

Typed

Ragsdale

submitted by
Virginia R. Stevenson

1. John Ragsdale came to America from England and settled in Virginia. He married Mary Harrison of Virginia and in 1770 they moved to South Carolina and settled in Fairfield County. One of their children was Samuel Ragsdale.

Samuel Ragsdale was born in Fairfield County, South Carolina; and lived there until middle-life. As a young man, he married Hannah Estes, a daughter of William Estes. They were the parents of a son whom they named ^{Elisha} Robert. When Robert was only a small child, 2

2 His mother, Hannah Estes Ragsdale, died and thereafter his father married again and, with his new wife, moved to Alabama. Robert Ragsdale remained in Fairfield County under the care of the Reverend Joseph Holmes, a Methodist minister. ~~The preacher with whom he lived thought that he should have a Biblical name, so he called him Elisha.~~

Elisha Robert Ragsdale was born in Fairfield County on April 12, 1825. He died November 17, 1862. He married Nancy Angeline (Nannie) Stanton, born October 29, 1834, died November 25, 1922. They lived for a time in Richland County, South Carolina. It was

3. there that their first child, Edward Bernard Ragsdale was born. Soon thereafter they bought a plantation in "Fairfield County" above and below the confluence of Little River and Jackson Creek." It was on this plantation that the other two children, Glenn Walker Ragsdale and John Knox Ragsdale, were born.

South Carolina seceded. Elisha Robert Ragsdale, although he had a wife and three small sons immediately volunteered (3rd. Battalion, S.C. Volunteers). He died of pneumonia in a Confederate Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, and was buried in Hollywood Cemetery in that city. #4

4. When her husband went off to the War, "Nannie" Stanton, ^{Ragsdale} with her three small sons moved into the home of her father, John D. Stanton, who was then a widower living alone on a large plantation. John D. Stanton, by all accounts, was a man of high ideals and exemplary character and contributed much to the upbringing and training of his three small grandsons. He was a highly respected citizen and up until the end of the War Between the States was a relatively wealthy man. Glenn W. Ragsdale a small boy at that time, watched Sherman's soldiers set fire to the 75

plantation buildings and destroy more than a hundred bales of cotton that were stored in the gin-house and other buildings. He said this was the biggest, the most awe-inspiring fire that he had ever seen, up until that time. After the army moved on, little was left other than the ~~scorched~~ scorched land. He quoted, as applying to his Grandfather, what Ben Hill had said about others: "He stood neck deep in the ashes of his own poverty."

The early lives of these three boys, Edward B. Ragsdale, Glenn W. Ragsdale and John K. Ragsdale ^{were} ~~was~~

61.
much like that of other farm boys in that community following the War. They attended school at Shiloh Academy, worked on the farm, and each in turn attended Furman College, later Furman University.

Edward, the oldest, after leaving Furman taught school for two years. He studied law under Colonel Rion and Judge Melton. After being admitted to the Bar, he opened an office in Winsboro, South Carolina. He was becoming reasonably well established in his profession when he was joined by his brother Glenn, who had followed.

#7

7.
the same pattern set by his
older brother. After he ~~had~~
left Furman, Glenn also
taught school for two years,
in the meantime studying
law under the direction of
Colonel Rion and Judge Melton
and, upon being admitted
to the Bar, joined his
brother under the firm
name of Ragsdale and Ragsdale.
John broke the pattern
set by his two older brothers.
He farmed for a time and
then entered the mercantile
business at Blairs, South
Carolina.

Edward B. Ragsdale
and Glenn W. Ragsdale
were young men, young
lawyers, ambitious to
succeed in their chosen
profession.

8 They possessed in abundance the essentials for success. Character, ability, integrity, personality and the energy, drive and determination that carried them to their objective. They made an excellent, well-balanced team. Ed was the more gregarious, the more loquacious, the speaker, the advocate, the "mixer." He was undoubtedly an extrovert with unbounded confidence in himself and his ability to achieve. Glenn bordered on the introvert. Though equally able, talented and popular he was more at ease in the office doing the essential research and preparing the cases for trial. Their success

9.
was almost immediate. Their reputation spread throughout Fairfield County and into adjoining counties, and ultimately throughout the state. As was well said: "In the multiplicity of affairs, the firm attained fame throughout the state - Glenn for his pleading, Ed for his advocacy."

Ed, the advocate, the orator, played the more spectacular role. It was he who stood before the Courts, the juries, the public as a living symbol of law and justice. But it was Glenn who did the more mundane, the unseen, but the absolutely

13/16

essential task of preparing the cases for trial with meticulous care, and ever sitting by the eloquent advocate to make sure that not one essential fact or point of law was overlooked in the presentation. Both tasks were equally important if there was to be any outstanding success.

Until the death of Ed, he and his brother Glen were so closely associated in their personal relations, their profession, their business ventures and activities that it is next to impossible to write of one without mentioning the other, during the years of their association. It is seldom that one

11. finds brothers, or other business associates, who so completely trusted each other and had such respect for and admiration of the ability and integrity of the other. Both men were accomplished, erudite, able, and broadly grounded in the fundamentals of the law. ^{One} ~~the~~ man may praise either ~~one~~ ^{man} without detracting from the other - there was enough talent to go around.

In 1896 Ed was first elected to the State House of Representatives, and at the same time ¹⁶12

^{12.} His brother, Glenn, was elected to the State Senate. Ed served two terms of two years each and was elected to a third term but died before taking his seat. Glenn served two terms of four years each and refused to stand for re-election. He did, however, serve in the Senate again in the nineteen twenties.

While serving in the Senate, in the dawn of the twentieth century, Glenn Ragsdale wrote, sponsored, and, against great opposition, drove through an Act of far-reaching importance, not only to the legal

4713

profession, but to the entire public. It revolutionized court pleadings and procedure by abolishing the complicated and antiquated system of court pleadings required at that time. Under the old system a lawyer must not only be learned in the law but had to be a craftsman of unusual skill to prepare, for instance, a complaint that could not be thrown out of court on an unimportant technicality. Mr. Ragsdale was such a skilled technician, but he saw the necessity for simplification.

Glenn Ragsdale was a member of the constitutional convention

14.
of 1895.

It has been said of
Glenn Walker Ragsdale:
"He was the same
commanding figure
whether in the
Constitutional Convention,
the State Senate, ~~the~~
~~was~~ presiding over the
Circuit Court, or consulting
with clients in his
office." He was a gentle,
compassionate, friendly
man of great charm;
a man of convictions who
expressed his opinions
freely but diplomatically;
and a man who had
a perfervid hatred of
sham and hypocrisy.
Perhaps a few words
written by Mr. W. W.
Dixon soon after Glenn

7915

15.
Ragsdale's death expressed
it well: "When night
draws down its curtain,
it is not to conceal
but to reveal the great
stars. When death lays
its pall on a great man,
it brings out the strength
and beauty of that life."

Edward Bernard Ragsdale,
March 16, 1856 - Sept. 18, 1901
not married.

Glenn Walker Ragsdale,
June 3, 1858 - Sept. 11, 1931
married

Inez Eppes McMeekin
Nov. 1, 1866 - March 10, 1932

John Knox Ragsdale
Feb. 21, 1860 - Jan. 8, 1915
married

Minnie Calhoun McMeekin
Sept. 30, 1861 - Jan. 20, 1952
2016

Glenn Walker Ragsdale and his wife, Inez Eppes McMeekin were the parents of five children: Ethel Louise, Inez Beatrice, William Glenn, Robert Walker, and Edith McMeekin.

1. Ethel Louise Ragsdale
 April 16, 1889 -
 married
 John Hugh McLaurin
 March 29, 1883 - Jan. 3, 1950

They were the parents of five children: Ethel Craig, John Hugh Jr., Inez, Sara, and Glenn Duncan.

2. Inez Beatrice Ragsdale
 July 27, 1981 -
 married

Grover Gordon McLaurin

Jan. 30, 1887 -

They are the parents of five children: Grover Gordon, Jr., Nancy Della, Inez Glenn, Ethel Louise, and Marianne.

3. William Glenn Ragsdale
b. Dec. 20, 1894 d. June 29, 1981

A graduate of Clemson College (now University). A World War One Veteran. A rural mail carrier, a lawyer, a business man. Extremely bright and intelligent and one of those rare individuals with charm, personality and magnetism. He and his wife Ella Little

Smith (b. May 15, 1905 - d. Feb. 29, 1973) were the parents of two children, Virginia Little Ragsdale and Elinor Glenn (Bob) Ragsdale.

a. Virginia Little Ragsdale
Nov. 20, 1923 -

married

Jacob Coleman Stevenson
Feb. 26, 1923 - Jan. 17, 1981

They are the parents of three children:

② Jacob Coleman Stevenson, Jr.
Dec. 23, 1946 #18

(G) William Glenn Stevenson
Feb. 20, 1949

married
Betsy Jane Chapman
Dec. 6, 1951

They are the parents
of two children, Kensey
Glenn (Oct. 10, 1975) and
Martha Elizabeth (June 26, 1979)

(C) Virginia Ragsdale Stevenson
Nov. 16, 1951

married
Carl Edward Startzman
Nov. 12, 1952

They are the parents
of one daughter, Virginia Glenn
(Jan. 23, 1978).

f. Elinor Glenn (Bob) Ragsdale
Feb. 17, 1926

married
William Lindsay Wylie
April 26, 1926

19: They are the parents of
two children:

(a) Dr. William Lindsay Wylie Jr.

May 20, 1951

married

Harriett Jones

Nov. 10, 1950

They have one son,
William Lindsay, III (Oct. 12, 1975)

(b) Elinor Ragsdale Wylie

Jan. 29, 1953

married

Ripley Westmoreland Clarkson

July 21, 1953