William Riddle was born about 1793 in Stokes County, North Carolina and traveled with his father John W. Riddle, Sr. to the Caine (Cane) River Valley in 1805. At this time there were no wagon roads and the only method of travel was by horseback or walking. William married Priscilla Renfroe and together they established a home on Laurel Branch near what is now Pensacola in Yancey County.

Their home was erected in forest-land that was cleared by hand with the aid of his brothers and a few neighbors, one of who was Adoniram D. Allen, II, born in 1782. Adoniram had married William’s older sister Lucinda “Lucy” Riddle and lived on Cattail Creek about one quarter of a mile from William’s home on Laurel Branch. William was a hunter and mountain man who knew the Black Mountains well.

As we approach the year 2,000. It is difficult to imagine how these settlers of the upper Cane River Valley survived in these primitive
Adoniram Allen and William Wilson had accompanied Professor Elisha Mitchell on his search for the highest peak east of the Mississippi River on July 28, 1835.

William Wilson lived near Adoniram Allen on Cattail Creek. It should be noted that William Wilson is not related to "Big Tom" Wilson, the well known tracker and bear hunter who appears later in this article.

In 1835, Thomas David Wilson who would later be know as "Big Tom" was 10 years old and lived with his parents, Edward "Big Ned" Wilson and Rachel Silver in the South Toe River Valley. William Wilson and another Cattail Creek neighbor Samuel Austin had accompanied Professor Mitchell to the top of Yeates Knob a few days prior to their July 28 journey. Wilson and Austin felt that Yeates Knob was the highest peak in the Black Mountain Range.

When the party arrived at the pinnacle of Yeates Knob Mitchell realized, either by sight or calculation that he was not on the highest peak.

They returned to the Cane River valley where Mitchell obtained the services of a well-known guide and mountain man Adoniram Allen. On July 28, the next morning, Adoniram Allen and William Wilson
again guided Professor Mitchell to the summit of what is now known as Mount Mitchell where they spent two hours.

Mt. Mitchell is 6,684 feet above sea level, the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains. Based on barometric pressure (23.807 inches) and temperature (58 degrees F), Professor Mitchell would later determine the elevation of the peak as 6,476 feet above sea level.

Professor Mitchell was sure that the Black Mountains were higher than Mount Washington (6,288 feet ASL) in the New Hampshire White Mountain range but was not certain that he had correctly identified the highest point in the eastern United States.

In 1838, Professor Mitchell returned to the Black Mountains and this time made two ascents of the Black Mountains, one from the south side through Dillingham’s Cove near present day Barnardsville and the other from the valley of the North Fork of the Swannanoa River.

Professor Mitchell received an honorary doctor of divinity degree in 1840 and thereafter was referred to as Doctor Mitchell. He made his third trip to the Black Mountains in 1844.

He was still not convinced that he had climbed the highest peak in the mountain range. This time he obtained the services of William Riddle and William’s son James. During his more than 30 years living in
and roaming the Black Mountains William Riddle had achieved a well known reputation for being an outstanding hunter and mountain man.

No doubt Dr. Mitchell had heard of William Riddle and perhaps met him during his 1835 expedition with Adoniram Allen and William Wilson.

July 5, 1844, Dr. Mitchell departed Asheville for the Cane River Valley by the way of Burnsville. He had established his barometric base in Asheville where Dr. John Dickson monitored the barometer. He arrived on Saturday and the next day preached a sermon in Burnsville.

In a letter written to his wife this same day he wrote, "Tomorrow I am expecting to ascend the Black Mountains I hope for the last time. I shall probably now reach the highest summit." On July 8, Dr. Mitchell and the Riddles began what Mitchell would describe in another letter to his wife on July 14, as the "hardest day's work I have ever performed." The following is based on Dr. Mitchell's directions to William Riddle.

They went from Riddle's house on Caney River, by the way of the Green Ponds (now Eskota) and from there up Spruce Pine Mountain ridge (now called Big Pine Mountain) to a place named Beech Nursery. From there they turned right and continued in a southerly direction on as a direct course as possible to what is now known as Mt. Gibbes.

Mitchell did not remain long on the peak of Mt. Gibbes. He took a reading with his new mountain barometer and later calculated the elevation to be 6,672 feet ASL (125 feet higher than actual).

They then began their descent to the Riddle residence but due to darkness and rain they had to stop at a point near the Beech Nursery. They spent a wet night trying to remain dry by the flame of a sputtering fire. The next morning they followed Beech Nursery Creek to the Caney River and on to William Riddle's home.

This ended the twenty-mile round trip over some of the most difficult terrain in the eastern United States. Dr. Mitchell was convinced that he had identified, climbed and measured the highest peak in the Black Mountains.

However the peak that Dr. Mitchell had climbed and measured on July 8, 1844 was three miles south of the highest peak in the east. This 1844 excursion would later be used in the 1856 Clingman-Mitchell controversy about who was the first person to identify, climb, and measure the highest peak in the Black Mountains.

During the twelve years between the 1844 excursion and the 1856 controversy several changes would take place in the upper Cain River Valley and Black Mountains.

Amos Ray would buy thirteen thousand acres of mountain land in and around what is now Mount Mitchell including the upper Cane River Valley and Green Ponds (now Eskota). Virginia Wilson Boone,
in her article on Eskota to be published as part of the Pensacola history book, tells us that Green Ponds got the name from two large ponds with bottoms covered in green moss. These ponds were located in the upper valley near Cane River about four miles upriver from Pensacola. Other changes included an influx of settlers, hunters, fishermen and early tourists attempting to escape the oppressive summer heat in the lower counties of North Carolina.

Some of the high peaks would acquire new names. A peak between Potato Top and Mt. Gibbes would be named Mt. Mitchell in honor of Dr. Mitchell. In 1855 US Congressman Thomas Clingman journeyed to and measured the present Mt. Mitchell.

As a result of his claim that it was the highest peak in the Black Mountains, the locals named it Clingman’s Peak or Mt. Clingman. This would lead to the 1856 Clingman-Mitchell controversy that would end with the tragic death of Dr. Elisha Mitchell on June 27, 1857. Big Tom Wilson and his descendants became famous after finding Dr. Mitchell’s body.

In 1852, Thomas David "Big Tom" Wilson married Niagara Ray, daughter of Amos Ray. About 1853 they moved to Ray’s land at the Green Ponds. According to Tim Silver in his article, "Big Tom Wilson" in the November 1997 issue of Wildlife in North Carolina, Thomas David Wilson may have earned his nickname "Big Tom" from his size.

He was 6 feet 2 inches tall and spindly. Some family members believe that he may have been nicknamed "Big Tom" to distinguish him from younger family members who shared the first name. He supported his growing family by farming, fishing, hunting and robbing bee gums.

By 1857 an eight-mile foot trail had been cut from the headwaters of the Cain River near Green Ponds to the top of Mt. Mitchell. It is believed that this was the trail that Dr. Mitchell was seeking when he became lost and met his death at Mitchell Falls. Here I must continue with caution. Many of my Riddle readers are proud to trace their line back to Big Tom by the way of his daughter Beuna Vista (Vistic) who married Marcus "Mark" Riddle.

This is also true of my Ray and Wilson cousins. It is not my intent to diminish the reputation or character of Big Tom but to try and put in perspective a few facts that are often ignored when the Mitchell-Big Tom story is told.

By 1857, Big Tom Wilson had become a well-known hunting guide. Contrary to the many stories that have been told and published, he was never a guide for Dr. Mitchell. He and Adoniram Allen, son of
Adoniram D. Allen, II, as well as others did find Dr. Mitchell’s body after searching for three days. Some researchers say that the first time Big Tom ever saw Dr. Mitchell was at the bottom of Mitchell Falls.

Dungeon Bear Pen
Walter Riddle

There is a place at the head of Cattail Creek near Pensacola, Yancey County called the Dungeon Bear Pen and I wondered how it got that name. I began asking older residents of Pensacola how the Dungeon Bear Pen got its name. Here is the story that was related to me.

Among the first settlers in the Pensacola-Cattail Creek section were two brothers, one named George and the other Fred. One fall, around the middle of October they decided to catch a bear in order to put meat on their table. At that time people did not have steel bear traps.

George and Fred planned to make a pen with spruce poles about six feet square. One day they took saw and ax and hiked a great distance up Cattail Creek searching for a suitable place to build their pen.

George discovered a location that suited him near a small creek now called Winter Star Creek.

Fred continued to the top of the ridge and emerged in a small flat gap. Here he observed bear tracks so he decided to construct his pen here. Assisting each other, they built two pens of small spruce trees about six or eight inches in diameter and six foot in length. These were notched together making a box about three feet high. They then built a top for the pen using the same type of poles.

Heavy rocks were laid on the top so the bear would not be able raise it. A hole in one wall big enough for a bear to enter was cut into one side. Over this hole they constructed a door that would slide up and down. A wire was attached to the top of the door to hold it open and when the door was lowered it covered the hole. The other end of the wire was attached to the trigger in the rear of the enclosure.

Bait was tied to the trigger and when the bear began eating and jerking the bait it tripped the trigger and the door quickly dropped over the hole where the bear had entered. The door was constructed in such a manner that it could
not be opened from the inside.

Soon afterwards, Fred went to check his trap for a bear. He discovered that a bear had indeed grabbed the bait but the trap failed to catch him. Fred then went George’s pen to borrow some more bait. He took this bait back to his trap and in the process of re-baiting his trap he tripped the trigger and the door quickly closed and caught him in his own pen.

Late the next day, George walked up the mountain to examine the traps. As he approached Fred’s pen he could see that the trigger was thrown but he could not see inside the pen.

Fred heard George circling the pen and Fred called out and said, "don’t shoot brother George. Open the door and give me a chew of tobacco." George raised the door and Fred crawled out. Fred straightened up, brushed himself off, chewed the tobacco and rubbed his eyes. He said, "George the light hurts my eyes. It’s just like a dungeon in that bear pen."

To this day the place is still referred to as the "Dungeon Bear Pen."

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**Riddle Research Trip**

(Continued)

by Mary Hill

**Wednesday, September 10, 1997**

Dear Journal, today was a truly lovely day. Everyone is being so very cooperative and we are seeing so many great things!

We went to the Courthouse of Montgomery County, Virginia this morning after breakfast, and it was truly a wonderful experience! These were seven intelligent and motivated people, and we went through drawer after drawer of files, or packets, of information on tiny slips of paper from the 1770’s and 1780’s. In four hours we found a gold mine of information:

1. We found two examples of William Riddle’s actual mark (R) he made on court papers. He could not write, or at least did not write his signature. Instead, he made a rather large, somewhat long-tailed capitol "R" and they were done the same way on both documents. Very good to have!

2. We found two papers wherein he had lawsuits with others over money owed him.

3. We have never found an actual deed on his property, and did not in this courthouse.

4. We found in an index to the Miscellaneous Records A-2: Augusta County, Virginia 1750-1770; Fincastle County, Virginia 1750-1770; Montgomery County, Virginia 1770-1798. Packet 16 mentions
William Riddle defendant against Nathaniel Wilson in 1769. Sad to say, this packet was missing. I hope it can be found in the Archives in Richmond. I think Dee Ann Larsen told me the Archives at Richmond have filmed all these packets. We shall see. That is by far the earliest we have a date for William Riddle in Montgomery County. That is an awesome find.

5. Fascinating documents of a fine against William Riddle for hiding tax he owed, and heavy fines of 500 L. for "trespassing on the case" along with other individuals - Thomas Rogers Jr. the same, William Rogers, Dozwell Rogers and George Reese, Thomas Rogers and his wife Jane, etc. These are fascinating records! "Trespassing on the case," according to Black's Law Dictionary means being guilty of a non-violent crime.

6. We found in the Court Minute Books the actual records of William Riddle being accused of "inimical acts" - Tory activities, and those who were accused with him.7. We found the record of two of his children being bound out in 1782 after his death.

8. We found the court record of his wife "Hoppe" suing to get her cow back (1782) which was illegally taken from her in 1780 by Capt. Wm. Love.

It will really be fun to pour over these records and flesh out the story of William Riddle!

This afternoon we drove to the Chiswell Lead Mines and the location where old Fort Chiswell was. It was raining, and beautiful and green, and we read history in the car as we drove. We stopped in Chatham County at the old Courthouse that is now a historical society and then drove down the Blue Ridge to Mt. Airy, Surry County, North Carolina.

It is really sobering, for some reason, to be here. I have felt a strong drawing to these Roberts. This evening I phoned Agnes Wells, here in Mt. Airy, who was recommended to me by David Hill who attended my genealogy lecture at BYU. She was wonderful, telling me all about how to go to the Courthouse at Dobson and also the Surry County Genealogical Society. So, we will try that tomorrow morning. I hope we find something!
She told me that Lovell or Loven’s Creek, the middle fork of the Arrarat or Tarrarat River was once called Bledsoe Creek and Susanna Bledsoe is mentioned as a widow in the original deed of James Roberts getting this land on the middle fork of the Tarrarat. This is good information! Also she told me there was an old Primitive Baptist Church there called Old Holler P.B.C. Lots of good information!

Thursday, September 11, 1997

Dear Journal, what a precious day this has been! This morning after a Continental breakfast at the motel, we drove from Mt. Airy, Surry County, North Carolina to the county seat - a drive of only about 20 miles or so. We went to the Surry County Court House, and although we did not find lots of information on James Roberts we did find some deeds which I will analyze later and enter into PAF.

Most of the records we need have been transferred to Raleigh. We were able to purchase the county historical map Mrs. Wells told me was there, and it had excellent information on it. It mentioned James Roberts, his Tory activities, and also gave a list of about 20 other men who lost their land in Surry County for Tory activities. Then we drove to the Surry Community College and went to the library, where the Surry County Genealogical Society has their holdings. It was also neat! I was especially grateful that the librarian there took a copy of my paper on William Riddle and is going to bind it as a family history to have there in the Library for patrons. I am going to send her copies of Draper Manuscript documents about Col. James Roberts, and hopefully we will find out more about him this way. I was so pleased that this happened!

We then drove to Pilot Mountain in Stokes County, and enjoyed the beautiful view from the top and took lots of pictures and just had fun together. This mountain was very well known in the early days as a landmark, to the Indians, the Long Hunters and early settlers.

Then we drove to the Flatt River in Persons County, and took pictures and talked about Moses Riddle and the 1755 tax list and the people who are on it showing up later in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in Henry County, Virginia and in Grayson County, Virginia with William Riddle.

While we were driving, Jim and I began going over pages I had included in our notebooks concerning Thomas Rogers and James Roberts and the mill etc. in Stokes County on the Dan River and Peters
Creek and then others joined in. I think we all understood a lot more clearly this complex, difficult research project! I think that probably this Thomas Rogers and James Roberts are not ours, but we need more research here.

We went out to dinner, and had a lovely time in an especially nice restaurant. All were very warm and supportive as we talked about how to move this project further along. This has been an absolutely precious trip!

Friday, September 12, 1997

Dear Journal, I am in a bedroom at Jack and Betty Goin’s home, where I will stay the last three nights of the trip. They have the loveliest home! Betty does all kinds of delightful and attractive touches that make a house into a home, and it is lovely. They are both such gracious people - I am amazed at what a blessing it is to have gotten to know them!

We left South Boston this morning, after a very nice motel and a lovely dinner last night, and drove through Halifax, Pittsylvania, Henry and Patrick counties and then up and over the Blue Ridge again. It was wonderful to see the lay of the land. We visited the old homestead of R.J. Reynolds, the great tobacco magnate.

It was lovely, but not presumptions at all. The home was quite small compared to Chaunce’s home and other southern homes I’ve seen. I am interested to see that these counties are not that large. We found streams - the Sandy River on the Dan and followed it up to the top where it goes from Pittsylvania County into Henry County briefly. We saw a number of the other streams mentioned in the land entry books of 1737-1770 and 1770-1800, such as Koger and Smith and South Mayo and Mayo etc. It was good to go over these things in the car with everyone.

The drive home was beautiful, and very pleasant. We finished up the driving part of the trip today, and Chaunce and Bertha left for their drive up to Normal, Illinois by 4 PM, which was very good for them! They have to be there this next Sunday. I walked down in front of Jack’s home to the Holston River and sat on the bank for almost an hour in the late afternoon sun. I thought about all we’ve seen, and the history which so saturates the Holston River and this whole area. We have truly had a wonderful experience walking in the footsteps of our ancestors these past six days and I felt a deep sense of gratitude for their sacrifices, challenges, and courage that allowed us to be here today.

I have a new appreciation for both patriots and Tories in the Am. Rev. - hard to put into words, but deeply felt. Each person saw certain sides of the issues, and many gave their lives for what they believed. I have a much broader perspective than I did when studying history in school! It was not "all good patriots" and "all bad Tories" - that’s for sure!

This evening Betty, Jack, Rebecca and I talked about our involvement in Riddle genealogy. We talked about where we’ve been in our research, and were we need to go from here.
Saturday, September 13, 1997

Dear Journal,

Well, today was a very pleasant, relaxed day. Jim, Jack, Betty, Rebecca and I visited and had a leisurely breakfast this morning, and looked over more genealogy until noon. We had a sandwich here, and then drove to Jack’s mother’s, Ona Arrington Goins’ home up on Cave Ridge. It was wonderful! What a beautiful place!

This is where Jack grew up, and it is one small farm after another, way up on the top of a ridge. There were grandchildren who came on a four wheeler, and eight beagle dogs, and the smokehouse made from the old original log house. The old privy from the 1940’s, and cows drinking out of a natural pond, and Jack’s mother out on the swing on the front porch, and his cousin mowing the grass, and a barn, and on and on. It was wonderful!

had the most pleasant time there, taking pictures and visiting. It was really very special!

Happy Riddle’s Second Husband  
Henry Fisher

We drove to Kyle’s Ford, the Clinch River where the old Blackwater Church sat along the side of the river, and then we drove to Newman’s Ridge - the mountain top where so many of the Melungeon people lived from about 1800 to the 1950’s. That was quite an experience! We drove way up on the ridge, for a long way passing newer homes, and then passed older places.

At the "end of civilization" was the Goins Chapel with the graveyard extending way down the mountainside. Many of the Melungeon people have been buried there. It is an awesomely beautiful spot, with the mountains flowing out before one’s view. I walked down among the graves and huge old trees, and it was a very touching time for me. I felt very close to the families buried there - Collins, Bunch, Gibson, Mullins, Sizemore, - and feel something extra special for this specific group of people. Words are inadequate. I left my heart on Newmans Ridge in the Goins Cemetery.

We left the Goins chapel and cemetery and drove further along the ridge. We were past civilization now and went on further through beautiful woods. Finally we took a very undeveloped dirt road off to the left for as far as the van could go. Then we had to get out and walk. We walked up and down this old road for at least half an hour, through beautiful woods, until we reached a wonderful old two-story log home with a front porch and two curved Mediterranean windows in front.
There were a couple of outbuildings too. The story is that they made corn liquor there, and sold it. When the feds came to take Mahalia to jail, she was so heavy - she apparently had elephantitus - weighing something like 500 lbs., it is said that the sheriff who served the warrant said, "She is findable, but not fetchable." They say she was not able to leave her home for the last seven years of her life - she could not get out the door! Wow - what hardship that suggests!

When she died they had to remove a portion of the wall to remove her body, and they then built a fireplace there so they say, although it is just a big hole now and there is a fireplace at the other end of the building. However, these homes often had a fireplace at both ends and maybe the stones have been hauled off.

The last time the home was lived in was in the 1950’s. It is such a colorful place! It was wonderful of Jack and Betty to take us there. The rounded windows were especially interesting! The builder had carefully chipped away the old log, into a curved window. Then a strip of wood was carefully notched at 1/2-inch intervals and curved to form a frame to the windows.

There were two such windows - one with the curved frame intact and the other without the curved frame so you could see the hand chipping with the ax more clearly. These are of a Mediterranean style, and most interesting! It is said that these curved windows are evidence of the Mediterranean heritage of the Melungeon people. Someone sure cared a lot to go to the effort to make those windows in a log home!

They got their water, so it is said, by lowering a bucket down over the side of a cliff to a spring far below. Jack showed us the place, and it sure did make me appreciate the comforts of running water!

We drove back to Jack and Betty’s in Rogersville, and had a lovely supper. Afterwards Jack, Jim and I poured over the Land Entry book for Pittsylvania, Patrick, Halifax, Henry and Franklin counties from 1737-1770 and made a list of every Roberts in the book. It was a good thing to do, and Jim is going to analyze it for us. It will be interesting to see what we can figure out from it. It seems there were four James Roberts in the county at this time, and we need to identify which one was ours.

Dear Journal,

We left at 8 am for the Smokey Mountains and the Cherokee reservation. We drove through the Smokey Mountains, and they were misty and beautiful. Then we went through the demonstration village, which is on the Cherokee reservation and saw how the old Cherokee people lived. It was well done and very interesting. We drove back, and stopped for dinner in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

As per the Riddle genealogy work we need to do, today Jack and I talked and we figured out that we think possibly there were brothers Cornelius Roberts, James Roberts, and William Roberts and sister Happy Roberts. That is pretty much what I have felt for a couple of years - the James and Happy part at least, but Jack fleshed out the rest with Cornelius and William added.

Sunday, September 14, 1997
He suspects the father is Col. James Roberts, at this point, which is what I also believe. They think Col. James Roberts is of the same generation as Moses Riddle, and that William Ingram who is on the 1767 tax list in Pittsylvania County living with two Madding men was the orphan William Ingraham as per his Rev. War Pension application. Therefore he would have had to be born in 1751, instead of the 1758 he said in his pension file, to appear on that tax list as at least 16 years old. He would also not have been married, since he was in the household of the Maddings. Interesting.

If we find new evidence to refute what we are now thinking I will surely consider that. But for now, I feel that Jim and Jack saw this evening what I have been seeing, and they also see the evidence behind these conclusions. They stated it, and saw it, and agreed that the documents - as good as we have them - point in this direction.

I do not know that we can do better than that, unless we go into the archives at Raleigh and Richmond and find more. Maybe someday some of us can do that. But for now I have to say that this has been an unbelievably successful trip, with wonderful conclusions, and wonderful results - in several very significant directions.

The newspaper clippings from Mrs. Joan Baity arrived yesterday in the mail, and the reporter quoted from my article on William Riddle. I am glad to have been able to share some of what we have found with others. This trip has been a real success in every way.

**Nathaniel Riddle Descendant**

Richard Riddle

Nathaniel Riddle, born 1805 in present day Yancey County, North Carolina was the youngest son of John W. Riddle, Sr. (1765-1844). Nathaniel and his first wife Rebecca Tatum had nine children. After Rebecca died, Nat married Elizabeth Edwards in 1856.

Elizabeth and Nathaniel had two children, Smith and Isabel Riddle. Jim Hartung, the *Riddle Newsletter’s* Technical Editor is a descendant of Smith Riddle and has provided us with a line of Smith’s descendants. (See: *Riddle Newsletter*, Volume 1, Issue 2, June 1995) It is unknown what happened to Isabel.

On April 19, I received a query from Sandy Zell seeking information about a Rintha Riddle who married Norman Penland. She stated that she understood Rintha’s father was a Nat Riddle.

We checked our Riddle database for all of the Nats, Nathans, and Nathaniels and did not find a daughter named Rintha. We thought that Rintha might have been another name of Nathaniel and Elizabeth’s daughter Isabel.
I was so certain of this that I was even willing to bet a few dollars that Rintha was our lost Isabel. After the exchange of two photographs, we were even more convinced that Rintha was in fact Isabel. I wanted to hedge my bet until I could locate Rintha’s death record at the Yancey County Court House.

On May 4, 1998, I retrieved Rintha Riddle and Norman Penland’s death certificates. It was fortunate that I was only willing to bet a few dollars, as I would have lost my wager.

The death certificates proved that Rintha was the granddaughter of Nathaniel Riddle and his first wife, Rebecca Tatum and not the daughter of Nathaniel and Elizabeth. Rintha’s father was James Edward Riddle, the third son of Nathaniel and Rebecca, and her mother was Epsey Cody of Bull Creek, Madison County. Sandy Zell (Sandra Lee Snodgrass) is the fourth great-granddaughter of Nathaniel Riddle. I asked Sandy to relate to us how she arrived in Nebraska.

"My great-grandparents, Redge Penland and Lila Shepherd lived in western North Carolina all their lives. Redge and Lila married in 1915 had eleven children over three decades. My grandmother, Dollie Penland and most of her brothers and sisters still live in Buncombe or Yancey County, North Carolina. My grandmother, a native of western North Carolina and grandfather, Laslie Crabtree lived briefly in Harrison, Arkansas in the 1950s, but returned to western North Carolina in the 1960s. As they had only an elementary school education they were employed as school janitors until their retirement. My mom, Dorothy Crabtree, was the first to brave the world by joining the air force in the early 1960s.

![Image of family members](image-url)

*Melvin Penland, Smith Riddle, Matilda Penland, Norman Penland, Trissie Penland Metcalf, Bessie & Harvey Penland*
She was stationed in Texas for training and while there married my dad, James Snodgrass, a Sergeant in the Air Force. At that time, spouses were not permitted to serve in the armed forces together so my mom separated from the air force. My sister, Sharon, and I were air force brats until my folks divorced and my mom returned to her roots in western North Carolina.

We lived there until my mother remarried, which took us to Maryland in the late 1970s. I lived in Maryland until I married an air force lieutenant, Joe Zell, who is now stationed at Offutt AFB in Nebraska. I'm a stay-at-home mom for our son, Tyler."

Our thanks to Sandy for providing us with another group of John W. Riddle, Sr. descendants.

Another Nathaniel Riddle Descendant

Richard Riddle

In mid-August 1997, William F. Riddle sent the following letter:

"Dear Richard L. Riddle,

First off, I would like to say great job on putting the Riddle family tree book together. I was very impressed on how well organized it was. I have also been organizing my family history for many years now, with little result. It may be the fact that I live in Michigan and the records I need are scattered over North Carolina.

I came across your book in 1994, while searching for information about my family. I copied some of your information hoping to find a missing link and assemble some pieces. It wasn’t until recently, while visiting my parents in Marshall, North Carolina, that I was able to discover more information.

I was told that if I were to find any records I would have to go to Bakersville. With pen in hand I went to Bakersville only to be again disappointed. I stopped at Riddle’s Used Appliances in Burnsville and met Mr. William Riddle.

He was very helpful and informative. He had a copy of your book and the 1996 supplement. After seeing how excited I was when reading it he sold it to me! That’s when I saw on the first page of the 1996 supplement my great-great-grandfather’s name who was a son of John W. Riddle, Sr. On the following pages I will list in order my family tree for you to determine if I belong to your family.

Yours Truly,

William F. Riddle"

Cousin W.F. Bill Riddle certainly does belong to our Riddle family and is a 2nd great grandson of Nathaniel Riddle. Bill’s line back to Nathaniel is as follows:
1. William Fillmore Riddle (1948-)
2. Millard Fillmore Riddle (1924-1948)
3. Elbert Lee Riddle (1881-1960)
4. Hiram Burton Riddle (1831-1893)
5. Nathaniel Riddle (1805-Aft 1870)

Our thanks to Bill for providing us with his Riddle line and adding these additional descendants of John W. Riddle, Sr.

James "Bo" Riddle Dies

Mr. James McGilvary "Bo" Riddle, 64, of Charlotte died 13 March 1998, at his home.

Jim was born May 28, 1933 in Greensboro, North Carolina to Luke and Lenna Adams Riddle and was the brother of Richard Riddle the Editor of the Riddle Newsletter. Jim was employed by the Charlotte Police Department from 1956 to 1966 and achieved the rank of Detective.

He then joined the Gaston Rural Police where he served as a Detective Sergeant until 1974. "Bo" was later employed by Stegall Security and then by American Security where he was a district manager and firearms instructor until his illness. He was a member of St. Andrew Masonic Lodge 702 and Oriental Shrine Temple of Charlotte.

Jim leaves behind his wife, Francis Taylor Bailey Riddle of Charlotte, brother Richard L. Riddle of Winston-Salem, daughter Laura Riddle of Asheville, daughter Linda Riddle of Charlotte, son James Riddle of Camarillo, California, and seven grandchildren who will dearly miss their "Big Daddy." His stepchildren are Brenda Hall of Kinston, North Carolina, George Pat Bailey, and Cynthia Haislip of Charlotte. We send our sincerest sympathies to Richard and his family.

Geneva Riddle Allen Dies

Mrs. Geneva Ruth Riddle Allen, 79, of Asheville, died at home Wednesday, March 11, 1998. Mrs. Allen was born on February 2, 1919 in Newark, New Jersey, daughter of the late Lune McGilvary Riddle and Fannie May Robinson Riddle.

She was the wife of the late Hubert Allen of Barnardsville, North Carolina. Surviving are her children Cheoah Allen Beall of Asheville, Ronald H. Allen of Barnardsville, her sister Helen R. Nesbitt of Harlem, Georgia, five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.