

Marcy was visited a few times over the span of the interviewing process. She is a very spry and alert woman for a woman of her years. After the first interview, the researcher scheduled a time to pick up “Ms. Marcy” and take her to the arsenal. A colleague in the Directorate of Environmental Management, Troy Pitts, agreed to accompany the researcher and drive so that the researcher would be free to talk and take notes. He was quite a good sport when Ms. Marcy continuously referred to him as “Our Driver.” There was no doubt that Ms. Marcy had a picture of where she lived in her mind, but for her to find it, she would have had to be taken in by the roads she knew. The farm roads that led off Elko Road (Rideout Road) are no longer there and fencing prevents access. However, the subject provided many details about where she lived, and if maps and the terrain were studied, it might be possible to connect her descriptions to an archaeological site if a site has been identified that fits the location.

Marcy’s Family

Marcy’s paternal grandmother, Sally Beach Eliff married three times. At one point, she had no husband and no money. She was living in Giles, Tennessee. She put what she had in a covered wagon and came to Huntsville to live in the Poor House. With her were her two daughters and a grandson, the little boy who would become Marcy’s father. Marcy’s father was Cole Younger Eliff. He went by his middle name, Younger. He was born in Fayetteville, Tennessee in 1885.

Cole Younger Eliff



After Younger Eliff married Janie Vickers, he lived with her on a little farm of 60 acres in a place near Huntsville that Marcy said was called Hump. Bentley Young, who owned a drugstore (in Huntsville), kept asking her father to oversee his farm. He talked to him about it on Cotton Trade Day. Younger Eliff had built a house out on his own farm, and his wife really liked it. Eliff told Young that he’d have to have a house just like the one they were going to leave. Bentley Young agreed. Eliff would build a house just like the one he left on the Bentley Young property.

Marcy said:

Daddy still owned his little house in Hump. He rented it. It was a little far [to go to]. The house had four big rooms and two porches. Momma loved that house. Bentley Young said he’d furnish Daddy the material to build another just like it out on his place. In the fall of 1921, Daddy finished building that house. It had tongue and groove flooring. The walls and all were pine. It had a brick foundation. [This provides the description of the house her family lived in on pre-arsenal land.]

Mrs. Eliff was expecting a baby, so they couldn’t move right away. Marcy’s brother was born on March 22, 1922. Nine days after his birth, the Eliff family set out to Bentley Young’s land on what is now Redstone Arsenal. Younger Eliff led the way, in Bentley Young’s wagon, pulled by a team of mules named Abe and Jack. Marcy said, “The