

Nathan A. Simms was born February 5, 1881 in Lincoln County Tennessee, a son of George W. Simms and Martha Jones.

Minnie L. Sugg was born February 3, 1884 purportedly in Petersburg, Lincoln County, Tennessee. She was the daughter of Joseph Sydney Sugg and Mary Elizabeth McGee.

Nathan and Minnie were married June 30, 1901 in Lincoln County, Tennessee. They had two children: Oscar Washington Simms, born October 30, 1902 and Cornelia Martha Ann Simms, born May 22, 1905. Both children were raised in Lincoln County, Tennessee.

In 1942, Nathan and Minnie moved to Huntsville, Alabama and lived with their daughter Cornelia Simms Porter on McCullough Avenue. Nathan died in 1945 and is buried in Lincoln, Tennessee. Minnie died 21 June 1987 and is also buried at Lincoln.

After completing the second year of high school at Lincoln in 1922, Oscar met and later married Ethyl Lynn of New Market, Alabama. They were married in Madison County on 9 June 1923. They lived their early marriage years in Lincoln County Tennessee where Oscar Bryson, was born 19 December 1923, and Minnie Elizabeth, was born 31 January 1927.

In the late 1920's Oscar and Ethyl and two children moved to Huntsville, Alabama. On 12 June 1928, George Melvin Simms was born on Mills Street. Oscar had accepted a job with International Harvest and became a farm implement parts salesman.

In early 1931, the family moved to Hazel Green, also in Madison County. Here Nathan Wayne Simms was born 29 June 1931. Bryson and Elizabeth attended school at Hazel Green where Alva S. Simms was the principal.

Shortly after this, the family moved back to Huntsville and lived at several places before settling on Meridian Street in the early 1930's. Nina Irene Simms was born on 9 November 1934 and John Louis Simms was born on 14 January 1938. Bryson, Elizabeth, Melvin, and Wayne attended the Huntsville City schools. Elizabeth graduated in 1942, Bryson came home from World War II and graduated in 1946, Melvin graduated in 1947, Wayne in 1949, Irene in 1952, and Louis in 1956.

Oscar W. and Bryson served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. Oscar spent most of his time in the South Pacific. Bryson was a crew member of the troop transport torpedo boat and sank off the coast of Africa in 1942.

During the Korean War, Melvin served in the U.S. Air Force and Wayne served in the U.S. Navy. After graduating from high school, Louis also served in the U.S. Air Force.

Ethyl Simms died in Huntsville on 7 October 1963, and Oscar Simms died on 10 October 1964. Both are buried in State Line Cemetery north of Huntsville.

Bryson is now retired and lives in Cocoa Beach, Florida. Elizabeth and Irene are deceased. Melvin retired from the Marshall Space Flight Center and lives in Brownsboro, Alabama. Wayne is now residing in Montgomery, Alabama and Louis is retired and lives in Warwick, Georgia. See photo on page 408. Submitted by George Melvin Simms, 2770 Dug Hill Road, Brownsboro, AL 35744. Sources: Marriage and Birth records of Madison County, Alabama and similar records of Lincoln County, Tennessee.

Doctor William Simpson

William Simpson was born 1780,¹ at Ballynashery, County Londonderry, Ireland² and died in 1816, near Ditto's Landing, Mississippi Territory.³ He was buried at Hobbs Island, Madison county, Alabama in an unmarked grave.⁴

In Ireland, William Simpson received a commission as a Major in the United Irishmen. This was a Protestant organization whose goal was to gain equal representation in the British Parliament for Ireland's Catholics. After the unsuccessful rebellion of 1798, William Simpson was captured, and on March 12, 1798, was convicted of Treason, and sentenced to hang at Bantry Bay. He was imprisoned in the Donegal Arms for a short time, then released on bail, on condition he exile himself from the British Empire.⁵ He received an American passport and migrated to the United States about 1806.⁶ William Simpson left the emerald isle with his wife Marguerite, and quite possibly a younger brother, George Simpson accompanied them to America. Marguerite was pregnant with William's child and gave birth to their daughter Mary Simpson while on the voyage over.⁷

Dr. Simpson and his family came to Madison county, in 1807, when it was part of the Mississippi Territory prior to Alabama statehood. They were among the first white settlers of what is now Ditto's Landing, Alabama.

Dr. Simpson was listed in the 1809 squatters census,⁸ and staked out a squatter's claim near Ditto Landing then purchased it from the government land office in 1809, and went on to amass large land holdings in the area.⁹ He was very active in the formation



John Simpson

of Madison county Government. He served on numerous court cases,¹⁰ was an overseer for the public road,¹¹ and was a charter member of Madison Lodge Number 21, the first Masonic Lodge in Alabama.¹²

During the War of 1812 William Simpson served as a Private and a Surgeon in the 7th Mississippi Regiment.¹³ Colonel Peter Perkins' Battalion of Mississippi Militia from Madison county, Perkins' Battalion came under General John Coffee's command in October 1813, and fought for Andrew Jackson in Alabama against the Red

Sticks, a warring band of the Creek Nation.¹⁴ At Horseshoe Bend, Dr. Simpson help save the wounded leg of a young soldier named Samuel Houston, who later became President of the Republic of Texas. Dr. Simpson's death was apparently the result of an epidemic of some unknown malady, after the war was over.

After William Simpson death, his widow, Marguerite married the Hon. Hopkins Lacy, on July 15, 1817, in Madison county, Mississippi Territory.¹⁵ Hopkins Lacy was born about 1763, at Halifax county, Virginia, and died February 9, 1831, near Ditto's Landing, Alabama. He is buried beside his brothers and their families in the Bartee cemetery, Lacy's Spring, Alabama.¹⁶ Hopkins Lacy was the older brother of Theophilus and John Lacy, whom Lacy's Spring, was named.¹⁷

Hopkins Lacy was a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives, and Attorney General for the district of Washington prior to Tennessee statehood.¹⁸ A close friend of John Coffee and Andrew Jackson,¹⁹ Mr. Lacy accompanied them to Alabama after the Creek uprising in 1813. After hostilities ended Hopkins Lacy remained in Madison county and became closely associated with Dr. William Simpson. Marguerite preceded her husband Hopkins Lacy in death, she died before August 19, 1820.

Marguerite had the following children: 1. Mary Simpson, born 1808, on the boat coming from Ireland. Married May 22, 1822, George W. McLeod.²⁰ She died May 23, 1837, at Mardisville, Alabama.²¹ 2. John Simpson born 1811, at Ditto's Landing, Mississippi Territory.²² Married November 18, 1840, Margaret Ann Dickson.²³ He died January 27, 1876, at Pond Beat, Alabama.²⁴ 3. Murtha June Coker Lacy, born 1818, at Ditto's Landing, Mississippi Territory. Married September 24, 1835, Dr. Albert Russell, Jr.²⁵ She died January 20, 1864, at Huntsville, Alabama.²⁶

Dr. Simpson and his wife Marguerite were buried beside one another at Hobbs Island, Alabama, but their graves were never found. In September 1988, a Veteran Administration marker was placed at the Simpson cemetery commemorating Dr. Simpson's service in the War of 1812, by his great-great-grandson, Dennis Simpson. The Simpson cemetery, located east of Dadd Road inside Test Area, 1, is a small plot containing several 19th century burials.

The cemetery was established by Dr. Simpson's son John, whose family and descendants lived for many years on land that became Redstone Arsenal. The memorial service included a military color guard, a 21-gun salute which was followed by taps. The dedication was attended by numerous family members, a contingent and the two top Masons in Alabama.

William Simpson's descendants include the Hon. David Campbell Humphreys, Judge for the Supreme Court of the District of