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(North Alabama)

# Valley Leaves

TENNESSEE VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.



Volume 49, Issues 1-2

Fall 2014

# Valley Leaves

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Books may be ordered by writing to TVGS at the address below or by going to [www.tvgs.org](http://www.tvgs.org) and clicking on publications and then click on “Order Form”.

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TVGS meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Huntsville/Madison County Public Library (915 Monroe St.) unless announced otherwise on the fourth Thursday of January, April, July, and October.

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**Thursday, Jan. 22, 2015**

**7 p.m.**

**Huntsville Public Library Auditorium**

Dr. John Kvach (UAH) will be speaking on “A Professional Historian Using Genealogical Tools and Practices... Gasp!: Conducting Research on the 19<sup>th</sup> Century South.”

**TVGS SPRING SEMINAR**

**Saturday, April 18, 2015**

**Huntsville Public Library Auditorium**

**9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Barbara Vines Little, CG, is a former president of the National Genealogical Society and has been the editor of the *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy* since 1996. She is an instructor and coordinator at Samford Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research and a lecturer on women, legal research, land platting, and Virginia research.

**Thursday, April 23, 2015**

**7 p.m.**

**Huntsville Public Library Auditorium**

Robert Davis, Wallace State Community College, presents “Researching in the War of 1812.”

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Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society  
Spring Seminar  
Barbara Vines Little, CG  
Saturday, April 18, 2015

The 2015 TVGS Spring Seminar hosted at the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, Huntsville, Alabama, is pleased to welcome Barbara Vines Little as the 2015 guest lecturer.

Barbara Vines Little, CG, is a former president of the National Genealogical Society and has been the editor of the *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy* for the Virginia Genealogical Society since 1996. She is a Fellow of the National Genealogical Society and the Virginia Genealogical Society. Barbara served as an instructor and coordinator at Samford's Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research.

Barbara is one of the foremost genealogical lecturers in the country on women, legal research, land platting, and Virginia genealogical research.

She will present the following lectures at the TVGS seminar on April 18, 2015:

**Researching Virginia's Records**  
**Virginia's Tax Records: A Goldmine of Information**  
**Beyond the Courthouse: Virginia's Manuscript Collections**  
**Identifying Women: The Ultimate Brick Wall**

Registration for this event will open on Jan. 1, 2015. Due to room size, please register early to guarantee your enrollment.

Questions about this event can be sent to [tvghsv@gmail.com](mailto:tvghsv@gmail.com).

## MEMORIALS TO OUR FALLEN LEAVES

John Monroe DeMent III passed away Saturday, Aug. 23, at Crestwood Hospital. John was a devoted husband, loving father, and grandfather. John was born on May 26, 1938, in Athens, Alabama. He graduated from West Limestone High School in 1956. He met his future wife, Martha Tillery, while working for Huntsville Utilities and they were married Dec. 23, 1959. John was inducted into the U.S. Army in 1961 and was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, with the 1st Armored Division. Serving briefly in Germany, he was discharged in December 1963. He and Martha then lived in Huntsville while he continued to work at Huntsville Utilities. John attended the University of Alabama in Huntsville at night, graduating with a BSBA degree in business management. Beginning as a draftsman for Huntsville Utilities, he worked his way to General Manager of the Natural Gas Department, and retired with 43 years of service.



John was a longtime member and Deacon at Southside Baptist Church. He was a Master Gardener and volunteered at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. John was also a member of the Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society, serving on the board and as treasurer for several years.

John is survived by his wife of 54 years, Martha Tillery DeMent; his daughter Tami DeMent Harbaugh; son-in-law Joey Harbaugh, and their three children, Daniel, Andrew, and Sarah Harbaugh; a sister and brother along with five nieces and nephews.

Services were held Tuesday, Aug. 26 at 2 p.m. Burial was in Maple Hill Cemetery.

*The Officers and Board Members of the Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society express our deepest heart-felt sympathy to the family and friends of John Dement. The loss of our TVGS members and their family members are undoubtedly great; however, the contributions they made to all who they encountered will forever be a tribute to their lives.*

Do you have a **Family Reunion** to publicize? TVGS will list members' reunion details on our web site free of charge. Listings may be edited for length and content. Email your plain-text announcements to [kat@hiwaay.net](mailto:kat@hiwaay.net), or go to <http://www.tvgs.org>. Like many families, you and your relatives may have made plans to get together this summer. What a great opportunity for sharing stories and family history.

# Jackson County

## Early History of Jackson County, Alabama

The following contains excerpts from an 1888 book entitled *Northern Alabama Historical and Biographical*, by Smith & De Land

Transcribed by Coy Michael

### Part 2

**James Alfred Kyle** was Register in Chancery, Scottsboro, was a son of Nelson Kyle and was born Feb. 28, 1862 in Bellefonte. Nelson Kyle was a son of John Kyle and a native of Alabama. He was a farmer and later a merchant at Bellefonte and has been Sheriff, Clerk of the Probate Court, County Treasurer, Probate Judge from 1874 to 1880 and was Register in Chancery at the time of his death, Sept. 19, 1886.

He was married first to the widow of Henry Walker of Bellefonte, daughter of Nelson Robinson. They were parents of three sons and one daughter, viz: William, James A, the subject of this sketch, Sallie B, wife of W.B. Hunt, and Charles E.

James A. Kyle was educated at the Agricultural and Mechanical School at Auburn. He assisted in the Probate Judge's office in Jackson County for some time prior to 1880, clerked in stores until 1883 and became a partner with his father, and was a merchant for 10 years. After his marriage, he went to Texas and remained there for about a year. He returned to Jackson County and became a Register in Chancery.

He was married to Miss Vula Sanders on March 24, 1885. She was the daughter of

C.R. Sanders, a minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Two children were Mary Du and Vula Sidney. Mr. Kyle was a member of the Knights of Honor.

**John H. Norwood** was born in Bellefonte Nov. 23, 1828 and was Probate Judge of Jackson County. He was a son of Henry Norwood and Aletha (Caperton) Norwood, natives of South Carolina and Virginia, respectively. The senior Mr. Norwood held the rank of Lieutenant in the War of 1812. He came to Jackson County in 1820 and became an extensive planter and slave owner. He was a Captain in the Creek War and a Colonel in the Seminole War. He later served in both branches of the State Legislature.

The younger Mr. Norwood was reared on a farm and received such education as could be obtained in the schools of this country and spent three years in Irving College. He read law and was admitted to the bar in 1852. After he practiced law for three years he was appointed Probate Judge. After 12 months he was then elected to the office and held it until March 1861 when he resigned and entered the Confederate Army as a First Lieutenant in Captain Bradford's Company, Second Alabama Regiment.

During that summer he resigned his position and returned home to raise five companies and with them joined the Forty-third Tennessee Regiment of which he was elected Lieutenant-colonel. He was captured at Fort Donelson and imprisoned at Fort Warren and in July of that year was exchanged at Richmond, Virginia. He re-entered the war effort and fought at

Vicksburg, Ringgold, Resaca and all the fights in the Atlanta Campaign. By direction of the War Department he went to Alabama and recruited a brigade which he commanded to the close of the war.

After the war he returned home and resumed the practice of law and in 1865 was elected to the State Senate. In 1886 he was elected Probate Judge.

Judge Norwood was married Dec. 25, 1856 to Miss Margaret Netherland, daughter of John Netherland who came to Alabama in 1820. The family attended the Presbyterian Church. The Judge belonged to the Masonic Order.

**Jesse Edward Brown**, born May 1, 1845 in Jackson County, was a son of Jeremiah Brown and Mary Ann (Williams) Brown, of Scottsboro.

Jeremiah Brown was one of a family of North Carolinians who gave its name to Brownsboro. He was a planter in Jackson and died there. He was a man of firm convictions and great stability of character. He was married three times. His first wife was a Miss Moore and by her he had two sons and a daughter: Bridges was a soldier who died at the battle of Corinth; John A. and Nancy, who married a Mr. Yates. Mrs. Yates, a fluent speaker and writer, has edited various papers both in this state and Mississippi.

Jeremiah Brown married, second, to Miss Mary Ann Williams, one of the pioneers of this county, who accumulated a goodly estate in land and slaves. As one of six children she was the mother of four:

1. Mary married Co. John Snodgrass.
2. Jesse Edward, the subject of this sketch, was educated at Georgetown, Kentucky. and Lebanon, Tennessee.

He was admitted to the bar in Huntsville August 1869 and began to practice in Scottsboro. He represented Jackson County in the State Legislature in 1872-73 and was one of the founders of the present Constitution of Alabama.

3. Margaret married William H. Payne, druggist.
4. Charles W. was educated at the University of Alabama, became a lawyer and was in the office of the Superintendent of Education.

Jesse E. Brown became a member of the Confederate Army in Frank Gurley's Company, Fourth Alabama Cavalry and served throughout the entire war. He was in the battle near Farmington and was wounded and captured at the second battle of Fort Donelson and imprisoned at Louisville and Baltimore for about two months. He fought at Murfreesboro, Chickamauga and Kennesaw Mountain where he lost a leg and was confined to a hospital for a long time. After returning home he studied law, as previously mentioned.

Mr. Brown was a member of the Episcopal Church and of the Odd Fellows fraternity. His position as one of the most prominent members of the bar in Northeastern Alabama was well known throughout that portion of the state.

**John R. Coffey**, of Fackler, Jackson County, was a son of Rice and Sallie (Bradford) Coffee. He was born at Wartrace, Bedford County, Tennessee March 27, 1814.

Rice Coffee was born in Pennsylvania in 1766. As a young man he removed to North Carolina and became a gunsmith. He married and again removed to Tennessee about 1801 and settled on a farm of a



thousand acres which he bought from General Jackson, and on which his son, John R. Coffee was born. He died in 1853 and his wife in 1840. He was a son of James Coffey of early times who raised a large family. All of his older sons served as soldiers in the Revolutionary War. The Coffey families were Baptists.

John R. Coffee spent his early days on a farm and he attended the common old-field schools. When he was 13 he went to a high school at Shelbyville, Tennessee and remained there 12 months. He then came to Bellefonte without an acquaintance in the county or a dollar in his pocket and became a clerk in a store. At the age of 22, he established a mercantile business of his own in that village and continued it until 1846.

In 1840 he was elected sheriff of Jackson County. At the breaking out of the Mexican War he enlisted in the army in a company commanded by Capt. Richard W. Jones. He afterwards acted as Lieutenant, Lieutenant-colonel and Major-general in the militia. He went to Mobile and organized the First Alabama Regiment and was elected its Colonel and his unit participated in the siege of Vera Cruz.

After the war with Mexico he became a General of the militia. He returned to his farm and devoted his attention to its cultivation until 1853 when he moved to Stevenson and engaged in the mercantile business until the beginning of the Civil War. He then closed his store and returned

to his 4,000-acre farm on the banks of the Tennessee River.

In 1861 he was elected a delegate to the convention which passed the ordinance of secession. He was bitterly opposed to that ordinance, but, being overpowered, he submitted with the best possible grace and thereafter gave moral and substantial support to the Confederacy.

General Coffee was married Jan. 21, 1849 to Miss Mary Ann Cross, daughter of Col. Charles Cross and Eliza (Clark) Cross of Jackson County. They were natives of North Carolina and came to Alabama about 1826. He was a soldier in the Indian Wars and was drowned in the Tennessee River about 1848. General Coffee was the father of six children, of whom four grew to maturity, namely:

1. Eliza, wife of William J. Tally;
2. Sallie R., wife of C.W. Brown, chief clerk in the office of the State Superintendent of Education.
3. John B.
4. Clark Maclin

General Coffey's wife died Sept. 6, 1887. He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church and was a member of the Masonic Order. General Coffey was a man of commanding presence, being over six feet tall and having apparently the vim and vigor of a youth. He was one of the best known men of the state and one of the most influential men in Northeastern Alabama.

## **JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!**

Just print off and mail the application found on the TVGS  
Website at: <http://www.tvgs.org>

**Last Will and Testament of John Gunter Sen.**  
**(of the Cherokee Nation)**

I John Gunter Sen. of the Cherokee Nation and residing in the said nation do make and ordain this my Last Will and Testament

1 I Design that all my just Debts shall be paid as soon as convenient after my Decease

2 It is my will that my son Samuel Gunter have my Mill and Plantation situated & being on and near Brawns Creek being the same which I purchased of James Thompson and also that he have one Negro Woman named Peggy now in his possession I also give to my son Samuel Gunter all the Debts which he may be owing me at the time of my Decease

3 It is my will that my Daughter Martha Henry have the five following Negroes Viz Peter Winney Sucky and her children Viney and Lucy and all the Increase of the said negroes

4 Should my Daughter Martha Die without children it is my wish the said negroes above mentioned be considered as part of my estate and be divided as follows viz on to each of my children Samual Edmond Elizabeth and Catharine and one to my granddaughter Nancy Gunter a daughter of Edmond Gunter

5 Should the above Negroes have any more increase after this time then it is my will that my Grandson George Gunter a son of Samuel Gunter have one and any other increase which they may have to be divided between my Daughters Elizabeth & Catharine

6 It is my will that my Daughter Elizabeth Gunter have the six following Negroes viz

Olivar Neor Isaac Judah Amy and old Lucy and all their increase

7 It is my will that my Daughter Catharine Gunter have the following negroes viz Bill Andrew Calvin Polly and Peggy and all their increase

8 It is my will that my son John Gunter Junior have the six following Negroes viz Tom Bobb Mary Augustis Daniel and China and all their increases

9 It is my will that all warrants which I may have on the Cherokee nation at the time of my Decease shall belong to my son John Gunter Junr

10 As I have sold my crop of cotton of the year 1832 to my son John Gunter Junr for five hundred dollars it is my will that if I should die before he can return from his contemplated voyage to New Orleans then the said John shall not be called upon to make payment for the said cotton provided that he shall on his return supply the family at my present home with three hundred pounds of Coffee and three Barrels of Sugar but if I should live till he can return then this tenth Article to be void and of no effect

11 It is my will that my reservation of a tract of Land lying in Jackson County Alabama and known by the name of Gunters Old place about eight miles from Gunters Landing shall belong to John Gunter Junr

12 It is my will that my Granddaughter Lucy McCoy whom I have raised have the four following Negroes viz Aaron Jacob Cloe and Mary and all their increase

13 It is my will that my wife Catharine Gunter have the seven following Negroes viz Will Sophy Jack Abram Bolivar Rachel and Bonipart and all their increase

14 It is my will that on the Decease of my wife Catharine Gunter five of the last mentioned negroes viz Will Sophy Jack Abram & Bolivar with all their increase shall belong to and become the property of my youngest Daughter Catharine Gunter.

15 It is my will that on the Decease of my wife Catharine Gunter two of the Negroes mentioned article Thirteenth viz Rachel & Conaparte with all their increase shall belong to and become the property of my son Edmond Gunter

16 It is my will that my wife Catharine Gunter have the use of all my house hold and Kitchen funeture during his [sic] life and at his decease that it be devided equally between my three daughters Martha Elizabeth and Catharine and my grand daughter Lucy Micoy provided however that if either of my Daughters or my Drand Daughter should marry before the Decease of my wife then my wife is requested to give to such an one her part of the furniture

17 It is my will that my Stock of Cattle and Hogs be equally Divided between my wife Catharine and my daughters Martha Elizabeth Catharine and my Granddaughter Lucy Micoy

18 It is my will that my wife Catharine Gunter have my house and plantation where I now live with all its appurtenances including the plantation on the Island at his own disposal during his life Provided that she shall not rent sell or in any way put it out of his own cultivation so long as the land belongs to the Cherokee Nation

19 It is my will that at the Decease of my wife Catharine the House and plantation of land mentioned in the last article shall be by the Executors of this my last will and Testament offered for sale to the legatee alone who are mentioned in this will and no one else shall have a right to become a purchaser and the property shall be sold and become the rightful possessions of the individual among my Legatees who will give the highest price for it and at the same time enter into such penal Bond as the Executors shall deem prudent that he or she that said purchaser will not dispose of the said house and plantation of land to anyone except on the my Lineal descendants

20 And it is furthermore my will that no person except one of my own decedents shall ever become the owner of the property mentioned in 18<sup>th</sup> article I do therefore ordain that if any of my heirs shall dispose of it to such an individual the title to said individual shall be and it is hereby declared to be null and void and the property shall in such case return to and be vested in my Legatees to be disposed of as directed in Article 19

21 It is my will that my wife Catharine Gunter have six hundred dollars in ready money My Daughter Martha Henry two hundred and fifty dollars My Daughter Elizabeth Gunter two hundred and fifty dollars My Daughter Catharine Gunter two hundred and fifty Dollars my Grand Daughter Lucy Micoy two hundred and fifty dollars all which sums are to be paid in ready money by my Executors as soon as they shall enter upon the duties of the their office

22 It is my will that all my ready money after the above sums shall have been paid shall be equally divided between my sons Samuel and Edmond



## **Report On Old Bellefonte: An Historical Site In Northern Alabama**

Submitted to the Tennessee Valley Authority Aug. 31, 1974, by Dr. C. Roger Nance, Senior Investigator, and Beverly E. Bastian, Junior Investigator, in accordance with the contract between the Tennessee Valley Authority and the University of Alabama in Birmingham

### OLD BELLEFONTE: REPORT ON ITS HISTORY, ITS CONTEMPORARY ROLE, AND ITS PRESENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUE

#### **Part 1**

#### **Bellefonte in the Beginning and in the 1820s**

The origin of Bellefonte and how it happened to become the county seat of Jackson County, Alabama, were directly related to the circumstances surrounding public and private land in the county in its earliest days. A review of these circumstances will provide a picture of how Bellefonte came to be.

The Treaty of Feb. 27, 1819 with the Cherokee ceded the land that is now the part of Jackson County north of the Tennessee River. The Treaty also provided for the reservation of 640 acres of land in the ceded area, to be had in fee simple, for each of certain specifically named persons. Among them was James Riley, who in this manner came into possession of the land on which Bellefonte would eventually be established. Also under the terms of the Treaty, the ceded area would be protected from intrusion by settlers until Jan. 1, 1820 (Indian Affairs, 1904: 177-80).

On Dec. 13, 1819, an act of the Alabama Legislature created Jackson County out of the Cherokee cession, at the same time fixing a temporary county seat at Sauta Cave (Brannon, 1941). About 1820, people began to settle on the public lands in various places around the country. Among the earliest to

settle in the vicinity of what would be Bellefonte were a Dr. George Washington Higgins and a Mr. Stephen Carter (Blue, 1861: 14).

On Oct. 3, 1820, James Riley bound himself in penal bond for the sum of \$13,000 to George W. Higgins and Stephen Carter. This bond would be void when the following conditions were met: First, Higgins and Carter paid him \$6,500 in specified installments to be completed by the year 1824; and second, he had signed over his 640 acre reservation to them (Carter, S., 1827: 2). On the strength of this bond, presumably, Higgins and Carter founded, surveyed, and laid out the town of Bellefonte, naming it for the nearby spring that would supply the town's water for many years (personal communication, Christine Sumner). The site of the town was chosen for its proximity to the Tennessee River, but care was taken that it was enough removed and elevated to reduce the danger of flood and disease (interview with Daisy Caldwell, 1974).

On Dec. 13, 1821, in the same act that created Decatur County out of part of Jackson County, the Alabama Legislature appointed seven Jackson County men to choose a temporary seat of justice for the county (Brannon, 1941). Very shortly thereafter, on Dec. 15, 1821, the Legislature incorporated the town of Bellefonte inclusive of 60 acres (Acts of Alabama,

1821), and by 1822, Bellefonte had been chosen as the second temporary seat of justice of Jackson County (Kennemer, 1935: 18).

Sometime during the first quarter of 1823, the official survey of the public land in Jackson County was undertaken and plats submitted to the General Land Office, signifying that the lands were ready for sale at public auction (Bell, plat of TIV RVI E., 1823). On Jan. 1, 1823, the Alabama Legislature approved a memorial to be sent to Congress requesting an indefinite postponement of sales of public lands in Jackson and Decatur counties. In the same memorial, the legislature also asked for pre-emption rights for the settlers on public lands in Alabama (American State Papers , 1859, IV: 2), because until the public lands were sold, the persons settled on them were, in effect, "squatters" and subject to removal and loss of their crops and improvements at any time. Congress granted the Alabama Legislature's request to postpone the land sales in Jackson and Decatur counties. It denied pre-emption rights.

Later, sometime between January and May of 1823 and in response to another Alabama memorial, Congress passed an act to allow certain Alabama counties in which the public lands were not yet sold to pre-empt quarter sections of land to establish county seats (American State Papers , IV, 1859: 2-3). Perhaps judging that the time was auspicious, in mid-1823, the Alabama Legislature again delivered a memorial to Congress requesting pre-emption rights for settlers on public lands, referring specifically to the plight of "certain inhabitants of Jackson and Decatur (American State Papers, III, 1834: 641)". Again the request was denied, and, in fact, later the Committee on Public Lands of the House of Representatives would make an

example of the settlers on public lands in Alabama (among others) in making its April 23, 1824 report to the House, disfavoring the renewal or extension of pre-emption rights (American State Papers, III, 1834: 719-21).

Making do with the gains achieved in 1823, the Alabama Legislature addressed itself to getting a permanent county seat established in Jackson County. An act of Dec. 24, 1824, appointed five commissioners for Jackson County and set forth guidelines for the selection of the quarter section of land, the establishment of the county town, and the erection of county buildings. A town square was to be provided and reserved from sale.

Apparently something delayed the implementation of the legislature's instructions, because on Dec. 16, 1826, the legislature again attended to the matter of Jackson County's seat of justice by directing that the commissioners appointed under the Act of Dec. 24, 1824, meet on the fourth Monday of February, 1827, and formally proceed with their appointive responsibilities (Brannon, 1941). Finally, on Dec. 17, 1827, the southwest quarter of section 17, T4S R5E was purchased for the seat of justice, and patent to it was obtained Aug. 25, 1828 (Kennemer, 1935: 18). But some other, unknown, factor impinged on the final decision of the commissioners, and "just after 1828," the permanent courthouse and jail were built at Bellefonte (Kennemer, 1935: 66).

Meanwhile, by early 1824, George W. Higgins and Stephen Carter had finished paying the specified sum to James Riley and had a sound legal claim on his 640 acres. But they did not have title because Riley died before he could sign the land over to them.

Consequently, on July 20, 1827, Higgins and Carter petitioned Jane Riley, as administratrix of the estate of James Riley, for conveyance of the title of the land to them. The judge of the Orphan's Court of Jackson County set the date for the hearing on the third Monday in October, 1827 (Carter, W., 1827). While no records from this hearing exist, it can be assumed that Higgins' and Carter's petition was granted because the earliest deed books for Jackson County (1830-31) show that these men legally sold lots in Bellefonte and tracts in other parts of Riley's reservation.<sup>1</sup> They gave land for the use of the town as a county seat (Kennemer, 1935: 132), meaning, probably, that they gave enough land for the requisite town square and jail, and perhaps some additional lots whose sale would help to finance the public buildings.

From the foregoing, it is easy to reconstruct the situation that brought Bellefonte to the fore. The land on which Higgins and Carter had a claim drew more people and investment of money and effort than most other land in Jackson County because the probability of clear title was much better: First, because it was to be had at an early date, whereas the sale of the public land had been postponed; and second, because even when the public land was sold at auction, settlers were at a terrible disadvantage bidding against speculators, frequently losing what they had invested in the way of improvements on public lands.

So those who could afford to, bought land and/or town lots from Higgins and Carter, and Bellefonte had a head start on most of the other communities in the county. Those

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of deeds relevant to Bellefonte were kindly supplied by Mrs. Christine Paradise Sumner who painstakingly transcribed them from the official deed books in the Jackson County courthouse.

who had settled on the public lands in Jackson County and elsewhere kept their legislature busy sending memorials to Congress asking for pre-emption rights, alternating with requests for postponements of the public land sales (American State Papers, VI, 1860: 10-12, 51-52, 142) . Finally Congress capitulated and granted the pre-emption rights on May 29, 1830. Thereafter the actual settlers of Jackson and other Alabama counties could own their 160 acres at the minimum price. A decade of waiting and uncertainty was over.

But meanwhile, Bellefonte was already owned, settled, and growing, having secured the county seat and having a population of 200 at the time of its incorporation (Sulzby, 1944: 9). It must have been able to take quite an early lead in the commercial, political, and social affairs of the area. There was at least one store by 1828 (Smith and Deland, 1888: 98), a post office after Feb. 14, 1822 (Post Office Records, National Archives, courtesy of Christine Sumner), some kind of temporary courthouse after 1821 (Kennemer, 1935: 18 and Brannon, 1941), a permanent courthouse after 1828 (Kennemer, 1935: 66), and a Presbyterian church by mid-1829 (Marshall, n.d.: 2417). One of the proprietors of the town, George W. Higgins, was also a physician (Blue, 1961: 14, and personal communication, Christine Sumner), so medical services were available in the town from the earliest time. In 1820, a stage line was extended from Knoxville to Huntsville on a road running parallel to the Tennessee River on its north bank (Abernethy, 1965: 100), and while there is no definite evidence that the stage ran through Bellefonte at this early time, it is probable that before the decade was over, Bellefonte was a regular stopping place on the route to Huntsville. Consequently, there was probably an inn or a tavern, possibly even run by Daniel M. Martin, an early

settler of the Bellefonte area (Blue, 1961: 15) and the builder and owner of the still-standing "Stage Coach Inn." The grave of a deceased child of Daniel Martin is marked with a headstone bearing the earliest date now to be found in the Bellefonte cemetery: 1826 (Sumner, 1971). Bellefonte's advantages as a river port must have drawn the money crop of the neighboring farms (cotton) into the town for storage and eventual keelboat transport down the river to market. The demand for the importation of non-locally produced foodstuffs like sugar, coffee, and whiskey and such manufactured items as frontier farmers need probably created an excellent opportunity for commerce.

With the population figure mentioned above, there must have been a number of dwellings in Bellefonte. While the existing deeds for lots in Bellefonte are dated just after the early period being discussed here, it is possible to draw some tentative conclusions about the extent of settlement in Bellefonte by considering how many lots are not accounted for in the surviving deed books. These unaccounted-for lots were probably registered in earlier deed books, no longer extant. The existing deeds for lots in Bellefonte represent a broken series of numbers, the lowest being for lot #2, and the highest being for lot #156. The earliest date is for Dec. 4, 1829, and the latest, Aug. 8, 1848. These deeds deal with exactly 40 of these Bellefonte lots. Assuming that the lots in the town were numbered consecutively and that there were only 156 of them, that still leaves at least 116 lots that probably were sold in the 1820s, during the town's beginning years. A number of adjoining lots may have been purchased as tracts for the purpose of later speculation, but, even so, it is probable that many of the lots in Bellefonte's 60-acre corporate limits were

individually owned, if not settled on before 1830.

### **Bellefonte in the 1830s and 1840s**

In 1833 Bellefonte had a population of 320 persons (Darby and Dwight, 1833: 49). By 1844 the population had grown to 400 (Haskel and Smith, 1944: 57). The physical face of Bellefonte was reflecting this trend also. Deriving a tally from the property descriptions included in many of the old deeds to Bellefonte lots, it is possible to get an idea of the number and kind of structures that were in the town and the scope of the activities that were taking place there in this period. Six stores are mentioned in the deeds, probably dealing in general merchandise, but this is not specified. Two of the stores are described as brick, one as being a frame building, and the other three are not described, merely mentioned. Two blacksmith shops are mentioned, one a frame building formerly used as a "workshop," the other not described. A sadler's shop is mentioned, the jail is mentioned, a wagon shop is mentioned, and there is reference to a tanyard on the outskirts of the town.

A brick store and office combination and the "Bellefonte Academy" are also included in the deeds. Many of these businesses are on lots fronting on the town square. Five residences are mentioned: three frame dwellings, one brick dwelling, and one whose construction material is not specified. The latter is described, however, as having outbuildings - a smokehouse and a kitchen.

Kennemer says that in 1839 a Methodist church, a frame building, was erected (Kennemer, 1935: 132). He also says Bellefonte had two brick stores, five or six frame stores, and two brick dwellings besides the courthouse and jail. He does not



say when this was the case nor does he say from where his information comes, but it is not unlikely that he derived his count from the old deeds, also. This same author credits Bellefonte with having had six merchants, a blacksmith, an apothecary, and a cabinet maker (ibid.). The names of these persons do not coincide with those of the men mentioned in connection with the stores and shops described in the deeds. Smith and Deland (1888) add another two merchants to the list of businesses present in the 1830s and 1840s (p.94, p.98).

Evidently there was quite a business community there at that time. A contemporary gazetteer gives us a concise description of Bellefonte in this period: two churches, one Presbyterian and one Methodist; two academies; 12 stores; 50 dwellings; and 400 inhabitants (Haskel and Smith, 1844: 57).

While none of the sources summarized above mentioned inns or taverns, Bellefonte had at least three in this period. A man who was to figure largely in Bellefonte's later history, Robert T. Scott (the founder of Scottsboro, Alabama), came to Bellefonte from Huntsville in the early 1830s. He either purchased or built an inn called "Belle Tavern" and operated it for a time. Another innkeeper who would later contribute greatly to Bellefonte in a different capacity was Major Robert A. Eaton, who also came to the town in the early 1830s. His inn was called the "Mansion Hotel."<sup>2</sup> Possibly Daniel M. Martin had an inn in the 1830s, too, but the hostelry for which he is known, the so-called "Stage Coach Inn" whose massive, rough-hewn limestone masonry chimney bears his name, was not built until 1845 as the inscription on the chimney itself

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<sup>2</sup> These particulars about Scott and Eaton supplied by Christine Paradise Sumner from her unpublished book.

attests. There was a "Jackson Inn" in Bellefonte, too (personal communication from Christine Sumner), which may well have been Martin's inn, the name of which is not really known. There is certain evidence in the early deeds to Bellefonte lots that Martin owned property on "Jackson Street," one of the named streets of the town, and that property may have been the site of his inn. Also, Martin was a good Jacksonian Democrat, several times an elector for his party, and he may have chosen to honor the popular hero by naming his inn for him.

In the '30s Bellefonte got its first newspapers. *The North Alabama Star* was one early paper, established and published by Major Robert A. Eaton (mentioned just above) as his maiden publishing effort in Alabama (Elliott, 1958: 91). The *Star* lasted only a year and Eaton went on to Tuscaloosa to publish another paper. In 1841 he returned to Bellefonte to found and publish the *Jackson County Democrat* which continued to be published at least up until 1855 (Ellison, 1954: 10). Ellison's guide to early Alabama newspapers also lists Eaton as a co-publisher of the *Bellefonte Courier*, a newspaper known to have been in existence as early as April 16, 1834. This paper merged with the *Jackson County Republican* sometime in 1837. By April 11, 1839, Robert T. Scott was the editor of this publication. Ellison also indicates that Eaton was a co-publisher of the *Jacksonian*, originally called the *Herald* (Blue, 1961: 11) and published in Bellefonte beginning Sept. 29, 1837. Blue says this paper was the forerunner of the *Jackson County Democrat* (ibid.) which is mentioned just above. A new paper, published by Green and Maddin and called the *North Alabama Register*, successfully competed with the *Jackson County Democrat* in the mid-1850s. Eaton, meanwhile, in conjunction with R.C. Gill, a

printer, had begun publication of the *Bellefonte Democrat* in the early '50s (Gist, 1968: 34).

This paper was taken over by publishers Frazier and Jones in the mid-'50s and renamed the *Bellefonte Era*. This was the last of Bellefonte's newspapers, ceasing publication in the early years of the Civil War.

While life in a frontier community like Bellefonte infrequently offered much in the way of the amenities, there were outlets for sociality, and at least one of the finer things in life was available to Bellefonte's citizens. In 1847, Lodge #82 of the Masonic Order was established at Bellefonte and was thereafter an important link in the lives of the men of the town. William A. Liddon, the county surveyor of Jackson County, "... was an accomplished musician and for a long time used this talent for the pleasure of the community about Bellefonte, where he was leader and instructor of local musicians composing the brass band (Owen, T. M., 1921, IV: 1045)".

In the early 1840s, Jackson County was stricken with a series of epidemic diseases which persisted over several seasons. Blue says, "In 1840, 1841, and 1842, severe epidemic diseases prevailed, at first bilious fevers in various forms, followed by Scarlet fever, unusually severe and fatal (Blue, 1861: 6)". Daniel Martin, writing to his daughter in Texas after the Civil War, reflects that "This has been a year sorter like 1840 for sickness ... (Martin, D. M., Jan. 27, 1872)", so apparently the epidemics took their toll in Bellefonte, too.

The Treaty of New Echota, Dec. 2, 1835, between the United States and the Cherokee Indians ceded all the land of the Cherokees east of the Mississippi River to

the United States and allowed the Cherokees then living east of the Mississippi two years to move west to Indian territory. Thus the part of what is now Jackson County south of the Tennessee River was acquired, and thus militia men from Jackson County participated in the Cherokee removal. In June of 1838, 10 companies of infantry were raised and ordered to appear at headquarters in Bellefonte to be mustered into service (Norwood, et al., 1838). Five companies marched directly to Turkey Town across the river; the other five were sent elsewhere. Under the orders of General Winfield Scott, the local militia rounded up the Cherokees who lived in Jackson County and sent them to Gunter's Landing to be shipped west on boats (Thornhill, July 20, 1967).

Interestingly, William Tecumseh Sherman had occasion to spend some time in Bellefonte in 1844, while he was still just a lieutenant. Christine Paradise Sumner (1974) recounts this event: "Young William Tecumseh Sherman was just out of West Point, in 1844, when he was ordered to go by horseback from Charleston to Marietta, Georgia, to assist in hearing claims of Georgia volunteers in the Seminole War for lost horses and equipment. After completing his work at Marietta, he proceeded to Bellefonte where he spent two months continuing his duties. When he returned to Fort Moultrie, Charleston Harbor, on horseback, he followed closely parts of the route he would take 20 years later in his historic 'March to the Sea.' In later years he said, 'I had ridden the distance on horseback and had noted well the topography of the country.'"

The period now being discussed was one of growth and diversification for the state, the county of Jackson, and, of course, for Bellefonte. Thornhill (Oct. 5, 1967) says that the number of slaves in Jackson County

tripled between 1820 and 1840, and slaves were a good barometer of wealth in that period. Furthermore, Thornhill says in a later article (Oct. 19, 1967) that Bellefonte "... was the leading trade center in the county. There were cotton warehouses and mule and horse sale barns. No place in the county was so prosperous. All of the above was due to river trade and transportation ..."

### **Bellefonte in the 1850s: The Golden Age and the Eve of the Civil War**

The 1850 census provides us with the most useful and probably the most reliable demographic data on Bellefonte for this time or any other. This census gives the head of household by name and lists household members by name and age. Family head's occupation is often given, along with the dollar value of his or her real estate. While Bellefonte per se is nowhere listed in the census, a portion of the enumeration for District 20 is distinct from most of the rest of the county. Taking in 52 households, this section is made up almost entirely of heads of households whose stated occupations are professional, business or service-type ones. There is no extant key explaining to which areas the three arbitrary enumeration districts in the county relate, but the content referred to above at least encourages argument that that portion of District 20 deals with Bellefonte. The names of the heads of households would bear out this assumption to a great degree. So, assuming that Bellefonte's populace is therein enumerated, the following statistics apply: 123 males and 132 females for a total population of 255. Occupations as given by 66 males are as follows: Professional - one probate judge, four physicians, two lawyers, one druggist, one editor, one teacher; Business/Commercial - six merchants, two hotel or tavern keepers, five store or bank clerks, three grocery keepers; Craftsmen -

six blacksmiths, six shoemakers, four mechanics, two tailors, one printer, one watchmaker, one sadler, one stonemason; Agricultural - six farmers, one overseer, four laborers; Miscellaneous - two sheriffs, one jailor, two criminals, three students. Real estate value is stated by 19 heads of households and divides these households into two distinct groups: 13 have real estate worth \$2,000 or less, and six have real estate worth \$4,000 or more. The largest value reported was \$7,200 and the smallest value was \$100. One family reported as real estate five mulatto slaves, dollar value not given.

The distribution of persons in households permits some interesting observations on life in Bellefonte. Several merchants, farmers, and craftsmen have young, unrelated, unmarried men living with them, possibly to learn the business or trade. Other families have unrelated teenage girls living with them, possibly as maids. Daniel Martin was boarding three young men at his inn - a lawyer, a tailor, and a schoolteacher. The other innkeeper had two young families boarding with him, one complete with mother-in-law, the other without a husband or father. The jailor, his family, and the two criminals (both labeled murderers, incidentally) have their residence clearly indicated in the census as "JAILHOUSE" by the meticulous census taker.

A description of antebellum Bellefonte at its peak was provided by Nelson Kyle, Jackson County's Register in Chancery from 1887-1917, in a letter to Dr. Thomas McAdory Owens, Director of the Alabama State Department of Archives and History. Kyle was born, in Bellefonte in 1862, and writes:

"Bellefonte was quite a handsome little village before the war, with the four sides of the square filled in with two-story brick

business houses, with a neat courthouse in the center, this place was watered by a large flowing spring at the foot of [word left out, probably 'hill'] on the northeast border of the town. Old Bellefonte was quite a political center in its day ... There was at one time a fine bar, some of the best known lawyers in the country practiced there. My grandfather Nelson Robinson and his brother Major Jim, Hon. R.C. Brickell, L.P. Walker, W.H. Robinson, W.H. Norwood, and Col. John Norwood being among the prominent ones (Kyle, 1916)".

A Union soldier, writing to his parents from what would be his winter quarters in Bellefonte, also described the courthouse and square: "This building is an excellent one for this country, it is built of brick, and two stories high. It is surrounded by a fine cluster of locust trees and altogether is a very pleasant place for persons who have within the last two years spent as little time within a house as I have (Widney, 1863)".

Matthew Powers Blue, Montgomery's prominent historian, has preserved several more facts about Bellefonte in his manuscript draft of a history of Jackson County. Writing around the year 1861, Blue states that Bellefonte's population numbered about 500 (p.11). Elsewhere, Blue relates that Bellefonte had two schools: "... an excellent Classical School ..., now, a permanent and highly respectable institution, and a fine female school (p.9)".

Blue also discusses some business activities that were taking place at Bellefonte and elsewhere in Jackson County. Even in 1861, Bellefonte was still on the upswing of the cycle of prosperity that began in the '40s. Businessmen were looking for ways to maximize their newly acquired capital. Blue relates that at Bellefonte there were two merchants, Napier

Shelton and a Mr. Harris, who had set up a shoe factory (p.8). This, incidentally, sheds some light on why Bellefonte's 1850 census lists six shoemakers all in a row - they were interviewed by the census taker while at work in Shelton's and Harris' factory. Blue also mentions that Robert T. Scott "has done much to promote a spirit of enterprise in manufacturing", and he lists five other Bellefonte men who were all "active enterprising citizens (p.8)".

In 1849, when the prospect of a railroad through Jackson County arose, the county's "enterprising" citizens saw a two-fold opportunity: a much more reliable way of marketing their money crops, now livestock as much as cotton (Moore, 1934: 273), and an almost certain large return on capital invested. Kennemer says Jackson County citizens subscribed heavily to the stock of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, scheduled to cross their county and join up with the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad near Crow Creek (Kennemer, 1935: 39). According to Henderson, when the proposed line for the Memphis and Charleston Railroad was being surveyed, "... the citizens of Old Bellefonte would not hear of the railroad running through their aristocratic old town, and the consequence was the railroad company built a depot three miles from the capital of Jackson ... (Henderson, 1913)". Kennemer adds that the idea of the railroad was squelched by the water transportation interests for fear of competition (1935: 66).

Robert T. Scott, innkeeper and editor, also had eight terms in the state legislature, the last two in the period when Alabama was in a turmoil over state aid for internal improvements (1847 and 1853). Being a man of wide experience from having served two gubernatorial appointments in Washington, D.C. pursuing Alabama claims

before the Congress, Scott had no such qualms or fears about railroads. He not only recognized the transportation advantages offered by the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, but also saw the opportunity to fulfill a long-held dream of his own. Very early in his life, Scott had attempted to establish a town near Huntsville in Madison County. A plan for that town had been drawn up and the land acquired, but somehow the project fell through (Gist, 1968: 42). Realizing, doubtless, that a railroad depot would virtually guarantee the livelihood and growth of a town, Scott exerted considerable influence on the management of the Memphis and Charleston to build a depot on the property he had acquired just west of Backbone Ridge, where he had been living since early in the '50s (Gist, 1968: 48). Scott even donated land for the depot ("Early History of Scottsboro", 1934) and was probably one of the citizens of Jackson County who "... gave the right of way for almost nothing ... (Kennemer, 1935: 39)". Track laying in Jackson County took place between April, 1855, and March, 1856 (Kennemer, 1935: 39). In 1855, "Scott's Mill" had a post office (Scruggs, Alabama Postal History, n.d.), so Scott's expectations were being met as people were drawn to the commercial prospects the railroad offered, and, by the time the railroad was completed, on March 8, 1856, Scott had his town, variously labeled Scott's Mill, Scott's Station, Scottsville, and, ultimately, Scottsboro.

Not satisfied with having just any town founded by him and named after him, Scott actively began to seek the county seat for Scottsboro (Gist, 1968: 48). The state legislature was made aware of the fact that the courthouse in Bellefonte was in need of repairs and that possibly a new and larger courthouse was needed to keep up with the growth of the county, and somehow this

concern became associated with the idea that the county seat should be moved from Bellefonte (Kennemer, 1935: 66). So the legislature passed an act on Dec. 17, 1859, giving Jackson County voters an opportunity to decide whether or not they wanted the county seat moved, and if so, giving them an additional opportunity to pick the new site. The election held the first Monday of May, 1860, resulted in a decision to move the county seat, and the election held the first Monday of August, 1860, elevated Stevenson to the honor of hosting the new seat of justice (Kennemer, 1935: 66-7). The intervention of the Civil War maintained the status quo. Before the war was over Robert T. Scott died, but his will, made 10 days after the legislature provided for the election on the relocation of the county seat, directed that his wife and executrix "... donate lots [in Scottsboro] for public purposes as it should be deemed necessary to GROW UP [sic] said town (Gist, 1968: 48)". Scott also provided that proceeds from the sale of each alternate lot around the public square be donated to the town (Gist, 1968: 49).

The destruction of the courthouse at Bellefonte during the war (Brewer, 1872: 284) doubtless reignited the relocation controversy, even though county court continued to meet in Bellefonte until Nov. 9, 1868, when the court ordered the county records removed. On Aug. 3, 1868, Charles O. Whitman, a resident of Scottsboro and a state senator, got a legislative act passed which allowed the county commissioners to select a location for the county seat. Their choice, however, was limited to "... the most suitable place ... on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad within eight miles, of the center of the county (Gist, 1968: 36)". This eliminated Scottsboro's only serious competition for the honor of having the county seat.

So on Sept. 5, 1868, the commissioners voted and the probate judge declared Scottsboro duly elected (Gist, 1868: 36). The heirs of Robert T. Scott had already signed an agreement on Sept. 1, 1868, to transfer to the county the public square and a site on the square for a jail, provided Scottsboro be selected for the site of the county seat (Gist, 1968: 49). Thus plans could be made right away to build the new courthouse and jail.

From the foregoing it can be seen that the downfall of Bellefonte was not the result of a lack of foresight alone, although this is the most commonly set forth explanation. While it is true that Bellefonte's rejection of the railroad condemned the town to isolation at a critical time and would have resulted in eventual obscurity at the least, the effects of that negative decision would have been felt neither so early nor so extremely had not the ambitions of Robert T. Scott exacerbated the situation. With the effects of the war immediately added on, Bellefonte was doomed.

### **Bellefonte in the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Final Years**

While not having favored secession, Jackson County contributed her share to the war effort. Bellefonte raised a company of volunteers and, under Captain H.C. Bradford, they were sent to Fort Morgan near Mobile for assignment (Kennemer, 1935: 66). John B. Gordan, resident in Jackson County at the beginning of the war, raised his company of mountaineers from Dade County, Georgia, Marion County, Tennessee, and Jackson County, Alabama and assembled them in Bellefonte (Owen, M.B., 1934). He took them up on nearby Sand Mountain to drill. Later this company would become Company I of the Sixth Alabama Infantry and would gain fame as

the indomitable "Raccoon Roughs", distinguished by their 'coon skin caps which they wore even with their regulation C.S.A. uniforms. It was these mountaineers who first treated Gordan to the famed "wild rebel yell" (Gordan, 1903: 9), but whether they originated it or not cannot be said. John B. Gordan, in his later performance on the battlefield, would so distinguish himself that he would be promoted to general before the war was over.

Judging from the volunteer rolls from Jackson County, overall Bellefonte had approximately 20 volunteers in the Confederate Army (Corvart, 1973 and 1974). One of them is buried in the Bellefonte cemetery. He is a son of Daniel Martin, the innkeeper. His tombstone reads, "James K. Polk Martin - Born November 5, 1844, Died January 4, 1863 in a Negro's cabin at Parker's Cross-Roads of a wound received in the battle at the place, December 31, 1862. He was most brutally treated by the Yankees and neglected by his own side."

Bellefonte's only direct contact with the Union Army was in the winter of 1863-64. During that period the 15th Army Corps, a part of Sherman's army under the command of General John A. Logan, were encamped all along the Tennessee River from Woodville to Bridgeport (Kennemer, 1940). It was the 34th Illinois Volunteer Regiment which occupied Bellefonte, and a letter from one of the soldiers of this regiment describes how the soldiers burned the records in front of the courthouse to keep warm (Widney, 1863). Sherman had ordered that his men subsist by foraging since it saved supplies and disadvantaged the rebels, even as it afflicted the local non-combatants. En route to Chattanooga on Dec. 17, 1863, Sherman ordered that "... all the forage and provisions in the country around Bridgeport and Bellefonte [sic] be collected and stored and no

compensation be allowed rebel owners (Miller, 1901: 188)". While there is no documentary evidence regarding the exact circumstances of the event, by the end of the war, the courthouse at Bellefonte had been burned and several dwellings as well (Kennemer, 1935: 134-5; Brewer, 1872: 284).

As it was for all of northern Alabama, Jackson County was left severely depleted by the war and the people were hungry and impoverished. The continuous skirmishing in the area had been as devastating as a major battle, but on a wider scale (Moore, 1934: 429). With reference to Jackson County, Miller says, "... from first to last a quarter of a million of Federal soldiers passed through the county (Miller, 1901: 335)". Describing the situation to his daughter in Texas, Daniel Martin wrote, "I have had everything taken from me but my land; my town property is literally destroyed. I am as poor as Job's turkey except in land ... (Martin, D.M., May 6, 1866)".

But Bellefonte had not been razed by any means. There were several dwellings that survived the war to be moved, intact, to Scottsboro (Matthews, Leola and Eunice, 1974). Others were torn down and the materials used to build homes in Scottsboro ("Early History of Scottsboro", 1934). The post office at Bellefonte continued to serve the populace thereabouts (Martin, D.M., May 6, 1866 and others), and the court continued to meet, business as usual,

somewhere in the town. In 1867, Daniel Martin wrote to his daughter that her older brother, William G. Martin, "... lives in Bellefonte in what was left of my old houses and is trying to keep tavern in a very small way (Martin, D.M., July 21, 1867)". Life in Bellefonte went on, but on a much reduced scale. National and regional events continued to touch the town - Martin mentions in two separate letters dated in August of 1868, seeing troops of Ku Klux Klansmen in the area near Bellefonte, and both he and his son-in-law lash out against the "scalawags and carpetbaggers" in the legislature.

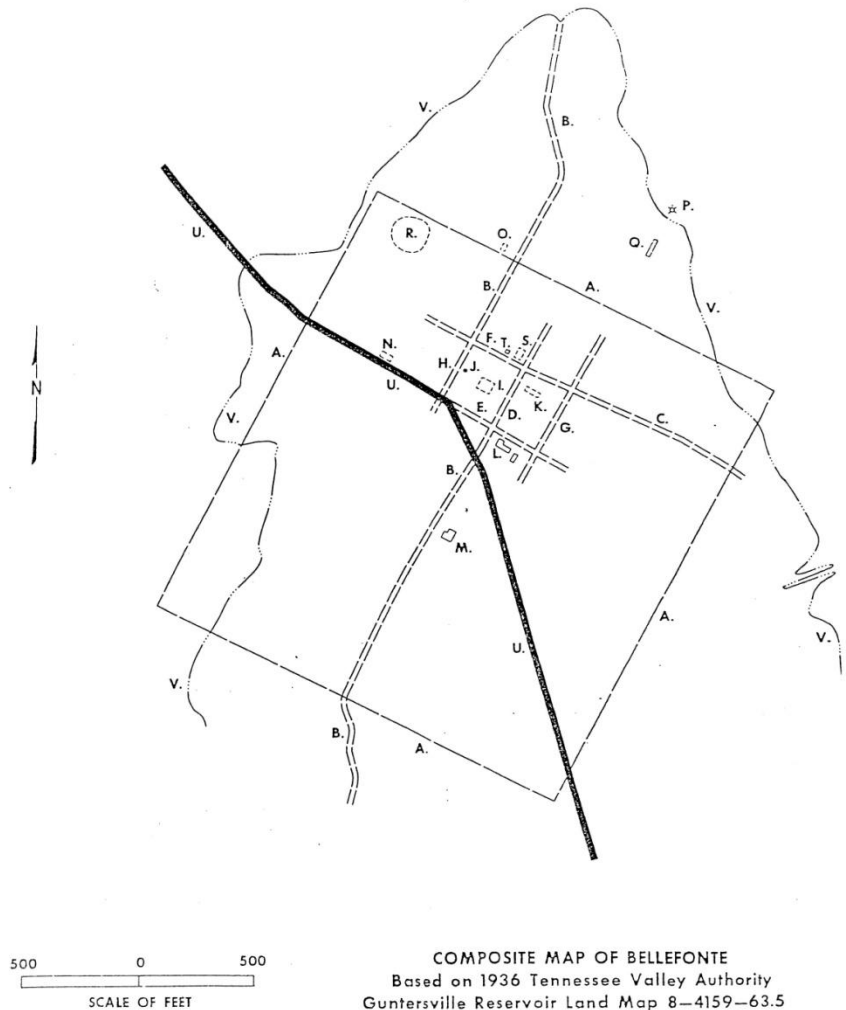
In another letter, Martin gives some of the reasons for the migration of people out of the county around 1870, and these reasons perhaps explain in part why the census figure for Bellefonte in 1870 was only 72 (Brewer, 1872: 283):

"... We have not made a general good crop since the War on account of drouth, and laziness and last year was the worst of all. And then It was reported all over this country that Texas had made the best crops in the world, that she had corn, wheat, pork, beef, and mutton enough to feed the world and that it was very cheap. And the people, being goaded to death by taxation and sick of a negro constitution, a negro legislature and Government, all that could raise the money to pay their way, went off like a swarm of blackbirds (Martin, D.M., March 21, 1870)".

But things picked up, and in 1873 Martin relates that his son "... lives in my old houses in Bellefonte; has a fine store in my old brick comer house. He also has a fine new cotton gin. It stands up on the Fowler lot. He gets more cotton to gin than any other gin about here and sells more goods than any other store in the County. Say to your Aunt Mary that your Brother Billie, is now doing as good a business as I was in your mother's lifetime when my tavern was in full bloom ... [Ella Marley's mother died in 1853] (Martin, D.M. , Dec. 22, 1873)". Bellefonte was still a steamboat landing at that time (Neville, 1963: 25), but there were only two or three steamboats plying the Tennessee between Chattanooga and Decatur

(Campbell, 1932: 92) and those very irregularly (Caldwell, Daisy, 1974).

In 1883 Bellefonte was listed in a business directory as having a population of 100 and the following services and business: five general merchandise firms, a sawmill, two physicians, a notary public, a Justice of the Peace, and a lawyer. Also indicated as being resident in the town were 11 farmers (Alabama State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1884-5: 132). In 1887,



Identification of Features and Sources of Information:

- A. Original boundary of Bellefonte (old deeds, aerial photos)
- B. Old Stage Coach Road (aerial photos and informant's identification)
- C. Bellefonte Landing Road (1936 TVA Land Map # 8-4159-63.5)
- D. Jackson Street (derived from old deeds)
- E. Cross Street (derived from old deeds)
- F. Adams Street (derived from old deeds)
- G. Spring Street (derived from old deeds)
- H. Russell Street (derived from old deeds)
- I. Courthouse foundation (field excavation)
- J. Cistern (field observation and informant identification)
- K. Store foundation (field observation)
- L. Martin's inn (1936 TVA Land Map # 8-4159-63.5)
- M. Old Turkey place (1936 TVA Land Map and informant's identification)
- N. Jail (field observation; exact size or shape not determined)
- O. Cabin foundation (field observation)
- P. City spring (informant's identification; now under water)
- Q. Brick sidewalk (informant's identification; extent not determined)
- R. Quarry (informant's identification; extent not determined)
- S. Masonic Lodge/school site (informant's identification; size not known)
- T. Cabin site (informant's identification; size not known)
- U. Modern county road (1936 TVA Land Map # 8-4159-63.5)
- V. Modern edge of Town Creek (1936 TVA Land Map # 8-4159-63.5)



another business directory lists Bellefonte as having a population of 150. At that time, the town had a telegraph, express, and railroad agent, a notary public, a Justice of the Peace, two physicians, two saw and grist mills, a lawyer, and three general stores (Alabama State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1887-8: 111).

Abruptly things declined, however, and in 1889 the Masonic Lodge at Bellefonte disbanded (Masonic Lodge Grand Library, Montgomery, personal communication). An atlas from 1893 (Gaskell's Family and Business Atlas of the World) indicates Bellefonte had a population of 100 according to the 1890 census, but on March 4, 1894 the post office closed down, and the town cannot be found in any references after that time. Some people continued to live on the site of the old town, however. The Snodgrasses, whose ancestors were among the earliest families to settle the area, still had a store right across from Daniel Martin's old inn up until the time of the first World War. Their descendants own the old town today.

### **Some Important Bellefonte Citizens**

Bellefonte can lay claim to a number of interesting and prominent men. The most often mentioned of her citizens is Williamson R.W. Cobb. Cobb was a merchant before he entered politics in 1844. From that time he lost only one election in the next 20 years. After two terms in the lower house of the Alabama Legislature, he was elected to the House of Representatives in 1847 and served in Washington until the Alabama delegation withdrew in 1861. During his tenure in the House, he was the chairman of the Committee on the Public Lands. Back in Alabama, in 1861 he was defeated in his bid for a seat in the Confederate Congress, but won it two years

later. He died in 1864. He was the only representative to Congress Jackson County ever called her own (Brewer, 1872: 286-7; Garrett, 1872: 395-7; Kennemer, 1935: 197; Richardson, 1936; Owen, T. M., 1921, III: 357; Blue, 1861: 16).

Major Robert A. Eaton was mentioned above in connection with Bellefonte newspapers, but he was also important elsewhere in the field of pioneer Alabama journalism. In Tuscaloosa in 1836 he was co-publisher of the leading Democratic journal in Alabama, *The Flag of the Union*, and simultaneously put out a monthly literary magazine, *The Southern*. Later, again in Tuscaloosa, he established another paper, the *Gazette*. He was elected State Printer by the Alabama Legislature for five successive years and he also printed the Supreme Court Reports from 1841 to 1849. He was elected mayor of Tuscaloosa, but resigned that office. He settled at Carrollton, Alabama, in 1849 and established the *West Alabamian*. He died at that city in 1853 (Elliott, 1958: 97).

The Norwoods, Henry and his son, John H., both had distinguished public careers. Henry served in both the War of 1812 and the Creek and Seminole Wars. Coming to Bellefonte in 1820, he established a plantation. He was active in the militia and at the time of his death he was sheriff of Jackson County. He served four terms in the legislature in the 1830s. John H. Norwood was born at Bellefonte and studied law there. He entered the bar at Bellefonte in 1852. He was appointed probate judge in 1855, elected in 1857 to continue in that office, but resigned to be First Lieutenant in Captain H.C. Bradford's Bellefonte company of Civil War volunteers. His war record was such that he was a brigadier general when he finally had to retire from battle because of injuries. In 1865 he was

elected to the State Senate. In 1875 he was a delegate to the State Constitutional Convention. In 1886 he was again elected probate judge and served in that capacity until his death in 1891 (Brewer, 1872: 285-6; Owen, T. M., 1921: IV: 1288).

Silas Parsons was one of the very first settlers at Bellefonte where he supported himself by laboring on a farm. Desiring to study law he ran for sheriff and was elected in 1823. Allowing his deputy to run the office, Parsons studied law and was soon

admitted to the bar. He practiced at Bellefonte until he moved to Huntsville in 1831. There he entered into two consecutive prestigious law partnerships and rose to such eminence at the bar that in 1849 he was elected unanimously by the state legislature to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court bench. Ill health forced him to resign this responsibility after only two years, much to the regret of his colleagues. He went into retirement in Texas and died in 1860 (Garrett, 1872: 524; Owen, T. M. 1921, IV: 1324; Blue, 1861: 15).

## **DID YOU KNOW THE TENNESSEE VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY IS A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION?**

Well, it is. The Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society (TVGS) is an organization made up of two types of volunteers.

The first type is “support-service” volunteers. This type includes all the members of TVGS who support the mission and activities of the society by sending in membership dues and/or attending its annual events.

The second type is “direct-service” volunteers. This type includes all TVGS members who voluntarily come together to do the work of the society.

Have you ever wondered what makes a successful volunteer? The top five reasons are:

- Believing in the cause
- Having clear set goals
- Knowing what is expected
- Having reliable communication
- Being proud of your contribution

TVGS exists because people volunteer to help it exist. What type of volunteer are you?

Not yet a member of TVGS? Join us and become a volunteer today!

Go to <http://www.tvgs.org> for more information.

## Madison County



### Liberty Hill Church and School

By Bettye Perrine

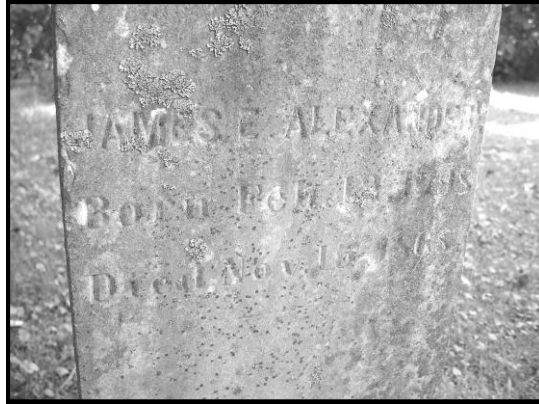
Liberty Hill Church and School was located approximately 12 miles from downtown Huntsville, Alabama, on Liberty Hill Road off Pulaski Pike, on the east side. It stood in a grove of trees, mostly deciduous except for one lone pine, which still stand today in the east side cemetery.

Sunday School was held each Sunday and a regular service when a pastor was available.

Week days the building was used as a school. Usually only one teacher for all grades. John Bates White, April 2, 1891 - June 9, 1974, was one of the teachers, receiving his teaching certificate on Jan. 6, 1909.

John lacked from January 6 till April 2 being 18 years old when he passed the test to receive his teaching certificate with a



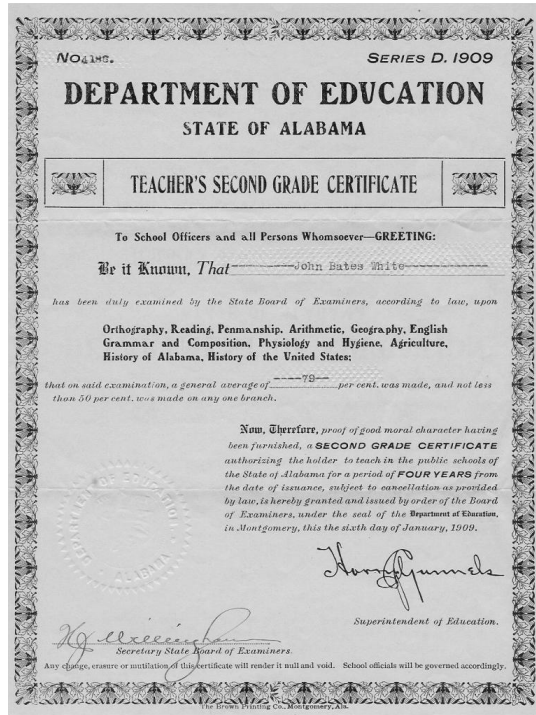


grade of 79. He taught a year or two at the Hewlett School on the corner of Stringfield Road and Pulaski Pike, approximately five miles south. The commute being a little rigorous for winter weather he boarded in the home of George Washington and Annie McLaughlin, one of the trustees. John White and Annie McLaughlin were first cousins, their mothers being sisters.

The names of the students in the below picture are unknown as well as the date of the photograph. John left his teaching career to enter the First World War. He enlisted Sept. 20, 1917, so the picture would have to have been taken between 1909 and 1917, maybe even 1910 to 1917.

The property surrounding the church/school building also was used as a cemetery, with grave stones on both sides of the road. They read as follows:

East Side:	
Darwin, George	1799-1865
Darwin, Melissa	1789-1879
Douglass, Keziah	1789-1858
Mitchell, Charley M.	1875-1878
Mitchell, Willie E.	1856-1937
Mitchell, Alex	died 1910
Terry, Josephine E.	1856-1858
Terry, George D.	1854-1858
Terry, James M.	1863-1864
Phillips, Lucy D.	1845-1874
Stevenson, Jeff	1833-1886



Stephenson, Mary	1880-1888
Stephenson, William A.	1856-1894
West Side	
Alexander, James E.	1798-1868
Brooks, May Walsh	1896-1934
Criner, Lucy James	1839-1861
Criner, Isaac Mc.	1827-1863
Grant, William	Died 1896
Hereford, W.F.	1822-1904
Hereford, Lucindia W.	1838-1891
Hereford, Mary B.	1824-1866
Hereford Lucy A.S.	1850-1854
Hereford, Martha	1828-1853
Johnson, Mary Brooks	1879-1956
Johnson, Henry J.	1859-1928
Johnson, Lucy James	1911-1913
Johnson, S.J.	1862-1942
Johnson, Mary A.	1830-1905
Johnson, W.T.	1824-1892
Johnson, George H.	1857-1858
Johnson, Robert E.	1851-1852
Lawhon, Lewis N.	1839-1901
Lawhon, Emma May	1898-1900
Lawhon, Milton & Mildred	1901-1901
Lewis, Jane	1793-1853
Pulley, Tommie B.	1857-1858



**John White with one of his classes at Liberty Hill School**

Routt, Tommie B.	1828-1857
Routt Andrew J.	1828-1857
Routt, Sarah M.	1833-1915
Routt infant	1854
Scott, Lena E.	1871-1886
Scott, S.M.	1826-1865
Scott, Elizabeth E.	1832-1878
Steele, William Thomas	1867-1885
Steele, Joseph W.	1866-1866
Steele, Angeline C.	1820-1854
Steele, William C.	1849-1853
Steele, Mary C.	1828-1858
Strong, Robert	1802-1856
Strong, Lucy J.	1811-1862
Strong, Robert Donnel	1847-1863
Strong, Margaret	1849-1852
Strong, Susan	1845-1853

The above names and dates were taken from *Cemeteries of Madison County, Alabama Vol. I* by Dorothy Scott Johnson. More detailed information is found in Scott's book about each listing.

James E. Alexander was the great uncle of the author, a brother to Catherine Alexander White.

The author would welcome any help with the names of students in the school picture.

## Early History of Madison County, Alabama

The following contains excerpts from an 1888 book entitled *Northern Alabama Historical and Biographical*, by Smith & DeLand.

Transcribed by Coy Michael

County Seat is Huntsville; Population is 8,000; located on the M. & C.R.R. Madison County is at the head of the famed Tennessee valley and has an area of 872 square miles with a frontage on the Tennessee River of thirty miles. Madison is the banner county of the cereal belt. It leads all others in wealth and the production of cotton. The average annual yield of cotton is 20,000 bales.

There is in this county now, at least 100 registered Jersey cattle (a recent business) and several head are from the island of Jersey. There are also two or three herds of Holsteins in which are represented some of the finest milk strains in the world.

In this county is the largest nursery in the United States and its business has proven eminently successful. Its name is "Huntsville Wholesale Nurseries," and as the name implies the trees grown are intended for the wholesale trade. The tract of land is over a thousand acres. Orders received are mostly from nurserymen to all parts of the United States. The production is confined to pears, plums, cherries and peaches. The plants that will be ready for setting next spring will be over 3,000,000,000.

Newspapers published at the County Seat are: *Democrat* (democrat), *Gazette* (colored republican), *Independent* (democrat), *Mercury* (democrat), *New South* (republican), *Normal Index* (educational).

Post Offices in the County are: Bell Factory, Berkley, Bloomfield, Brownsborough, Carmichael, Cluttsville, Dan, Fisk, Green Grove, Curly, Haden, Hayes' Store, Hazel Green, Huntsville, Lowe, Madison Cross Roads, Madison Station, Maysville, Meridianville, Monrovia, New Market, Owen's Cross Roads, Plevana, Popular Ridge, Rep, Triana, Whitesburg, and Wiley.

**C.W. Martin** was born near Madison in 1820 and has spent his entire life in Madison County. In business he has been a farmer and merchant, in the last of which he has been very successful.

At the close of the late war he, like almost everybody else at the South, was financially a wreck, but by close and persistent application to business he has retrieved his loss. He was a son of Richard Martin and Lydia (Fitts) Martin who came from Virginia to Alabama about 1810.

Richard Martin was a farmer and served in the War of 1812. They had 11 children of whom but four are living. Two of their sons were in Ward's Battery (Confederate States Army), and both served through the war, spending a great part of the time at Mobile.

Mr. Martin was married in 1849 to Miss Nannie Leeman of Madison County and they have seven children living, of whom two are merchants, one is a railroad agent at Madison, and one a farmer in Limestone County. Mr. Martin is a member of the Methodist Church and a F. & A.M.

**G.W. and J.A. Wise** were merchants in Madison, Alabama. They were sons of Samuel Wise and Sarah A. (Line) Wise who came with them from Virginia to this place

in the fall of 1872. The senior Wise died on his farm near Madison in 1876. He reared seven sons to manhood, and two of them, John M. and William, served through the late war in the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Cavalry under Fitz Hugh Lee. They now reside in Kansas. Of the others, Samuel is in Iowa, Henry A. in Virginia. David L. died in 1862. The only daughter is in Virginia.

G.W. Wise was born in Virginia Nov. 20, 1854 and there grew to manhood and followed farming a number of years. In 1882 he began the life of a merchant at Madison in the firm name of Wise, Hertzler & Co. In January 1887 that firm was dissolved and the present one of G.W. & J.A. Wise was organized. They deal in general merchandise and trade in cotton. Wise Bros. & Harper is

a firm including G.W. and J.A. Wise and B.F. Harper, who is a clerk in the store of the Wise Bros.

G.W. is a steward in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

J.A. Wise was born Aug. 2, 1860 in Virginia. He was married Feb. 28, 1884 to Miss Lucy Harris of this state. Her father, Thomas Harris, received a wound at the Battle of Manassas, from which he afterwards died. Dr. A.S. Harris, of Madison, her grandfather, was a Virginian. J.A. Wise has two living children.

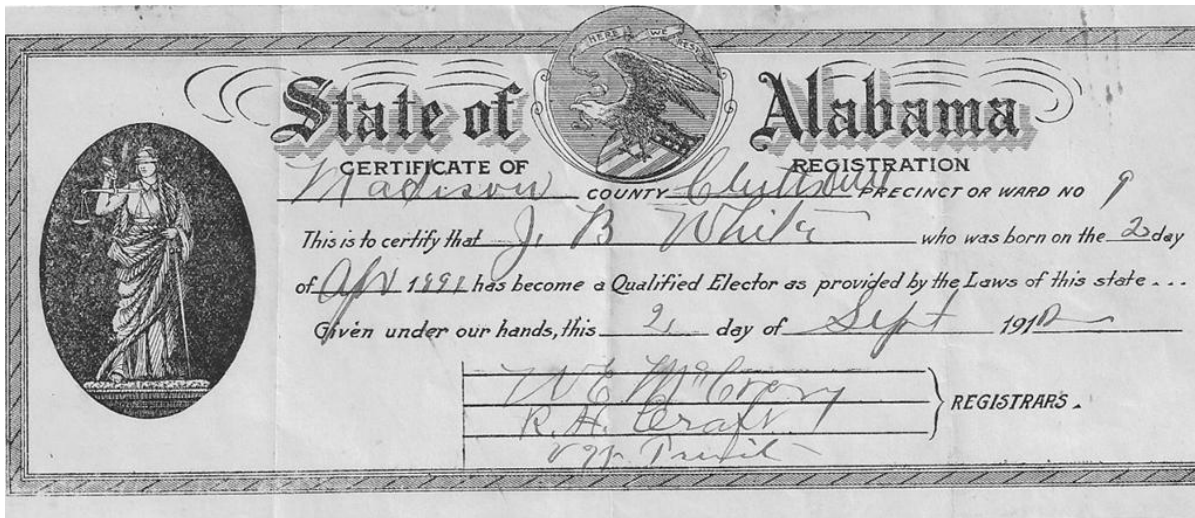


You don't usually think of tombstones as heirlooms, but they are historical artifacts that preserve information about your family. There's more to learn from them than what you might see in an online photo, says Joy Giguete, a trustee of the Association for Gravestone Studies, [www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org). To learn the most from these heirlooms, she says, you need to visit the cemetery yourself.

Taken from page 58,

*Family Tree Magazine*,

January/February 2014



**Certificate of Voter Registration for John Bates White**

## **Poll Taxes**

By Betty Perrine

The word poll is a Middle English word that once meant “head”. According to Webster’s 1979 New Collegiate Dictionary – it is “the prominent hairy top or back of the head”. Therefore a per-person tax is a poll tax.

The poll or capitation (head) tax in the United States was a lump sum tax levied by state and local governments on individuals, who often had to pay the tax in order to vote. This was introduced in many states shortly after the American Revolution. In the colonial era, men had to own a certain amount of property in order to vote. Women were almost always disfranchised.

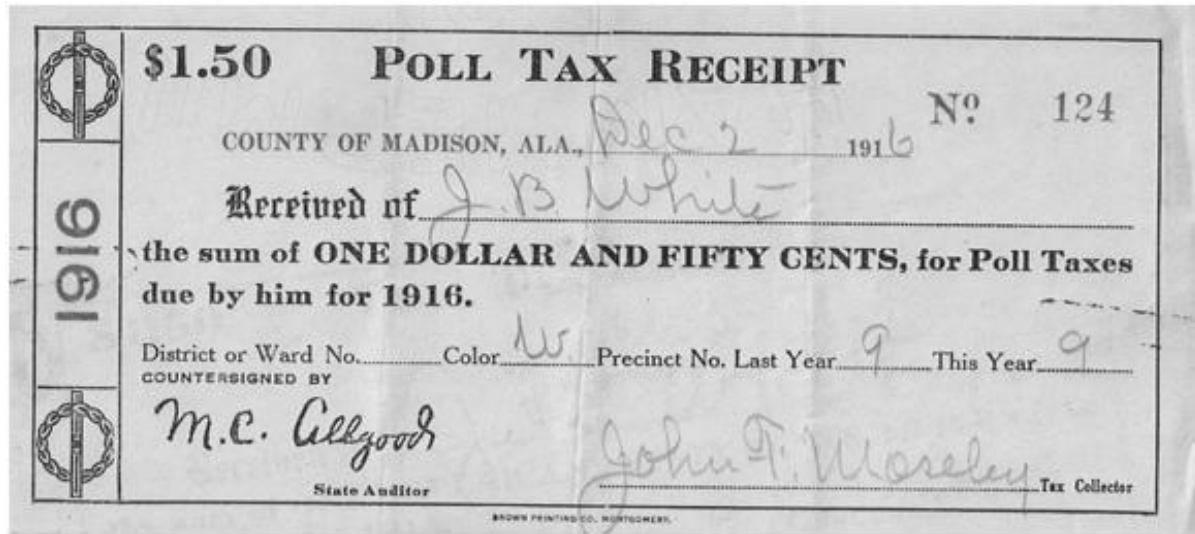
Many southern states adopted a poll tax in the late 1800s. This meant that even though the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment gave former slaves the right to vote, many poor people, both blacks and whites, did not have the money to pay for the poll tax to vote. States often included a grandfather clause that allowed any adult male whose father or grandfather had voted in a specific year prior to the abolition of slavery to vote without paying the tax. These laws, along with unfairly implemented

literacy tests and extra-legal intimidation, achieved the desired effect of disenfranchising African-American and Native American voters as well as poor whites.

In 1880, the average southern income, including non-cash income, was \$86 in contemporary dollars; in 1900, \$100. Most people received much less than the average as income distribution was extremely skewed. Most sharecroppers, small farmers, factory workers, miners, and others bought most of their necessities on credit. They might not see more than a few dollars in cash during a year. A levy of a dollar or two was enormous and a cumulated poll tax, impossibly high to large majorities of the adult male population of every southern state at the turn of the century. The dollar and a half required in the state of Alabama at the turn of the century would be equal to about \$35 in 2012.

It took several years and court cases to abolish the poll tax. Breedlove v. Suttles (1937) found poll tax to be constitutional.

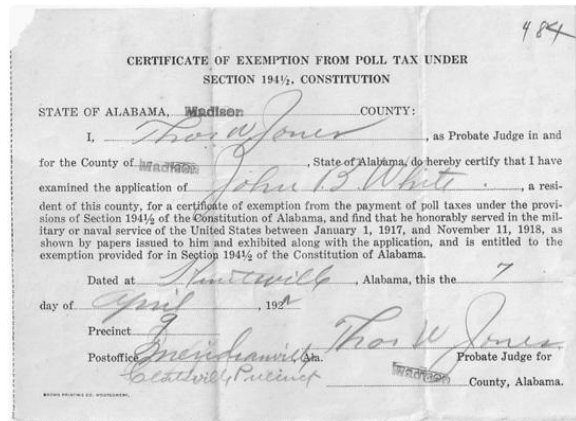




**John paid poll taxes of \$1.50 for the years 1912-13-14-15-16**

The Kennedy administration pushed the Twenty-fourth Amendment through Congress in 1962, which abolished the poll tax in national elections and was ratified in 1964. At the ceremony formalizing the 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment, President Lyndon Johnson noted that: “there can be no one too poor to vote.” In 1966, Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled state poll taxes violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment on the grounds, by that time widely accepted by the public, that wealth was not a valid reason to burden citizens’ fundamental right to vote.

As Alabamians, the poll tax was a part of our ancestor’s lives. John Bates White registered to vote on Sept. 2, 1912 after turning 21 years of age on April 2, 1912. He then paid poll taxes of \$1.50 for the years 1912-13-14-15-16. He entered WWI on Sept. 20, 1917 and was discharged May 22, 1919. He received a certificate of Exemption from Poll Tax under Section 194 ½ of the Alabama Constitution on April 7, 1922. This was because he “honorably served in the military or naval service of the United States



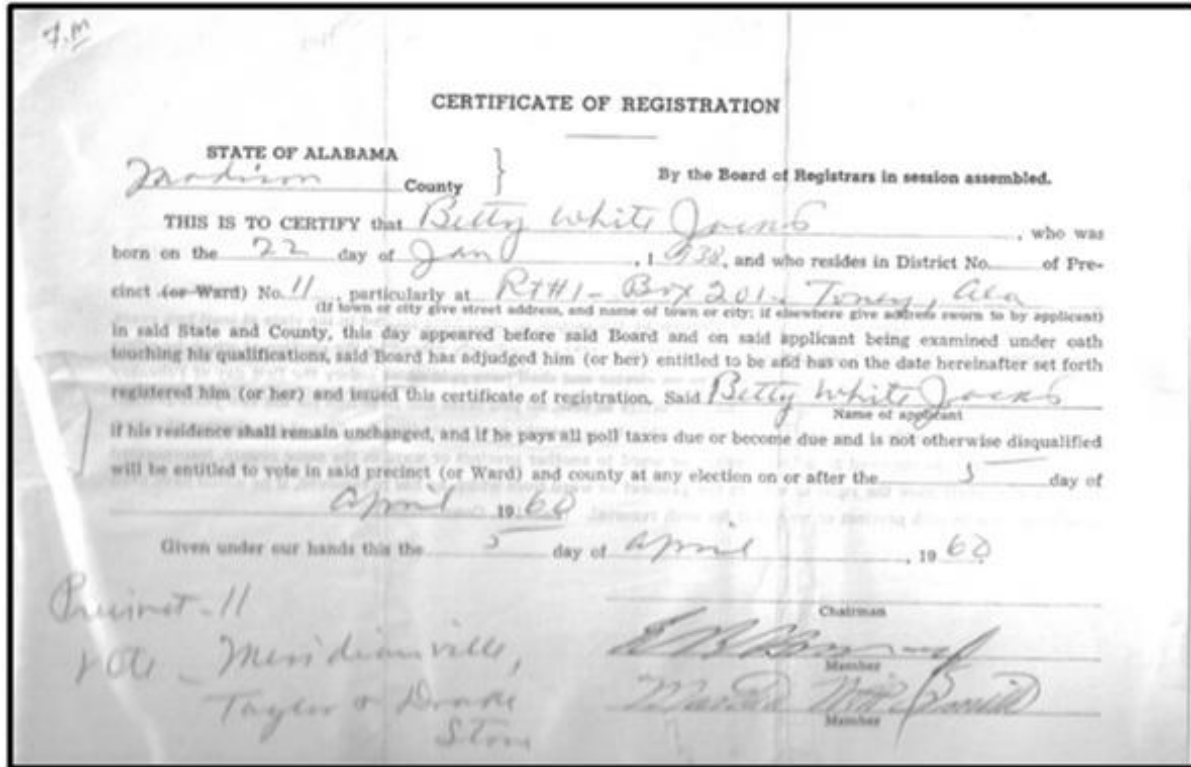
**1922 Certificate of Exemption for John Bates White**

between Jan. 1, 1917, and Nov. 11, 1918, as shown by papers issued to him and exhibited along with the application.”

The receipts were numbered, wonder if this was denotive of number of paid registered voters.

1912	No. 332	Dated 7 Nov.
1913	No. 8	Dated 12 Dec.
1914	No. 163	Dated 12 Dec.
1915	No. 668	Dated 5 Jan.
1916	No. 124	Dated 2 Dec.

At first it appears that a new record book was not started each year, but then they are dated in red print (see above on the left), so



**Poll taxes were paid by later generation also. Betty Jacks was “examined under oath touching on his qualification” and “if he pays all poll taxes due or become due and is not otherwise disqualified will be entitled to vote” in any election after 5 April 1960.**

they must have. Thinking it could be based on presidential election years, it is found that Woodrow Wilson took office March 4, 1913 and left office on March 4 1921, so that is not it, maybe something or someone in the state elections.

**Sources:**

Wikipedia – poll tax - United States

Congressional Quarterly, Inc., *The International Encyclopedia of Elections*, J. Morgan Kousser, California Institute of Technology, 1999.

Odgen, Fredric D. Poll Tax in the South. 1958. Tuscaloosa, Alabama, University of Alabama Press.

Receipts from the author’s archives.

**I**n all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage – to know who we are and where we came from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still a vacuum, an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness.

- Alex Haley

## **Indian Creek And Western Madison County**

By John P. Rankin

The western border of the county was defined by an 1805 treaty as part of the “Chickasaw Indian Boundary Line”, which ran from Hobbs Island to Ardmore and on to the southwestern corner of Maury County, Tennessee. West of the line was still claimed by the Chickasaws, who did not give up their rights to land westward to the Elk River until 1816. Even then, the land of western Madison County could not be legally settled until after systematic government surveys culminating in sales that began in early February of 1818.

There were already numerous settlers (called “squatters”) west of the line when government land sales began. As the pioneers arrived in the area, they had no clear definition of such lines, and they saw uninhabited cleared lands around and west of Indian Creek. Back then, it was not called Indian Creek. That name began to be used for the creek lying just west of the Indian line around the time of the Civil War. Earlier, the creek was known as Hurricane Creek and as Price’s Fork of Indian Creek<sup>3</sup>. Indian Creek was the name initially given to what is today called Spring Branch, running from Hunt’s Big Spring toward the town of Triana. Indian Creek and Spring Branch join on Redstone Arsenal, about three miles northeast of Triana. The old land records that refer to Indian Creek are actually referring to today’s Spring Branch, not to the Indian Creek of the western part of the county.

Details of the rush to settle on Indian lands to the west of Madison County are given in a book about the “Sims Settlement”, available in the Heritage Room of the Huntsville – Madison County Public Library.<sup>4</sup> Because they signed several petitions to the federal government to allow them to keep their lands, Dixon and Priest were able to list names of the heads of the families known to have taken up residence on Indian lands - mostly along today’s Indian Creek, Limestone Creek, Piney Creek, Beaverdam Creek, and other tributaries of the Tennessee River. Comparison of the petitioners’ names to those of the land records later recorded in western Madison County gives a degree of proof of the squatter settlers of the area who were allowed to retain their farms.

Among the signers of the 1810 Sims Settlement petition were James and William Slaughter; James, William, and Thomas Mullens, David Capshaw, William Martin, and Elisha Rainbolt. These names are easily recognizable, among many others, as residents of the western portions of Madison County along Indian Creek in later years. In fact, today’s Rainbow Mountain in the city of Madison is a phonetic distortion of Elisha Rainbolt’s surname.<sup>5</sup> Mullens Flat on today’s arsenal property may well have taken its name from the Mullens brothers, as that community was west of the Indian Boundary Line on arsenal lands today, and no other namesake for the community is known. The Martin family has been prominent in the history of the town of Madison and the land on the east side of Rainbow Mountain, just as the Slaughter family has

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<sup>3</sup> 1875 Madison County Map by James Mayhew, as reproduced by the Library of Congress, 1950, plus earlier maps.

<sup>4</sup> Dixon, Ruth and Priest, Bob, “*SIMS SETTLEMENT – Our Squatter Ancestors, 1806-1818*” (published by Ruth Dixon Associates, Inc., 3715 Upton Street NW, Washington, D.C., 1989)

<sup>5</sup> Taylor, (Judge) Thomas Jones, “*THE HISTORY OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA*”, (written in Huntsville from 1880 to 1886, manuscript typed by WPA in Huntsville Library in 1940), p. 14

been notable in the area along Indian Creek, and David Capshaw's holdings gave rise to the community by that name today. Many of the Sims Settlement pioneers also defended the area during the War of 1812, when Elisha Rainbolt, along with James and William Mullens, served in Peter Perkins' 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment while Thomas Mullens, David Capshaw, James and William Slaughter, and William Martin were listed in Burrus' 16<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the militia from Madison County. The Sims Settlement pioneers of western Madison County were civic-minded men of action and devotion to their country. They were not men looking to avoid taxes or public service.

Books such as "The Heritage of Madison County, Alabama"<sup>6</sup> and the City of Madison's sesquicentennial book<sup>7</sup> detailed the family stories of some of the notable early settlers along Indian Creek. However, there are many clarifications and detailed stories yet to be told.

Few realize that Thomas Bibb, the second governor of the state (usually associated with Limestone County), came to Huntsville with Leroy Pope in 1808 from Petersburg, Georgia. He bought several parcels of land in Huntsville and Madison County and was reported to have helped in the construction of Madison County's first courthouse. However, before 1819 he must have moved to Limestone County, which he represented in the Constitutional Convention of 1819. In fact, Thomas Bibb and Waddy Tate were among the 197 squatter signers of the Sims Settlement petition of 1817. By 1826 he built Belle Manor, a large mansion in Limestone County for his family. The mansion became the namesake of the community of Belle Mina. However, Thomas and his widow, Pamela Thompson Bibb, lived out their final years in Huntsville, while their son David Porter Bibb occupied Belle Manor.



**Thomas Bibb**

During the period of 1809-1819 Thomas Bibb purchased several parcels of land immediately west of Meridianville, along Patterson Lane and Monroe Road, mostly adjacent to land of his father-in-law, Robert Thompson. Bibb's parcels included land on the east side of Wade Mountain, where Mount Charron Estates is located today. He also had land at the halfway point of a line between Harvest and Meridianville, just east of Quarter Mountain, along Carter's Gin Road and north of Burwell Road. He also owned several lots in Huntsville and in the areas of today's UAH and Butler High School. In 1818 Thomas Bibb in conjunction with other trustees (John Lindsay, Dr. Waddy Tate, Henry Chambers, and William Adair) established the town of Triana by purchasing land where Indian Creek joins the Tennessee River in Sections 22 and 27 of Township 5, Range 2W.<sup>8</sup> Triana was the second town incorporated in Madison County by an act of the state legislature in 1819. It is reported to be the only town in America named in honor of the first sailor to spot land of the new world from one of Columbus' ships.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Madison County Heritage Book Committee (chaired by John P. Rankin), "The Heritage of Madison County, Alabama", 1998; Heritage Publishing Company, Clanton, Alabama; LOC #98-72637, printed by Walsworth Publishing Company.

<sup>7</sup> Rankin, John P., "Memories of Madison: A Connected Community, 1857 – 2007" (published for the Madison Station Historical Preservation Society and the City of Madison) by Donning Publishers, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Cowart, Margaret Matthews, "OLD LAND RECORDS OF MADISON COUNTY, ALABAMA" (Huntsville, Alabama, no date) p. 88

<sup>9</sup> Record, James, "A Dream Come True", Volume II (1978)

## Madison County

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The site of Triana would have been one of the portals for settlement of the western part of Madison County during the Sims Settlement days due to the depth of Indian Creek at that point. The creek was navigable to flatboats for several miles upstream, so the transportation of household furnishings and other goods was facilitated by water before the roads were established. Navigable waters also provided a good way to get crops and other products to distant markets, so the land along the rivers and major creeks was usually settled first. It was also more fertile due to deposits left by occasional floods.

The south and central portion of the western part of Madison County is drained by the Indian Creek watershed. The northwestern part of the county is drained by the watersheds of Limestone Creek. The northeastern part of the western half of the county is drained by Beaverdam Creek and Banyon Swamp Creek plus Brier Fork of the Flint River. The land distant from the streams was sometimes considered to be less desirable. Some of the land in the northwestern part of the county was purchased in the late 1800s (and even the early 1900s) by government patents, whereas almost all of the southern portion of the county was patented before 1819. Blanks in sections of map excerpts in this book indicate that there was no record found for a pre-statehood purchase. The watersheds of the western part of Madison County are depicted in an excerpt of the 1875 map drawn by James Mayhew, shown to the right.



The map shown above also illustrates the township – range – section system used here for the first time in America to survey land before government titles were issued to buyers.<sup>10</sup> While this map is useful to show the watershed and survey grids, the landowner names given in the sections are of course those of record in the early 1870s, and not necessarily those of the first pioneers. Later excerpts given herein will show pioneer names in sections as recorded in Cowart's book, but not necessarily depicted within the precise quarter sections that they purchased. This map moreover shows Indian Creek as "Price's Fork" (of Indian Creek), whereas an earlier map produced by Union forces during the Civil War has the label of "Hurricane Creek" on what we today call Indian Creek.

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<sup>10</sup> Madison County Heritage Book Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 1

## Madison County

Naturally, not everyone who purchased land resided on the parcels that they bought. Much of it was patented in anticipation of profits to be realized from future sales, just as is done with deeds today. Accordingly, the old land records in the western part of the county include several known residents of Huntsville. Furthermore, adjacent parcels were often purchased by people who were related by blood, marriage, business, or other common interests. Therefore, land records provide useful clues to these relationships. Most pioneers bought a quarter of a section in each transaction, but some could afford a complete section (one square mile, 640 acres) when they made their purchases. Some purchasers patented land in parcels that were not contiguous or sometimes not even close to one another, so land in various areas (and counties and states) must be considered to see all of a person's holdings.

Beginning in accordance with the early influx (at the southern end of the county) along the river and creek confluences in townships 5 and 6, range 1 west, the pioneer landowners included William, Thomas, Burwell, and Clement Lanier plus their sister Clarissa (Lanier) Boddie. The Lanier family eventually owned several thousand acres of what is today Redstone Arsenal - far more than just that recorded in T5-R1W per Cowart's book.



**NOTE:** T6 has only very small fractional sections of about 20 acres within Madison County, so those are not shown at bottom of the map. However, the land of Section 4 was obtained by McCutchen, and the land of Section 5 was patented by Austin Sands.

The Lanier family originated in France, where as Huguenots they fled in the late 1600s to Wales and became noted in service as poets and musicians to English royalty.<sup>11</sup> The local branches descend from Thomas Lanier, who came to Virginia in Colonial days. He established a family connected to President George Washington's ancestors plus ancestors of other families of this area, such as the Jordan, Pope, Looney, Dickson, Gillespie, Ford, Rison, Halsey, and McCrab families. In fact, there is a tombstone in the Lanier family cemetery on Redstone Arsenal to mark the grave of Louisa Shelby McCrab (1767-1846). Louisa was the mother-in-law of Burwell Clinton Lanier, and she was an aunt of Absalom Looney II, a Revolutionary War patriot buried near Airport Road in southwest Huntsville. Absalom's sons Absalom III and John Warren Looney owned land just west of the Laniers. The Looney land included the confluence of Spring Branch with Indian Creek, where Looney's Mill and Looney's Landing were operated by John Looney. Burwell Lanier's uncle, the Rev. William Lanier, was also a Revolutionary War patriot, and his grave is in another of the several Lanier cemeteries on the arsenal.

<sup>11</sup> Ingersoll, Louise, "LANIER", Goetz Printing Company, Washington 7, D. C. (1965)



**At left, Lanier Cemetery 46-3, Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, AL, Jan. 28, 2003. Right, Jordan-Lanier Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, June 2002.**

The Lanier neighbors in this area included Austin L. Sands, John Timmons, James Cooper, William Patton, Sugars Turner, Richard Burdine, and Hughy Smith plus his son-in-law Pleasant S. Austin. As with the Laniers, all of these men owned far more land than just what is shown in T5-R1W. For example, Austin Sands was the 1818 “assignee” (took over payments) for a land patent of General John Coffee in Section 22 of T4-R2W, immediately north of Lady Ann Lake and west of Zierdt Road. He likewise patented in 1818 fractional Sections 30 and 31 in T5-R1W. In 1816 William Patton (believed to be the pre-WWII namesake of Patton Road, running from the end of Jordan Lane southward through the arsenal) patented land in Section 29 of T2-R1W, west of Pulaski Pike and along Carter’s Gin Road today. It was 1818 when Patton patented Sections 7 of T5-R2W and T3-R2W. The latter parcel is east of Old Railroad Bed Road and south of Nick Davis Road. It was likewise 1818 when he purchased the parcel shown as Section 18 of T5-R1W. Sugars Turner was one of the most prolific land speculators in Madison County, buying numerous parcels for later resale, including in Section 26 of T3-R2W. That parcel is east of Slaughter Road and along Highway 72 and Indian Creek. He patented the land of Section 12 in T5-R1W in 1810 and joined with Leroy Pope in 1812 to patent part of nearby Section 24, wherein Richard Burdine obtained land in 1818. Burdine is normally associated with land in the northeastern part of Madison County, but he left his name on the maps used by riverboat steamers in that there was a “Burdine Shoals” as the final obstacle to be circumvented in the approach to Ditto’s Landing from the west. The Whitesburg/Clement Comer Clay bridge was later erected very near that point in the river.



**Timmons Cemetery, Redstone Arsenal, Madison County, AL, Dec. 3, 2002.**

John Timmons has left a unique cemetery as his legacy on arsenal land. His family cemetery is full of above-ground box crypts, much like those found in New Orleans. The cemetery is in a heavily wooded area of the arsenal. There is no improved road to it today, but it is surrounded by a high brick wall and regularly maintained by the Army's groundskeepers.

The Timmons plantation house was nearby, but there are no traces left of it since the 1970s. The chimneys remained until that time. Timmons in 1818 took land in Sections 22, 23, 26, 27, and 34 of T5-R1W. Of course, he (like most of the other

pioneer landowners) also entered into private transactions recorded in Madison County deeds that are not part of the initial government land records provided in Cowart's book. Therefore, his total holdings ultimately covered quite a large area. His nearby neighbors included Hughy Smith and Pleasant Austin. Pleasant married Hughy's daughter Mary in 1827, but both men patented government land in Section 15-T5-R1W in 1818. In the 1830s Hughy bought land in Sections 10 and 22 to expand his plantation. The Smith and Austin families were well connected in Madison County politics and in the local circles of wealth in the early 1800s. Hughy died in 1857 at age 74, leaving his son Stanhope to control the estate. Stanhope was a doctor, and he apparently didn't like farming, so he moved to Morgan County and later came back to live in Huntsville. However, he sold the farm. A few years after Hughy's death, the plantation was in the hands of Henry W. Grantland. Henry had a daughter who married a Rice and had a son that she named Grantland Rice. Grantland Rice became the premier sportscaster in America. He used the phrase "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" for the Notre Dame football team's backfield in 1924. For many years thereafter, the college football championship trophy in America was called the Grantland Rice trophy in honor of this famous sportscaster who had ancestral roots in southern Madison County.

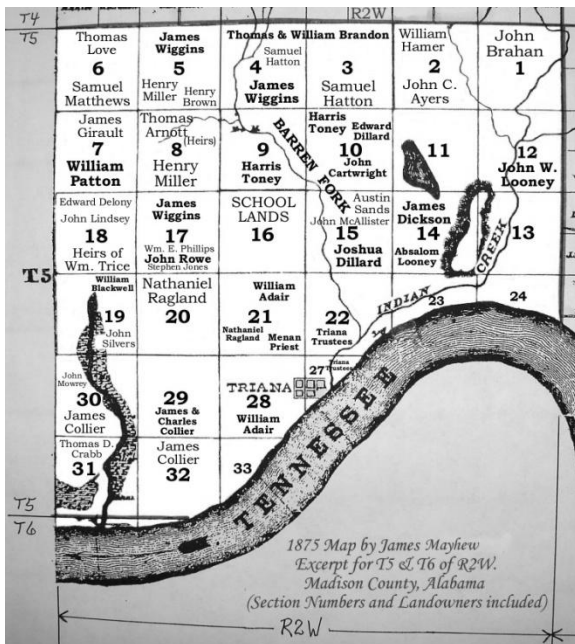
James Cooper is shown in the T5-R1W map as getting land in Section 20 in 1818. His story is tragic, in that he committed suicide by strapping an iron pot on his head and walking into the Tennessee River on Dec. 7, 1834. He had married Charity Allison less than 3 years earlier. Charity was about 10 years younger than her husband, who had accumulated a plantation of over 640 acres. About 6 years after James' death, Charity remarried. Her second husband was Houston H. Lea, a man 5 years younger than Charity. She must have expected him to outlive her, so before they married she recorded a prenuptial agreement banning Houston from inheriting any of her property. Houston already had land holdings that equaled hers, and since he passed away in 1853 before she did, Charity inherited his property. Even though she was a wealthy widow, the hard times of the Civil War wiped her out financially. She died penniless in 1872, after her lands were sold at auction in a sheriff's sale. The lands were purchased by Charity's cousins, James W. and Francis Fennell.



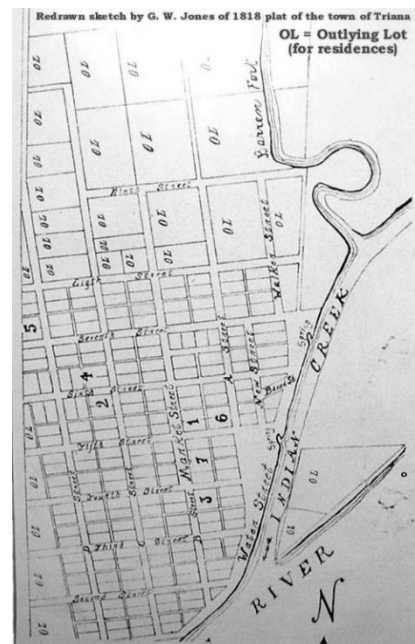
The house that James Cooper started for his bride and that Houston Lea expanded and completed was moved in 1977 to 104 Metaire Lane in Madison, where it still stands as a witness to its old plantation heritage. It sits near the crest of a ridge of the southern part of Rainbow Mountain, just north of Eastview Drive, with a panoramic view to the east, toward Huntsville and Monte Sano.



There were many others who obtained parcels in T5-R1W before statehood, and they all have significant stories that could be told. However, only a very few selected pioneer settlers of township-range quadrants will hereafter be mentioned in highly condensed snippets in order to fit page allocations. The T5-R2W area contains the mouth of Indian Creek at Triana, where it joins the Tennessee River. In fact, the town of Triana was platted on land purchased from the government by its 5 trustees on Feb. 4, 1818. These trustees have already been named in the earlier discussion of Gov. Thomas Bibb. One of them, William Adair (a lawyer and nephew of Kentucky's Gov. John Adair), also purchased land for himself in the area around the town, acquiring parcels in Sections 21 and 28, whereas the town is in Sections 22 and 27. (The 1875 map excerpted below erroneously shows part of the town in Section 28.) Another of the trustees, John Lindsey, bought land in Section 18.



1875 Map Excerpt: T5-R2W



Triana Plat

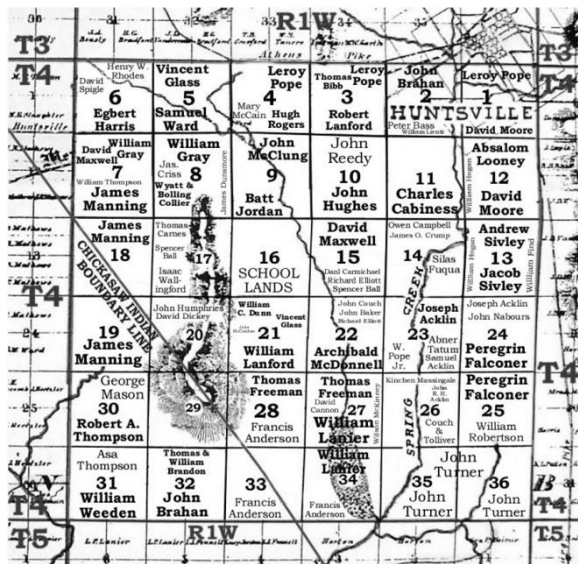
In this area, John W. Looney has already been mentioned as owning the land of Section 12, at the confluence of Indian Creek and Spring Branch, where Looney's Landing and Mill were located. By the 1830s, that land was purchased by Dr. Thomas Fearn and others of Huntsville for

the Indian Creek Navigation Company. This company operated a fleet of boats to transport bales of cotton from Huntsville to the Tennessee River landing at Triana for shipment to distant markets during the 1830s and 1840s. The coming of the railroad in the 1850s made the creek-based canal system obsolete, leading to the establishment of the railroad depot town of Madison a few miles to the north. That event was the death knell of riverboat transportation and of the town of Triana, as their role in commerce of the area shrank dramatically.

Another connection to the later town of Madison is seen in the land ownership of John Cartwright. Early researchers thought that Cartwright was the first settler of Madison. However, it is now known that he died several years before the town was founded, and he no doubt settled his family near Triana where he first owned area lands. His subsequent holdings were several miles west of the site of Madison's historic district, so he could not have been a pioneer of Madison, but he would have been a pioneer of Triana. Still another Madison connection comes from the plantation of James Wiggins. His son Richard owned the farm in the 1840s, and Richard's wife was Jackey Dunn. Jackey's brother Dr. William B. Dunn lived in the Wiggins household at the time of the 1850 census, but he became the first railroad depot agent in Madison, from 1856 to his death in 1871.

Perhaps the most prominent of the plantation owners along the river in this area was James Collier. His plantation was called Myrtle Grove, and his children were among the most influential people of north Alabama of their day. Henry Watkins Collier was a Supreme Court chief justice and governor of the state. Thomas Bouldin Collier married Mary Dent, a close relative of Julia Dent Grant, wife of the notorious Union General Ulysses S. Grant. Wyatt Collier married Janet Walker, daughter of James Walker of Nashville and thought to be connected to the William Walker who served as President of Nicaragua in 1856. Other children of James married into the famed Blackwell and Pickett families of the area, connecting them to several more governors of the state, physicians, and notable military officers.<sup>12</sup>

**Modified excerpt of 1875 map drawn by James Mayhew (original showing landowners of record in the 1870s). TR-R1W pioneer landowners shown per Cowart's book.**



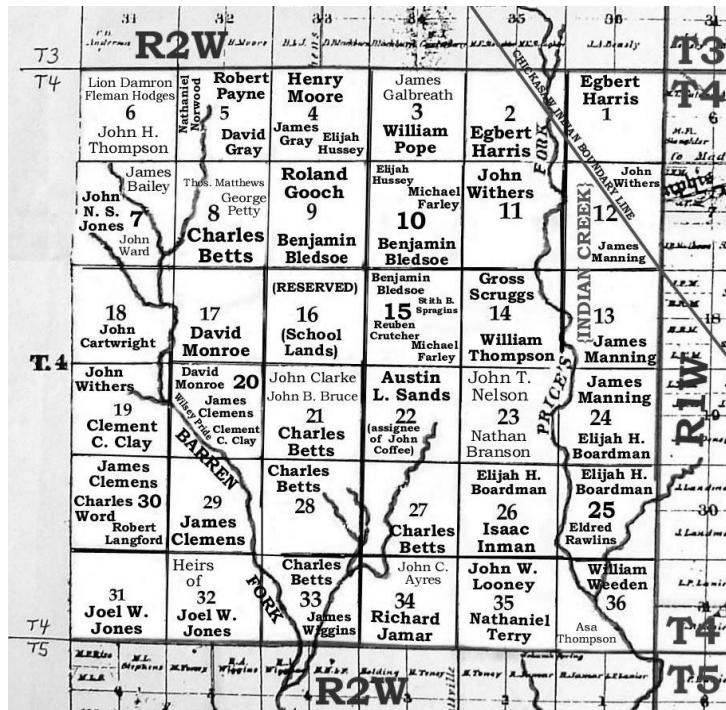
The pre-statehood pioneer landowners in T4-R1W included those who owned land near the southwestern portion of Huntsville, as shown on the map excerpt to the left. Among the notable landowners were LeRoy Pope (S1, 3, 4), Absalom Looney (S12), John Brahan (S2 & 32), Charles Cabiness (S11), William Weeden (S31), Thomas Freeman (S27 & 28), and William Lanier (S27 & 34). Additionally, parcels in this area were owned by James

<sup>12</sup> Edwards, Chris, and Axford, Faye, THE LURE AND LORE OF LIMESTONE COUNTY (ALABAMA), published for the Limestone County Historical Society, 1978, pp. 194-5.

Manning (S7, 18, 19), William Gray (S7 & 8), Batt Jordan (S9), and Robert Lanford (S3) and his son William (S21). It was William Lanford who in the 1850s constructed the Lanford-Slaughter mansion which still stands today on Old Madison Pike at Indian Creek. He married Charlotte Fennell, a granddaughter of Batt Jordan.

Batt Jordan was a patriot of the American Revolutionary War, and he donated land for an early Methodist Church (located near the Botanical Garden site today) that became known as Jordan's Chapel, where Batt is buried, according to family tradition. The church had first been chartered to meet on land of Robert Lanford, but it moved to Jordan's more favorable location in the 1820s. Another Revolutionary War soldier, William Gray, took land adjacent to Batt's holdings. William Gray's wife was Eleanor Wardrobe Blackburn, a widow and a sister of Lord Wardrobe of Scotland.<sup>13</sup> Gray also served on the first jury selected in Madison County, and a grandson founded Huntsville, Texas, named after his hometown in Madison County. Another of Gray's neighbors was Dr. James Manning, who was quite possibly one of the wealthiest men of the area. Manning married a daughter of Robert Thompson, who owned land in Section 30, adjacent to Manning's holdings in Section 19. Another of Thompson's daughters was married to Gov. Thomas Bibb, who owned land not far away from Manning. It was Manning who built "The Grove" in Huntsville, a large house occupied later by his son-in-law, General Bartley M. Lowe, who headed the bank in that town. After Lowe, the house was occupied by Lowe's son-in-law, Nicholas Davis Jr.<sup>14</sup>

Several of the pre-statehood pioneers of T4-R2W were squatters on Chickasaw Indian lands before the cession of 1814 and legal purchase date of February 1818.



This is the area where the town of Madison was founded in 1857, in Section 16. That section in each township and range quadrant was always reserved by the government for use by the state to fund public education. However, in 1854, most of S16 of T4-R2W was sold by the state to James Clemens, who began development of a town beside the railroad tracks. Clemens purchased numerous parcels of land in north Alabama, including acreage in Sections 20, 29, and 30 of T4-R2W in 1818. Clemens died in 1860, and his son U.S. Sen. Jeremiah Clemens died in 1865 before the estate was settled. John Cartwright, formerly presumed to have been the first settler in the town of Madison, purchased land in

<sup>13</sup> Madison County Heritage Book Committee, Op. Cit., page 215.

<sup>14</sup> Edwards, Chris, and Axford, Faye, Op. Cit., page 63.

Section 18, two miles west of where the town was located. Cartwright died almost 20 years before the establishment of the town.

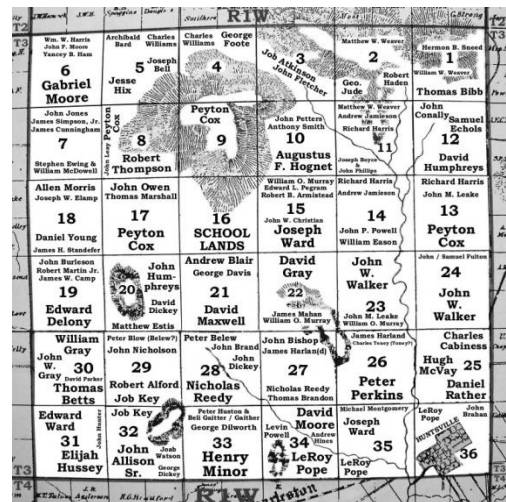
Clement Comer Clay, who became the 8<sup>th</sup> governor of the state, purchased land in Sections 19 and 20. His land adjoined that of John Withers, who became his father-in-law when Clement married Susannah Claiborne Withers in 1815. Withers held land in Sections 11 and 12. James Manning also had land in Sections 12, 13, & 24. His land in S24 was near that of Elijah Boardman (S24, 25, & 26), while nearby was land of William Weeden (S36) and of Nathaniel Terry and John W. Looney (both in S35). Boardman and Terry were names involved with the American Asylum (an institute for the deaf and mute) in Hartford, Connecticut. For a time, that institution was involved in ownership of portions of Boardman's land and his mill on Indian Creek before Richard Lipscomb later acquired it.

Charles Betts obtained land in Sections 28 and 33. His descendants included local judges and attorneys of great accomplishments.<sup>15</sup> In fact, one of his great grandsons, Edward C. Betts of Huntsville, became chief of the legal staff for General Eisenhower during WWII and was the primary architect of the Nuremberg Trials. Robert Payne took land in Section 5, a portion of which he later deeded to the early Providence Presbyterian Church that disbanded in the 1920s. Payne was a son-in-law of Henry Brown of Huntsville, who in turn was a son-in-law of the Father of Huntsville, LeRoy Pope. Brown, Pope, and Payne engaged in several land transactions among them before Payne moved to Mississippi, where he died in 1843.



Section 7 of T4-R2W was land of James Bailey, who was the father-in-law of famed Primitive Baptist preacher Reuben Crutcher of the area. He was also a grandfather of Sarah Abernathy, who married Edmund James Hughes, progenitor of the historic local Hughes families and first public school educator of Madison. The two-story log cabin of James Bailey that served as the first stage stop between Huntsville and Mooresville in pioneer days is still preserved, incorporated into the modern home of Dr. Charles Whitworth on the south side Mill Road near County Line Road.

Pioneer landowners in T3-R1W are shown in the map segment to the right. The town of Huntsville was then contained in Section 36, the southeastern corner. From 1810 Col. Peter Perkins held land in Section 26, now located south of Oakwood Avenue, north of University Drive, and east of the Parkway in this quadrant. Perkins headed the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Mississippi Territorial Militia during the War of 1812. He also was Clerk of the Superior Court in Huntsville in 1810, and he served in the Territorial House of Representatives 1812-1813. Just to the east, in Section 25, were Daniel Rather and Hugh McVay. Rather was county coroner in 1815 and served

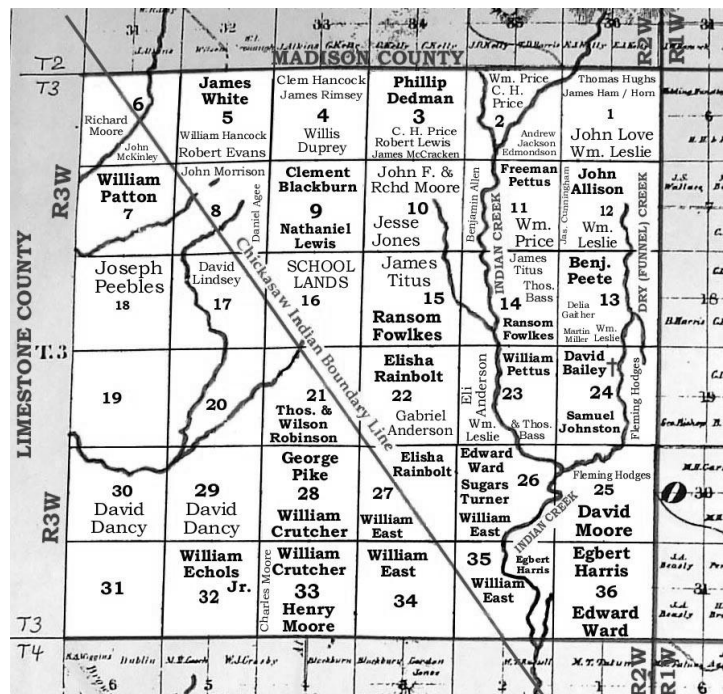


<sup>15</sup> Rankin, John P., Op. Cit., page 68.

in the 1819 Constitutional Convention. McVay was Speaker of the Senate and in 1837 became governor of the state.

Henry Minor had land in Section 33. He served in the House of Representatives in 1819, at which time he joined with LeRoy Pope and Clement Clay to host U.S. President James Monroe at a banquet in Huntsville. Minor was elected justice of the Alabama Supreme Court in 1823.<sup>16</sup> Pope had additional land in Sections 34 and 35, as well as the land of Huntsville in Section 36. Nicholas Reedy had land in Sections 27 and 28, from which he gave a title bond for an acre of land in 1817 to the Canaan Meeting House of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church that was meeting and camping on his land (along the eastern edge of Oakwood College property today). Robert Thompson held land in Section 8, while his son-in-law (Gov. Thomas Bibb) had land in Section 1.

The pioneer landowners of T3-R2W included such notables as Phillip Dedman, Nathaniel Lewis, Elisha Rainbolt, David Bailey, and William East. Dedman was son of Samuel, who was son of another Phillip of York Co. VA, who died in 1770. Samuel's sons Henry, Frank, and Phillip came to Madison County around 1814. Phillip eventually owned about 1,000 acres and was considered a man of great wealth for the time. He was married twice, having 14 children. His descendants intermarried with the Wall, Tuck, Vaughn, Hilliard, and Halsey families of the area. Nathaniel Lewis was a son of Revolutionary War soldier Edward Lewis. Nathaniel came to Madison County before 1816. The Lewis ancestry in Virginia is closely allied with that of Nicholas Meriwether, Thomas Jefferson and George Washington.



+ In Section 24 is approximate location of Salem Baptist Church per 1817 deed by David Bailey.

Nathaniel Lewis' grandson Meriwether Anderson Lewis purchased land near Triana and had a plantation at the south end of today's airport. According to family tradition, he also owned at least three riverboats to transport cotton. Meriwether's son Arthur H. Lewis became a pioneer citizen of the town of Madison. In 1818 Nathaniel Lewis purchased the land of David Bailey in Section 24, separated by about three miles from the parcel that he had obtained from the government in Section 9 on Jan. 1, 1816. Bailey's land was less than a full quarter section, because in 1816 he had deeded 3 acres to the Salem Baptist Church, which was already meeting on his land. Bailey's parcel was stated as being along "Funnel Creek", which is now known as Dry Creek (a fork of Indian Creek), where it passes west of John's Road and south of Plummer

<sup>16</sup> Edwards, Chris, and Axford, Faye, Op. Cit., page 198

Road. Bailey is believed to have been a son of Moses Bailey and a brother of James Bailey, who lived near County Line Road and south of Mill Road, in the northwest quarter of Section 18, T4-R2W.<sup>17</sup> Elisha Rainbolt had holdings in Section 27 of T3-R2W, on the north end of Rainbow Mountain, a label derived from phonetic distortion of his name.<sup>18</sup> He was part of the Sims Settlement and served in the local militia during the War of 1812. He had arrived in Madison County well before the 1816 Chickasaw cession and “squatted” on his land, along with neighbors Jesse Martin, Jesse Fitts, and William East. East acquired extensive lands in the area, including Sections 26, 34, and 35 with the parcel that he held in Section 27, where Rainbolt had his initial holdings.

The pioneer landowners in T2-R1W included Waddy Tate (Section 1), Robert Donnell (S10), Robert Thompson (S12 & 13), Thomas Bibb (S11, 13, 14, 23, & 24), Thomas Freeman (S26 & 35), Eli Hammond (S19), James Manning (S25), and John Brahan (S27). Thomas Freeman was the government surveyor of the county, and he apparently had first-hand knowledge of which parcels of land would be the best in each area. He made out his will (probated here in 1821) in Washington, Mississippi (the Territorial Capitol), naming his heirs as Caroline Elizabeth Neal (wife of Madison County’s first sheriff, Stephen Neal) and her son George Washington Neal of Madison County.

T1						
T2	James Cole 6	5	John Harless 4	John Childress 3	Charles Samuel Thomas Brown John Milkin 2	James Taylor 1
	Martin Cole	Jacob & Colby Jackson	Thomas Morrow	Samuel Green	John Milam	Waddy Tate
	John Eddins 7	Parker Campbell	James Mullins 9	Robert Donnell 10	Jane Taylor 11	Robert Thompson 12
	Daniel Coursey	Joseph Steel	John S. Garner	Joseph Steel	Thomas Bibb	
	John B. Rogers 18	David Moore 17	SCHOOL LANDS 16	Frances Haynes 15	Thomas Bibb 14	Robert Thompson 13
	William Shoulders	Joshua Butcher		Robert Clark	James Lloyd	Thomas Bibb 24
	Eli Hammond 19	John Dentz 20	Henry Knall 21	David Monroe 22	Thomas Bibb 23	Thomas Bibb 24
	Joseph Steel	Cornelius Clark	Michael Box	Robert Clark John Black & Smith 27	Isham Watkins 26	Isham Watkins 25
	William Mullins 30	William Patton 29	Gabriel Hancock 28	David Humphreys 27	Stephen Pate 26	James Manning 25
	Neil McCarne	James Priest 32	David Draper	John Brahan 34	Thomas Freeman 35	Benjamin S. Pope 36
	Wm & Robt Hancock 31	James Priest 32	Rowland Cornelius George Foote 33	John Brahan John Powell 34	Thomas Freeman 35	Benjamin S. Pope 36
	Henry & Abe Miller	Samuel Priest	Richard Harris		Thomas C. Perry 35	Charles Hedgpath 36
T3						

Waddy Tate was a physician, already mentioned as one of the trustees of the town of Triana in T5-R2W. He also has the distinction of being involved in the first recorded duel in Madison County. It was reported that in 1811<sup>19</sup> he (at age 25) duelled with Clement Comer Clay, who had just arrived in Huntsville at age 22 that year and would become governor of the state 1835-7.<sup>20</sup> Obviously, no mortal wounds were inflicted, as both men went on to have long highly productive careers. Tate’s ancestors were connected to the Bibb, Harris, and Washington families of Virginia, including the ancestors of George Washinton.<sup>21</sup> Robert Donnell was likely the same person of that name who came to the area in 1809 as a Cumberland Presbyterian minister from the old Buffalo Church in Guilford County, North Carolina. He was born there in 1784 and was

<sup>17</sup> Rankin, John P., Op. Cit., page 135

<sup>18</sup> Taylor, (Judge) Thomas Jones, page 14.

<sup>19</sup> Alabama Department of Archives & History, “Alabama Governors On-Line” says the time was 1823.

<sup>20</sup> Madison County Heritage Book Committee, Op. Cit., page 2 and page 141.

<sup>21</sup> Edwards, Chris, and Axford, Faye, Op. Cit., pages 172 and 195-6.

one of the authors of the 1814 Cumberland Presbyterian Confession of Faith.<sup>22</sup> He started several churches of the denomination in this area, and pastored the church in Mooresville later in life, ending his ministry in Athens, where his house remains today.

Thomas Bibb and his father-in-law Robert Thompson held land in T2-R1W just as they had in other quadrants. Not only did they often purchase adjacent parcels, but Thompson breathed his last breath in the house of his son-in-law at Belle Mina in 1829.<sup>23</sup>

1875 Map by James Madison, Madison County, Alabama (Section Numbers and Landowners included)	T1	6 Richard Robertson	Philemon Beckham 5	Daniel Tillman 4 William Easter	John Linnard 3 James G. Flournoy	Washington Eddins 2 Adam Scruggs 1 Daniel Tillman	Washington Eddins 1 Matthew Harris	T1
	T2	7 Joe & Wm. Ellis Valentine Hardgrove	8	9 William Easter	10	11 M. Dockery John Robinson	12 Robert Harper James Cunningham	T2
	T2	18 Thomas Wilson Jonathan Hardy	17 Jonathan Hardy	16 SCHOOL LANDS	15 Samuel Bennett	14 John Lane James D. Wright	13 Thomas S. Hill Obediah Jones	T2
	T2	19 Charles Burrus	20 William Grant John Hardie	21 Eli Hammond	22 Griffith Linnard George A. Lowe	23 Littleberry Adams William Bailey	24 Obediah Jones Gabriel Hancock	T2
	T2	30 Robert Roberts Mark & Henry Meacham	29 Thomas Grey	28 William Grant James Sanderson	27 Richard Ford Lewis Sanderson	26 Charles Dement Magness Teague	25 William Chennault John Shappock	T2
	T2	31 Thomas Grey	32 John Brunson	33 Henry Dedman David Capshaw	34 John Craig Nancy Scott	35 Samuel Jones Samuel Mardis	36 Wm. Barrett J. E. Lockhart	T2
	T2							T2
	T2							T2
	T3							T3



Left, map of T2-R2W. Above, Ford’s Chapel portrait by Judy Tuck.

Pre-statehood landowners in T2-R2W included Eli Hammond (Section 21), Richard Ford (S27), William Chennault (S25), and David Capshaw (S33).

Ford’s Chapel was established in 1808 on the land of Richard Ford in Section 27, making it the oldest Methodist Church in the state, according to a history of the church by Suzanne Schultz submitted to the Madison County heritage book of 1998.<sup>24</sup> Eli Hammond held land in Section 19 of T2-R1W, as well as in Section 21 of T2-R2W. His tombstone shows his lifespan from 1761 to 1842, and it shows the title of “Captain”. Research shows that he was a captain of a unit of Tennessee in the War of 1812. He was a friend of Andrew Jackson and father of Madison County’s 1853-9 Probate Judge Ferdinand L. Hammond. As Executor of Eli’s estate of 800 acres, Ferdinand sold the land to his brother Arthur in 1844 for \$1. The next year Arthur sold 361 acres of it back to Ferdinand for \$100, with no involvement by the several other heirs of Eli. Section 25 included land of William Chennault, a son of Stephen and a brother of Morris.<sup>25</sup> All three Chennaults held land in Sections 25 and 26 of T1-R1W.<sup>26</sup> According to input made by

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pages 7-8

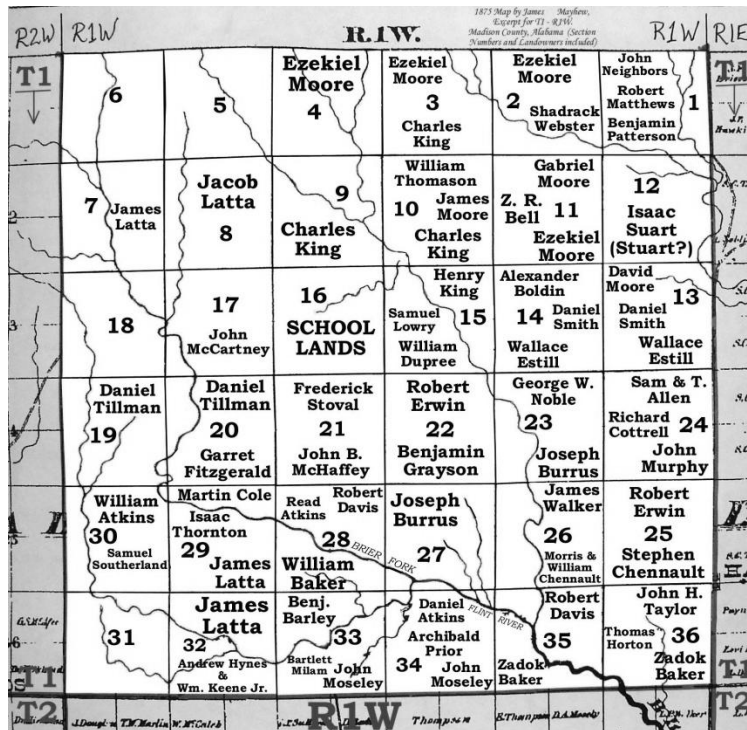
<sup>23</sup> Madison County Heritage Book Committee, Op. Cit., pp. 440-1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., page 20.

<sup>25</sup> Lawrence County Heritage Book Committee, “The Heritage of Lawrence County, Alabama”, Heritage Publishing Consultants, Inc., of Clanton , Alabama; printed by Walsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1998; pages 100-1.

<sup>26</sup> Cowart, Margaret, Op. Cit., page 8.

Belle M. Chenault of Decatur, AL, to the Madison County heritage book, another son of Stephen, John Nelson Chennault, was a great grandfather of General Claire Lee Chennault, commander of the famous “Flying Tigers” of World War II.<sup>27</sup> The David Preston Capshaw (born 1779 in NC) who owned land in Section 33, T2-R2W, was the father of David Granville Capshaw (1817-1872), for whom the community of Capshaw is named today. Some lines of their ancestry have been documented back to the 1620s on postings to Ancestry.com, with connections to the Tate and Watkins families.



The pioneer landowners in T1-R1W included Daniel Tillman, James and Jacob Latta, and Ezekiel, Gabriel, and David Moore. Daniel Tillman had land in T1-R2W and in T2-R2W as well as in T1-R1W. He was born in 1776 in SC, and his estate began probate in 1827 Madison County. Allen Walls became Administrator of the estate in 1849 after three earlier administrators. William Walls was among the men who made bond for the three initial administrators. Daniel Tillman was a 16<sup>th</sup> great grandson of English author Geoffrey Chaucer and a 6<sup>th</sup> cousin of Eli Whitney, per Ancestry One World Tree.

James Latta was born around 1840 in NC. He was reported by the Latta Organization (online) to have died in 1856 in Madison County. However, the *Southern Democrat* (a Huntsville newspaper) reported on April 11, 1860 that James “Latty” had passed away at age 102. He was mentioned as a volunteer in the Revolutionary War, but his enfeebled father had arranged a substitute for him, per Thomas M. Owen’s listing of Revolutionary soldiers in Alabama. Jacob Latta was probably a son of James, as his listings on Ancestry.com do not show him having a brother or father of that name, nor do they show any children due to lack of data. However, it was reported in the *Southern Advocate* that his father-in-law was named Jacob Allen, so he may have named a son after that Jacob. Likewise, the relationships of the several Moore families that owned land in this area has been elusive. It is known from census and other records that Ezekiel was born in 1769 in North Carolina, Gabriel in 1785 in North Carolina, and David in 1779 in Virginia.<sup>28</sup> David Moore owned nine plantations, was a physician and trustee of Huntsville, and was a personal friend of General Andrew Jackson, with whom he served in the Creek Indian War of 1813-5 as Surgeon-General. David became a judge in Madison County and served in the Territorial Legislature as well as in both houses of the state legislature, becoming Speaker of the House in 1841. Gabriel Moore similarly had a long political career, becoming the fifth governor of Alabama in 1829.

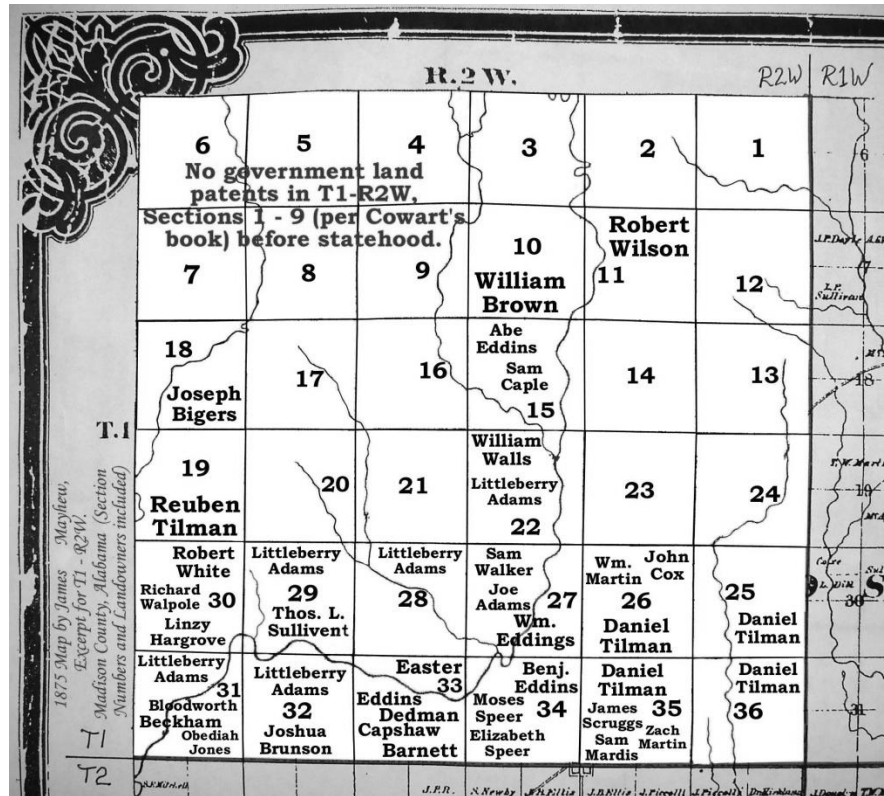
<sup>27</sup> Madison County Heritage Book Committee, Op. Cit., pages 136-7.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, pages 347-8 plus federal census records of Madison County, 1830, 1840, and 1850.



Not everyone liked him, as he was attacked with a loaded pistol in Huntsville in 1821.<sup>29</sup> Of course, he was himself a man who fought a duel with his own brother-in-law. In 1843 he took his eight slaves to Cincinnati and emancipated them, then moved with them to Panola County, Mississippi. In 1844 he moved to Texas, where he died a few months later in 1845. It was also reported that while in Huntsville he had fathered a child by a slave, which no doubt further intensified dislike of him in the area.<sup>30</sup>

The earliest owners of land in T1-R2W included Littleberry Adams (Sections 22, 28, 29, 31, & 32), William Walls (S22), and Daniel Tillman (S25, 26, 35, 36). Daniel also had land in T2-R2W and in T1-R2W. The history of all three of these men is closely interwoven. Littleberry Adams had a sister Sarah who married Flooda Mitchell, with the two families coming together from South Carolina in 1808 to northern Alabama. Flooda and Sarah settled in Limestone County, where their descendants included connections with the Scruggs, Cartwright, Crutcher, Bailey, Hargrove, and Millhouse families.



T1-R2W

The Adams and Mitchell connections<sup>31</sup> can be further associated with Tillman and other recognizable surnames of this area by a look at the early records of Edgefield District, South Carolina. There Frederick and Daniel Tillman had transactions with the Samuel Walker family, as did Thomas, Littleberry, and Joseph Adams plus Thomas Terry and Joseph Eddins.<sup>32</sup> In the Madison County records, Littleberry Adams was defendant in a suit in Superior Court (1811-1819 minute book) brought by Robert Beaty regarding a keelboat. William Walls was previously mentioned as having made bond for the first three administrators of Daniel Tillman's estate, of which Allen Walls was administrator in 1849. Both Walls may have been sons of Alexander G.


<sup>29</sup> Pruitt, Raneer G., "Eden of the South, A Chronology of Huntsville, Alabama, 1805-2005", published by the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, 2005, page 13.

<sup>30</sup> Doss, Harriet E., "Alabama Review", July 2000.

<sup>31</sup> Edwards, Chris, and Axford, Faye, Op. Cit., pages 68 and 70.

<sup>32</sup> Russell, Judith F., (on-line) "Database of 300 Citations With South Carolina Walker References, 1770-1820", draft of 2002.

Wall(s), who had land in T5-R1W, near the Tennessee River. The interplays among these settlers and early landowners is just another illustration of the closely intertwined lives of those who lived here. The citizens of Huntsville often owned land well outside the city's boundaries, and even those generally associated with Limestone County sometimes owned land in Madison County. Perhaps we should learn to be less conscious of lines of separation and more willing to see ourselves as the pioneers did – just living together in an interactive community.



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When preparing this article, Archive.org listed 83,947 items in its genealogy collection. That number grows every day or so and may be a bit larger by the time you read these words.

Many of the items were scanned at Archive.org's headquarters in San Francisco, but these are supplemented by digitization projects of several other participating organizations, including the following: the [Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center](#) in Fort Wayne, Indiana; the Roberts Library at the [University of Toronto](#); the [University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library](#); [Brigham Young University](#) in Provo, Utah; the [National Library of Scotland](#); the Indianapolis City Library's [Indianapolis City Directory and Yearbooks Collection](#); The Leo Baeck Institute Archives of German-speaking Jewry, [Leo Baeck Institute Archives](#); and the [Boston Public Library](#).

Taken from the *Eastman Online Newsletter*

## Indian Creek Engagement

By John P. Rankin

On Dec. 23, 1864, 150 years ago, one of two significant engagements of the Civil War occurred along Indian Creek near Madison. The creek was shown on some maps then as Hurricane Creek or Price's Fork or Six Mile Creek, due to its location about six miles from old Huntsville. One of the Confederates involved in the December 1864 conflict was Capt. James Bennington Irvine. He was in Company F, 4th Alabama Cavalry, CSA. Irvine wrote his war memoirs while imprisoned after being wounded in the fight.

Col. John Burtwell and 150 men of the 4th Alabama Cavalry encamped along Indian Creek near the railroad bridge on Dec. 20. Col. Burtwell had fence rails burned on the railroad bridge on Dec. 22, realizing that the Union forces could reach the Confederate position from Huntsville by horse and by rail within 15 minutes. The rebels could hear heavy cannonading at Decatur to their rear and numerous whistles in Huntsville at the railroad depot. They knew that a large Union cavalry force had occupied Huntsville in the last few days and was being reinforced with infantry. They were awaiting Confederate reinforcements that were overdue, and all scouts that they sent out to either east or west had failed to return. The men were exhausted from continuous duty guarding many roads, and spirits were low as the weather was extremely cold.

During the night of Dec. 23, according to Union and Irvine's reports, a Negro man left the Confederate camp and reported to the Union forces in Huntsville that the rebels were about to attack. Union Col. Prosser



**Capt. James Bennington Irvine**

thought that there was a brigade of rebel forces gathered at the creek, so he decided to initiate a surprise attack. He ordered 300 men to move out at 3 in the morning. The Union force arrived at Indian Creek at dawn on the 23rd. As described in the Union accounts, the morning was excessively cold and piercing, while the roads were frozen hard. Even the creek itself was frozen. Moving at a fast trot, Col. Prosser

turned to George House, the Union bugler, and commanded him to blow the charge. Simultaneously, he spurred his horse forward. However, the bugle did not sound, so Col. Prosser turned around and swore at George for not blowing the charge. House had the bugle to his lips, and replied from the side of his mouth as best he could that he would blow it as soon as his lips thawed out the metal. It had frozen to his lips.

From Irvine's Confederate account, he and Col. Burtwell had arisen before the attack. They rode down the hill to the soldiers' camp while everything was still quiet. "We then rode to the bridge, which was about a quarter mile off, and saw that it was thoroughly destroyed," he stated. Irvine said that he then rode to the "Y" in the creek, where the point of the attack occurred. The only place of such a split near the railroad bridge across the creek is along Old Madison Pike today. That pike is the old road from Huntsville to Madison Station. It can be deduced that the conflict occurred along the creek at the current location of Madison Academy along Slaughter Road. The engagement was a complete rout of the rebels, leaving very few killed, many wounded, and about 60 captured.

# Marshall County

## MARSHALL COUNTY, ALABAMA – 1936 DEATH NOTICES THE GUNTERSVILLE DEMOCRAT and ALBERTVILLE HERALD

Contributed by Betty Taylor, Marshall County Archives

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	DEATH DATE	NAME & DATE OF PAPER
A			
Abercrombie,	John L.	Sept. 05, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 09, 1936
Abney,	Billy	Dec. 31, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Amos,	Ida	Sept. 10, 1936	Herald, Sept. 24, 1936
Amos,	Pierce	Mar. 01, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936
Ashley,	Mrs. Washington	Aug. 31, 1936	Herald, Aug. 27, 1936
B			
Baggett,	Claude L.	Nov. 04, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Bagwell,	J. C.	Mar. 31, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 08, 1936
Baker,	Dyke	Nov. 07, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Baldwin,	C. C.	Dec. 13, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Baldwin,	Mrs. George	Jan. 17, 1936	Herald, Jan. 23, 1936
Beard,	Myrtle	Nov. 08, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Bearden,	Elizabeth C.	Dec. 07, 1936	Democrat - Dec. 16, 1936
Bedford,	Dock	Dec., 1936	Democrat - Dec. 23, 1936
Bell,	Oscar	Oct. 21, 1936	Advertiser-Democrat - Oct. 28, 1936
Berney,	Martha	November, 1936	Herald, Dec. 17, 1936
Bemey,	William C.	Jan. 17, 1936	Herald, Jan. 23, 1936
Biddle,	Ella P.	May. 11, 1936	Herald, May 14, 1936
Black,	Malinda	Aug. 01, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 05, 1936
Black,	Mrs. W. E.	Nov. 08, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Blevins,	Gladys	Jun. 03, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 10, 1936
Bobo,	Clifford	Dec. 22, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Bodine,	Pete	Feb. 27, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936
Bonds,	Albert	Apr. 23, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 29, 1936
Bonds,	Shirley	Jun. 16, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 24, 1936
Boyce,	L. D. "Eick"	Jan. 20, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 22, 1936
Brand,	Marie	Nov. 08, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Brashier,	Mrs. Reuben	Apr. 13, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 15, 1936
Brashier,	Mrs. John	Apr. 12, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 15, 1936
Brashier,	Rebecca	Apr. 03, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 15, 1936
Brown,	Bobbie Ray	Feb. 12, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 19, 1936
Brown,	Jake	Jan. 15, 1936	Herald, Mar. 05, 1936
Brown,	Jesse	Jul. 04 1936	Democrat - Jul. 08, 1936
Brown,	Josephine	Dec., 1936	Democrat - Dec. 16, 1936
Brown,	L. H.	Jul. 08, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 08, 1936

## Marshall County

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Brown,	Mary	Nov. 09, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12,1936
Burgess,	Melvina	Mar. 1936	Democrat - Mar. 11.1936
Burke,	Robert R.	Dec. 03, 1935	Democrat - Dec. 09,1936
Burroughs,	J. L.	Sept. 03, 1936	Democrat - Sept.09 1936

### C

Calhoun,	Lore	Oct. 09, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 14,1936
Camp,	Charles D.	Feb. 20,1936	Herald, Feb. 27, 1936
Cantrell,	Mrs. Grover	Dec. 27, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Carter,	Ima Gene	Jan. 30,1936	Democrat - Feb. 05, 1936
Center,	Frank	September, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04,1936
Chandler,	Mrs. J. D.	Jan. 16, 1936	Herald, Jan. 23, 1936
Clay,	Buddy	Mar. 24, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 01,1936
Click,	Sampson R.	Jul. 15, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 05, 1936
Coker-Ridgway,	Martha A.	Oct. 04, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 18, 1936
Collins,	Isaac Henry	May.. 07,1936	Democrat - May 13, 1936
Collins,	Texanna	Feb. 21, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26,1936
Collins,	Vela	Oct. 27, 1936	Herald, Oct. 29, 1936
Coman,	Boyd E. Baker	Dec. 03,1935	Democrat - Jan. 08, 1936
Connally,	J. W.	Feb. 23, 1936	Herald, Feb. 27, 1936
Croxton,	Finis W.	Mar. 19, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 25 1936
Cryar,	Araie F.	Dec. 31, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Culbert,	Ellen	Apr. 18, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 22, 1936
Culpepper,	Nancy Jane	Jul. 03, 1936	Herald, Jul. 09,1936

### D

Dalrymple,	Dorothy	Apr. 21, 1936	Herald, Apr. 23, 1936
Dalrymple,	Mrs. L. F.	Dec. 25, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Daugette,	Alma	Jun. 03,1936	Democrat - Jun. 10, 1936
Davis,	Gertrude	Aug. 16, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 19, 1936
Deal,	Will Samuel	May.. 21,1936	Democrat - Jun. 03, 1936
Dendy,	W. J., MG	Jan. 24, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 05, 1936
Denton,	Ralph	Aug. 08, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 12, 1936
Dingier,	J. J.	Jul. 27, 1936	Herald, Jul. 30, 1936
Dispennett,	Ada	Sept. 30, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 07,1936
Donahue,	Julia Ann	Feb. 11,1936	Herald, Feb. 20, 1936
Dowdy,	Nancy Jane	Feb. 11, 1936	Herald, Feb. 20, 1936
Drake,	Annie	Jul. 12, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 15,1936
Drake,	James T.	Jan. 24, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 29, 1936
Driver,	John K.	May. 07, 1936	Herald, May 14, 1936
Dyar,	Mary	Nov. 13, 1936	Herald, Nov. 19, 1936

### E

East,	Mary Elizabeth	Nov. 07,1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Eggleston,	J. B.	Mar. 01,1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936
Elder,	Anna D.	December, 1936	Herald, Dec. 17,1936
Ellenberg,	Louisa	Oct. 06, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 07,1936

## Marshall County

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Ellenberg,	Mrs. J. T., Sr.	Oct. 06, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 14, 1936
Ellis,	Lattie	Jun.01, 1936	Herald, Jun. 04, 1936
Ennis,	W. P.	Dec. 06, 1936	Democrat - Dec. 16, 1936
Etchison,	J. C.	Jan. 18,1936	Democrat - Jan. 22, 1936

### F

Ferguson,	Ruby Jeanette	Jan. 06, 1936	Herald, Jan. 09, 1936
Finney,	Mrs. O. H.	Aug. 14, 1936	Herald, Aug. 20, 1936
Fletcher,	Mrs. George	Dec. 31, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Fobear,	Renna	Sept. 24, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
Foster,	Barbara Ann	Nov. 16, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 18, 1936
Frazier,	Odell	Feb. 01, 1936	Herald, Feb. 06, 1936
Frith,	W. O., Jr.	January, 1936	Democrats Jan. 08, 1836
Fuell,	Herbert	Jan. 29, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 05,1936
Fulcher,	Ella Christopher	Nov. 01, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 04,1936
Fullerton,	James Renrick	Aug. 21, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 26, 1936

### G

Garland,	Mr. & Mrs. Hugh	Jan. 15, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Gaston,	Infant	Dec. 26, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31,1936
Gilley,	Francis M.	Nov. 21, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 25,1936
Gillian,	W. A.	Mar. 31,1936	Herald, Apr. 02,1936
Goble,	Maggie M.	Mar. 29, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 01,1936
Golden,	Effie S.	Jan. 05, 1936	Herald, Jan. 09,1936
Goodwin,	Mrs. W. P., Dora B.	Oct. 26, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 28,1936
Gore,	P. P.	Jul. 09, 1936	Herald, Jul. 16,1936
Graden,	John T.	Nov. 22, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 25, 1936
Grant,	Shirley Ann	Apr. 06, 1936	Herald, Apr. 16, 1836
Gray,	Margaret E.	Nov. 07, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12, 1936
Green,	George Edward	Sept. 22, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
Green,	Sallie	Sept. 17, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
Gross,	Harvey "Pete"	February, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 12,1936
Gullion,	Tom	Jul. 26, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 29,1936

### H

Halbrooks,	Tempie	Jul. 11, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 15,1936
Hall,	Lillie M.	February	Herald, Feb. 06,1936
Hambrick,	Mrs. C. D.	Jan. 21, 1936	Herald, Jan. 23, 1936
Hamby,	Buford	Mar. 29,1936	Herald, Apr. 02, 1936
Harris,	Mrs. Toomer	Mar. 22 or 29, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 01, 1936
Hart,	Mrs. Grady	Oct. 25, 1936	Herald, Oct. 29, 1936
Haynes,	Chester Olin	Mar. 20, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 25 1936
Head,	Ida	Oct. 24, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 28, 1936
Head,	Lee	Oct. 24, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 28, 1936
Henderson,	John Wesley	Jan. 25, 1936	Herald, Feb.27, 1936
Hendon,	Katie Anna	October, 1936	Herald, Oct. 29,1936
Hendricks,	James Lewis	Jan. 20, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 22, 1936

## Marshall County

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Higgins,	Anna Jordan	Jul. 06,1936	Herald, Jul. 09, 1936
Hubbard,	Sarah Jane	Dec. 21, 1936	Democrat - Dec. 23,1936
Hubbard,	Mrs. T. C.	Jul. 15, 1936	Herald, Jul. 23, 1936
Hudgins,	V. B.	Jul. 10, 1936	Herald, Jul. 16, 1936
Hunt,	Charles L.	Feb. 25, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936
Hyde,	W. H.	Feb. 12, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 19, 1936

### I

Isdell,	Mrs. Joe	Sept. 25, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 30, 1936
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### J

Jackson,	G. D.	Dec. 31, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Jackson,	T. J.	May.. 20, 1936	Democrat - May 20,1936
Jetton,	Miss Ree H.	Dec. 1935	Democrat - Jan. 01, 1936
Johnson,	Durwood	Nov. 13, 1936	Herald, Nov. 19, 1936
Johnson,	George	Apr. 02, 1936	Herald, Apr. 09, 1936
Johnson,	Josie	Jan. 22, 1936	Herald, Jan. 23, 1936
Johnson,	Mildred Mary	Dec. 27, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Johnson,	Morris	Mar. 29, 1936	Herald, Apr. 09, 1936
Johnson,	Nancy M.	Mar. 01,1936	Democrat - Mar. 04,1936
Johnson,	Morris	Mar. 29,1936	Democrat - Apr. 08, 1936
Johnson,	Rufus,	Oct. 11, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 14, 1936
Joiley,	Bettie Jo	Oct. 27, 1936	Herald, Oct. 29, 1936
Jones,	Frances	Dec. 26, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Jones,	Lizzie Cobb	Jun., 1936	Democrat - Jun. 24, 1936
Jordan,	Gerald	Feb. 24, 1936	Herald, Feb. 27, 1936

### K

Karr,	Mrs. John	Dec. 27, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Keith,	Mrs. Lemual	Aug. 23, 1936	Herald, Aug. 27 1936
Kennedy,	Etta Collins	Jan. 06, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 15, 1936
Knight,	Nancy	Apr. 10, 1936	Herald, Apr. 16, 1936
Kracke,	Robert	Jul. 09, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 15,1936

### L

Lambert,	Dora	Nov. 10, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12, 1936
Langford,	E. E.	Jun. 1936	Democrat - Jun. 17, 1936
Lansden,	H. Baylor	Jan., 1936	Democrat - Feb. 05, 1936
Latham,	Mr. J. J.	Nov. 25, 1936	Herald, Dec. 03, 1936
Lee,	Bessie Cochran	Nov. 16, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 18,1936
Lewis,	C. J.	Feb. 25, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936
Lewis,	Fannie	Dec. 19, 1935	Democrat - Jan. 01, 1936
Light,	Mrs. Dallas	Sept. 18, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
Lindsay,	Mrs. J. A.	Sept. 13, 1936	Herald, Sept. 17, 1936
Locklear,	Ollie F.	Mar. 21, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 25 1936
Lokey,	H. D.	August, 1936	Herald, Aug. 13, 1936

## Marshall County

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Love,	Mrs. S. S.	Dec. 29, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Lumpkin,	W. A.	Apr. 16, 1936	Herald, Apr. 23, 1936
Lusk,	Marvin	Aug. 05, 1936	Democrat-Aug. 12, 1936
Lusk,	Dorothy	Oct. 14, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 21, 1936
Luttrell,	Benjamin G.	December, 1935	Democrat - Jan. 01, 1936

### M

McClendon,	Mrs. G. S.	Mar. 21, 1936	Herald, Mar. 26, 1936
McDaniel,	Eugene	December, 1935	Democrat - Jan. 01, 1936
McElroy,	Charles, Jr.	Dec. 21, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
McEwen,	Mrs. J. E.	Oct. 09, 1936	Herald, Oct. 15, 1936
McKinney,	John A.	Jan. 07, 1936	Herald, Jan. 09, 1936
Mabrey,	Ernest Lovell	Jan. 03, 1936	Herald, Jan. 09, 1936
Mann,	Alice McCord	Sept. 29, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 07, 1936
Manning,	Mrs. J. B.	Jan. 03, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 15, 1936
Manning,	J. B.	Sept. 24, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 30, 1936
Maroney,	John H.	Apr. 03, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 08, 1936
Masters,	Infant	Dec. 26, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Mayes,	Plina	Mar. 04, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936
Mayhall,	John P.	Mar. 21, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 25, 1936
Maze,	Ellen	Nov. 02, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12, 1936
Melton,	Henry, Infant	Feb. 19, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Miller,	Frances	Mar. 25, 1936	Herald, Mar. 26, 1936
Minor,	Leola	Jun. 02, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 17, 1936
Mitchell,	Rena Young	Jul. 19, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 29, 1936
Mohan,	Henry	Feb. 20, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Moman,	Mary Adeline	Oct. 03, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 07, 1936
Montgomery,	John (Murkison)	Aug. 20, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 26, 1936
Moody,	Bernard O.	Jan. 02, 1936	Herald, Jan. 09, 1936
Moore,	J. C.	Sept. 03, 1936	Herald, Sept. 10, 1936
Moore,	J. F.	Sept. 12, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
Morrow,	Mary Ann	Jul. 01, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 08, 1936
Morrow,	Rachael	Nov. 07, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 11, 1936
Morton,	William Joel	Mar. 20, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 25, 1936
Morton,	Dr. D. A.	Aug. 19, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 19, 1936
Morton,	A. Howell	Aug. 16, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 19, 1936
Mosley,	Nettie	Apr. 19, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 22, 1936
Murphy,	Wincie E.	Mar. 01, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04, 1936

### N

Nelson,	Pauline	September, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
NeSmith,	Cinda	Jun. 06, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 10, 1936
NeSmith,	Elex	Dec. 24, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Newbill,	Margaret Jackson	Jun. 05, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 10, 1936
Newbill,	Baby Margaret	Jun. 05, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 10, 1936
Nipper,	Cicero E.	Dec. 25, 1935	Democrat - Jan. 08, 1936
Nobles,	Emma	Sept. 17, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 30, 1936



## Marshall County

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### O

Owens,	Charles W.	Aug. 19, 1936	Herald, Aug. 27, 1936
Owens,	Lula B.	Sept. 24, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936

### P

Palmer,	Harrison	Apr. 19, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 22, 1936
Parker,	Mrs. Lee (nee Markham)	Apr. 12, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 15, 1936
Parton,	Mary	Dec. 25, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Patterson,	Sarah	Mar. 28, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 01, 1936
Payne,	A. C.	Sept. 17, 1936	Herald, Sept. 24, 1936
Pearson,	Mrs. D. M. <sup>1</sup>	Dec. 12, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Peek,	Charles Newton	Mar. 21, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 25 1936
Pell,	Mrs. John	Mar. 24, 1936	Herald, Mar. 26, 1936
Pendergrass,	Bobby Jean	Feb. 18, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Pendle,	Mrs. Jack	Dec. 1935	Democrat - Jan. 01, 1936
Plane,	Wert	October, 1936	Herald, Nov. 05, 1936
Pope,	Margorie Louise	Dec. 30, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Portenberry,	Mrs. Neta	Aug. 18, 1936	Herald, Aug. 20, 1936
Potter,	Mrs. Steve	Aug. 29, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 02, 1936
Powell,	J. B.	Jan. 28, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 29, 1936
Prickett,	Martha	Oct. 14, 1936	Herald, Oct. 29, 1936
Pritchard,	Donie Virginia	Jul. 01, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 08, 1936
Pritchett,	Cora	Jul. 10, 1936	Herald, Jul. 16, 1936
Pursley,	M. J.	Jun. 02, 1936	Herald, Jun. 04, 1936

### R

Rains,	Alice	Mar. 24, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 01, 1936
Ray,	Martha E.	Feb. 20, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Reagan,	Effie	Jan. 29, 1936	Herald, Feb. 06, 1936
Riddle,	L. V.	Dec. 26, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Ridgeway,	Mrs. M. A.	Nov. 04, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12, 1936
Roberts,	Frances Emma	May. 19, 1936	Democrat - May 20, 1936
Roden,	A. P. "Pick"	Mar. 14, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 18, 1936
Rogers,	Senator John	Sept. 22, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 23, 1936
Rollins,	Ruby Bradford	Mar. 25, 1936	Herald, Mar. 26, 1936
Russell,	Robert, Jr.	Feb. 05, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 12, 1936
Rutledge,	Isabell	Feb. 07, 1936	Herald, Feb. 20, 1936

### S

Samuel,	Will	May.. 21, 1936	Democrat-Jun.03 1936
Saunders,	J.T.	Feb. 13, 1936	Herald, Feb. 06, 1936
Scott,	Wiley	Jan. 31, 1936	Herald, Feb. 06, 1936
Scruggs,	Martha	Aug. 23, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 26, 1936
Shelly,	Hugh	Nov. 30, 1936	Herald, Dec. 03, 1936
Shirley,	James M.	Feb. 14, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Sims,	Ora	May. 24, 1936	Herald, May 28, 1936

## Marshall County

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Singleton,	Wayne	Feb. 23, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Slaton,	Evelyn	Nov. 04, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12, 1936
Slaton,	Geroge	Nov. 13, 1936	Herald, Nov. 19, 1936
Smallwood,	Robert Lee	Nov. 1936	Democrat - Dec. 02, 1936
Smith,	Henry	Dec. 27, 1935	Herald, Jan. 02, 1936
Smith,	Jake	Mar. 21, 1936	Herald, Mar. 26, 1936
Smith,	James Freeman	Feb. 15, 1936	Herald, Feb. 20, 1936
Smith,	M. E.	Apr. 03, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 08, 1936
Smith,	Mrs. Leroy I	Jun. 05, 1936	Democrat-Jun. 10, 1936
Smith,	Nina	Jul. 25, 1936	Herald, Jul. 30, 1936
Smith,	Sam	October, 1936	Herald, Oct. 08, 1936
Snider,	Annie Gene	Feb. 20, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26, 1936
Snow,	Ollie D.	Apr. 28, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 29, 1936
Snyder,	Edward E.	Jan. 19, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 22, 1936
Snyder,	Mintie	Sept. 29, 1936	Herald, Oct. 04, 1936
Sparks,	T. Y.	Nov. 05, 1936	Democrat - Nov. 18, 1936
Sparks,	William Alvin	Dec. 1936	Democrat - Jan. 01, 1936
St. John,	Mrs. R. F. B	Jul. 19, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 22, 1936
Stansell,	S. H.	Apr. 04, 1936	Herald, Apr. 16, 1936
Starnes,	James Henry	Mar. 22 or 29, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 01, 1936
Stewart,	Dr. John P.	May. 17, 1936	Democrat - May 20, 1936
Stewart,	Martha	Dec. 15, 1936	Herald, Dec. 17, 1936
Stover,	Mrs. P. M.	Jan. 02, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 08, 1936
Street,	Judge Thomas Atkins	Mar. 10, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 18, 1936

### T

Taylor,	Herbert Lee	Oct. 13, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 14, 1936
Thomas,	Junior	Apr. 04, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 15, 1936
Thomp,	J. P.	Jan. 27, 1936	Herald, Jan. 30, 1936
Thrasher,	Billie R.	Dec. 17, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Todd,	S. I.	Mar. 29, 1936	Herald, Apr. 02, 1936
Todd,	Sara	Jan. 07, 1936	Herald, Jan. 16, 1936
Townson,	Jo Ann	Aug. 21, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 26, 1936
Townson,	Lou	Jan. 03, 1936	Herald, Jan. 09, 1936
Tucker,	Dock	May. 12, 1936	Democrat - May 13, 1936
Turner,	Dock	Aprl 12, 1936	Democrat - May 13, 1936

### V

Vann,	Tobe	Sept. 02, 1936	Democrat - Sept. 02, 1936
Vaughn,	A. M.	Dec. 30, 1936	Herald, Dec. 31, 1936
Vaughn,	Martha Jo	Jul. 04, 1936	Democrat - Jul. 08, 1936
Vest,	J. W.	May.. 23, 1936	Democrat - Jun. 03, 1936
Vest,	Dora	Jul. 31, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 05, 1936

### W

Walker,	Joe	Dec. 14, 1936	Herald, Dec. 17, 1936
Walls,	John Berry	Aug. 18, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 26, 1936

Marshall County

Weaver,	Alice	Mar. 08, 1936	Democrat - Mar. 04,1936
Welborn,	John	Oct., 1935	Democrat - Oct. 21, 1936
Wesson,	Mrs. G. W.	Mar. 24, 1936	Herald, Mar. 26, 1936
Wheeler,	Nancy R.	Jun. 02, 1936	Herald, Jun. 11, 1936
Whisenant,	Sarah E.	Feb. 18, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 26,1936
Whitman,	Marie Williams	Apr. 07, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 08, 1936
Whitman,	J. P.	Apr. 07, 1936	Democrat - Apr. 08, 1936
Whitworth,	Thomas J.	Jan. 08, 1936	Democrat - Jan. 08, 1936
Wilkes,	Mrs. O. R.	Jul. 20, 1936	Herald, Jul. 30, 1936
Willet,	Myrtle	May.. 08, 1936	Democrat - May 13, 1936
Williams,	Thomas W.	Oct. 26, 1936	Democrat - Oct. 28, 1936
Wolfe,	E. R.	Nov. 11, 1936	Herald, Nov. 12, 1936
Wright,	John G. "Gad"	Feb. 14, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 19, 1936
Wright,	John H.	Aug. 21, 1936	Democrat - Aug. 26,1936
Wright,	Lilia	Nov. 30, 1936	Herald, Dec. 03, 1936
Wright,	Marcus Owen	Dec. 22, 1936	Democrat - Dec. 30, 1936
Wright,	Mary	Jun. 01, 1936	Herald, June 04, 1936

Y

Young,	Mary	Jan. 30, 1936	Democrat - Feb. 05, 1936
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**GENEALOGY WILL AND ESTATE TERMS**

- ABSTRACT – A summary of important parts of a deed. (or a will)
- ADMINISTRATION (of ESTATE) – The management of collecting and distributing an estate.
- ADMINISTRATOR – One who handles the administration of an estate.
- ADMINISTRATRIX – A female administrator
- BENEFICIARY – One who receives benefits from a property or trust.
- BEQUEATH – To give property to a person in a will.
- CODICIL – An addition to a will
- CONVEYANCE – A document transferring property from one person to another.
- DEED – Same as conveyance
- DEVISE – Gift of real property by way of a will.
- DEVISOR – One who gives real property in a will.
- DOWER – A wife’s legal share of real estate acquired by marriage allotted to her after his death.
- ESCHEAT – Property acquired by the state when there are no heirs.
- EXECUTOR – One or more appointed in a will to carry out its instructions.
- EXECUTRIX – Female executor.
- ESTATE – A person’s property and debts.
- FEE – An estate of inheritance in land, either free or fee simple or fee tail.
- FEE SIMPLE – Absolute ownership without restriction.
- FEE TAIL – An inheritance limited to heirs of a person.
- GRANTEE – One who receives property by purchase or grant.
- GRANTOR – One who sells or grants property.
- HEIRS – Those receiving property through a will.
- INTESTATE – One who dies without a will.
- INVENTORY – An accounting of property and debts of a deceased person by an administrator or executor.
- MINOR – One who is under age.
- NONCUPATIVE WILL – A will dictated by the testator when a person is extremely sick or military.
- PROBATE – Concerning wills and administration of estates.
- PROVED WILL – A will proved genuine by probate court.
- TESTAMENTARY – Pertaining to a will.
- WILL – A document declaring how a person wants his property divided after his death.

## A True Southern Belle: The William M. Griffin House



By Macey Taylor and Louella Rice Alves

Sitting serene and proud on a slight knoll in Browns Valley, this lady has survived a civil war, the hunger and devastation that followed, severe storms and the effects of a depression. She has protected nine generations of the Griffin descendants in the Diamond community and is still welcoming them home. The carriage stoop out front reminds one of days when visitors pulled up front to be greeted by the old boxwoods that still line the path to the steps onto the portico. The front doors, encased by unusual and impressive double side lights and double transoms of old hand blown glass, have been witness to over a century and a half of neighbor and family gatherings. Some of those guests could have been the Sheffields, Streets, Smiths, Mays, Brookshires, Johnsons, or any of the other early pioneers of the area.

For mealtimes, the original log kitchen out back would have been the place of activity for the cook to prepare the pork, beef, chicken, vegetables, and fruit that would have been staples grown on the farm. The kitchens in early plantation life were placed outside for fear of burning the house down

with the open fireplace cooking and also to prevent overheating the house in the hot southern summers.

The Greek revival home, built between 1845 and 1849 by William Meredith Griffin, has had very little modernization. Extra bedrooms, a storeroom, side porch, baths and an indoor kitchen were added, but the timeless spirit of the home remains. Framed and preserved, on the original wide heart pine board walls of the living room, is this inscription: "February 12 was the first day Willie Linn was ever in his grandpas house 1866". The wide doorway and entrance hall facilitated breezes as well as ease of casket removal in times when a loved one's body was laid out in the home. The corner stones are still in place and an old dinner bell stands high on its cedar post, waiting to ring the workers in from the fields for dinner, or to summon help or maybe announce a death.

A tornado in 1995, not the first to hit the plantation, destroyed the slave quarters. It also damaged the chimneys on either end of the main house. For their rebuilding, the owner, Louella Rice Alves and her husband,

the Rev. James Thomason Alves, found brick close to the same age to use on the existing sturdy rock base. The original old brick, no longer durable enough for use in the chimneys, was used inside the home to surround the fireplace, then the preserved mantle was put back in its place.

The community name “Diamond” is linked to the Griffin valley farms, whose soil contained bits of quartz, when tilled, glistened like diamonds. When reading the agriculture census, one can see the farm was one of the largest in the valley; raising sheep, corn, cows, pigs, horses, and cotton. In the 1860 census the plantation consisted of 1,200 acres. The old barn across the road can still be seen, but some of the original property is now under water due to the TVA reservoir project of 1935-39.

William Meredith Griffin, born December 1806 in Newberry County, S.C., the owner of Griffin plantation, also served from the Marshall county district in the State Legislature before, during, and after the War Between the States. “The History of Marshall County” by Larry Smith records that he served in the Alabama House of Representatives for three periods including the years 1839 -1844, again in 1857 - 1863, and last in 1876 - 1878. He is listed as serving in the Alabama Senate in 1844-47. He was in the Alabama Mounted Volunteer Corps in the Creek War of 1835-36 and was the grandson of Col. James Williams of Kings Mountain history, whose death came before he would have received his next promotion. Col. Williams’s daughter Sarah, mother of William Meredith, was 90 years

old as recorded in the 1860 Marshall County census. William Meredith’s father, John Griffin, born in Virginia in 1767, died in Marshall County in 1837. His grandfather, Richard Griffin, was born in Virginia in 1736 where he lived in Hanover and Orange counties. Richard and his son, John, moved to Laurens District, South Carolina, before 1775.

William Meredith Griffin married Teresa C. Satterwhite in 1826 in Madison County, AL. They had six children: William Pinkney, Evaline, Narsissa, Susan C., Caroline, and Martha P. After the death of wife Teresa, William married Amanda Caroline Garrison and had two children: James K.P. and Emma Frances Griffin. William Meredith Griffin died in 1881 in Marshall County. We may never know why his “Belle” was spared in the Civil War burnings in Marshall County but we are proud to see her standing now in 2013.



The original log kitchen on Griffin Plantation.

"When an elder dies, it is as if an entire library has burned to the ground."  
African saying

## Marshall County's Last Hanging

Robert E. Lee "Bob" Watts was the last person hanged in Marshall County. Keith Finley and Betty Taylor have written a book on the murder of Perd Winkles, the man Bob Watts was accused of killing. The authors have gone to great care to relate the facts as they found them.

*Flight to Another World, The Story of Robert E. Lee Watts*, is the result of exhaustive research on one of the most talked about events in the history of Marshall County.

When Confederate veteran Perd Winkles was shot and killed in the Bucksnot community near Grant, Alabama, in January of 1905, there were no eyewitnesses. But Perd's neighbor, Bob Watts, was arrested, tried and convicted and sentenced to death for the murder.

Events following the murder took many twists and turns, including Watts being committed to Bryce's Mental Hospital in Tuscaloosa.

Once Watts was released from Bryce's, he was brought to trial in Guntersville, Alabama. The trial, according to the authors, raised more questions than answers - 21 in all. One of the questions was why Watts'

lawyer was not allowed by the judge to present testimony for Mr. Watts. Another question was why some of the testimony by the prosecution contained obvious contradictions.

The authors do not state who they think was the actual killer of Mr. Winkles: they leave that up to the reader. A case can be made that Bob Watts pulled the trigger that killed Mr. Winkles, but some others had the opportunity and motive as well.

Adding to the theory that Watts was innocent are claims by two different people that they killed Mr. Winkles.

Regardless of who killed Perd, Bob Watts paid for the crime with his life. After all appeals were exhausted he was taken to the Marshall County jail on Blount Avenue (now the site of Old Jail Storage). Although there was a trap door in the jail that was built for hangings, it was not used. A scaffold was built for the hanging and it drew a large crowd.

Sheriff John Lewis was in charge of the execution. Lewis's grandson Sonny Lewis says that his grandfather always believed that he had hanged an innocent man. The sheriff never got over the hanging.

“Too many Americans have ignored their ancestors and family history and not bothered to examine their own life stories, much less share them with others. They too rarely share much of their past lives with friends, or pass them on to their progeny. And yet we desperately need to do all that...”  
Dolly Berthelot

## **Crime In 1880 As Reported By The Guntersville Democrat**

The first edition of this paper was printed and distributed on Oct. 21, 1880. The crimes reported by this newspaper were for the purpose of informing the public of what was happening in the county as well as surrounding counties. Many genealogical tidbits relating to Marshall County and surrounding counties were included in the articles.

The first crime reported in this newspaper regarded a mule theft. Two men from Tennessee came into Guntersville in hot pursuit of a mule thief who had stolen it from their farm. The person who stole the mule had traded it in Huntsville, Alabama, and these men came close to capturing the thief, but somehow the man escaped and headed toward Guntersville. The men did not catch the elusive thief.

About the same time as the mule theft a serious cutting was reported happening at Albertville, Alabama, just a few miles south. Mr. J.R. Thomas was seriously stabbed by an older man named James Daniel.

Daniel had been drinking. Thomas tried to persuade him to stop and let him take him to his home. Daniel said he would go home in a peaceful manner if Thomas would shut up. Thomas took him home, but as soon as he got in the house he started abusing his own wife and son. Thomas turned to leave and after a few steps Daniel ran after him and said he was going with him. Daniel took Thomas by the arm, walked a few steps and struck Thomas in front of the left ear with his knife. The gash in his ear was small and about an inch deep. Thomas, it was said, had a chance of recovering from his wound.

In the next issue of the paper there was a shooting reported which happened at Walker

and Fowler's Mill on Sand Mountain and proved fatal.

Hugh Collins and James Sneed, brothers-in-law, had been having problems for several days. They agreed to meet at the mill to settle their differences with shotguns. They met and exchanged shots. Sneed was hit in the arm and Collins was unhurt although his coat was full of holes.

Mr. Pink Walker, a by-stander, was shot in the neck by a stray bullet from Collins' gun. The ball lodged in the back of his neck and he died two days later. Collins escaped. Mr. Sneed's arm was amputated because of the injury.

Another incident of mule stealing was reported. E.B. Bush, R.A. Adkinson and D.W. Terry from near Whitesburg, Alabama, came through town looking for two mules that had been stolen from their farm. It is not know whether or not the culprit was caught.

Horse or mule stealing in the state of Texas is a serious crime. The saying there is "hang the thief to the first tree you come across."

Knife fights were common in the community in 1880. Two men from Warrenton, Alabama, Benjamin Copeland and Young Capps, were charged with trying to solve problems with knives. They were not seriously hurt. Copeland pleaded self defense and was acquitted. He had been defended by Col. Rufus K. Boyd.

Material from the book *MARSHALL COUNTY, ALABAMA, BLACK BOOK*. Permission granted for publication by author Betty Taylor.

**MARSHALL COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT RECORDS**

Filed in the Marshall County Archives, Worth Street, Guntersville

Abney	B. D.	1902	Chamness	Lummie	1926
Alexander	Mary A.	1924	Childress	R. C.	1933
Allbritton	W.A.	1925	Cnrisman	A. L.	1913
Anderson	R. W.	1866	Claburn	N. P.	1903
Anderson	Thomas J.	1921	Claburn	N. P.	1903
Anderson	Thomas J.	1921	Coleman	W. M., Mrs.	1925
Anderson		1869	Colley	Martha	1928
Arnold	John A.	1884	Colley	Mattie	1928
Ashburn	W. A.	1919	Collier	J. M.	1919
Asworth	John C.	1858	Colvin	B. I.	1931
Athisson	Stephen	1844	Couch	Margarett	1904
Bagwell	John E.	1911	Couch	Martha	1907
Bain	James J.	1852	Couch	Nancy	1912
Bain	James S.	1884	Couch	Thomas	nd
Bain	John Joe	1872	Cowen	J. W.	1928
Bain	Robert L.	1852	Cox	Edward	1856
Bain	Robert L.	1852	Culbert	M.	1876
Balew	William	1919	Culbert	Matthew	1861
Barnard	J. W.	1910	Davidson	Edward	1864
Barnard	W. R.	1910	Davidson	J. Henry	1920
Bartlett	W. H.	1924	Davis	D. F.	1903
Barton	Clarke T.	1847	Davis	D. Franklin	1905
Beard	Arthur C.	1876	Derrick	Tobias	1855
Beard	Arthur C.	1877	Ditto	William	1876
Beard	Arthur C.	1890	Dodd	J. K.	1913
Bearden	John H.	1904	Donahoo	estate	1930
Beck	R. D.	1921	Doss	Sam H.	1920
Berry	Clarence	1924	Douglas	H. B.	1858
Billingsley	Margarette J.	1908	Drake		1904
Black	William	1847	Dyar	Elias	1910
Blanchett	Robert L.	1914	Easley	John L.	1901
Blanchett	Robert L.	1914	Easley	John L.	1906
Blassingame	Jesse		Elrod	Adam	1860
Boggus	Nancy	1866	Elrod	S. M.	1903
Boshart	David	1888	Farmer	Sarah	1842
Bosnart	Sarah	1925	Farrow	W. A.	1925
Bradberry	James	1913	Farrow	W. B.	1927
Bradberry	Mary L.	1914	Fearn	Eiiaza Lee	1927
Bradford	S. A.	1917	Fearn	Robert	1876
Bright	Sarah	1913	Fearn	Thomas	1889
Brown	Amanda E.	1897	Feemster	Brazilla	1898
Bryan	Calvin W.	1851	Fennell	James W., Sr.	1880
Bryant	Wade	1928	Finlay	Samuel	1886
Buchannon	Dave	1931	Finley	Alva	1843
Caddel	John Louis	1919	Finley	Alva	1847
Caddel	John Louis	1919	Finley	Samuel	1886
Calley	Mattie	1928	Finley	Samuel	1887
Carlisle	Hugh	1900	Fossett	J. A.	1908
Carter	Byrd	1923	Foster	Alford	1887
Carter	James S.	1905	Foster	Alfrod R.	1887
Carter	Joseph M.	1888	Foster	Ira A.	1899
Carter	William H.	1919	Fowler	Martha	1919



## Marshall County

Fowler	Richard	1932	Lang	W. M.	1869
Frazier	Levi	1892	Lasseter		1924
Freeman	John	1902	Law	Mrs.	1910
Gambeil	Lucy	1909	Lawson	Charles W.	1924
Gambell	Lucy	1909	Lewis	Ada	1916
Gideon	John	1900	Lewis	David P.	1886
Gilbreath	Alex J.	1883	Ligon	James and Loveless	1860
Graham	William L.	1915	Logan	Nancy J.	1917
Graham	William L.	1915	Logan	Robert	1916
Greenwood	G.	1866	Looney	Martha	1847
Griffin	W. W.	1886	Loveless	see Ligon, James	1860
Griffin	Washington W.	1884	Lowery	Ellen	1926
Guffey	E. M.	1917	Lowery	James Forney	1927
Hamby	Emma	1915	Lyon	O. N.	1923
Hampton	James	1862	Malone	Thomas	1909
Haney	Hugh	1923	Manning	Thomas	1872
Haney	Ray	1931	Manning	Lewis	nd
Hardin	W. M.	1905	Manning	McCajah	nd
Hayes	Jerome	1901	Manning	Preston K.	1910
Hayes	Jerome P.	1893	Manning	William	1901
Henry	Sam	1912	Marsh	Susie	1918
Henry	Wallace	1885	Marsh	Susie	1919
Henry	Wallace	1886	Mathews	George F.	1902
Hiii	Stephen	1908	Mathis		1902
Holt	Thomas	1925	Mathis		1902
Hood	John D.	1919	Matthews	John	1929
Hooper	Frank	1910	May	General	1893
Hooper	J. T.	1924	May	Washington T.	1889
Howl	Earnest	1911	May	William	1893
Howl	Ernest	1914	May	William	1894
Hudgins	V. P.	1916	Maybrey	James E.	1903
Huffman	Robert M.	1910	McDerment	Josiah	1921
Hulsey	William	1924	McDerment	Penny	1903
Hunt	V. B.	1905	McElroy	Sarah A.	1918
Jacobs	Simeon	1890	McKee	William M.	1893
Jacobs	Simon	1893	McKinstry	J. A.	1922
Johnson	Azelia	1926	Merrell	Beverly	1911
Johnson	Bartley	1921	Miller	Martin	1884
Johnson	J. L.	1928	Mitchell	John	1923
Johnson	Pleasant F.	1863	Montgomery	G. C.	1905
Johnson	S. R. (female)	1897	Moon	Gabriei M.	1859
Jordan	David C.	1896	Moore	Elijah	1856
Jordan	William	1902	Neill	G. W. C.	1892
Jordan	William	1902	Nixon	Samuel	1906
Kearney	A. R.	1924	Noble	James	1873
Kearney		1927	Noble	James	1926
Kenamer	J. Frank	1928	Noble	Reuben	1902
Kenamer	Vera	nd	Norman	David C.	1925
Kenamer		1915	Paris	J. T.	1920
King	Andrew	1887	Patterson	Lovie	1929
King	T. J.	1932	Patterson	Samuel	1891
Kirby	F. M.	1897	Patteson	Sarah	1896
Kuykendall'	M. M.	1910	Patteson	Tim	1870
Kuykendall	M. M.	1916	Perkins	William	1912
Kytile	Sam W.	1906	Phillips	H. C.	1923
Landers	Martha J.	1897	Pittman	James G.	1909

## Marshall County

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Powell	Lewis R.	1907	Story	Mollie	1913
Powers	J. W.	1932	Sturgus	James	1855
Price	Thomas	1889	Swain	Joe M.	1916
Price	Thomas	1889	Taylor	Catherine G.	1917
Proctor	James	1928	Taylor	W. O.	1913
Radcliff	Oliver	1929	Teal	Decatur C.	1925
Radcliff	R. T.	1927	Teal	Homer	1919
Ragsdale	Peter	1902	Teal	Zim	1927
Reynold	Nellie	1930	Thompson	Emma	1915
Ricketts	David	1899	Thrasher	Jack	1909
Roberts	Thomas	1913	Traylor	Jack	1927
Roden	Ben	1923	Tucker	Calvin	1911
Roden	Bennett H.	1903	Tucker	Joe	1919
Rooks	R.	1911	Tucker	William C.	1913
Saymour	estate	nd	Turner	Catherine G.	1845
Scott	James C.	1915	Vandyke	S. M.	1850
Scott	James C.	1931	Vaughn	Sallie	1891
Scruggs	James	1925	Vaughn	Sally	1891
Segler	Seborn	1918	Walker	D. Lemuel	1920
Shipp	Walter	1919	Walker	J. W.	1920
Sims	Lucinda	1886	Walker	J. W.	1920
Slaton	G. D.	1911	Walker	James D.	1902
Slaton	G. P.	1911	Watson	J. A.	1914
Smith	Calvin	1892	Weatherly	George F.	1890
Smith	Jasper	1909	Webb	Margarette R.	1916
Smith	Jennie	1926	Wheeler	Thomas	1912
Smiin	Priscilia	nd	Whisenant	G. P.	1932
Smith	William	1924	Whisenant	Mary	1893
Snow	P.H.	1909	Whitaker	Elijah	1892
Sotherland	Nicy, et al	1909	Whitaker	Elijah	1892
Spivey	James	1928	White	E. F.	1902
Spivey	James W.	1926	Whitfield	Jane P.	1919
Spradlin	J. M.	1922	Whitworth	C. A.	1908
Spradlin	J. M.	1922	Wiggs	William H.	1879
Stapler	Amos	1898	Winston		1889
Steames	Mary	1927	Wood	J. C.	1919
Stephens	Ester	1902	Wyeth	Louis	1876
Stephens	Henry	1902	Wyeth	Louis	1891
Stephenson	estate	1922	Wyeth	Louis	1895
Stephenson		1922	Young	Ira	1906

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/summary-of-costs-april-2014.pdf>

The National Archives Prices went up April 1, 2014 for their services. Check the above web site for a listing of the new pricing.

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

Sarah Huff Fisk, **Civilization Comes to the Big Spring: Huntsville, Alabama 1823**, Huntsville, Alabama: Pinhook Publishing Co., 2008. 178 pages, Paperback. \$22.95, ISBN-13: 978-0-9655917-3-7.

John Hunt built the first cabin near the Big Spring in 1805 in early Huntsville, the little town in the untamed southern wilderness. Sarah Fisk ably gives her conception of the appearance of some 70 of the earliest structures that stood around the public square. Her illustration of the scene is a scale drawing made after many years of archival research. The size and appearance of each structure was gleaned from deeds, newspapers, and other records, or was based on the architecture of surviving buildings in Huntsville or other southern towns.

In the beginning Ms. Fisk reflects on the wild rush of Federal land sales and 1819 Huntsville which played host to the convention that organized the State of Alabama. She further adds short biographical information for some of the known Huntsville builders and artisans during the period 1810-1824. An early chapter entitled "Sights, Sounds, and Smells" embellishes both the pictures and descriptions of conditions in the early development of Huntsville.

The main part of the book is the illustrations of the buildings and their stories. All structures are numbered which makes it easy to relate them to the documented text. Each of their stories are told: the owners, the builders, the succession of merchants, their goods as advertised in the local newspapers, the offices of doctors and lawyers, and the commerce of a bustling town as well as some of its problems. Ms Fisk discusses how the waters of the Big Spring were used

by the town for their needs, and of the great fires that destroyed most of these buildings before the advent of photography.

The illustrations were originally made to commemorate the 150th anniversary in 1973 of the Huntsville Water Works, which is the oldest water system in the United States west of the Appalachian Mountains. This study by Ms. Fisk additionally led to the restoration of Lots 51 and 52 which had housed activities closely associated with the drafting of Alabama's first constitution in the year 1819. Today on these two lots stand The Alabama Constitution Village, a living history museum that not only tells the story of Alabama's statehood, but also includes The Center for Early Southern Life, an imaginative, hands-on museum facility that teaches us about our heritage.

Aside from being an entertaining and informative read, this posthumous publication of Ms. Fisk's work will give researchers the opportunity to understand life on the Huntsville frontier, find ancestors among the earliest residents, and get a vivid picture of the who-and-what of each building and its occupants. They will surely want to delve into this important addition to the history of early Huntsville and Alabama.

Susie Jacks

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Frank Anderson Chappell, Editor, **Dear Sister: Civil War Letters to a Sister in Alabama**, Huntsville, Alabama, Branch Springs Publishing, 241 Pages, Paperback, \$14.95. ISBN 0-9727622-0-5.

Frank Anderson Chappell was the great-great grandson of Lucinda Caroline

Branscomb Hunter of Union Springs, Alabama. Lucinda, the “Dear Sister” of the title, had four brothers who joined the Confederate Army as part of the Third Alabama Infantry Regiment. In 1861 they went to Virginia, to defend the South, writing home frequently. This book contains the transcribed and annotated chronological correspondence of the brothers.

In 1991 the great-grandchildren of Lucinda Hunter cleaned out their grandfather's house in Union Springs. They found an old BVD underwear box marked “War Letters” containing almost 100 Civil War letters. Most were written by Lucinda’s four brothers, children of Bennett Hill Branscomb and Eliza Belotte Branscomb. Chappell was able to find several other letters from various sources, which he added to the collection.

The four brothers, John Wesley Branscomb, William Henry Branscomb, James Zachariah Branscomb and Lewis Sylvester Branscomb, typically wrote home complaining of not enough mail, inadequate clothing, cold weather, poor food, and problems with officers. The letters also give a detailed account of camp life and engagements. Chappell’s narrative between letters keeps the reader knowledgeable about the military situation the brothers were facing at that time along with much biographical information, pictures, and documents. This book adds to our understanding of the conditions encountered by the men who went off to war in 1861 and also those of their families left at home.

Civil War enthusiasts and researchers, especially those with an interest in Alabama and Union Springs, will want to study this book. It provides a perspective of the period from the viewpoint of the individual participants rather than the broad-brush

approach of generals, presidents, and grand battles given by historians.

Susie Jacks

---

Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck, **The Name Is The Game: Onomatology and the Genealogist**, Baltimore, Maryland: Clearfield Co., \$16.95. 88pages, soft bound. ISBN 978-0-8963-5627-3.

An easy read, this book is a collection of illustrations and tales that can help family historians overcome obstacles and pitfalls associated with the naming practices of past centuries. Bockstruck believes that names, like people, have lives of their own and discusses how life choices can alter our family names, as well as serendipitous events.

This delightful book is divided into five chapters. In the introductory chapter Bockstruck relates a number of first-hand accounts that fostered his early fascination with names. He includes his initial failures, such as his inability to find the tombstone of his German great-aunt Barbara Baker (born Barbara Becker). The second chapter discusses the ancestral clues that are inherent in names.

Chapter three is the longest, covering a lot of territory. Topics include maiden names, spelling, surname misinterpretation, aliases, military influences, changes in language, dialects, surname abbreviations, and more. By the time the reader has consumed the two short final chapters which cover toponyms (place names) and change of name statutes, respectively, they will be more cognizant that a name change may be the actual cause of an ancestor’s “disappearance”. The reader will, also, possess the tools for finding the missing ancestor.

*The Name Is The Game* is a fascinating, must read for family historians by this

leading genealogist and former genealogy librarian at the Dallas Public Library.

Susie Jacks

The **Family History Wiki** of Ancestry.com is an exceptionally valuable research reference resource. It contains the following excellent free content: 1. the full, searchable text of *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy*, the influential reference guide to selecting, locating, and using appropriate primary and secondary resources; 2. *The Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources*, which provides detailed information about every state in the U.S., including historical background, descriptions of all major record resources created in each state and where they can be found.

Taken from *Genealogy at a glance: Ancestry. Com Research* by George Morgan  
Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland

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**WHEN YOUR ADDRESS**  
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**NEWSLETTERS WILL NOT BE**  
**FORWARDED!**

I saw behind me those who had gone, and before me those who are to come. I looked back and saw my father, and his father, and all our fathers, and in front to see my son, and his son, and the sons upon sons beyond.  
And their eyes were my eyes.

- Richard Llewellyn

## Things You Should Know



**Course 10 Participants with Victor Dunn in the front, center row.**

### **The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research**

Do you have a goal to strengthen your genealogy skills? Do you enjoy meeting other genealogists from across the country? If the answer to both of these questions is “yes”, then the Samford Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research held each June in Birmingham may be the place for you.

Samford offers 10 week-long courses each summer. Participants can elect to stay in campus dorm rooms or at a hotel. Meals are offered in the college cafeteria.

This June I attended Course 10, *Virginia, Her Records and Her Laws* taught by Victor Dunn, CG with Judy G. Russell, CG, J.D., as a course lecturer. Judy is best known as the “Legal Genealogist” in genealogy circles! Students in the course came from 13 states.

Topics covered in the Virginia course included:

- Virginia Geography
- Virginia Vital Records
- Virginia Church and Bible Records
- The Library of Virginia’s website
- Colonial Virginia Probate Law
- The Virginia Court System Prior to 1850 and Its Records
- Virginia Manuscript Records (on-site, on film, and on-line)

During the week, Heritage Books was on-site with books for sale. Optional, evening sessions were held on Monday through Wednesday nights with speakers like Dr. Thomas Jones and Dr. John Colletta.

To preview the 2015 courses, please go to [ighr.samford.edu/IGHR\\_future.html](http://ighr.samford.edu/IGHR_future.html).

## Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference 2015

February 11-14 – Salt Lake City, Utah

### FGS 2015 — Two Conferences, One Location!

The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and RootsTech are teaming up for a **one-time special genealogy event** at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Feb. 11-14, 2015. FGS and RootsTech will share the expo hall, general sessions, activities, and more while each conference offers their own program of sessions. FGS sessions will focus on methodology, records, ethnic research, and migration for honing your research skills and society issues to motivate and inspire society volunteers. RootsTech will offer a program of technology-based solutions for the genealogy needs of both individuals and societies.

**Register for FGS only or add-on a RootsTech pass for an additional fee to have access to both programs**

#### Program Spotlight

##### T-200 Getting the Most Out of Genealogical Evidence

by *Thomas Jones PhD, CG, CGL, FASG, FUGA, FNGS*

Evidence lying below surface information can solve simple and complex genealogical problems. Examples will show how to discover evidence and use it to advance genealogies.

##### F-301 Gentlemen Judges: The Justices of the Peace

by *Judy G. Russell JD, CG, CGL*

Landowners, but legal laymen, America's early justices of the peace served up ground-level justice and local governance, creating records unparalleled for genealogists.

#### Registration

Early Registration, \$159, ends Jan. 23, 2015

Regular Registration, \$189, ends Feb. 6, 2015

Onsite Registration, \$239, begins Feb. 10, 2015

#### 10 Reasons to Attend FGS 2015

1. Network with other society leaders, sharing the latest ideas.
2. Visit the world's largest collection of family history materials, just minutes away.
3. Get tips from the pros for finding those elusive ancestors!
4. Spend time relaxing and socializing with other genealogists from around the world.
5. Find the latest family history gadgets and gizmos in the Expo Hall.
6. Go behind the scenes of family history on TV at the FGS Opening Event.
7. Explore genealogical societies from across the U.S. at the FGS Society Showcase in the Expo Hall.
8. CONNECT with new genealogy friends and blaze new research trails.
9. EXPLORE presentations on a variety of topics in the classrooms and the new tools you learn about each day.
10. REFRESH your interest in family history, and leave FGS 2015 ready to tackle those challenging research projects!

#### Family History Library

FHL hours during the conference:

Monday: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Tuesday–Friday: 8 a.m.–9 p.m.

Saturday: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sunday: Closed

Monday, President's Day: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

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*To have a sense of history one must consider  
oneself a piece of history... Alfred Kazin*

# Valley Leaves Policies

## Contributions

**Editorial Policy:** The Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society, “Valley Leaves” is an educational publication committed to the compiling and printing of genealogical and historical articles and materials for the Counties of **Jackson, Marshall, and Madison** in the State of Alabama – including County and Municipal Records, Bible records, diaries, military records, newspaper items, personal letters, tombstone inscriptions, family histories, church and school records, research methodology and technology. The Society solicits primarily from among its membership unpublished source data but will accept previously published material if it is derived from rare, little-known, hard-to-find or out of print publications not readily available to researchers, provided that proper acknowledgement is given. An effort will be made to balance material among the three counties to broaden researcher interest. Materials prior to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century are preferred. Family histories should be sufficiently comprehensive to interest researchers in methods of research, and possible connection to ancestors. In compiling submissions, all source references should be cited, including locations where known. The 15<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* should be used. While attempts are made to check submission for accuracy and originality, The Society, Editorial Board, and the TVGS *Valley Leaves* Editor shall not be held responsible for any such errors by contributors. Correction of proven errors will appear in subsequent issues of the publication.

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