

According to The Family of Weimar Siler by Leona Bryson Porter, copyright 1952, “Leonidas Fidelio Siler, third son of Jesse and Harriet Patton Siler, a Methodist minister, was for many years secretary of the Siler family. He kept the records of the annual Meetings and frequently led in the devotions for those Meetings. His beautifully kept and beautifully expressed accounts of the family gatherings are a pleasure to read. He was twice married, the first time to Mary Trotter, sister to Caroline Trotter who married his brother Thaddeus. After his first wife’s death, he married Sue Smith of Oxford, North Carolina, and lived exactly one month afterwards.... In addition to his position as local minister, he was editor in 1860 of the Franklin Observer.... Leon Siler was also postmaster at Franklin for a time. (pp. 49-53)

In the same book, a letter written by Leon Siler dated July 17th, 1862 notes, “Capt. Thaddeus P. and Lieut. Jesse W. Siler are my brothers, in the cavalry co.... Thomas and Thaddeus are Sgts in the same co. James W. was in same co. but died at Petersburg, about the 8th of April. Albert Siler is commissary to the 39th N.C. Partisan Rangers which will soon leave for the seat of war. T.P., Jesse W., and Julius T., are my brothers; the others are cousins. I am the only Siler, between the ages of 18 and 35 that is now at home. And I should have been in the war long ago; but in 1839 I lost the use of my right arm and am hence unfit for service.” (pp. 100-101)

Siler Family Meeting
Excerpts from Minutes

Book 1
January 1, 1853-October 5, 1882

Leon F. Siler
Bequeathed by Phi Gamma Delta Association
University of North Carolina
June 3rd 1852

Presented by Leon F. Siler to the Siler family, in which to keep a record of their annual gatherings. Jan. 1, 1854

Cartoogechaye, Macon Co., NC
Oct. 6th, 1857

The Chairman [Jacob Siler] then appointed the committees as follows;

L.F. Siler
A. Siler *Committee on Obituaries*
T.S. Siler

Jesse W. Siler
Rufus S. Siler *Comm. on Family History*
Wm. Sloan Jr.

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Cartoogechaye, Macon Co., NC
Octr. 28th, 1858

The Committee on Family History made no report.

The Chairman [Rev. Jacob Weaver] then appointed the following standing committees

David W. Siler

Julius T. Siler Comm. on Obituaries

John Siler

Jesse R. Siler

Albert Siler Comm. on Family History

Dr. John M. Lyle

[It appears in subsequent minutes that new committees were appointed each year]

Cartoogechaye NC
Octr. 3rd, 1861

Letters were read from Jas. S. Robinson and Jesse W. Siler now with the Southern army in Va. and all were glad to hear so favorable an account of our relatives who are at the post of danger.

The following resolution was offered by Albert Siler:

“Resolved That in the unfortunate controversy which has placed the opposing sections of our once happy country in battle array, the cause of the South is that of right, justice and constitutional liberty and, as such, claims the sympathy, cooperation and prayers of all patriots and Christians.”

After all the males present had expressed their concurrence in the sentiments couched in the resolution, it was unanimously adopted.

The Comm. to whom was referred the subject of procuring photographs of the older members of the Connection, failing to report, were continued for the next year and urged to attend to the important work committed to their care.

On motion Albert Siler, L.F. Siler and Wm. Sloan Jr. were appointed to transmit an account of our proceedings to our friends in the camps.

Macon Co. NC Oct. 9th 1862

The Committee on Family History failed to report. Subject recommitted.

Committee on Photographs reported as follows;

“The undersigned members of a Committee to whom was referred the duty of making inquiry as to the cost and means of procuring full sized photographs, report that a member of the Comm. visited two galleries for this purpose. The cost of such likenesses at the time (last February) was Fifty Dollars. We state further that Photographs are produced from Daguerreotypes, and, by accompanying the latter by a description of the person, are made correct and life like.

J. Johnston

D.W. Siler”

On motion the report was received and the Comm. instructed to carry out the spirit of the motion under which the Comm. was raised. In the absence of Dr. Moore, Dr. Lyle was appointed on said Comm.

A motion was made to discharge the Comm. The chair decided the motion out of order. An appeal was taken and the chair was not sustained. The motion then failed.

The Comm. on Obituaries reported as follows—

“The war has become so extensive as that it interferes more or less, with all the interest of every community. It has so far interfered with the duties of the Comm. on Obituaries, that the subscriber must offer, as a f...ll...ting plea for the meagerness of this report, that the Chairman, J.T. Siler, is Captain of a volunteer Company and Albert Siler, the next in order, is Commissary of the 39th N.C.T.

Death has made sad inroads into our family circle and many tears have been shed in memory of those who were dear to us all. The friends of Mrs. (David W.) Catharine Siler, Mrs. (Rufus S.) Bettie Siler and the infant child of J & C.E. Johnston claim the sympathy of us all. Flowers bloom o'er their graves and green in all our memories are the many excellencies of the deceased. The first mentioned died 20th July 1861, the second 11th Febr. 1861 and the third 21st May 1861. This much must suffice for the unfinished work of a former Comm.

It is somewhat singular that the same number of deaths have occurred this year that did last, tho' under very different circumstances. James Weimar, William Theodore and Rufus Swain Siler, have fallen and now sleep in the hush and quiet of the grave. All gallant solders of an injured country, they died at their posts. James W. second son on John & P. C. Siler, died on the 8th day of April 1862, in the hospital at Petersburg Va. William T., oldest and only surviving son of John & P.C. Siler, died 24th July 1862, at Richmond, attended by the skill & kindness of our kinsman Dr. B.W. Moore. These two were members of Co. K 1st NC Cavalry and the testimony of their Captain to their fidelity, cheerfulness, manliness and upright conduct, is of record. Green be the sod o'er graves and long may their many virtues be cherished and simulated.

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Of Rufus's death, we have much more information, as we has sick at the residence of a kind friend, was attended by his brother David W. and wife and had the kindly ministrations of a man of God. Indeed he had been better prepared for the solemn event, by having been detailed to wait on the sick of his company, many of whom had died. We learn that previous to his death he declared his willingness to die and, with a smile on his countenance, he gasped 'glory, halleluiah' and thus passed away. He was 3rd Lt. Of Co. I 39th N.C.T. and died 2nd day of Septr. 1862.

Affliction has fallen heavily on every family of the connection, as we lament the wounding and capture of one of our friends; the wounding of two in the Richmond battles; the suffering and exposure of all in the army; the diseases contracted by some and the mental anguish the war has caused us all. But we thank God that it has pleased Him, to deal with us as kindly as he has.

Respectfully, L.F. Siler."

Franklin, Macon Co. NC
Octr. 8th, 1863

The Comm. on Obituaries made the following report;

The repeated absence of the other members of your Committee forces on the undersigned the necessity of discharging the sad and melancholy duties of the occasion.

Death has not only invaded the usual circles of our connection and robbed us of the young. But at this meeting we all lament the absence of one of the elder members of the family—one who was always foremost in the pleasures of these meetings and, who is perhaps more missed than any other would be. William Siler was born near old Pendleton, SC Septr. 6th 1790. Was married to Miss Althia Swain Nov. 25th 1823 and died May 5th 1863, aged 72 years 7 mos and 29 days. Our venerated uncle joined the Methodist Church Febr. 17th 1831 and was always esteemed by preachers and people an acceptable and estimable member. Honesty of purpose, industry worthy of all, emulation, a desire to see his family comfortable and happy, a quiet resignation to the will of God and an humble trust in the merit of Jesus Christ, with a cheerful, almost a playful, disposition towards all classes of his acquaintances;--were the striking characteristics of William Siler. May his virtues be imitated by all!---Your Committee would respectfully suggest that a special committee be appointed, charged with the important duty of preparing a biographical sketch of our dec'd uncle, to be spread on the journals.

Our connection has again made sacrifices for the cause of Southern independence. Frank Wells, Richard L. Simmons, C.L. Robinson and Jesse W. Siler have all paid the lavish forfeit of their lives and now sleep in soldiers' graves. Lt. Frank Wells of 29th N.C.T. though not permitted to fall in the thickest of the battle, nevertheless fell a martyr to his country's cause. He died at Chattanooga Ten in Feb. 1863.

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R.L. Simmons was taken prisoner in Middle Tennessee and so far recovered from typhoid fever while a prisoner of war, as to be paroled and while on his way home, contracted smallpox and died among strangers.

Charles Lane Robinson was as noble a specimen of honesty, fidelity, kindness and bravery, as ever fell by Yankee bullets.

As 1st Lt. Co. H. 16th N.C.T., he was beloved by the entire company and we have heard that eyes unused to weep, poured forth tears lavishly, when their gallant young commander, in the thickest of the fight at Chancellorsville and in the forefront of his command, just as the tide of victory was turned in favor of Southern arms, was shot through the head and fell to rise no more. He was born 12th Apr. 1840 and was killed May 3rd 1863.

Jesse Weimar Siler was born June 29th 1838 and was killed in battle Nov. 7th 1862. He was 3rd Lt. Co K. 1st N.C. Cav and fell at his post. To another than a brother's pen is left the duty of writing his obituary.

Your committee would fain pay a higher tribute to our noble dead. Their reputation is the common property of our connection and while we lament their loss, we may be allowed to rejoice that they have left us the priceless legacy of a good name.

Committee on Photographs made no written report and the subject was recommitted.

On motion of J.L. Robinson an extract from a pamphlet called "Hampton's Cavalry" which was read to the meeting, was ordered to be appended to the report of the Obituary Comm. (In explanation of the foregoing, the Secretary begs leave to say, that the "extract" referred to the conduct of Jesse W. Siler, while a member of Hampton's Cavalry, who was spoken of in the highest terms. But before writing out in the journal the proceedings of this meeting, the pamphlet got mislaid and hence the order has not been complied with.)

***Cartoogechaye, Macon Co. N.C.
Octr. 13th 1864***

The Obituary Committee beg leave to report, that, amid the sorrows that have caused every household in the land to mourn, our connection has not escaped. One year ago to day Horace Whipple Nolen departed this life, at his home in Franklin. Born Sep. 26, 1826, in Massachussetts, he, in his early manhood, came South in pursuit of pleasure and to prosecute business plans. Accidentally coming this county, he located at Wm. Siler's, established a shoe shop and conducted a small business in an energetic and liberal manner. Removing to Franklin, after his marriage to M. Caroline Siler, he enlarged his business and in the various means of investment, was making money and enshrined himself in the estimation of the people, so that at his death, he was universally lamented.

Comm. on Photographs made no report.

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John Siler being unable to attend was represented by his proxy. The message he sent to the meeting was, "That in view of the hard times and of the probability of holding the next meeting at

my house, I think it is expedient and proper, that the meetings either be discontinued or assemble at the houses of the younger members of the family." J.R. Siler moved that a message of disapproval be returned. Carried.

On motion the next Family gathering will be held at John Siler's on 2nd Thursday in Oct. 1865.

***Cartoogechaye, Macon Co. N.C.
Octbr. 12th 1865***

J.R. Siler then offered the following Preamble and Resolutions, which were unanimously adopted;--

Whereas in Oct. 1861, while the great conflict between the North and the South, was shaking the whole fabric of our government, our family meeting defined their position by a resolution unanimously passed, by taking sides with the South.

And whereas, it is but justice to ourselves and our posterity that the records of our family meetings should show to posterity, what position we occupy under the changed circumstances that now surround us.

And whereas, the four years of bloody war, in which both parties lost thousands of men and millions of treasure, evinced to the world, that, notwithstanding the gallant South was forced to submit to the overpowering North, the chivalry & gallantry of the South and energy and indomitable persistence of the North, had made the United States the greatest country in the world;--

Therefore Resolved, That, trusting to the faithful historian to do both parties justice, we bow to circumstances as they are; and as the government offers us terms on which we claim their protection, it is our duty to bear true allegiance to the constitution, submit to the requirements of the authorities, keep down all exciting political discussions and endeavor to make good & quiet citizens of the U. States.

Resolved, That, although we have lost so many noble friends—our country is filled with widows and orphans and disabled soldiers—our servants are liberated—our currency worthless and many other things look gloomy & unpromising; yet we will not despair, but go to work, like the faithful and, to repair the desolations already made and trust in Providence that good will yet result from it, and that we will be a great and happy people.

A motion was made that hereafter all our meetings be held at John Siler's. Albert Siler advocated it strenuously. But John Siler arose, and having disposed of the affirmative arguments in a style at once convincing and overpowering, appealed to the sympathy of the friends in most piteous strains, for said he "they eat too much." The motion was then withdrawn.

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Franklin N.C. Oct. 26th 1866

The Committee on Photographs were allowed further time. On motion the Comm. were authorized to procure 50 photographs of the four heads of the connection, with their wives, if the cash be not excessive, and the Connection will foot the bill.

J.R. Siler moved that these Family Meetings be discontinued. Motion withdrawn.

Inasmuch as some of our female friends are getting on the further side of their “teens”, it was moved that a Comm. on old maids be appointed. Whereupon Hattie Gash, Virginia Siler and Mary Siler were appointed.

Cartoogechaye, Oct. 3rd 1867

Since our last annual meeting, Willie Sloan, infant son of Dr. B.W. & Roxa E. Moore, has passed from earth's toils and tumults to the peaceful enjoyment and repose of heaven. And though called away at the early age of eleven months & 10 days—having died the 28th of July—he had lived long enough to arrest the attention and secure the affections of all who knew him, by his lively, playful manners, affection, gentleness & sweetness of disposition. Who that has fathomed the depth and intelligence of expression of those clear, searching blue eyes—in one so young—can forget them?

The Comm. on Photographs made no report. A motion was adopted that the committee on Photographs be instructed to correspond with and procure an artist to come to this country and take the four heads of families and their wives in a group.

**Cartoogechaye, Macon Co. N.C.
Oct. 1st 1868**

J. Johnston, from the Comm. on Photographs reported that arrangements were in progress for procuring photographs of the older members of the family and on motion further time was allowed the committee.

On motion of James H. Bryson, each branch of the family is required to contribute \$7.00 to be placed in the hands of the Comm. on photographs.

Franklin N.C. Oct. 7th 1869

Comm. on Photographs reported that they had procured photographs, which after being inspected by the friends, were disapproved and ordered to be returned to the artist.

The following Committees were appointed;

<u>Family History</u>	<u>Memoirs</u>	<u>Photographs</u>
<i>T.R. Siler</i>	<i>D.W. Siler</i>	<i>J. Johnston</i>
<i>Jacob Siler</i>	<i>J.H. Bryson</i>	<i>D. Moore</i>
<i>John Siler</i>	<i>Albert Siler</i>	<i>D.W. Siler</i>

**Franklin, N.C.
Oct. 6th 1870**

The committee on obituaries reported as follows:

Twelve months ago your Committee were called upon to record the death of our much loved relative Mary Q. Siler, and now it is our sad and painful duty to chronical the death of the husband Rev. Leonidas F. Siler who was born April 8 1830 & died of congestion of the liver and lungs Sept. 1st 1870.

The following from the Qr. Conference of the Franklin circuit M.E.C.S. explains itself.

“Whereas a wise and inscrutable dispensation of Divine providence our beloved brother Rev. L. F. Siler, a member of this Quarterly Conference has been removed from us by death which occurred Sept. 2 1870, and whereas this our Conf. while bowing submissively to the will of God, cannot refrain from expressing their heart-felt sorrow at this loss.

Resolved,

That in the scholarship ,calm[?] exemplary deportment, purity & bounteous liberality of brother Leonidas F. Siler this conference has had an example worthy of our warmest admiration & highest effort to imitate and in his death we have sustained an irreparable loss.

2nd That the secretary furnish the aged parents, and surviving children and widow of the deceased brother with a copy of this preamble and these resolutions of this Conference, and that a blank page in the same be dedicated to his memory.

A true copy

C.D. Smith Secty.

Cartoogechaye, Oct. 7th, 1875

William Sloan died March 3rd 1875, in the 42nd year of his age. He was a native of Pendleton S.C. He was a man of a nice sense of honor as well as correct tastes. He was universally respected by all who knew him, but none knew his real worth but those that were intimately acquainted with him.

He was quiet and unassuming in his manners—gentle and affectionate in his disposition. He was retiring in his nature—had an humble opinion of himself—his preference if he had have expressed it—would be to have as little said about him as possible. He died trusting alone in the merits of Jesus Christ. Calm & peaceful to the last. When his soul was leaving the body, one felt like exclaiming “How blessed the righteous when he dies.”

J.L. Robinson then offered the following resolution, which was adopted.

Resolved, that the Secretary be requested to furnish so much of this report on obituaries...to Mrs. Sloan so much of it as refers to her husband.

And that he be requested to express the sincere sympathy & condolence of our family connection in their own affliction.

T.R. Gray Sect.