

LIFE

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A series of serendipity

Although the team began their research in September 2012, it wasn't until they went to Washington in June 2015 that they got the first big break. The team had very little detail to include in their soldier's eulogy at that point.

Having perused the online family history resource for months, Smith finally came across a "Dozier" message board on Ancestry.com and made a query. A person with the username "trishegbert_27" answered less than two hours later. She said her grandfather Samuel Dozier was a first cousin to Sgt. Moberly.

The relative said Ethel Moberly, Allen's mother, died when he was around age 3, and he was sent to live with his maternal grandparents, Albert and Lulu Dozier of Richmond. Allen was enumerated in both the 1920 and the 1930 U.S. Census, she wrote.

The relative speculated Allen's father, John Moberly, could not maintain employment during the Great Depression and was unable to support his child (we find out later his middle name is Bill). According to the census, both of Allen's parents were born in Kentucky.

From census data and enrollment records, Smith and Shoopman concluded Allen was born in Lexington in 1919 and his grandparents (the Doziers) owned a dairy farm.

After graduating from high school in 1938, Allen attended one year of college, married Lora Katherine Tipton and began a career in banking. The couple resided in Ashland when Allen was called for active duty with the 29th Infantry Division in 1942 at age 24.

Census data indicates Lora remarried another soldier after her husband's death and then joined the military herself, Smith said.

In her response, trishegbert_27 said an obituary exists that was published July 25, 1944, on the front page of a newspaper in Boyd County (Ashland), but she had never seen it. Although Allen was injured on June 6 and died shortly thereafter, she said it usually took some time to formally

were notified with news of their loved ones in Europe.

Following Wednesday's interview, the Register called on its sister newspaper, The Independent, the daily newspaper of record in Ashland since 1896.

Editor Mark Maynard skimmed the paper's collection of microfilm and soon located the obituary on the front page of the July 25, 1944, edition, just as Moberly's relative had revealed.

The obituary included new bits of information that hastened the investigation.

"Sergeant Moberly was a former employee of the Ashland Oil & Refining Company at Leach, Ky., and a devoted member of the Unity Baptist Church," the obituary read.

Visit the Allen P. Moberly Internet Memorial at theapmmemorial.weebly.com

To browse memorial websites of past participants, visit 66328486.rhd.weebly.com

The eulogy would seem to contradict Smith and Shoopman's conclusion that Moberly was a banker in the four years following his 1938 high school graduation until August 1942, when he was called for active duty.

Or the position at Ashland Oil was simply a second career.

Moberly's membership at Unity Baptist Church was the key to obtaining the next clue.

Maynard also is a member of the 175-year-old church and knew immediately who to call for help.

Judy Little, who Maynard described as the "extremely organized" church historian, said she has a passion for his story and for her church.

Her collection includes more than 1,000 photos, one of which dates back to 1890. Other pieces in her collection are data years before that, she said.

Little, 75, said she can hear her mother's words play over again in her head. "How do you know where you're going if you don't know where you've been," she would always say.

From the time Maynard discovered the obituary, no more than a half hour had passed when Little announced she had unearthed church bulletins (see photos) featuring Moberly

and his wife. The bride was Lora Tipton, the daughter of Unity Baptist's pastor.

Lola, along with her sister Lois and brothers Shirley and Charlie Lee, were born to Rev. L.H. (Letcher Harold) Tipton and Hallie Walker (Parks) Tipton.

Rev. Tipton came to Unity Baptist in 1936 and remained until 1950 when health problems nudged him into retirement, Little said. During his years as Unity's pastor, Tipton faithfully published a weekly church bulletin. And he was methodical when it came to record-keeping.

As a teenager, Little attended a Sunday school class taught by Shirley Tipton and his wife Virginia.

Years after the couple's marriage ended, Little kept in touch with Virginia, who had since moved to Indiana. One day, as Virginia was passing through the area, she gave Little a copy of every bulletin printed in Rev. Tipton's 14 years at the church, except for one missing year.

In four bulletins dated between June 15, 1941 and July 30, 1944, Rev. Tipton reported both the news of his daughter's marriage to Sgt. Moberly and the news of his death.

Both reaffirming and contradicting bits of information can be found in the reverend's reporting.

In the June 15 wedding announcement, Tipton wrote that his soon-to-be son-in-law was "of Radford, Virginia," but Smith and Shoopman's research did not indicate Moberly ever lived in Radford, only that he may have trained in Bedford (Bedford, Va. does exist).

Little said it is possible Rev. Tipton made a few mistakes in his reporting. The June 15 announcement also placed the wedding in the Unity Baptist Church sanctuary at noon, with the bride's father officiating. The public was invited to witness the wedding.

A Dec. 12, 1943, bulletin confirms Shoopman and Smith's hypothesis that Lora also enlisted in the military, but not as the wife of a new husband as originally suspected.

Sgt. Moberly's enlistment date of August 1942 aligned with the team's prior research, however. The reverend also mentioned his daughter was a junior clerk in the Warner Robins Air Service Command of Warner Robins, Georgia.

Lawson was arrested Dec. 28 and also remains in the Madison County Detention Center.

Other people indicted Wednesday were:

- Nathan Michael Walters, first-degree trafficking in a controlled substance (oxycodone)
- Robert Aaron Burton, 24, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (heroin) and possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Christopher L. Madden, 34, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (oxycodone) and possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Angela K. Burgin, 43, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (oxycodone) and operating a motor vehicle while impaired.
- Christina Alexander, 20, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (morphine) and possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Tracey Short, 30, two counts of first-degree possession of a controlled substance (methadone and oxycodone).

David N. Rigel, 20, first-degree bail jumping.

Kelly D. Smith, 39, first-degree bail jumping.

Ryan R. Blake, 25, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (alprazolam) and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Robert Aaron Burton, 24, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (heroin) and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Grand jury indictments do not indicate guilt, only that grand jurors believe the state has enough evidence to proceed with prosecution.

People are born with the defective gene, but symptoms usually don't appear until middle age. If one parent has HD, a child has a 50 percent chance of developing the disorder.

While still a couple, Shirley and his wife Virginia adopted two children, Timothy and Kimberly, knowing that any biological offspring could one day suffer from the disease.

Little said during those years, people from within the church were well aware of the Tiptons' health problems. Once Hallie started showing signs of the disease, however, outsiders started rumors that she was an alcoholic. When her condition worsened, she was hospitalized and died while receiving medical care.

Lois had married a doctor named Bourbon Canfield, who would give her medication to help her rest after she began showing signs of HD.

One night, while sleeping in an upstairs bedroom, the house caught fire. The Canfield's teenage daughter Deborah ran outside and called for help. She re-entered the home to save her mother, but it proved to be a fatal mistake. Dr. Canfield broke out a window hoping to rescue his wife and daughter, but it was too late. Both died from smoke inhalation (see September 6, 1988, mother-daughter obituary at www.richmond-dregister.com).

Among the 25 over-stuffed binders that make up Little's church chronicles, an Oct. 29, 1961, church bulletin from the East Hickman Baptist Church in Lexington shows Rev. Tipton and his new wife Bessie Harper Tipton, along with his sons and daughters and their spouses and children.

The family portrait includes David Allen Canfield, Lois and Bourbon's son who had escaped the fire. Little said using Allen's name was perhaps Lois' way of memorializing her brother-in-law's sacrifice.

Bessie's daughter from a previous marriage, who also was named Lois, now lives in Lexington and sent the 1961 bulletin to Little just a few years ago.

'A life to match the sacrifice'

Shoopman knew he loved history and he knew he wanted to go to France, so the program's demanding application process didn't deter him.

In fact, Smith said Shoopman's application went above and beyond the requirements, and "I'm pretty sure that's why we were accepted."

Shoopman's application essay was unique and posed over the original

order from the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force for "Operation Overlord," codename for the Battle of Normandy.

The high school student used language from the original orders and integrated it into his application essay. It took weeks to piece together, he said.

Shoopman plans to attend EKU to earn a bachelor's degree and go to Marshall University for a master's in forensic science.

For Smith, the Normandy project was a chance to honor one of her own students from when she taught in Montgomery County, Pic. Dustin Gross died in Afghanistan, May 2012, after being hit by an improvised explosive device. He was 19.

"That was part of the impetus for me. Here is a way for me to honor my student's sacrifice by honoring another soldier in this way," she said.

On the plane home from Normandy, Smith and Shoopman discussed the importance of bringing what they learned back to the community. They want to find a way to recognize Sgt. Allen P. Moberly and other Madison County veterans through more than just a website and for longer than just a year.

The pair didn't know last week that their wish to see Sgt. Moberly's face, let alone several members of his family, would be granted so soon. However, the missing details of the soldier's early life are yet to be uncovered.

The Doziers were dairy farmers in Richmond. Sgt. Moberly's aunt, Mrs. Jim May (Mabel) Reeves, is buried in the Richmond Cemetery. Shoopman and Smith are counting on the community's response to their story to progress further into their investigation and to determine an appropriate way to commemorate Moberly's life.

The "extremely organized" church historian in Ashland has promised to keep digging, she said.

"I think it is important for the community to recognize the sacrifice of this particular soldier - he was just a kid; he was 24," said Smith. "There is so much for this community to be proud of."

"We still need a life to match the sacrifice," Shoopman said.

Crystal Wylie can be reached at cwylie@richmondregister.com or 623-1669, Ext. 6696.

CHARGES

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Under Kentucky law, complicity to a crime incurs the same penalty as perpetrating the crime.

First-degree rape and first-degree sodomy are Class A felonies, punishable by 20 to 50 years or life in prison.

In a separate case, another person, 59-year-old Robbie Uhrin, has been charged with first-degree sodomy involving

one of the children. Uhrin is set for a status hearing in his case at 1:50 p.m. Sept. 5 in Madison Circuit Court.

Kelley and Lawson are scheduled to be arraigned on new charges at 11:50 a.m. Sept. 12. A trial date of Oct. 28 had been set on the earlier indictment.

Kelley and Uhrin were both arrested Nov. 19 by the Madison County Sheriff's Department. Uhrin was released Jan. 5 on a \$10,000 bond, but Kelley remains in jail.

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