997.

Golden N. Crane  
2012 Benedict Circle  
St. Albans, WV 25177



*not an actual photograph of Casto Cemetery*

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**People Buried in Casto Cemetery  
Fairplain, West Virginia**

NAME	BIRTH-DEATH	RELATED TO
Abraham F. Fisher .....	1869-1937 .....	son of Martin & Mary (Price)
Lona Fisher .....	1876-1947	
Martin Fisher .....	1841-1917 .....	son of Leonard & Barbara (Crites)
Mary A. Fisher.....	1840-1900 .....	wife of Martin, dau of D. Hiram and Temperance (Casto) Price
Katheryn Southall.....		dau of Lloyd and Dovie Southall
Floyd R. Southall.....	1916-1973	
Otmer R. Casto .....	-Sept. 11 1930	
Donald O. Casto .....	1918-1955	
Lillian M. Casto .....	1894-1930 .....	wife of Herb Casto
Richard O. Casto		
Nancy J. Brown.....	1836-1883 .....	wife of W.P. Brown
Infant Son of W.P. & Nancy Brown		
Phebe (Casto) Greene.....	1832-1878 .....	wife of Leonard Greene
Harvey A. Southall .....	1869-1935 .....	son of Wm. Jr. & Margaret (Tolley)
Dora Southall .....	1878-1937 .....	wife of H.A. Southall
Addie E. Austin .....	1880-1955	
Robert H. Austin.....	1873-1934	
David W. Winter .....	1850-1927	
Mary Winter.....	1852-1941	
Benjamin F. Casto .....	1830-1920	
Mary M. Casto.....	1840-1924	
Elizabeth Jeffers .....	1799-1867	
Samuel Jeffers .....	1798-1869	
Charles Greene.....	1848-1869 .....	son of Leonard & Phebe
Harriet Adams .....	1857-1876 .....	dau of Wm. & Martha (Winters)
John A. Adams.....	1873-1939	
Mary V. Adams .....	1879-19? .....	(Edwards)
Clara B. Casto.....	1868-1895 .....	wife of H.J. Casto
Hiram J. Casto .....	1862-1949	
Lida Cowen Casto.....	1859-1946	
Barbara Ann Casto .....	1931-1940	
Sarah M. Casto .....	Jan. 20 1869 - Oct. 2 1920	
Jacob Casto .....	1828-1905 .....	son of Jonathan & Magdalene (Wetherholt)
Celia B. Casto .....	June 27 1830 - Jan 21 1910..	wife of Jacob, dau. of James and Sarah (Bennett) Winter
Jonathan Casto.....	1876-1899 .....	son of Jacob & Celia
F.W. Casto .....	1828-1905 .....	son of Jacob & Celia
Harlow L. Casto .....	1864-1945 .....	son of Jacob & Celia
Sarah (Bennett) Winters .....	1810-1877 .....	wife of James, dau. of John Bennett
James L. Winter .....	1810-1883 .....	son of Matthias and Martha (Johnson)
William Winter .....	1829-1881 .....	son of James & Sarah
Martha Adams.....	1835-1883	

## Quips and Queries



Hello?? Is anyone out there?



## Web Wanderings

This month in my web wanderings I ran across the site of the Library of Virginia's Digital Collections. Apparently, they had scanned in documents in their possession and made them viewable, as well as downloadable, from the web. One part of their collection that I found particularly useful was the "Land Office Patents and Grants", a collection of index cards listing person(s) receiving land, dates, counties, and boundaries. If you click on the "Retrieve Document" button, you can download a scanned image of the actual court document. The collection had 31 cards pertaining to the Castos, as follows:

B.F. Casto	2 May 1859	David L. Casto	1 Oct 1859	James C. Casto	1 May 1856
Charles H. Casto	1 Jan 1861	E. H. Casto	2 Apr 1855	John Casto	5 Nov 1795
D.G. Casto	1 Oct 1859	Edward Casto	1 Jan 1861	John Casto	31 Nov 1800
Daniel Casto	14 Jun 1823	Elmore H. Casto	30 Aug 1842	John Casto Sr	30 Apr 1823
David Casto	12 Apr 1793	Elmore H. Casto	29 Jun 1844	John J. Casto	31 Dec 1844
David Casto	10 Nov 1800	Elmore H. Casto	1 Aug 1850	John M.D. Casto	1 May 1856
David D. Casto	30 Sep 1846	George Casto	31 Oct 1842	Jonathan Casto	28 Aug 1827
David G. Casto	2 Aug 1852	George Casto Jr.	1 Jul 1850	William Casto	1 Jul 1820
David G. Casto	1 May 1855	J.J. Casto	2 May 1859	Elmore H. Castoe	31 Dec 1847
David G. Casto	1 May 1856	James Casto	2 Aug 1819	James Castoe & Jesse Carney	31 Dec 1847
				Jacob Castop	6 Jan 1800

This web site can be found at: <http://198.17.62.51/collections/LO.html>

For those of you who don't have access to the web and are interested in any of the above land grants, let Danita know and she'll be glad to download the document and send it to you!

***The answer to last month's brain teaser:*** The five pounds refers to a sum of money. The pound is the common unit of monetary currency in Great Britain. Individual colonies also issued money denominated in pounds, and it is most likely Virginia colonial money to which the bequest refers.

Estimating the purchasing power of colonial money is no simple task, however a very good reference is *How Much Is That In Real Money* by John J. McCusker, published by the American Antiquarian Society in 1991. McCusker provides a table which can be used to roughly convert amounts in Virginia (and other) colonial currency at various periods into 1991 U. S. dollar equivalents. The time of the bequest falls between the periods (1766-72 and 1782-96) for which McCusker gives conversions. Thus, the five pounds would be worth between \$219.87 and \$300.97 in 1991 dollars. Using the Consumer Price Index to inflate this amount to 1997 dollars gives an amount between \$257.02 and \$351.82 as of September 1997, the latest month available at publication. Thus the five pounds bequeathed by William Casto to his daughter Elizabeth Kelle would be worth \$250-\$350 today.