



Rutherford County Historical Society  
 P. O. Box 906  
 Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0906

2013-2014 OFFICERS

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**NEW MEMBERS** - Boyd & Barletta Dagley; Andrew "Drew" Fedak' Adeline & Bruce Frizzell; Dona J. Kurtz; Dennis & Carmenann Micucci

**Saturday, November 16, 2013, RCHS Banquet** - Gayle Hazelwood was our guest speaker. Gayle is the new Superintendent of Stones River Battlefield. It was quite fitting to have her discuss the impact of the battle in the Civil War, since we are in the 4 years of that War's Sesquicentennial. We were also entertained by the music of "The Coleman Scouts."

**OAKLANDS CANDLELIGHT TOUR OF HOMES**

**December 7, 2013 - 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

The Rutherford County Historical Society Ransom Schoolhouse has been included in this annual enchanting Tour of Homes. The tour will feature beautiful and historic private homes as well as the graceful Oaklands Mansion. Set in the historic district of Murfreesboro, stops along the delightful tour will be festively adorned historical sites, dressed in holly and evergreens. Additionally, living history demonstrations will be presented on the lawn of the mansion. \$10 Admission is charged for the entire tour and may be purchased at each of the Tour sites, including Oaklands Historic House Museum. Contact Jeff Adcock if you wish to participate in decorating the Schoolhouse - [jeffadcock.jak@gmail.com](mailto:jeffadcock.jak@gmail.com) or 394-1040.

Other places on the tour are: Dr. & Mrs. Sydney McPhee, 212 N. Tennessee Blvd.; Paul & Ellen Willson, 1001 E. Main St.; Kent & Cecil Coleman, 933 E. Main St.; Tommy Lynch, 527 E. College St.; Jim & Judith Smythe, 511 E. Main St.; Nightingale Apartments, 415 E. Main St.; Kerry & Maria Knox, 202 N. Academy; First Baptist Church, 200 E. Main St.

**RUTHERFORD CO. HISTORICAL SOCIETY CHAIRMANSHIPS**

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**RANSOM SCHOOL HOUSE IS OPEN ON SATURDAY MORNINGS**

**The following holidays the building will be closed: Nov 30; Dec 28; Jan 4**

The RANSOM SCHOOL HOUSE is now open on Saturdays, 9-12 a.m. If you would like to come and do research using our publications, purchase any of our publications, or just take a tour of the 1920s classroom and the building itself, someone will be there to greet you and assist you. We also need members to greet visitors. For further information or to sign up, contact: Gwen Boyd - 895-0028

**FROM THE PRESIDENT:** Not available due to death in her family. Joyce Johnson, President

All meetings are free and open to the public. Membership in the Rutherford County Historical Society is open to all persons. Annual membership dues of \$25 per person/family are to be paid by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Each annual membership is entitled to 6 issues of "Frow Chips". Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month [except November and December] at 7:00 p.m. (See Daily News Journal "Calendar of Events" for information on each monthly meeting). The November meeting is set aside for the Annual Membership Banquet. There is no meeting in December. Regular meetings will be held at the Rutherford Co. Archive, 435 Rice St.

**Web site [includes publication list]:**  
[www.rutherfordtnhistory.org](http://www.rutherfordtnhistory.org)

**Publications for sale:**

Extra copies of Frow Chips .....\$4.00  
 For past publications, please contact Susan Daniel (615)849-3823 ([sgdaniel@comcast.net](mailto:sgdaniel@comcast.net)) or write the Society at the above address.

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**DEED HISTORY OF RANSOM SCHOOL**

717 North Academy Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37130

Researched by Gwen Boyd &amp; Greg Tucker

August 22, 1809 (DB: M, P157) (DB:B, P297: Davidson County, TN) Grant #75, Item #74, TN Grant Book, to William Lytle & heirs, 210 acres ... The acreage that William Franklin Pitt Lytle, transferred to the state-appointed Town of Commissioners, was part of this grant. The remaining grant acreage ran north from the town corporation. Six years after the Town Commissioners laid out and sold the seventy original town lots, Captain Lytle platted and sold 60 additional lots north of the town. Likely, the total of 130 lots did not cover the entire grant. Captain Lytle's Tennessee grant was surrounded by Murfree land to the north, east and south, and was bordered on the west by the original North Carolina grant to Archibald Lytle.. (Rutherford Co., TN DB: A-F, P290 & DB: A-F, P289)

On August 2, 1831, Legrand Hargis Carney (1808-1884) married Captain Lytle's granddaughter, Catherine Wells Lytle (1814-1892), the daughter of John Taylor Lytle (1788-1841). Legrand and Catherine built a grand home, The Crest, which included approximately thirty-two acres in the area of the Murfreesboro Lebanon Turnpike and Spring Street. When the Civil War came to Rutherford County, the large landowners lost most of their land and wealth. After the Civil War, Legrand and Catherine sold their antebellum home and moved to the country.

The first official record we have of the Ransom School property is recorded in (DB:17, P594) and reads in part: "Jordan & Miller & Company (principles listed in Jordan & Miller are John W. Jordan, S. H. Miller, and John L. Carney, son of Legrand): "All our rights, title, claims and interest in and to a certain house and lot in said county and state and within the corporate limits of Murfreesboro, situated on Academy alias Summer Street, known in the **Carney Survey** as **Lot No. 1**, and bounded as follows: Beginning and bounded on the East by Academy or Summer Street, on the North by a lot now owned by W. A. Ransom which he recently purchased from Maney, Black & Co. On the West by the lot of F. H. Crass and on which he now resides and on the South by a vacant lot of H. C. Jackson. Containing by estimation ninety six poles more or less, with all the privileges and appurtenances thereunto belonging ... we warrant and defend the title of the said house and lot ... April 27, 1871." This deed was to H. W. Hall. (\$2,500)

December 15, 1879, H. W. Hall, R. H. Haley and G. J. Clark to C. B. Huggins. (DB:24, P:63). Beginning at H. C. Jackson's northeast corner on North Academy Street running thence north with same street 200 feet more or less to Ed Arnold's south east corner thence west with said Arnold's south boundary line 150 feet more or less to F. H. Crass north east corner

thence south with said Crass's east boundary line 200 feet more or less to Henry Levi's north east & H. C. Jackson's north west corner, east with said Jackson's north boundary line 150 feet more or less to the beginning ... to have and to hold the above described house & lot to the said C. B. Huggins ... (\$900)

October 29, 1880, Robert Newton Ransom (1824-1904) and Isabella Smith Huggins Ransom (1831-1899) deeded the Huggins family town home, located at the corner of Spring and Lytle Streets, to C. B. Huggins. On the same date, C. B. Huggins deeded to R. N. and Isabella Ransom a house and lot on North Academy (same as above description). This appears to be a "swap" and is probably connected to the estate settlement of Jonathan Huggins (1793-1870), Isabella's father. Camillus Brennus (CB) was Isabella's brother and executor of their father's estate. Robert Newton Ransom was involved with Jonathan Huggins in several business ventures in the early years. (DB:25, P326-27). (Property Swap)

The 1900 census listed Robert Ransom, head, age 75; Eliza N. Ransom, 41, daughter; Bell Ransom, 31, daughter; on Academy Street. Isabella had died in 1899. Robert Newton Ransom died in 1904 leaving Eliza and Bell in the family home. Robert and Isabella Ransom had at least ten children. Eliza and Bell's younger sister, Nannie Turner Ransom (1871-1928) had married Lawrence Anthony Horton (1869-1951). After Robert's death, the Horton's deeded their share in the family home to Eliza and Bell (DB:44, P489), 1904. There is no mention of any of the other siblings. (Estate Settlement)

Bell Ransom (1869-1927) was the younger sister, but died before Eliza. The school continued to operate until about 1930. When Eliza died (1859-1935), her estate was divided between L. A. [Lemuel Athelston] Ransom (1872-1963), her brother, and the children of her deceased sister, Nannie Turner [Ransom] Horton. Eliza Ransom died intestate. On October 12, 1938, the property was sold to one of the children, Hollis H. Horton. DB:86, P193. The deed listed two parcels. (\$1,710). Parcel #2 was a vacant lot on the corner of Academy and Evergreen Streets. Purchased in 1908 by Eliza Ransom from C. C. Brooks (DB:49, P548). Parcel #1 was a lot with **TWO** dwelling houses known as 717 and 725 North Academy St. with the same description we have seen since 1871.

Now we have a mystery! The early deeds list ONE house. Sometime between 1880 and 1938 someone built a second house. Is the Ransom School building the first or second house?

November 1, 1940, 725 North Academy was sold to Ralph H. Jarrett. (\$1,750). July 16, 2004, 717 North Academy was sold at auction and purchased by C. B. Arnett for \$45,000. In August 2011 the heirs of C. B. Arnett donated the property at 717 North Academy, known as the Ransom School, to the Rutherford Co. Historical Society.

**SOME EARLY SETTLERS IN RUTHERFORD COUNTY AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS**

researched by Susan G. Daniel

**JOHN CEDRIC SPENCE**

He was born November 14, 1809 in Murfreesboro. His father, John Spence, was born in Ireland, and his mother, who was Mary Chism, was born in Virginia. John, Sr., along with his brother Marmon, came to Middle Tennessee the same year that John Cedric was born.

John Cedric's school days extended over a period of about seven years. Eighteen months of this time was spent at Hopewell Academy. Within this period he obtained a fair knowledge of the English language and learned the rudiments of natural sciences. John relates in his Annals of Rutherford Co. that he served an eight-year apprenticeship in the store of his Uncle Marmon. He tells an interesting story of how in September 1831 at the age of 22 he along with his friend D. D. Wendell, began an extensive journey through the sparsely-settled West Tennessee.

In 1832 John Cedric went to Sommersville, TN, where he opened a store of his own. He remained in business there until 1847 when he moved to Memphis, TN. He continued in business in Memphis until 1849 at which time he returned to Murfreesboro. Here he remained in the mercantile business until his health failed.

John Cedric Spence started the Red Cedar Bucket Factory in Murfreesboro in 1854. The factory at that time was located at the present site of the City Police Department. Later, the factory moved to a location south of the old freight depot.

There was a carriage manufacturing establishment in the Jacob-Hancock two-story residence on the north side of College Street just east of the present Pinnacle Bank. Mr. Spence bought that house and had it moved on wooden wheels to the present site of the law firm of Kious,

Rodgers, Barger, Holder & Kious at 503 N. Maple Street. This became his home.

John was married to Elizabeth Spence, their family names being the same on September 16, 1834 in Murfreesboro. John became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1882. At that time J. B. Plummer was the pastor. John was always a Whig as long as that party existed. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he bitterly opposed secession; however, as the war escalated his influence and feelings were with the South.

Marmon Spence, John Cedric's uncle, was one of Murfreesboro's most noted citizens. He served as mayor from 1834 to 1835 and became the owner of a large number of buildings in the area of the Public Square.

John Cedric Spence was an avid and very capable chronicler, not knowing whether any of his annals would ever be read or published. He was possessed with a deep sense of history and felt a constraint to spend hundreds of hours in writing his manuscripts.

The Rutherford Co. Historical Society came into possession of John Cedric's Annals of Rutherford County through the courtesy of Eric S. Chamberlain of Natchez, Mississippi, a descendant of John C. Spence. He discovered these journals in an attic of one of his elder relatives following her death. Realizing the value these manuscripts would have for interested citizens of Rutherford County, Mr. Chamberlain expressed a willingness to part with them. These journals were in manuscript form and fully legible even though they were over 100 years old. They were published by the Historical Society in 1991. Volume 1 covers the period 1799 - 1828. Volume 2 covers the period 1829 - 1870. The third volume is called "A Diary of the Civil War."

John C. Spence died June 29, 1890 and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Murfreesboro.

#### NIMROD MENELEE, MENAFEE, MENIFEE, MINIFEE

John C. Spence in Volume 1 of his Annals of Rutherford County states: "The County of Rutherford, now established, it was necessary to organize courts in the county, for the better regulation of the public interest. The commissioners, in view of this matter, making it known in the settlement, they would open and hold courts in the county, for the transaction of public business, as yet, having no convenient place for hold said courts, and wishing to accommodate the public by meeting at the most central point in the county. It was proposed and agreed, to meet at the house of Nimrod Menefee, appointing the day of meeting [January 3, 1804]. His house was small. This defect in the accommodation, a large log fire was prepared in the yard, in front of the door, for those attending court could be warmed, and such other convenience as he could devise. In the house, the dinner table and chairs were prepared for the use of the court. A large gathering of people for the time, representing all parts of the county, were present, attending court, all things being ready. . . The house of Menefee, where the first court in Rutherford was held, formerly standing on the ground between the pike and R. Road leading to Nashville, immediately north of the present U.S. Cemetery [Stones River National Battlefield], on a small rise of ground. The house was made of hewed cedar logs. The openings in the wall was chinked and plastered with lime. The corners sawed down. Stone chimney. The roof, covered with shingles. . . The location of this place is three miles from Murfreesboro. . . Little thought the people, when selecting Nimrod Menefee's house, the birth place where law and justice would sway and govern the new born, and rear it up to future greatness, that they too, had selected a bloody ground, a potters field to bury strangers, a field of blood, January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1863."

Nimrod Menefee apparently moved into Middle Tennessee about 1797 settling on land which he probably obtained by preemption.

**[Note:** Preemption was a right to purchase government-owned land prior to others. This usually meant that the individual had settled on un-

deeded or un-granted land, built some kind of habitation and begun clearing and farming the land.] On March 12, 1803 he purchased and registered 471 acres "on the West fork of Stones River" [Davidson Co. Deed Book, f, p. 25]. This acreage was originally part of a Land Grant of 1645 acres granted to Capt. John Eburn or Eborn or Aborn, Esq. on September 15, 1787 for his service in the Revolutionary War for the State of North Carolina. DAR records state that John Aborn died in Hyde Co., North Carolina in 1796.

Nimrod Menefee, born about 1763 married Jemima Minerva Ingram in Va. He was one of the signatories on the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. on Aug. 10, 1803. He appeared on the 1810 census for Rutherford Co., but disappears off the census records after that. In 1813 he paid Rutherford Co. taxes on 371 acres. It is presumed that he died sometime between 1813 and 1820 (the next census record). Jemima, born about 1772 in Va, appears as head of a household on the 1840 and 1850 Tishomingo Co., MS census. She was the daughter of Samuel Ingram, a Revolutionary War veteran, who died in Montgomery Co., VA about 1801.

#### HINCHEY PETWAY OR PETAWAY

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "[About 1803] Jefferson was gradually improving. Houses going up and business shops opening. It was not long before a strip red flannel was stretched over the door, indicating a store of dry goods and all other articles for sale. Hinchey Petaway, the first in this line, he opened a small trade store."

A descendant of Hinchey Petway offers the following glimpse of the man: "Williamson Co., TN in 1807, Susan Caroline Parrish, a queenly beauty, married Hinchey Petway, one of the wealthiest merchants of Franklin. A man of fine sense and very genial disposition. He had a mortal aversion to onions, and when some friend would slip one into his coat pocket, as soon as he detected the nauseous scent he would take out his pen-knife, cut off his pocket and throw both away together. He was a man of great sagacity, and I don't know of his being mistaken but once, and that was when Bennett was hung for murder. An ambitious young physician conceived the idea of resuscitating him, and as he was cut down, he was taken and placed in a carry-all and carried away rapidly. Hundreds of people crowded around the office. When the young doctor found all efforts to bring the body to life futile, he fixed his galvanic points, and when everything was ready called in Petway and another merchant, and applied the points. The dead body opened its eyes, gave a ghastly stare at the two merchants, and stuck out one leg--and the merchants broke and ran, and reported that "Bennett was alive." In a short time it was reported that Sheriff Hunt had been bribed, and Bennett had been hung in stirrups, and there was great excitement, until his body was exhumed from its secret grave, in the woods, and exposed openly in the court house.

"I am mistaken; for there was another instance in which Petway's sagacity was at fault. He built a costly brick house right across the south end of main street in Franklin, which had to be torn down. A man can not make a greater mistake than to fix limits to a young American town, located in a fertile country. When cotton rose to 25 cents per pound, and the county of Lawrence in Alabama was settled, Mr. Petway bought and opened up, a large plantation on the west bank of Town creek, where the brick house now stands. After residing there for a while, he sold out and bought a home in the vicinity of Nashville, where he died. He had one son, Ferdinand Petway, who was an itinerant Methodist preacher. He was a man of education and taste, and a good speaker, and a singer of unusually fine voice. He died in the Memphis Conference. The descendants of Mr. Petway are to be found in Davidson county, Tennessee." Hinchey Petway, born in 1776 in Virginia, died September 1856 in Davidson Co., TN. On the 1850 Census for Davidson Co., he is aged 72, born in Va and a farmer.

SAMUEL W. McBRIDE

He was one of the signatories on the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. on August 10, 1803. He was appointed the first Sheriff of Rutherford Co. on January 2, 1804, and later, in 1808, appointed Coroner of the County. He was living in Middle Tennessee when he married in Davidson Co. on 9 April 1796, Elizabeth Howell, daughter of John & Sarah [Gwinn] Howell. Elizabeth died before December 1807. He seems to have left Rutherford Co. about 1811 when he last paid taxes. He received a Rutherford Co. Militia Commission of Second Major on July 31, 1807. He is aged 26 and under 45 on the 1810 Rutherford Co. census.

BLACKMAN COLEMAN

He was appointed Clerk of the Court on January 2, 1810 and served until 1824. He married Charlotte Dyer, daughter of Joel H. Dyer, who deeded property to his daughter and her husband, Blackman Coleman on October 27, 1817. Blackman Coleman does not appear on the 1810 census, although there are Colemans living in Rutherford Co. He does appear aged 26 to 44 with a wife and children on the 1820 census for Rutherford Co. In a deed dated 1828 he was listed as being "of Haywood Co., TN," where the name Blackman Coleman is found on the 1830 Haywood Co., TN Census. After that he disappears off the U. S. census.

BENJAMIN LIDDON

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "At this time [about 1813] the county was without a seal, which was necessary in law matters. The court ordered the Clerk, Blackman Coleman, to procure a county seal at the October term. Benjamin Liddon, an ingenious silversmith of the town, undertook the work. In a short time produced a fair substitute about the size of a dollar, engraved in his best manner, which would only pass very ordinary. For this he received ten dollars. The seal answering a good purpose, and was used a number of years by the county, and the first of the kind in the county." [Note: This probably refers to Benjamin F. Liddon, son of Revolutionary War soldier, Benjamin Liddon.]

There is a Liddon marker on the east side of the Shelbyville Highway (231S) just south of the Indian Hills Golf Club, which was erected by the Benjamin Liddon Chapter, DAR, of Midland, TX. It reads: "Benjamin Liddon 1754-1805, buried near this Spring for Loyal Service in War of Revolution. Was awarded two tracts of land including "Liddon Spring."

Benjamin Liddon/Ledden/Leadon, Senior, born March 30, 1754 in Wilmington, NC, died about 1805 and was buried at Liddon Spring (Camp Springs), Rutherford Co. He married 1792 in NC, Sarah Rutledge, born May 9, 1763 in New Hanover Co., NC, died 1838 in Murfreesboro. As an heiress of Lt. William Rutledge, deceased, she inherited land that included the Black Fox Spring as a Revolutionary War Land Grant [NC Grant #614, Military Warrant No. 190 - surveyed December 2, 1785 - 2, 560 acres, and registered first in September 1787 in Sumner Co., TN and then in Rutherford Co. Deed Book K, p. 306]. This same 2, 560 acreage was deed [Davidson Co. Deed Book E, p. 362, January 16, 1797] by Benjamin Lidden & wife, Sarah, of Duplin Co., NC to Thomas Rutledge, Duplin Co., TN, who in turn re-deeded the same acreage on January 17, 1797 back to Benjamin Lidden of Duplin Co., NC. On January 23, 1814 his widow, Sarah Jane Liddon, was named the "intended" wife of William T. Henderson [see Rutherford Co. Deed Book K, p. 83]. A road was built between Cummins' Mill and Sinking Creek, Widow Leadon's and three forks of Duck River, 1807. On March 10, 1806, Sarah Liddon, widow, gift deeded to Thomas Rutledge Ivey and Ann Gilbert Perry "my dowry of land on the plantation I now live on, also my part of the Negroes of Mr. Liddon's estate." On June 1, 1814 a division of lands was made to Benjamin Liddon's heirs and his "2 and only children", William Abraham "Leddon" and

Benjamin F. "Leddon." From the early records, Sarah Rutledge Liddon Henderson is also the mother Malinda, wife of Thomas R. Ivy and Ann "Nancy", wife of Nathaniel Perry. It is unclear if these daughters were the offspring of Benjamin and Sarah Liddon.

FELIX GRUNDY, ESQ.

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "Felix Grundy Esqr. [of Nashville] presented licence to practice law [1807] in the Courts of Rutherford. Mr. G. was one of the prominent men in his day. Few better criminal lawyers. In cases where it was thought dangerous, he was most generally on hand, taking a prominent part in the law suit, and often successful in gaining the case, and was one of the regular attendants at courts in Rutherford. In after time, fulfilling important positions at Washington. His fort[e] in practice was the criminal law. He gave this the greatest attention."

He was born September 11, 1777 in Berkley Co., VA (now West Virginia), died December 19, 1840 in Nashville. He married Ann Phillips Rogers. In 1780 he moved with his parents to Kentucky, and later in 1807 removed to Nashville. He was elected Democratic Republican to Congress in 1811 and resigned in 1814. He was a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives 1819-1825 [during the time when the Tennessee Legislature met in Murfreesboro]. In 1820 he helped effect an amicable adjustment of the State line between Tennessee and Kentucky. He was elected as a Jacksonian in 1829 to the United States Senate. He was U. S. Attorney General (1838-1839).

PETER JENNINGS (A FREE MAN OF COLOR)

On his pension application filed in Rutherford Co. for service in the Revolutionary War, he stated he was born at Pequannock, three miles east of Fairfield, Connecticut. According to a record by Charles Ready certifying his death, he died January 22, 1842 in Rutherford Co. In his pension he stated "that on this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of August 1832. . .aged eighty years, four months, and twenty-one days [April 2, 1752]. . . that he enlisted in the army of the United States. . . in the year 1776 in Providence, Rhode Island where he lived. . . to the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Artillery of Blacks in the Continental line. . . engaged in the Battle of Trenton. . . Battle of Princeton. . . winter quarters at Morristown. . . Battle of Brandywine. . . Valley Forge. . . Battle of Yorktown. . . He lost his discharge [from service] a few years after the war was over, he thinks, on the eastern part of the Bahama Islands, where he was shipwrecked while on a voyage in a merchantman bound from New York to Teneriff on a trading expedition." In a report attached to the pension request of his friend, Peter Jennings, a "man of colour," Elijah Smith stated that he was a resident of Rutherford Co., aged 77 years and twenty days [born August 19, 1755] and continued ". . . in the winter of 1777 when the American troops were quartered at Valley Forge, he was an assistant forage master under one Cochlerow, and the knew a man of colour [Peter Jennings] who belonged to the New England troops, and was in the artillery. . . about 5 feet 6 inches, stout made, black color, cut on the right ear, another on his forehead, and a shot wound on the right knee, has been occasionally at sea." Also, another attachment from William T. Christy states that ". . . The general opinion here is that he served as a soldier in the Revolution, which opinion was strengthened by his being recognized by Gen. LaFayette in Nashville two years ago." John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "[He was] a free Negro by birth. A low stout heavy set man. Could read and write, quite intelligent, having been bred a sailor in the English navy about twenty years, and a soldier in the revolutionary war. A good memory. Having traveled much over the world, cruising on board a man of war vessel. Very talkative, particularly when the teasing the boys for a "jigger of muggins" (a name fo whiskey). He had seen much of the world and could tell what he

had seen with interest. [He] was a favorite with store boys. . . They were pleased to hear his sea tales. He was witty. Would often call for a glass of "muggins," then commence rehearsing over the history of some celebrated battle, showing the maneuvering of soldiers fighting, often using a broom stick for a gun. He claimed to have been in the battle of "Waterloo," between the English and French. He taught the boys the art of boxing and fencing for amusement, which he appeared to understand well. And was in the habit of using many sea phrases generally in conversation, a peculiar trait among sailors. Peter was a first rate baker. Could make bread, ginger cakes and all other kinds of cakes, equal to the best. Few boys of his day that had not the pleasure of sampling his cakes, cider and ginger beer at muster grounds. . . Among other things, Jennings professed being well acquainted with Marcus De La Fayette. When at Nashville, he makes a visit to meet him there, in company of the "Murfreesboro Volunteers," to see and talk with the General."

He was listed on the 1840 Rutherford Co. census as a Revolutionary War soldier, age 88 years. According to a story appearing in the Murfreesboro News Banner, November 22, 1900, the first house erected on the corner of Vine and Church Street, a one-story frame building, was occupied by a "free Negro, named Peter Jennings, as a baker." He first appears in Rutherford Co. on the 1830 census where he is listed as a free colored person aged 55 thru 99 with a female in the household also a free colored person, aged 36 thru 54.

#### HENRY DOWNS JAMISON

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states:

"H. D. Jamison [owned a saddle shop on the] south side public square. These shops made everything in the way of saddlery, buying stirrups, bridle bits, buckles, tacks, webbing thread, and many other things from the merchants who kept all these articles for sale. . ."

Henry D. Jamison was a respected citizen of Rutherford Co., often being called "Esquire." The Alderman were, for several years, "qualified by H. D. Jamison, Esq." He was born April 12, 1795 [probably Savannah, Georgia] and died March 15, 1859. In a newspaper account by R. D. Jamison, Brooksville, MS, November 13, 1911: "My father was a soldier in the War of 1812, and a descendant of Col. Downs of the Revolutionary army. My father, in 1835, bought a farm of several hundred acres of good land southwest of Murfreesboro and lived there until 1858; left a large family. He was buried in a cemetery on the Murfreesboro and Columbia dirt road extending across the road to Panther Creek. . . a small portion of this one-half acre of the north end is enclosed by a fence of large limestone rocks for 2 feet in height and 2 or 2½ feet of barbed wire with an iron gate for entrance. His grave is in the northwest corner of this enclosure and is marked by a marble monument 7 or 8 feet high in rock base. I have often heard him speak of being in the big battle of Horseshoe on Tallapoosa River in Alabama and this was a great victory."

He first married in Rutherford Co. January 21, 1819, Elizabeth Batey (died in February 1835), daughter of Capt. William & Ann [Bass] Batey. He married second in Williamson Co. on July 23, 1835, Sarah W. Thomas. In his will he names his "older children": Mary J. Jamison, wife of Robert M. Smith; William C. Jamison; Julia Ann Jamison, wife of Isaac H. Ledbetter; John B. Jamison; Martha Jamison, wife of Elijah M. Shettlesworth. Other children were listed: Eliza T. Jamison, Caroline Ann Jamison, Robert D. Jamison, Sally G. Jamison, Louisa B. Jamison, Clark M. Jamison, James H. Jamison, Margaret O. Jamison, Samuel T. Jamison, Albert D. Jamison, and Richie Anna Jamison.

#### BRADLEY GAMBILL/GAMBREL, GAMBLE, SEN.

DAR records state that Bradley Gamble was born about 1751 and served in the Revolutionary War for Virginia and North Carolina. He was

living in the Watauga settlement in East Tennessee in 1775 [Washington Co. Book A., p. 25, November 19, 1775]. He is listed on the payroll of Captain Joseph Martin, stationed at Fort Patrick Henry for the year 1776. Joseph Martin was a frontier military leader and an early inhabitant and leader of the State of Franklin. [Draper Manuscripts - TN State Library & Archives]. Bradley Gambill served as Constable 1778-1779 in Washington Co. He was found guilty of "Sabbath Breaking" and fined 5 shillings October 2, 1786 [Davidson Co. Minutes]. By July 4, 1790 he had bought large tracts of land, including 300 acres on Mill Creek, and 400 acres on the waters of the west fork of Stuarts [Stewarts] Creek on August 1, 1799. This was his home until his death. He was "of Rutherford Co.," when he signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co., August 10, 1803. He wrote his will June 19, 1806 (probated September term of court 1806), naming his sons, Benjamin Gambills, Metton/Milton Gambill, James Gambill, Jordan Gambill, and the 2 youngest sons, Bradley Gambill, Jr. and Hiram Gambill. His daughters and wife were noted but not named. His wife was named Susanna (died about 1825). She owned 200 acres on the tax records of 1809-1813. She appeared head of a household on both the 1810 and 1820 census for Rutherford Co. She married 2<sup>nd</sup> in Rutherford Co. on March 16, 1822, Gideon Patterson.

#### ADAM COMER

He was born about 1780 in North Carolina and died in 1859. He was Adam Cromer and owned 104 acres on the tax list for 1809 and was Adam Coomer owning the same 104 acres on the tax list for 1812. He was living in Jefferson on the 1810 census for Rutherford Co. He does not appear on the 1820 census, but does appear on the 1830 Census for Rutherford Co. He came from North Carolina and settled at the headwaters of Panther Creek in Rockvale. It is believed that part of his house was already built in the 1790s when he arrived. His first child was born in Rutherford Co. in 1803. The house is located at 5600 Oak Grove Road, is a full 2-story cedar log structure with a dog trot to the rear of the house connecting it with a log one-room kitchen. The house's logs were V-notched with a mortise-tendon connector room added so that the exterior walls would be straight. It is the oldest log notch according to most log structure experts. Adam Comer was illiterate, but he was a very successful cattle farmer and planter. He appears on the mortality census for Rutherford Co. for 1860 stating that he was widowed, born 1775 in North Carolina, and died November 1859 of "palsy of the heart."

#### NATHANIEL OVERALL

He was born in Frederick Co., VA between 1766-68 and died 1835 in Rutherford Co. leaving a will (the original is in the Rutherford Co. Archives) dated October 23, 1835 and probated November 1835. He married about 1785 in either Shenandoah Co., Virginia or Davidson Co., Tennessee, Anne Thomas (1767-1844-47), daughter of William & Catherine [Leith] Thomas of Shenandoah Co., Virginia. Anne was the sister of Susanna Thomas who married William Overall, Nathaniel's brother. He was considered a Patriot during the Revolutionary War when he signed the Cumberland Compact on May 1, 1780. Service records reveal Nathaniel Overall served on the 3<sup>rd</sup> VA Continental line. He came with James Robertson's second part to Middle Tennessee in 1779. His brothers were Robert Overall and William Overall. His sister, Nancy Overall, married Joshua Thomas of Rutherford Co. He was on the 1787 tax roll for Davidson Co. He owned 1,200 acres on the extant early tax records (1809-1813) and was listed on the 1810-1830 census for Rutherford Co. When he first came to Tennessee he settled at Fort Nashborough. He later moved to Rutherford Co. and settled between Lascassas and Milton. In the year 1812 there "was regular (Methodist) preaching at the dwelling houses of John Windrow, Thomas Jarrett, Charles Lock[e], James Rucker,

and Nat. Overall. . . Societies were organized and log church-houses built at those places in a very few years, at most of them as early as 1814." [Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro, TN, April 29, 1962]. The Overall Family is buried on the grounds of what was called "Overall's Campground," an area where early religious "camp meetings" were held. His children were: Mary "Polly" Overall, who married William Ramsey, Jr.; Robert Overal; Rev. Nace Overall; Rev. Abraham Overall; John Overall, who married Jean McLin; Rev. Lorenzo Dow Overall; James E. Overall, who married Lucinda Butler; Sarah "Sally" Overall, who married John Doak.

**NOTE:** Robert Overall, brother of Nathaniel & William, came to Tennessee with his brothers on the James Robertson second party in 1779. Within a few months after their arrival at the Bluff early in 1780, Robert Overall was killed by Indians. He never married. Overall's Creek in Rutherford Co. is named for him.

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#### JESSE BEAN

Jesse Bean was living in Wilson Co. when he purchased 640 acres in Rutherford Co. from Anthony Foster February 16, 1802. In October 1802 he was named overseer of a road beginning at Cripple Creek thence to Thomas Rucker's Mill with the following hands; Jesse Bean 6 hands; Simeon Miller, Jr., 2 hands; Col. John Thompson, 2 hands; Capt. William Lytle, 3 hands; Capt. Thomas Thompson, 3 hands; Capt. David Williams, 2 hands [Davidson Co. Minutes] He signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. on August 10, 1803. He was "of Rutherford Co.," when he signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co., August 10, 1803. A jury of view was required to view and mark a road from his property to Ready's Mill on the northeast county boundary, East fork of the Stones River, 1804. Jesse Bean and Polly Kirkendol (Kuykendall) applied for a marriage license in Rutherford Co. on December 21, 1805; Robert Bean was surety, and may have been his father. A Robert Bean also signed the 1803 petition. Between 1805 and 1808 Jesse seems to have sold off most of his land. There is not a record of him on the 1810 census or any of the extant early tax records.

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#### CLARISSA BOSHANO

She was listed as "other free persons, except Indians, not taxed" on the 1810 census for Rutherford Co., living in Jefferson. She was called a free Black, who ran a boarding house or inn in the town of Jefferson.

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#### JOHN M. TILFORD

He erected the first brick house in Murfreesboro, 1811. John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "It was a 2-story building with an ell, the doors panel work, made of cherry wood, all other portions of the finish after this style. It was thought by the people to be a very find building of that day. . . [located] west side [of the Square] a one-story house store room, occupied by Jno. M. Tilford, merchant. Front, weather-boarded, painted red. Was known a long time as the red house." Spence continues ". . . [about 1815] John M. Tilford was granted permission to establish a grist and saw mill on the west fork of Stones river above the Salem pike. In connection with the mill, a small distillery to put the surplus corn into whiskey and fatning [sic] hogs. Whiskey was used these times by everybody, for morning drams and of course a household article, would seem."

John M. Tilford was born September 18, 1783 in Louisa Co., Virginia. He married in Rutherford Co. on October 24, 1811, Ann "Nancy" Taylor Lytle (born 1795), daughter of Capt. William & Nancy [Taylor] Lytle. The 1860 Mortality Census for Rutherford Co., Fox Camp District, states that Nancy Tillford, 65, born in NC, died in August 1859 of cancer. On the same page of the Mortality Census appears J. M. Tillford, age 77, born in Virginia, died in April 1860 of "old age." Their children to survive childhood were: James M. Tilford; Sarah Tilford, who married David Ramsey; Lucilla

Stanley Tilford; Jane Foster Tilford, who married Henderson McGowan; William H. Tilford, who married Elizabeth Vantreece; Henry W. Tilford, married Eliza Jane Ivie; Mary E. Tilford, married R. B. McFarlin.

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#### JAMES TITUS

He purchased 140 acres from an original 320 acres of land granted in 1787 to William Bowen, Adjutant Commissioners Guard, on the east side of Stuart's [Stewart's] Creek and registered it in Davidson Co. on July 30, 1803. He sold the same acreage to Robert Hunter of Mecklenburg Co., NC on December 29, 1804. Therefore, he probably did not live in Rutherford County for very long. However, he signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. on August 10, 1803. He, Samuel McBride, and John Howell, were appointed on January 2, 1804, the first commissioners for the court in Rutherford County. He is probably the son of Ebenezer Titus, who signed the Cumberland Compact, May 1780, for on September 28, 1803 "I, Ebenezer Titus of Davidson County and not being able in health to transact my business has appointed James Titus, my son, my attorney." A James Titus married in Davidson Co. on May 17, 1808, Nancy Edmondson. On the 1830 Census of Haywood Co., TN appears a James Titus age 50 to 59.

**NOTE:** The Cumberland Compact document signed in May 1780 by the first settlers on the Cumberland River [Fort Nashboro area] established a provisional government for the isolated colony founded by the Robertson and Donelson parties. The Compact provided for the election of twelve representatives from the eight stations, provided for a Sheriff, a Clerk, a Militia, and for the adjudication of causes, the administration of estates, and the awarding of executions. Power was vested in a tribunal of Judges or General Committee.

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#### DRURY VAUGHAN / VAUGHN

He was born about 1750 in Halifax Co., VA, and died in 1827 in Old Jefferson, TN, the son of William Vaughan of Halifax Co., VA. He first married Martha Cox, who died about 1800. He married 2<sup>nd</sup> Elizabeth Barksdale, the daughter of Nathaniel Barksdale, Sen., sister of Nathaniel Barksdale, Jr. of Rutherford Co. Elizabeth died about 1811. Drury Vaughan of Rutherford Co. purchased 640 acres on August 26, 1811 from Joshua Hadley of Sumner Co. He was on the early extant (1809-1813) tax lists and appeared on the 1810 and 1820 Census for Rutherford Co. On May 18, 1813 he and John Warren, Deacons and as Trustees of the Baptist Church near Cummin's Mill on the east fork of the Stones River, accepted a gift deed from Thomas Rucker "for love and affection which he the said Thomas Rucker has for the Baptist people. . . granted (for 1 dollar) for a place of public worship." He owned property on Caney Fork, 1807 and was a slave-owner. He wrote his will dated January 28, 1826 and probated July 1827, naming his children: William B. Vaughan; Peter Vaughan, who was his father's executor; Betsey [Vaughan] Matthews; Mildred [Vaughan] Nelson; Nancy Vaughan, who married John P. H. Lenoir; Frances "Frankie" Vaughan, who married Moses Palmer.

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#### BENNETT PHILLIPS

A Revolutionary War veteran, he applied for a pension on May 20, 1834 in Rutherford Co. for service on the North Carolina line. He was living in Granville Co., NC when he enlisted. He was born December 27, 1763 in Somerset Co., Maryland and died September 20, 1842 in Rutherford Co. He married in the Spring of 1784 in Granville Co., NC, Isabella Moore (born 9 Feb 1765, died after 1850). He had been living in Tennessee since 1797. On November 20, 1843 his widow applied for benefits in Rutherford Co. He was listed on the extant county records (1809-13) and the 1810-1840 census for Rutherford Co. Based on the land descriptions in the deeds he apparently lived in or near the Salem and Rockvale (southwest) part of Rutherford Co. Bennett Phillips was a

Methodist and at his death he owned 191 acres and 3 slaves. He was a farmer raising corn, hogs, geese and sheep. He was a literate man owning 21 books at his death. Isabella [Moore] Phillips, also born in Maryland, was living in the Middleton District (14) on the 1850 Rutherford Co. census. Bennett Phillips' original will exists in the Rutherford Co. Archives dated December 18, 1841 and probated October 1842. His children were: Rebecca Phillips; Isaac M. Phillips; Samuel Phillips (executor); Mary [Phillips] Hill; Richard Phillips; Nancy Phillips, wife of Stephen Vancleave; William B. Phillips. He named his grandchildren: Eleanor Potts and the three children of his deceased son, Isaac M. Phillips, Safrona Phillips, Jerusha Phillips and Isaac William Phillips.

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JAMES McDOWELL, SEN.

On the 1850 census, James McDowell, born 1780, carpenter, & Sarah McDowell, born 1780, were living in Murfreesboro on the 1850 census. John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "People were building dwelling and business houses. For this purpose, carpenters were necessary. Among the first at this business and one of the first citizens in town, James McDowell. He followed the business many years in this place, taking part in the erection of many of the first buildings, having several son, all adopting his occupation as a livelihood. He lived to an advanced age in the town of his adoption. . . He was a master carpenter and joiner. . . He was elected door keeper, the first in the Legislature in Murfreesboro (September 20, 1819). He held that position during the time of the meetings [in Murfreesboro]."

An entry in the Rutherford Co. Record Book No. 7, p. 36 states: "Apprenticeship to Carpenter's and house joiner's trade, 22 May 1828 - Thomas Douglas, son of Bodham Douglas, age 17 years, 10 months and 22 days, apprenticed to James McDowell." On the 1860 census (Murfreesboro) James McDowell, born 1775 in Virginia, carpenter, & Sarah McDowell, born 1780 in Virginia, were living with H. C. Carter (saddler) & wife, Elizabeth.

The Commissioners of Rutherford Co. entered a "Tribute of Respect" in the court records: ". . . our beloved brother, James McDowell, Sr. He died at 11 o'clock on the night of Saturday the 23d day of September, A. D. 1865. He was an industrious member of society, a peaceable and upright citizen, a true friend, a faithful Christian, and a worthy mason. He was among the first members of Mount Moriah Lodge, of which he acted as Tyler for nearly half a century. . . He lived to see the descendants of his children's children approximating their majority; and was when he died about 90 years of age. . . He was buried with Masonic honors on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 1865; a large number of his Masonic brethren being in attendance. . ."

He wrote his will August 26, 1865 naming James M. Avent, his executor. There was no mention of a wife, so Sarah must have died between the 1860 census and James' death in 1865. His estate was divided between his six children and the heirs of a deceased son: Gideon McDowell, who married Elizabeth Norris; James McDowell, Jr., who married Harriet Petty; Wallace McDowell, who married Melissa Sherron; Houston McDowell; Nancy McDowell, who married James Cothran; Mary McDowell, who married Joseph Harrison; and Jesse McDowell (deceased).

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CAPT. JAMES BOSLEY

He had a plantation on the stone lick about 2 miles south of Nashville circa June 6, 1796. He was listed on the 1787 tax roll for Davidson Co. James Bosley was accused of breaking the Sabbath by grinding on his Horse Mill [Grand Jury presentiments, Jan 4, 1787, Davidson Co. Minutes]. "The old Revolutionary soldier, Captain James Bosley. . . died in 1823 at the ripe old age of one hundred and four years."

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ABRAM or ABRAHAM STATLER

He was first listed in Rutherford Co. on the 1820 census living in Murfreesboro, born about 1770. He married Hannah Wright (1772-1836), widow of David Miller of Guilford Co., NC, and daughter of Isaac (a Revolutionary War soldier who built Wright's Mill in Rutherford Co.) & Rebecca [Thompson] Wright.

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "On the street (Church) leading south, Shelbyville pike, Abram Statler, hatter, employed at work. Making all kinds of hats from a wool, to the best fur hat. Two or three journeymen. Among the number of workers, the late Alford Miller. At this place he learned the trade of making hats and from that time on made a fortune. Mr. S[atler], the first in town following the hatting business. Furs that time was plenty in the country and cheap. Merchants seldom brought on hats, the people depending on the home made article. Those following the business made good profits. . . Mrs. A. Statler was a milliner." Abram Statler died about 1830.

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CAPT. JOHN HOLLIS, SEN.

He was born in or near London, England and died August 27, 1832 in Readyville. His son and heir, William Hollis, applied for a pension on November 20, 1832 in Rutherford Co. based upon the service of his father in the Revolutionary War on the North Carolina line, who came to America at age 14 and lived in Rowan Co., North Carolina at the time of his enlistment. In 1808 he moved to Rutherford Co., TN. He had a large family during the Revolutionary War of which William, was the oldest. John Hollis was listed on the 1810 & 1820 census for Rutherford Co.

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MATTHIAS HOOVER originally HUBER

He was born circa 1730-40. His father, Jacob Huber was born in Switzerland and died in Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania. Matthias married in Pennsylvania, Maria. They moved from Pennsylvania to Virginia and later to Greene Co. "territory of the U.S. south of the Ohio which later became part of the state of Tennessee." While living in Greene Co. he purchased on August 9, 1793, for the sum of £500, 5,000 acres of land located in Davidson Co. (now Rutherford Co.) lying on the waters of the Duck River. The acreage is located at what is now known as Hoover's Gap. It is said that Matthias would speak only in German and owned a bible which was written in German. He had a large family, gifting large portions of his land to his children: Martin Hoover; Christopher Hoover; Jacob Hoover; John H. Hoover; Nancy Hoover, wife of John Glase; Elizabeth Hoover, wife of Joseph Allison; Sally Hoover, wife of William Rawlins; Mary "Polly" Hoover, wife of John B. Pruett.

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WILLIAM DORAN

He was born circa 1770-75 and died about September 1834. His original will exists at the Rutherford Co. Archives. He purchased 640 acres "on the waters of the first creek that runs in on the east side of Stones River above Bradleys Creek" on August 11, 1801. He was one of the signatories on the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. on August 10, 1803. He was listed on the early tax lists and on the 1820 and 1830 census for Rutherford Co. A road had been built from Lebanon (Wilson Co. line) to the north end of Capt. William Doran's land, the creek at David McKnight's still house, and the River below Ready's Mill in 1817. One of the first families to be located in the Milton area of Rutherford Co., his will names his wife, Mary 'Polly' [Alexander] Doran, whose will was probated in 1839, and children: James Gardin Doran, who married Elizabeth Knox; Alexander Doran, who married Nancy Powell; Samuel Doran; Polly Minerva Doran, wife of Samuel Armstrong; Rebecca T. Doran; Vina Dora; Peggy B. Doran; Nancy [Doran] McKnight; Elizabeth Doran; Lolly [Doran] McKnight.

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JEREMIAH W. FLETCHER

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: ". . . [He was] about the first brick maker in town, or pioneer in the business. He learned many youths in his day, the art of spreading mortar and laying brick, the masters craft of the plumb, and trowell. To make a finished workman, plastering was a branch of his business. This was carried on with the other. He had a hand in constructing many of the first houses in the town. In his declining years, he become a disciple of "Sir Isaac Walton," delighted much in fishing. After having received a "florious nibble" in the morning, he was encouraged to spend the remainder of the day about the same place, well contented. In the end was generally successful, making a handsome string of fish. He followed this occupation, mostly for amusement, the remainder of his days. Fish that time were numerous in the waters."

On July 19, 1816 Jeremiah Fletcher purchased Lot No. 15 in the town of Murfreesboro (approximately where the Firestone dealership is located on the corner of College and Walnut Streets). He sold a portion of this lot to Robartus Carney in March 1818. He appears on the 1820, 1830 and 1840 census. His wife, Frances Fletcher appears on the 1850 census living in the town of Murfreesborough with her son, William C. Fletcher, also a brick maker (both Frances and William were born in North Carolina). Jeremiah and Frances are buried in the Old City Cemetery in Murfreesboro: Jeremiah W. Fletcher, 11 Nov 1776 - 13 Jan 1842, & wife, Frances Fletcher, 19 July 1782 - 21 Aug 1856. They were members of the Presbyterian Church. Therefore, he probably was heavily involved in building the first Presbyterian Church which was located on the northwest corner of the Old City Cemetery. In two recent archaeological excavations of the site, many of the bricks of this first church were unearthed. It was the first brick church in Murfreesboro, built about 1818.

SAMUEL WILSON

He was born about 1758 and died 11 September 1830, a Revolutionary War soldier and reportedly buried not far from the Stones River Battlefield (Spence, p. 34). He resided temporarily at the forks of the Stone's River in 1788-1789 and planted Rutherford County's first corn crop. He later erected a permanent settlement at Wilson's Shoals on the Stone's River near the Stone's River National Battlefield. He was awarded a preemption right of 640 acres on the West fork near 25 miles from the mouth to include an improvement marked at the head of a spring "SB & B," the place being known by the name of Samuel Barton's Mill Seat (January 23, 1783). Samuel Wilson signed the Cumberland Compact, May 1780, and signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co., August 10, 1803. He was on the first panel called for jury duty on July 2, 1804 of the newly formed Rutherford Co. He owns 642 acres on the early extant Rutherford Co. tax lists (1809-1813) and the 1810-1830 Rutherford Co. census. He began serving as Coroner for the county in 1812. Mrs. Samuel Wilson was one of the members who organized the Presbyterian Church in Murfreesboro in April 1812. His property was near Robert Hunter's on the "big" or "granite" shoal on the West Fork of the Stones River and Squirrel Hill, 1804 (Rutherford Co. Minute Book). A jury of view was required to view and mark out a road from Jefferson at Franklin Road entrance to Maj. Robert Purdy's land; Simon Miller's; Samuel Wilson's shoals; Abner John's; Richard Caswell's plantation; Samuel Campbell; John Flemming's land; Ben Smith's land; with the Nashville to Frederick Barfield road to Barfield's plantation; east crossing a branch below Hance Hamilton's fence; William Smith; to the Nashville to Duck River by Bennett Phillips's; to William Hanley's, 1807 (Rutherford Co. Minute Book). Based on this description, Samuel Wilson lived in the area south of Murfreesboro where Route 99 or the Salem Pike head southwest.

JAMES OLIPHANT

He was listed on the 1840 Rutherford Co. census as age between 60-69 and his wife aged 50-59. They were also listed on the 1810-1830 census for Rutherford Co. He married in Davidson Co., TN September 1, 1797, Mary "Polly" Compton. She died about 1845. He signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. August 10, 1803 and was on the first panel called for jury duty on July 2, 1804 of the newly formed Rutherford Co. He was appointed overseer on a road from Charles B. Harvey's to the county line near Squirrel Hill, July 9, 1806 (Rutherford Co. Minute Book). He paid taxes on 157 acres on the early extant tax records (1809-1813). This land, which he purchased in July 1804 from Samuel Oliphant, was "on the waters of Harrison and Harts Spring Creek. In his will (the original is at the Rutherford Co. Archives) dated January 1, 1849 and probated March 5, 1849, he stated that his wife was deceased and he was to be buried alongside her in the cemetery on his plantation. He named his children: Samuel H. Oliphant, married Nancy Shackelford; Presley W. Oliphant, married Mary S. Fitzhugh; Isaac N. Oliphant, married Martha N. Lane; Harriet N. Oliphant; Andrew J. Oliphant, married Sarah C. Shelton; James M. Oliphant; Franklin M. Oliphant; William C. Oliphant, married Elizabeth R. Lane. A daughter, Martha A. Oliphant married Thomas H. Goodman. Another daughter, Amelia E. Oliphant, married Edward W. Smeledge.

MATTHEW McCLANAHAN

From Bible records copied by Miss Annie Campbell in 1937, appears the following: Matthew McClanahan, son of Samuel McClanahan and Jane Moore, was born February 6, 1778. And was married to Sarah Bradley, daughter of John & Molly Bradley, on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of May, 1801. It appears from the Bible record that they had 8 children: Mary B. McClanahan, married Burrell Ward; Samuel McClanahan, married Elizabeth Ward; Matilda McClanahan, married Simeon Taylor; Jane McClanahan; Cassandra McClanahan, married Best Ward; James Roulston McClanahan, married Caroline M. Wallace; Harriett Newell McClanahan, married Edwin Amate; and John Bradley McClanahan.

Matthew McClanahan was living in Rutherford Co. when he signed a petition in 1806 to build bridges. He appears on the 1810-1830 census for Rutherford Co. and on the early extant tax records (1809-1813). He was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sheriff of Rutherford Co. (about 1812) and was still Sheriff on December 14, 1819 when his bond was submitted to court. He received a Rutherford Co. Militia Commission as Capt. of Light Infantry on April 18, 1809; First Major on July 23, 1810 and Lieut. Co. Commandant on September 3, 1813. He served in the War of 1812. He represented Rutherford Co. in the 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1825-27). He died without a will about 1835. Sarah outlived him, appearing as born 1783 in VA in the Flemings District (21<sup>st</sup>) on the 1850 census.

John C. Spence in Vol. 1 of Annals of Rutherford County states: "The Courts of Rutherford, having tried and condemned, sentenced to be executed a Negro man, which took place Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> 1813, at Murfreesboro in the presence of a large concourse of people, it being the first case of the kind since the settlement of the county. Mathew McClanahan, sheriff of the county at that time, who conducted the execution. The novelty created a great sensation among the people generally. They came from far and near to see the sight. Men, women and children, in wagons and carts. Had the execution failed to take place, at the time, the disappointment would have been great with many. Crime, house break, property of B. Ward."

COL. or GEN. JOHN COFFEE

He was born June 2, 1772 in Prince Edward Co., Virginia, and died July 7, 1833 in Florence, Lauderdale Co., Alabama. In April 1798 he and his mother settled along the Cumberland River. His sister was Mary



Coffee, who married Simpson Harris. John Coffee married in 1809, Mary Donelson, a niece of Andrew Jackson's wife. Mary [Donelson] Coffee received a tract of 640 acres, as a wedding gift from her father, John Donelson, Jr. (brother of Rachel Donelson, wife of Andrew Jackson). John Coffee and Andrew Jackson were in the mercantile business together for awhile but this was not financially successful and John Coffee then withdrew and devoted himself to surveying. He was listed on the 1810 census of Rutherford Co. and the early tax records. He was appointed the first Clerk of Circuit court, January 2, 1810. John and Mary Coffee built a plantation home on the 640 acres, which was located about where the

community of Mona now stands. They named the home "Sugar Tree Forest." As early as 1803 he owned several barges and keelboats which he employed in the New Orleans trade. He was with the Natchez Expedition of General Jackson in 1812 where he commanded the cavalry of 670 men. As Colonel he commanded the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Volunteer Mounted Riflemen until the end of October 1813, when he was promoted to Brigadier General. He was appointed one of the Trustees of "The Jefferson Seminary of Learning" November 6, 1815. In 1819 he leased his farm and moved his family to a farm near Florence, Alabama. [some information from John C. Spence, Vol. 1 Annals of Rutherford Co.].

**from ANNALS OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY, Volume 1**

by John C. Spence

BEGINNING WORK [about 1812]

The land which the town stands, at the lot sales, was covered with heavy growing timber, cane, brush and grape vine, a small portion cleared for corn, a house, the home of the settler. The prospect presenting a heavy job ahead.

The commissioners having the control, their first business to have the timber all cut down, the land cleared, streets opened, all timber removed from the public square, a place prepared for the erection of court house. This expense was paid by the commissioners of monies received for sales of lots.

The purchasers of lots, many were actively engaged clearing up and erecting temporary houses for shops and dwellings round the public square and along the streets. The first houses built were made of hewed logs, after, they were weatherboarded to make a better appearance. Some one, others a story and a half. The majority of lots having a house of some kind a few months after the lot sale, altogether, making a fair show for a town. Some of the business houses on the public square were graced with a coat of paint, either yellow ochre or venetian red. This was another indication of a town, the smell of paint. Many of the dwelling houses had wood chimneys, made with flat sticks and clay, answering a very good purpose. This was the style of chimneys in the country a number of years before stone and brick.

Sawed lumber was now plenty. Several saw mills established in the county, supplying the wants of the people. Timber plenty and convenient lumber, selling at low prices at the mills.

The first public improvement attempted by the commissioners in town, was sinking a public well in the court square. It proved a failure abandoned and filled up. A public spring was made at the end of the street, leading south, in the middle of the street. This was called and known the pump springs (near the old gas house). Here was had a good supply of water for public use a long time.

A Tavern in a new town about one of the first wants of the people. To supply this, A. [Alexander] Carmichael opened a house of entertainment near the pump springs.

Col. Joel Dyer, who was keeping entertainment in Jefferson, pulled down his houses, sent them by wagon to this place, erected on the present site of the Hotel. This building, two story, hued [sic] logs weatherboarded. This work done in short time and ready for entertainment. Buildings burned 1834.

On south Main St. and public square, Col. Robert Jetton built a house for public entertainment. This was hewed cedar logs, boarded on the outside. In 1853, this house, with several other buildings, burned out. On the south east corner public square, a tavern kept by J. Renshaw [Note: probably Isaac Renshaw, who died in 1819]. The supply were fully ahead of the demand. Four taverns opened in quick succession, one after the other. New as the town at the time, all appeared to get business in their

line. Population fast increasing, various occupations opening up stores and mechanics shops.

Porter & Spence, merchants in Jefferson, to be up with the times, moved goods, store house and all, rebuilding in town, losing little time in the operation.

Many were leaving Jefferson and adopting the new town as a permanent settlement.

Jefferson had continued to be a lively growing and business town, until the establishment of Murfreesboro 1812. From this time it commenced declining, little improvements after, gradually going down to the present time.

DOOR KEEPER (circa 1820)

James McDowell elected door keeper, the first in the Legislature in Murfreesboro. He held that position during the time of the meetings. He was one of the first settlers of the town, being an old man, died 1866.

The meeting of the Legislature spurred business in town and country, making a market for many articles, with the country people selling to the tavern and boarding houses. A small rise taking place in town property. The people feeling generally encourage. Their prospects brightening. The members of that body closely engaged passing laws benefitting their immediate section they were representing. There were a number of people visiting the town from other sections, some on business, other sportsmen, each having some object in view peculiar to themselves. with all making the town have a lively business like appearance.

The stage line running regularly three times a week each way, through town, the channel for news. The arrivals of stages with a few passengers caused quite a sensation with the citizens. When it came in, crowds gathering round to hear the news, see the passengers, find out where they were from, and where going.

Having previously alluded to first class roads that time, these stages passed over daily garnished with rocks, stumps, mud holes and prize poles in sight the whole day. Such things people were familiar. They never complained.

The first session of the Legislature lasted about six weeks, having passed all laws necessary exigent to the times. When this was done, adjourned, settling up their matters, returned to their homes.

Politics little known at this time. People were wanting men that were honest and qualified to serve them in office, and no other.

REVIEWING 1826

The town of Murfreesboro, now thirteen years since it commenced struggling into existence. It has been gradually improving since the beginning. The various branches of business noticed as they come in. It is now proposed to mention who are occupied at this time in business in town. The same thing may occur a time or two before finishing these annals, without being considered repetition. The object is to show the changes taking place, and who were actors in the scene.

Beginning with the merchants in business, David Wendel, Joseph Spence, Willes Snell & Co., M. [Marmon] Spence, Silas Lock, C. O'Flynn, C. R. Abbott, Falls & Christy, Daniel Lienau, John Smith, J. C. Moore & Co., Jonathan Currin, Benj. Elder, Charles Gugger. Fourteen stores, a mixture of dry goods and all other articles kept on sale. The sales in these houses running from six to eighteen thousand dollars a year. Profits on goods from seventy five to one hundred per cent. Credit the prevailing system, running twelve months and often longer. . .

Saddlers - Charles Niles, H. D. Jamison, W. Gardner, A. S. & J. Davidson. Three men getting their supplies of leather from the neighborhood tanners, their saddlery from the merchants. Saddle trees still furnished by Benj. Blankenship, iron by the blacksmiths of town. These shops made saddles for men and women.

Tailors - Ruben Bolles, Peter Campbell, Samuel Parish, Samuel Jones. All known to be fashionable workmen in their day.

Hatters - Alfred Miller, Abram Statler, C. W. Hist. All makers of fur and wool hats.

Cabinet Workers - Jas. Chrichlow, Edward Fisher, Sam Patton. Makers of furniture.

Chair Makers - Edward A. Cochran, Isaac C. Brown. Winsor [Windsor] chairs.

Carpenters - Cap. John Jones, George Anderson, James McDowell.

Blacksmiths - William Gillam, Jno. Kennedy, W. Blanton, P. Parker.

Boot & Shoe - Willis Barker, B. Kennedy, John Jones.

Tanners - Varner D. Cowan, Robt. Jetton, James Bone.

Wagon Maker - William R. Iseminger, Jas. D. Scrape. House and sign painters.

Tin plate worker - Lewis Sperry

Taverns - Jas. Vaughan, R. Smith, Gen. Rob. Purdy, William C. Emmitt.

Rifle Guns - Edward Elam and Gin builder.

Brick Makers and Plaster - Jeremi Fletcher, Thomas Montague.

Watch Repairs - Willard Manchester, Abram Liddon.

Milliners - Mrs. A. Statler, Miss S. Wasson.

To complete the catalogue of occupations of the town, it may be necessary to notice the professional portion, as a prominent part of a community. The first to hand is:

Doctors - Wm. R. Rucker, James Maney, Henry Holmes, I. P. Yandel, I. King. Little change since first introduced. These Drs. are regularly in the practice of their profession, all ranking in the first order.

Lawyers - Samuel H. Laughlin, Samuel Anderson, Samuel R. Rucker, Wm. Brady, Anderson Childress, Jno. D. Martin, Charles Ready, John Bruce. These were resident lawyers. Beside visiting attorneys - Robert Burton of Lebanon, John Bell of Franklin (after senator in Congress, Secretary of War under Pres. Taylor, run for President 1860), John H. Eaton of Franklin (Gen. Jackson's private secretary during his Presidency), Felix Grundy of Nashville, having great character as a criminal lawyer. Fiew his equal. He was a senator in Congress, acting a conspicuous part in the affairs of the county.

These with a few others were practicing Attorneys at the bar in Rutherford. Men of prominence, filling offices of high station, and if there be any honor in being a member of the Legislature, all may claim to have filled that station, representing the county. The bar of Rutherford from the beginning sustaining a high order of legal intellect.

Joshua Haskell Esqr., one of the first resident lawyers in Murfreesboro, removed to West Tennessee. Was appointed to a judicial office in that district. P. W. Humphreys practicing at the bar in Rutherford at an early time, removed to another district and received the appointment of Judge of that district. Thomas H. Benton, in after time, in Washington meeting and being introduced to Judge R - After enquiring what part of country he was from, being informed, from Tennessee. What part of Tennessee? Old Jefferson! "Ah! Sir. I remember it. I reverence and respect that old town of Jefferson. Sir! It was at that place I made my maiden speech at the bar as a lawyer. I remember my feelings well." Many great changes have taken place since that time.

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#### IN MEMORIAM

Selene Dismukes Woodson (1918-2013) long-time member of the Rutherford Co. Historical Society.  
Kathryn Haynes Walkup (1927-2013) long-time member of the Rutherford Co. Historical Society.

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