S. A Thompson, Mayor of Harlingen, and His Daughter Vera

As related by Norman Rozef

1918-22  S.A. Thompson was Mayor 4/2/18 to 4/4/22 and again 4/2/24 to 4/6/26. He was also City Commissioner 1916-21. In 1915 he served on the committee of fifteen to draw up a new city charter. He was the owner of the Planters State Bank 1919 until 1923. He joined with James W. Rhone and John Myrick to purchase the first parsonage for the Christian Church of which he was a charter member. Rhone's children were Walter and Marvel.

In October 2010 James A. Munsey of the Munsey Ranch, Fredericksburg, TX 78624 inquired by email about an uncle of his who had married Vera Thompson. He had uncovered a newspaper article on the marriage that read:

“Mr. and Mrs. Fred E. Munsey whose marriage in Houston, Texas was a surprise to many of their friends are registered at the Nueces and are visiting friends and relatives in the city. Mrs. Munsey was formally Miss Vera Thompson, daughter of J.S.A. Thompson of Harlingen, Texas and president of the Planters State Bank and Mayor of Harlingen. The bride is well known in the social circles of the lower Rio Grande Valley.

The young couple will be at home to their friends after June 15 where Mr. Muncey has a responsible position with the Planters Bank.”

James Munsey related the tragic story that the groom died of leukemia shortly after their marriage. This was on November 8, 1926. Fred had been born December 12, 1896 so was just short of his 30th birthday at the time of his death. The funeral of Frederick Edward Munsey took place at 3 PM the following day at the Christian Church. Fred was buried in the Harlingen Cemetery. Vera and Frederick had no issue from the union.

James Munsey recalled that his father visited Vera in Comfort, Texas while depositing James' younger brother at Schreiner in Kerrville. She had entered a second marriage to a Mr. Jones in Harlingen.

The 1910 US Census tells us something of the Munsey family residing in San Patricio, Texas:
Mark E. Munsey, age 43, Texas born, occupation section foreman for a railroad company
Maggie J., wife, 49 (?), Texas born
Fred E., son, 13, Texas born
Arthur, son, 10, Texas born
Claude A., 7, Texas born
Ernest L., 6, Texas born

The 1920 US Census of Harlingen provides this information:
Smith A. Thompson, age 48, born in Ohio, occupation bank president
Lora, wife, age 48, born in Illinois
Vera M., daughter, 21, born around 1899 (actually July 27, 1898) in Illinois
Walter C., son, 16, born in Illinois
Marvel L., daughter, 10, born in Illinois

Ten years later in the 1930 US Census of Harlingen is found at 306 E. Monroe Avenue:
Vera M. Munsey, 32, cashier Railroad Express Agency
Cecil W. Duncan, brother-in-law, 29, construction manager irrigation company
Marvel L. Duncan, sister, 21 (born March 10, 1909, died April 1987 in Kerrville)

By 1930 S.A. Thompson had left Harlingen to take up stock raising in Bandera County, Texas. He is living with his second and younger wife, Millie. On 11/26/21 Tyre H. Brown joined the Planters State Bank as cashier. By December 1921 the bank had moved its location into the old Harlingen State Bank building. The bank reorganized as the Valley State Bank on 4/10/24, and Mr. Brown was made active vice-president.

Vera Mae Thompson Munsey is to remarry Robert N. Jones, who has a son Robert Jr. from a previous marriage. He was divorced. R N Jones was, in 1930, 34 years old, had a son, Robert Jr., five years old and was living on 305 E. Monroe Avenue with his 68 year old widowed mother, Mary M. Jones. Robert was a salesman at The Refrigerator Rodeo at the Chain Battery System, 117-119 South 1st Street. In the 1931-32 Wilmot Harlingen Telephone Directory he listed his occupation as farmer. He would go on to start his own insurance agency and will later become co-owner in 1933 of the Embee Building, a major five story structure housing professionals. It is likely that he married Vera in 1934, for they both appear together in the 1935 edition of the directory. Their residence is 221 E. Monroe. This year Robert is also listed as agent for the Farm and Home Savings and Loan Association. Ensconsed in the Embee Building in 1939, Jones is dealing with both insurance and real estate. By 1940, the Westlake, Louisiana born Robert Newton (son of Charles S. Jones and Minerva Calvert Jones), Vera, and Bobby Jr. will be living at 1102 E. Polk Avenue. He notes his occupation to be accountant and manager. For many years he will be an insurance agent for a major national insurance company. His son will succeed him in owning and managing the agency. At one point Jones went into partnership with Ron Spiers and a man named Gardere. They opened a restaurant named Scampi on South Padre Island. The senior Jones is to die July 12, 1973 in Kerrville. Vera will also die in Kerrville, November 30, 1979.