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# ◆ The Summitt Family Quarterly ◆

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## From The Editor

I am really happy to be here this issue. As those of you who have been with us since the beginning know, this is the first issue of our 7th year of publication. In April of 1995 we published our first issue and it is fitting, after these past years, that this issue should discuss the first National Reunion of the Summit(t) family. Bob Shuping and his committee continue to plan what will be the first time that descendents of Francis Summitt (Johan Franz Sammet) from all over this nation will gather together in one place to celebrate our ancestors. Turn to the bottom of Page 2 and Page 15 for more information on the planning for the reunion and for information on how you can get registered so you don't miss this historic event. Bob provided us with pictures of Mt. Ruhama Baptist Church and you can look at some of those pictures on Page 9. You can look at even more pictures on the site that Bob set up for the pictures located at <http://albums.photopoint.com/j/AlbumIndex?u=1517011&a=12025822&pw=Summit>.

Glen Summitt provided me with a little history concerning the church and its connection with the Summit(t) family.

"Mount Ruhama Baptist Church was formed from

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## Serena Bell Summitt and Her Family by Wanda Johnson

In the 1880's two families came to Indiana and settled in the rolling hills of southern Indiana, not too far from the Ohio River. In this article, Jennings, Ripley, Jefferson, and Decatur counties of Indiana are all mentioned, and are all adjoining counties. Why did these two families move to Indiana? We will never know but the pioneer spirit that brought our ancestors to this country also moved one of these families from Pennsylvania to Virginia, to Kentucky and finally Indiana, and brought the other family from Pennsylvania through Ohio and on to Indiana.

One of these families was the Summitt family. William Harrison Summitt moved from Kentucky in the early 1850's to Ripley County, Indiana. There he married Isabelle Ann Morris on 24 December 1853. Isabelle was born in Ohio. Her parents were born in Virginia. This William Harrison Summitt was mentioned in an article in the Summitt Family Quarterly of October 2000, and was the first in a line of William Harrison Summitts. His and Isabelle's children were: James Layton, b. 1854; Ann M, b. 1855; William Harrison Jr., b. 1856; Jacob, b. 1857; Elijah, b. Mar 1859 and Serena Bell, b. January 17, 1866. It is this last child of theirs, **Serena Bell**, that is the subject of this article.

During these same years, William Gearries moved into Indiana and married Melissa Jane Woodfield. Family tradition has it that William skated on frozen rivers to get to Indiana from Pennsylvania. Census records in 1880 from Jefferson County indicate William, age 58, was born in Pennsylvania and both his parents were born in PA. Melissa Jane, age 45, was born in Indiana. Their children were listed as follows:

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