**Grandfathers in Arms**  
*Brenda Finnegan*

A Kentucky lawyer, a classmate of General Ben Butler, a colonel in the Confederate Army, he wrote his old friend for safe passage for his family to relocate to New Orleans. Once the War Between the States was over, he found his family preferred their new home, and my grandmother was born there.

A runaway from Mobile at age sixteen, he found himself living on a farm in Mississippi, lied about his age, enlisted in the Confederacy, fought at Shiloh, came home, married the farmer’s granddaughter in Perry County, and my grandfather was born there.

Trying to escape the unrest in Ireland, he worked his way across the sea through Mobile to Mississippi, ended up in a new conflict, left the farm in Jasper County to enlist in the war, survived, returned home to his Irish wife, and my husband’s grandfather was born there.

Colonel Benjamin Selby, Private A. G. Brown and Private John O’Flynn, all Confederate soldiers, did not know one another, but their genetic paths crossed in Mississippi many years later in the marriage of their great-great grandchildren who were both born here.