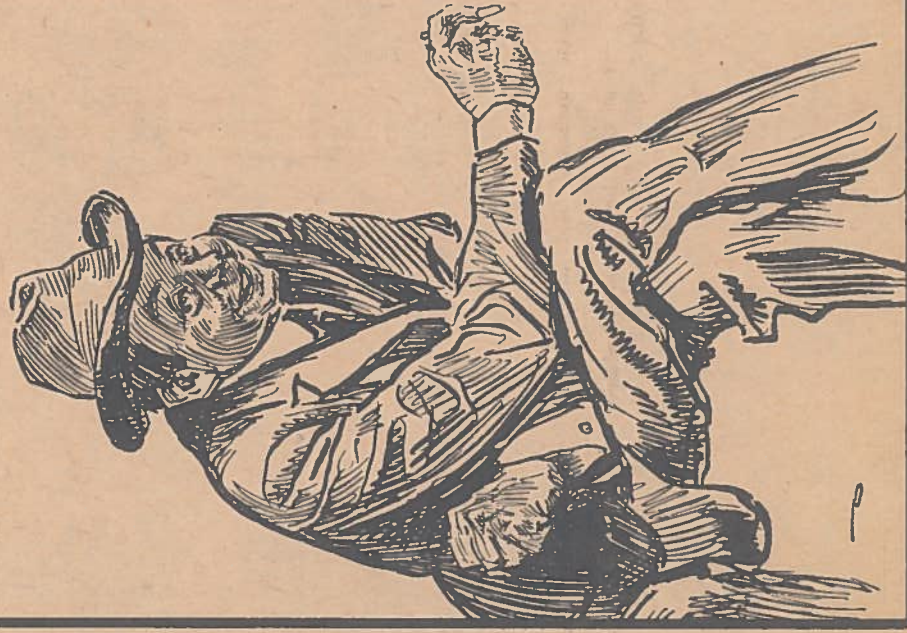


Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian

8-19-81



"A MUCH MARRIED MAN"

(Not For Genealogists-Mostly for Fun)

"I'm a very much married man. In fact I'm the most married man you ever saw. I'll tell you all about it. Not long ago I fell in love with a charming widow who lived in her own house with a grown up daughter. Well I married the widow. As soon as I married the widow her daughter became my step daughter. Well, shortly after our marriage I extended an invitation to my father who was a widower, to come down and spend the holiday with us. The old gentleman came down and being in the same house with my wife and step daughter, he fell in love with my step daughter and married her. Now that's where the trouble first commences. For as soon as my father married my step daughter the family seems to get big. For then my wife became my father's mother-in-law, my father my step son and my step daughter my own mother-in-law.

"Oh Dear! that's not all. No there's more. A little while after that my wife had a little boy. That little boy being my son of course, was my father's grandson. But because my father married my step daughter who was the boy's half sister he became his half brother. So my father's grandfather to his own brother and my step daughter is grandmother to her half brother.

"Oh, that's not all. No, there's more. A little while after that my father's wife had a little girl. That little girl being my father's daughter of course, she was my sister. But because she was a daughter of my step daughter she became my granddaughter. So I'm grandfather to my own sister and my wife is grandmother to her own sister-in-law.

"Oh Dear, oh me, that's not all. No there's more. The case stands as this: I'm grandfather to my own sister, my wife is grandmother to her own sister-in-law, my father grandfather to his brother-in-law, my step daughter grandmother to her half brother, my wife is mother-in-law to her own father-in-law and my father is my step son. I'm grandfather to my sister. In fact I am my own grandfather. Oh I'm much married.

Well, by now you should have guessed that "A much married man" is just a fictitious story. The words are from a seventy-five year old talking record done by a humorist. Surely this man's relationship to himself and others in his family is mind boggling.

On a serious note, however, let me try to answer a common question and misunderstanding about the relationship of cousins, once, twice, three times removed, etc. For example: If your father had a brother he would be your uncle. If your uncle had a son he would be your first cousin. If your first cousin had a son he would be your first cousin once-removed. If he in turn had a son he would be your first cousin twice removed and if he had a son that would be your first cousin three times removed.

Now let's back up. If you had a son he would be a first cousin once-removed to your first cousin and a second cousin to your cousin's son, your first cousin once-removed. Your son and your first cousin three-times removed would be second cousins once-removed. If you had a grandson he would be a third cousin to your first cousin three times removed or in other words your grandson would be a first cousin three times removed from your uncle's son, your first cousin. "Oh Dear, Oh me, that's not all". There are fourth cousins and fourth cousins four-times removed, kissing cousins and so on.

Once you start figuring this all out it's sometimes surprising who and how many you are related to. Yes indeed. "...much married..."