

# Alice Loraine McElroy Boggess

Compiled by D. A. Sharpe

Alice Loraine McElroy was born January 4, 1914 in [Ottumwa, Wapello County, Iowa](#), a city that hovered around a population of +-20,000 over the years. It was a town whose beginning was in the mid 1800s, and the coal mining industry was of significant influence for many of those years. That date of January 4, 1914, was the very same day as was Jane Wyman, famous movie star and first wife of Ronald Reagan, the man who was later to serve two terms as President of the United States.



Source: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0943837/>

1914 was the year that Edgar Rice Burroughs published his classic book, "Tarzan of the Apes." The Panama Canal opened on August 15. About a quarter billion tons of earth were moved to create it for \$366,650,000. On June 28, the event that was to precipitate World War I, the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria, occurred at Sarajevo, Serbia. A resolution was passed by Congress on May 7 to establish Mother's Day to be celebrated on the second Sunday in May annually.

Source: Gorton Carruth, "Encyclopedia of American Facts & Dates," Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, first edition 1817, eighth edition 1987, pages 428-432.

Alice was a talented and beautiful young lady. Her artistic capabilities followed her throughout most of her life. She painted many, many pieces in various media, and taught children the skills of art. Even today, our Sharpe home is blessed with numerous Alice McElroy Boggess paintings hanging on our walls.



Her college education freshman year was at [Stephens College](#) in Columbia, Missouri. The next year she traveled the country, mainly sightseeing in the western half. The following year, she enrolled as an art major at [Louisiana State University](#) in Baton Rouge. This was the time in her life when she met that dashing handsome young man from [Macon, Mississippi](#), [Thomas Shelton \(T. S.\) Boggess, Jr.](#), who was a graduate student at [Louisiana State University Medical School in New Orleans](#). The following year, they married, despite the nation being in the depths of economic recession. Their marriage ceremony was conducted September 4, 1935, at her family's home church, [the First Presbyterian Church, Ottumwa, Iowa](#).

The wonderment and passion of their love enabled them to overcome those economic era obstacles, and they resided several years in New Orleans as T. S. achieved his master's degree and almost completed his doctoral studies.

They moved to Griffin, Georgia before T. S. completed his PhD degree, as the economy pressed the need to take a job, which turned out to be at the [Georgia Experiment Station](#), a research arm of the [University of Georgia](#). They lived there and later in Tifton, where their two children respectively were born. While still young children, the family returned to Griffin.





In 1947, at the beckoning of T.S.'s father, the family moved to the Boggess family farm in [Noxubee County, Mississippi](#), and took up agricultural pursuits. This included dairy farming and the raising of chickens.

Operating a farm was not the vision T. S. had for his profession. Later, a feed store business was operated by the family before T. S. took to the road as a sales representative for clay pipe across the South. They had sold their part of the farm and moved into Macon (Noxubee County) for "city" living. Macon has been pretty level in population over the years at about 2,000. In 2014, its population was about 2,700. Alice was responsible for the children and family home for weeks at a time, which was a challenge to which she rose and accomplished with style and success. The family were active in the [First Baptist Church of Macon](#).

Alice, overcame the stigma in that Southern town of her originating life as a Yankee! Her winsome charm and gracious manner of living and relating to people won acceptance into the hearts of many in their community. She raised her daughter and son, who became well known among the people. Mostly, that was good. She traced her ancestry to an American Revolutionary soldier, Amos Heald, to qualify for the Daughters of the American Revolution, Dancing Rabbit Chapter of Noxubee County. Her daughter, Suzanne subsequently qualified through Amos Heald for her DAR membership as well! Suzanne's membership was in Dallas, TX in April 1988.

The Boggess family returned to Georgia in 1958, where T. S. resumed work at the Georgia Experiment Station. Suzanne had gone to college at [Mississippi Southern University](#), but it was Tommy's senior year in high school. It was a difficult time for him, as he was a star football player at Macon. He made the transition and played instead for the high school in Griffin, showing enough attractiveness to meet the young lady whom later he married, Lindley Jones Cheatham. Alice took up the position of Director of the Kindergarten School of the First Baptist Church. Alice served the school from 1959 to 1969. She nurtured her family by being a leader again in the Griffin community. She labored by the side of her husband to support him in his pursuits, both professionally and in community service.

They returned to the family farm in Noxubee County, Mississippi in 1974. They had inherited it from T. S.'s father, who died in 1964. Again, she immersed herself into the society of Macon. They were members of the First Baptist Church, except for a brief couple of years at the [First Presbyterian Church](#). Her artistic green thumb enhanced the beauty of their yard at home, both in Noxubee County and in Georgia. She always made a home of beauty, laden with antiques and representations of her artwork.

Here is one of pen & ink drawings from Grand Isle, Louisiana, one of the Gulf of Mexico coastal island, done back in the 1930's when they lived in New Orleans.



Her concluding days occurred when she was taken to Birmingham, Alabama for heart surgery. The surgery was successful in what it attempted to do, but she died from infection complications. She died November 24, 1994 at age 80. She was interred among other Boggess family members in the [Odd Fellows Cemetery, Macon, Noxubee County, Mississippi.](#)

*Alice's daughter, my lovely bride, Suzanne, and I hope you'll enjoy Alice's story.*

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