



Rutherford County Historical Society
 P. O. Box 906
 717 N. Academy Street
 Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0906

2015-2016 OFFICERS

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 Vice-President Jeff Adcock
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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 1st of each year. Each annual membership is entitled to 6 issues of "Frow Chips". Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of each month [except November and December] at 7:00 p.m. 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

Publications for sale:

For past publications, please contact Gwen Boyd (615) 895-0028 or Susan Daniel (615) 849-3823 or write the Society at the above address.

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NEW MEMBERS - Virginia Donnell, Bruce & Susan Harber, Debbie Lillard

Sunday, May 15, 2016 - Board Meeting - 2 pm at Ransom School - all Board members urged to attend.

Monday, May 16, 2016 - 7 pm at Rutherford Co. Archives, 435 Rice Street. Speaker: Joyce Joines of the City of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department.

Monday, June 20, 2016 - 7 pm at Rutherford Co. Archives, 435 Rice Street. Speaker: Jeff Adcock will tell us about some of the people of the Fosterville area of Rutherford Co.

Sunday, June 12, 2016 - 2 pm - The Rutherford County APTA [Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities] President, Bonnie Nemeth, will place an APTA marker on the front lawn of Ransom School Historic House and School Museum at 717 North Academy Street. The event will start at 2:00 p.m. All members and guests are welcome at this event and there will be an open house following the presentation.

Tuesday, June 21, 2016 - 9 am to 10 am - Greg Tucker and Truman Jones will bring their radio program to Ransom School's front porch. Attend May's meeting for more on that event.

The Friends of the Johns-King House "Liberty Hill" - Smyrna, TN

We are requesting the Rutherford County Commission allocate \$150,000 to purchase this 209 year old historic landmark home at 845 Old Jefferson Pike in Smyrna, Tennessee. The Friends of the 1807 Johns-King House are seeking to preserve one of Rutherford Counties oldest historic homes for the benefit of the citizens of Rutherford County and the citizens of Smyrna, TN. The house has a vast 209 year old history linked directly to the founding of Rutherford County, TN. and Col. Robert Weakley, a very prominent 18th and 19th century Tennessee Politician. The home is also one of less than 10 surviving Cherokee Trail of Tears witness structures that saw the passage of the Cherokee through the county in 1838, and it also played an important role in local Civil War history as the location of Wheeler's Raid on Jefferson and a Confederate hospital in December of 1862. The citizens of Smyrna and Rutherford County would greatly benefit from the preservation of the house and it's restored use as a Smyrna based Historical Interpretive Center. Encourage the Rutherford County Commission to preserve the Johns-King Home of Smyrna by signing the petition at the link at RCHS website.

RANSOM SCHOOL HOUSE IS OPEN ON SATURDAY MORNINGS

The RANSOM SCHOOL HOUSE is now open on Saturdays, 9-12 a.m. Publications by RCHS are always for sale. For further information or to sign up as a greeter, contact: Gwen Boyd - 895-0028 or gwenboyd2@bellsouth.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT: May is so busy with schools out, graduations and many family activities That being said, I hope all of you members will attend the Rutherford County Historical Society May 16th general meeting at the Archives. Jennifer Joines who is the Wellness, Fitness Coordinator, City of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department SportsCom will present an award to Rutherford County Historical Society for participation in "Historic Selfie Scavenger Hunt." You will be interested to hear more about this award at our meeting.

615-867-7254 or brujohn@comcast.net.

Joyce Johnson, President

Hopewell Presbyterian Church near Milton, Tennessee

1 April 1816 - 1 April 2016

CONTINUATION

Early member records taken from the Church Minutes

[abstracted by Susan G. Daniel]

Note: The Presbyterian Church baptizes infants., later confirms them.

1853 Oct 22 - Received: Jermima H. McLin & John D. McLin.

1854 Mar 25 - Mary A. Knox, consort of Samuel W. Knox, departed this life [Ed. note: Samuel W. Knox married 14 Dec 1842 In Sumner Co., Mary Ann Mobley]

Sep 2 - Dismissed: A. B. Witherspoon, Jane Witherspoon, D. C. Witherspoon, G. T. Witherspoon, M. E. Witherspoon

Sep 25 - Received: James H. Watt & Sarah E. Watt

Sep 26 - Received: Mary Jane Knox and Silvy Knox, consort of B. F. Knox

Baptized: John D. Spain & Samuel E. Spain, sons of John Q. Spain & S. M. Spain. Mary Jane Bradley, daughter of William M. & Ana J. R. Bradley. James Albert Baxter, son of H. A. & R. A. Baxter.

1855 June 5 - Sarah E. Watt, consort of James H. Watt, departed this life
June 6 - L. [Lemuel] E. McKnight departed this life.

June 12 - Eliza McKnight, consort of D. M. McKnight, departed this life

Sep 26 - Received: Priscella R. Creson, John H. Baxter, Jr., Dennison H. Creson, William R. Hogwood, Henry B. Hogwood, B. F. Witherspoon

Baptized: John D. Rogers, son of R. [Ranzel] H. & Mary Rogers.

Sep 30 - Baptized: Samuel Brantley, son of E. T. & M. E. Brantley
Received: James E. McLin

Oct 4 - Baptized: James L. Creson, son of L. B. & Jane K. Creson

Oct 30 - Dismissed: A. M. & Mary Reynolds

Nov 20 - Mary E. Rogers, consort of R. H. Rogers, departed this life

Nov 22 - Dismissed: July A. Stroops, Sa. Catharine Ramsey

Dec 21 - Baptized: Albert D. P. Craner, son of Thomas B. & Mary A. Craner

1856 Mar 5 - Dismissed: Neomia S. McKnight & Martha P. Rankin, formerly M. B. McKnight

Mar 29 - [Ed. Note: a correction to the church records was made]
Deaths: Nancy Hooper, E. S. Weatherford, M. R. Alexander, S. E. McKnight, & Rachel McKnight, a woman of color

Members left the church: J. A. Knox, Enos McKnight, William G. Morison, Sam A. McKnight, Mary Cunningham, Mary S. Saunders, Mary Morison, Thomas E. & Mrs. Spain, J. B. & Mrs. Lusk, Mary M. Percell, Robert Donoho.

Apr 17 - Dismissed: J. C. Sloan

May 27 - William Rhea departed this life. He was 104 years and 3 months of age.

June 1 - Baptized: Stephen Alexander Cook, son of Stephen &

Sarah Cook

Aug 24 - Baptized: George Albert White & Martha Frances White, children of William B. & Martha G. White

Sep 30 - Received: John T. Herington

Oct 1 - Received for baptism: N. K. Knox

1857 Mar 27 - Dismissed: Virginia Donoho

July 16 - Jacob H. Thomas departed this life

Aug 1 - Dismissed: Ann Powell, wife of Allen Powell

Sep 24 - Baptized: William E. Knox & Mary E. Knox, children of S. W. & N. [Nancy] E. Knox. John Baxter Bradley, son of William M. & M. [Martha] J. Bradley, Robert F. Creson, son of L. B. & J. R. Creson. Edwin A. McKnight, son of W. W. & M. P. McKnight

Nov 14 - Received: Robert McGill, free man of color. Peter, a colored man belonging to B. Knox

1858 Apr 12 - Dismissed: Jane Orr

Nov 22 - Sarah Ray departed this life

Nov 28 - Baptized: Priscella Rebecca Hogwood & John Thomas Hogwood, children of D. & P. W. Hogwood

Received: William R. Hogwood

1859 Mar 11 - Dismissed: Partheny Price

Mar 21 - Dismissed: Harriet McLin, James McLin

May 6 - Dismissed: Elizabeth English

Nov 16 - Dismissed: R. J. McKnight & wife, Ann F. McKnight, James F. Black & wife, Nancy C. Black.

Received: Sarah E. Craner

1860 Aug 29 - Received: Simon Craddock

Baptized: William H. Herndon, son of J. L. & Martha E.

Herndon; William Thomas White, son of William B. & C. P. White

Aug 31 - Dismissed: William M. Bradley

1861 Aug 8 - Baptized: Samuel Black Craner, son of Thomas B. & Mary Craner

Dec 12 - William R. Hogwood, son of Dennison & Priscella Hogwood, departed this life

1862 Apr 3 - Hugh L. White departed this life

Sep 26 - Rebecca Black departed this life

Dec 11 - Lucy F. McKnight departed this life

1863 Mar 23 - L. [Lewis] B. Creson departed this life

June 15 - Rev. Jesse Alexander departed this life

June 26 - A. [Andrew] Barkley [Ed. Note: born 1795 NC] departed this life

1864 Jan 7 - Isabella Huddleston departed this life

May 4 - Jane F. Peebles departed this life

Aug 7 - M. [Mary] E. Dill departed this life

1865 May 21 - Baptized: John R. Herndon & Sally A. Herndon, children of J. C. & M. E. Herndon

May 25 - Nancy McKnight departed this life

Aug 26 - William M. Johns departed this life

Sep 13 - Received: William R. McDougal, Sarah J. White, D. D.

- Hogwood, Sarah A. Bradley, Ann E. Hogwood,
David E. McKnight
- Sep 14 - Received: Andrew B. Creson, Dennison H. Bradley
Sep 24 - Received: Lochia W. Weatherly, Ann C. Weatherly,
Elvira R. Craner, Larkin L. Barber
- Oct 7 - Received: J. H. White, Mary E. Black, William A. Black,
John B. Creson, Mary M. White
- Oct 18 - John H. Baxter, Jr. departed this life
Nov 20 - Received: Sister J. Hogwood
Nov 27 - Dismissed: Mary Anderson
- 1866 Apr 24 - Sister N. [?? Nelly or Elinor] H. Knox departed this life
May 21 - Sarah M. McKnight, consort of Joseph D. McKnight,
departed this life
May 26 - Received: Benjamin Knox
Nov 17 - E. R. Baxter, consort of J. [John] H. Baxter, departed this
life
- 1867 Feb 21 - Dismissed: John Herndon
Mar 4 - Dismissed: D. [Dennison] H. Creson
Mar 10 - Dismissed: Brother Thomas C. Barkley & Sister N. J.
Barkley
Sep 30 - Dismissed: Jane R. Creson, Priscella R. Patton, John B.
Creson, Andrew B. Creson
Oct 4 - Received: Ella I. Weatherly, Martha A. Whitlock
- 1869 May 24 - Sarah E. Craner [daughter of Tom B. & Mary A. Craner]
departed this life
- 1870 Jan 7 - S. R. Baxter [female] departed this life
Feb 26 - S. J. Martin, formerly S. J. White, departed this life
Mar 26 - Elizabeth A. Black departed this life
June 26 - Mary T. Vaught, consort of Thomas Vaught, departed
this life
July 9 - Jane Johns, widow of William Johns, departed this life
Aug 17 - [may be Mrs.] William McKnight departed this life
Oct 5 - John H. White departed this life
- 1871 May 27 - Baptized: William Edwin Brantley & Ally Brantley,
children of Rev. E. T. & M. E. Brantley
- 1872 - June 2 - Benjamin Knox departed this life
July 4 - Baptized: Flora E. McKnight, Ida M. McKnight, William M.
McKnight, Wesley A. McKnight, Quinta E. McKnight,
Sexta McKnight, children of Amanda E. McKnight
[July?] 21 - Margret Knox departed this life
Oct 18 - Della Weatherly departed this life
- 1873 Jan 25 - Mary J. Baxter, consort of R. H. Baxter, departed this life
Oct 2 - T. [Thomas] B. Craner departed this life
Nov 18 - S. A. Craner departed this life
- 1874 Nov 30 - J. W. Mabry departed this life
- 1875 June 10 - Ann E. Craner, formerly Ann E. Weatherly departed this
life
July 2 - Margaret Alexander departed this life
- 1876 July 26 - David N. Baxter departed this life
Aug 21 - [N. A. or H. A.] Baxter departed this life
- 1878 Sep 5 - Baptized: Edgar Brantley, son of S. P. & Mary J.
Brantley
- 1879 Apr 21 - George Peebles departed this life
June 19 - Lucinda R. Martin departed this life
- 1880 May 16 - Ella J. Weatherly departed this life
Oct 25 - J. H. Baxter departed this life
- 1883 Jan 26 - R. D. Black, member of Hopewell church since 1830,
departed this life
May 6 - Bessie F. Thompson, infant daughter of Rev. C. E.
& Cora C. Thompson

KATE SILLS CARNEY POINDEXTER

Submitted by Gwen Boyd
[originally written by Carol R. White]



"The Crest" - home of LeGrand Hargis Carney
- stood on a rise several blocks north of the
Square between Maple & Spring Streets.

William Spencer Poindexter &
Catharine "Kate" Sills Carney with
children: William Spencer Poindexter, Jr.
& Rosa Kathleen Poindexter



Kate Sills Carney was the daughter of Legrand Carney and his wife, Katherine "Kate" Wells Lytle Carney. Her father was a very successful merchant and landowner in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, owning over a thousand slaves, plus house servants. Her parents' plantation, called "The Crest" once stood on a rise several blocks north of the square between Maple and Spring Streets. Kate was the great-granddaughter of Captain William Lytle, who donated the land which became the town of Murfreesboro. Kate Lytle's brother, Will, also resided at the plantation and acted as overseer and managed the farm while Kate's father, Legrand, took care of the mercantile interests in town.

Kate Sills Carney became quite famous in her community as she kept a diary during the civil war 1859-1862 describing life in Murfreesboro and her true dedication to the South and family. Parts of her diary can be found electronically, online, at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill or a hard copy can be located in the library at Middle Tennessee State University.

Kate was a true southern belle. She attended school at the Soule College and was very well educated in her studies and music. At the age of 16, she describes in her travels visiting various schools for her advanced education and eventually decided on a school in Philadelphia. Kate's diary chronicled her school days in Philadelphia quite thoroughly.

When trouble began to brew between the North and South, Sister Mary and Mary's husband, Dr. Lunsford Wilson [see article below] of Mississippi, had planned a trip North that summer and Kate's father had them go by Philadelphia and pick up Kate. They went to New York and on up into Canada before returning to Tennessee. Then she decided to go to Yazoo, Mississippi with them where they lived on a large plantation right on the Mississippi River. In her diary, she relates about the day "Old Abe" became president and how unhappy they were. Almost most of the South seceding before Tennessee and how afraid they were that she wouldn't. She describes the boat loads of Confederate soldiers and how they went down to the levee to cheer them on to victory!

Tennessee eventually did secede from the Union, and Kate went back home to Tennessee during the Civil War. Her oldest brother, Will, had joined the Infantry under his uncle, Colonel Ephraim Lytle. Her second brother was a Captain, along with her uncle, Chaplain John Lytle in the Cavalry. Her father, Legrand Carney, was thrown into prison for a time because he would not pledge allegiance to the union, but was eventually released. Wounded were pouring into the hospital, and she and her mother, Catharine Wells Lytle Carney, were busy carrying food to jail and hospital and tending the sick and wounded. During all the war activity, Kate attempted to keep up a semblance of a school at her home for her younger sisters and brothers: Rosa, Legrand, Helen, Ephraim and Jenny, as well as some of the house Negroes whom she had always taught off and on. Her brother, Legrand, although very young, also joined the cause and went off to war. When brother Will went off to the war, and other menfolk gone, the family had a desperate time. Gradually the slaves, as well as some of the house servants, deserted the plantation. Those slaves that remained behind wouldn't do what they were told to do. The stock had to be fed and the crops were running in the fields.

The Union army arrived in the area in December 1862. The Battle of Stones River was virtually fought in the backyard of their home. The "Crest" was turned into a hospital and the Carney family nursed both the blue and gray. The Yankee officers took up headquarters in the house and although Kate's parents tolerated the Yankee's, Kate would retire to her room rather than face the enemy. Kate was quite bossy with her siblings, parents, and servants on the plantation and had no qualms about spouting off to the enemy. At the close of the war, peace did return to the community and Kate's life. Some of the house servants did stay on. Kate Carney taught

school plus gave lessons in art, guitar, and mandolin. She managed to help educate all her younger brother and sisters until they left the home. Most of them married before Kate as she was so busy helping them. However, Kate's diary indicated that she did not have a high opinion of marriage and was very independent; I think she was very hesitant about giving herself under the command of marriage.

However, Kate did marry as her last entry in the diary indicates that there were other diaries but they were destroyed in that "foolishness needed to be put aside as she was now married". When I finished reading her diary, about her girlhood days and of the Civil War, I longed to hear more information about the life of Kate Carney as an adult, but unfortunately, I could not locate any information on her life after marriage nor have an image of her. After several attempts on the internet I found that others were looking for her as well. The last couple of weeks, through several sources and piecing together information, I hit pay dirt!

One of Kate's students, Louisa "Lulu" Poindexter, introduced her father, who had twice been a widower, to Kate Carney. He was quite smitten with Kate and before too long they became engaged. Kate Carney married, on February 2, 1875 in Rutherford County, William Spencer Poindexter with daughter Lulu accompanying as bridesmaid.

Mr. Poindexter was born in 1830 in Kentucky and settled in Clarksville, Montgomery County, Tennessee where he was engaged as a banker and tobacco man. Mr. Poindexter married first, in about 1859, to Emily Everett. Two children were born to this union: a son (who died at five years old) and Louisa "Lulu" Poindexter (mentioned above). The first Mrs. Poindexter died, and he married second on September 10, 1866, Mrs. Mary F. George. To my knowledge, Mr. Poindexter and Mary did not have any children. Mr. Poindexter married third, our Kate Carney of Murfreesboro, as stated above, on February 2, 1875. Three children were born to this union: William S. Poindexter Jr. (b. 1877), and Rosa Kathleen Poindexter (b. 1879, d. 1963), and Helen May Poindexter (b. circa 1887, d. 1889).

Mr. Poindexter died in the March of 1890 with pneumonia leaving Kate to support two children in their teens. Kate only had about fourteen years of marriage life and freedom from heavy responsibility. Kate was well provided for in that Mr. Poindexter had been President of the largest bank in Clarksville and left Kate a substantial life insurance policy. When Kate collected the life insurance policy, she immediately placed it in the bank. Unfortunately, the treasurer of the bank, who had been taking a little money here and there, knew there would be a complete audit of the bank after Mr. Poindexter's death, decided to take every cent from the bank he could get his hands on (included Kate's insurance money) and absconded to South America. Everyone had always trusted him and no one suspected a thing until they could not locate him. Kate Carney Poindexter felt obligated to make everything up to the depositors by giving up almost everything she had except the two houses in Nashville (which she rented) and began to start taking in boarders in her large home in Clarksville.

Kate was used to bossing and being independent so she managed quite well without a husband. I was able to locate Kate Carney Poindexter living with her two children and two servants on the 1900 Tennessee census as residing in Davidson County, Tennessee. William Poindexter Jr.'s occupation was listed as bookkeeper on this census record

Kate's son, William "Spencer" Poindexter Jr. married, before 1906, Willie E. Corsey; they had one daughter Willie E. Poindexter. Spencer Poindexter (occupation merchant) and family are found on the 1910 census as residing in Davidson County Tennessee. However, the couple were later divorced as Willie E. Poindexter (divorced) and daughter (also named Willie) are found on the 1920 census record as residing in her parents' home in Montgomery County, Tennessee. I was able to locate

Spencer Poindexter on the 1920 and 1930 census living in Portland, Oregon. He remarried Irene "Maude" (last name unknown) and had a daughter, Betty J. Poindexter. Spencer died in Oregon on July 1, 1937. His wife and daughter removed to California where they both died in San Mateo, California: Maude on November 28, 1971 and Betty J. Poindexter on December 25, 1974 just a few short years after her mother. To my knowledge, Betty Poindexter did not marry as she is listed on the California death records as Betty Poindexter.

Kate's daughter, Rosa, married on December 24, 1903 in Clarksville, Montgomery County, to Mr. Thomas W. Binns. Thomas Binns had been one of the boarders that resided at Kate's boarding house in Clarksville. He began to show special interest in Rosa, and Kate was opposed to such a match sending Rosa off to Saint Cecilia's Convent in Nashville (even though she was not of the catholic faith) to try to cool their romance. In the meantime, Thomas Binn worked hard, saved his money, and was still boarding with Kate in Clarksville. When Rosa did not return home after her schooling as she traveled and spent time with other family members, he traveled all over Europe and spent some time in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Rosa and Thomas both returned home and married in 1903. Thomas Binn continued to work hard and was eventually able, with the financial assistance of a couple of partners, to buy a grain and elevator business in Nashville so was born the Daniel, Binns, & Laurent Nashville Grain and Elevator Company. Kate Carney Poindexter finally decided to accept her son-in-law, as she sold her magnificent home in Clarksville where she had lived with her husband, birthed her children, and after her husband's death, maintained boarders for many years. Kate sold her home and bought her daughter Rosa and son-in-law Thomas a nice home in Nashville located at 334 22nd Avenue and moved in with them. Kate was a very bossy woman, and although Thomas adored his mother-in-law, I am sure she was a great trial to the couple many times.

Rosa and Thomas W. Binns had two daughters, Catherine Carney Binns (b. 1905, d. 1977) married Frederick James Harris and they had four children; and Elizabeth Feary Binns (b. 1910, d. 1983), married to James William Sovrens. Rosa and Thomas, as well as daughters, later resided in Florida where they both died in 1963, and 1946, respectively. Catherine Kate Sills Carney Poindexter relocated to Florida, along with her daughter, as she died in Winter Haven, Florida on May 28, 1930. Her body was returned to Tennessee where she is buried with her husband, William Spencer Poindexter, and his other two wives in the Greenwood Cemetery in Clarksville, Montgomery County, Tennessee. Mr. William Ledbetter, from Murfreesboro, provided me factual information on birth and death dates for Kate. Special thanks to Gene Hill, findagrave volunteer, who was kind enough to take a photo of the Poindexter Monument for me as well as a close-up of the transcription for Kate. Mr. Hill also provided the obituary for Kate and Mr. Poindexter.

Interestingly, the Montgomery County Historical Society has a Greenwood cemetery tour in which one among the characters that will be portrayed are William Spencer Poindexter (1830-1890) tobacconist and banker with 3 wives, all who sleep with him here at Greenwood--they will be singing to him and he to them.

Kate's obituary states: Poindexter, Mrs. Kate Carney. Born in Murfreesboro, TN: Age 86 yrs. Died 28 May 1930, in Winter Haven, Florida. Third wife of late W. Spencer Poindexter, former president of Clarksville National Bank. Former school teacher. Leaves two sisters: Mrs. Helen Whitfield and Mrs. Jennie Michel [sic Mitchell]; one brother, Ephraim Carney. Survived by one daughter, Mrs. Thomas Binns; one son, Spencer Poindexter one step-daughter, Mrs. W. B. Anderson. Methodist. Interment at Greenwood Cemetery. Clarksville Leaf Chronicle.

A letter was written by Catharine Carney Binns about her parents as

well as her grandmother, Kate Carney Poindexter that supplements the genealogical facts of this story. However, nothing was included about their lives in Winter Haven or why they chose to leave Tennessee to reside in Florida was mentioned.

Lastly, no known photo of Kate Carney exists. However, the diary of Kate Carney indicates that several tintypes of the family were made in Murfreesboro, but it is unknown where these tintypes are today. If anyone has information about photos of this family, please let me know.

DR. WILLIAM LUNSFORD WILSON

Submitted by Gwen Boyd

The following was written by Dr. William Lunsford Wilson...."I was born November 15, 1833, the night of the great meteor shower or as is commonly said "the night the stars fell" on a farm near Smyrna and Old Jefferson, Rutherford County, Tennessee now owned by the Gooches.

The first school I attended was Franklin College, operated by Mr. Tolbert Fanning and a core of professors. This was a new departure, an agricultural and mechanical school, the students being required to spend certain hours of each day at work in the field or shops. The boys called Fanning "Old Boss" and he was a perfect terror to most of them. He was about 6 1/2 feet tall and had very large feet and hands and a voice like a fog horn. He was a great and good man and about 100 years ahead of his time. He was one of the most eminent ministers of his church, which the people generally called Campbellite, but they call themselves Christians. Franklin College was burnt during the war. Minerva College (the female school nearby) was torn down several years ago and the Fanning Orphan School built on this site. Among the faculty of Franklin College was professor Jos. Smith Fowler, Prof. of Mathematics. He resigned his chair in the college and with us A. J. Boile founded Washington Institute situated on the Murfreesboro Pike near the residence of Col. E. W. Cole in the south west corner of the Cottage Home tract. The land about 2 1/2 acres was given to the Institute by my father to be used for school purposes and whenever the school ceased it reverted to him or his heirs. The building was destroyed by fire during the war and there is not a vestige of it left. I attended this school for several years or until I was about grown and so also did my brothers and sisters.

In 1853, I left home with my father and went to the Kentucky Military Institute, 6 miles south of Frankfort. We went from Nashville to Louisville by stage pulled by four horses. It was a very tiresome trip; we changed teams about every 25 miles. Left Nashville about 5 a.m. and arrived at Louisville the next afternoon. From Louisville we went by rail to Frankfort then to the Institute by Omni bus. I graduated at the K.U.I. in 1854, getting my degrees of A.B. and A.M. The time I spent at the K.U.I. will always be a grin (?) shot in my memory. The associations and friendships I formed there will be recollected by me with the greatest pleasure. There are not many of my school mates living now. Most of them served in the Confederate Army and some in the Yankee Army. After graduating from the K.U.I. I returned to Cottage Home and soon after my return my father died.

I then concluded the study of medicine and attended one course of lectures at the University of Nashville going in from Cottage Home every day, sometimes walking and others riding horseback. During the winter, my mother and brothers and sisters, with my Uncle Thomas C. Black, were on the Gandercleugh Plantation in MS and I kept bachelor's hall with my friend and neighbor A. L. King at Cottage Home. The next fall and winter I took a course of medical lectures at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and graduated there in the spring of that year.

After becoming a Doctor, one of the most important things of my life took place. I purchased from Rev. Tolbert Fanning a fine trotting mare

named Jennie Lauderdale and paid him six hundred dollars for her. She could trot a mile in 2-40 easily and was a splendid animal. I then bought a no top spider buggy weighing about 175 pounds and went a courting. I was proud of my horse and buggy and could pass anything on the road about Nashville and vicinity. The principal scene of my courting was near Murfreesboro at the Legrand H. Carney's where I first met Miss Mary Carney. After attending numerous fairs, camp meetings, and dances together, we finally wound up by a wedding which took place on the evening of 18th Jan 1859. Our attendants were: General Joseph B. Palmer and Miss Ellen Spence, Dr. Samuel P. Black and Miss Bettie King, Dr. William H. Harris and Miss Ellen Avent, Capt. Samuel Y. Caldwell and Miss Kate Carney, Robert Crockett and Miss Armie L. Black, Joseph D. Wilson and Miss Fannie A. Wilson. All of them are now dead except Miss Ellen Avent, now Mrs. Childress, living in Memphis Tennessee with her mother Mrs. Dr. Avent; Joseph D. Neilson who lives in Murfreesboro and Miss Kate Carney now Mrs. Poindexter and lives in Nashville.

The fall before our marriage I went down to Ganderclough Plantation and laid the foundation for our dwelling house and then went to Cincinnati with a plan and specifications and had the house framed there by the firm of Hinkle Guild and Co. Capt. Parisot, a steam boat man of the Yazoo River, was then building a new boat for the Yazoo river trade named the Dew-Drop, and when it was finished I ordered the material for the house to be loaded on the boat and it was taken and landed right on the spot on which the house was to be built. An old Dutch carpenter named Jacob Vogt (?) and his two sons were employed to frame the house. They came down on the boat to the plantation and built the house and a good many besides. At the time, the plasterers were to begin work the river was very high. They were not able to get sand. I ordered it shipped from the Gulf of Mexico. It was put in barrels and shipped by steamboat and landed right at the door about as cheaply as I could have gotten it in the neighborhood and was white as snow.

One of my attendants was to have been Capt. W.C. Flournoy of Pulaski, Tenn., an old schoolmate of mine at KUI. The day before the wedding, his step father died, Judge March Banks, and he notified me that he could not attend, so I got Gen. Palmer as a substitute. It would be stating the case mildly to say that I was excited. I left Cottage Home on the morning of 18th January and came to Nashville on my way to Murfreesboro and left on the 3-30 train. When the train stopped at Glenn Cliff, George, one of our servants, came running up to the car with a box containing my wedding suit, which I had forgotten. Also I had a French boot maker to make for me a fine pair of calf skin boots and he took my measure to fit like the skin and when I went to put them on, I failed to do so after about an hour's hard work. I sent out to town and got a pair of cloth gaiters (the other extreme) that were too big for me, but I put them on any way as it was getting near the time for the ceremony. Also, I had bought in Cincinnati a part of my wedding outfit, a white silk neck tie, about as large as a medium size table cloth, which was folded and put around my neck and by the time we arrived at the Carney's I don't know how I looked but I felt like I was going to be hung. About 8 o'clock we were informed that Dr. S. D. Baldwin, who was to have performed the ceremony, could not come. He had sent a courier post haste with the letter of information. He lived in Lebanon TN 25 miles north of Murfreesboro and had gotten ready for the trip when he was suddenly taken in confinement which prevented his coming. As it was getting very late, the company getting very restless, something had to be done and that quickly. We sent out in town and procured the services of Dr. Plummer, who performed the ceremony successfully.

We stayed at Mr. Carney's several weeks after we were married, getting things ready. Mr. and Mrs. Carney gave us twelve negroes and they had to be freed up to take them down to the Plantation on Yazoo River.

Also we had household goods of all kinds to get ready and prepare for shipment. Sometime about 1st of Feb we got everything on board of the steam boat James Johnson, a large side wheel steamer at the lower wharf at Nashville. And I and my wife, my mother, and brothers and sisters, took passage for New Orleans, Louisiana. We transferred the negroes and the freight at Vicksburg my brother superintending it and going up to the plantation with it. We were about eight days making the trip and it was a very pleasant one. There was a big crowd of passengers on board and everybody became acquainted. Besides dancing and card playing and games of all kinds, the boat landed frequently taking on and putting off freight and passengers, when we would frequently go up in the towns and plantations and be highly entertained by the persons and things we would see. We stayed in New Orleans about a month waiting for the house on the plantation to be completed. It was during the madrigal's season and having a good many friends and acquaintances there we enjoyed ourselves to the fullest extent.

We left New Orleans after purchasing all necessary stuff for the plantation and for our house and came up to the place on a Yazoo River steamboat. The dwelling being about ready we moved into it and my wife Miss Mary was duly installed "Queen of the Realm" and no woman ever reined more completely as a queen than she did at Gander Leigh. My mother, brothers, and sister stayed with us about a month then left for Cottage Home. We remained on the plantation until about the middle of June then went to Murfreesboro and Cottage Home. From the time we were married in 1859 to Nov. 1862 we spent the time as follows:

We went to Gander Leigh about 1st of October and stayed during the ginning and picking and shipping of the crop (we always shipped our cotton to New Orleans) and in January and February following we went down to settle with the merchant and lay in supplies of different kinds for the Plantation and then return to the plantation and stay until the crops of corn and cotton were planted and well under way of cultivation, say about the middle of June and then return to Tennessee, spending the time at Cottage Home, Murfreesboro, and Estill Springs. This was our routine until 1862; I think I can safely say that no two people ever got more pleasure out of life than we did during that time.

We had just about completed the improvements contemplated on the plantation, naming, dwelling and out houses, negro quarters, steam gin, saw mill, and fencing, when the war broke out (The war between the Confederate States and the United States). Our prospects for a long prosperous and happy life were very bright but the war blasted them all. The mere act of freeing negroes would not have been so bad if it had not been for the complete demoralization of them--rendering them wholly unreliable as laborers. We had at Gander Leigh about 125 negroes, big and little, valued easily at \$100,000; one hundred thousand dollars and their emancipation destroyed it all. I lost all interest in the plantation and the country after the war. The Yazoo Delta before the war was the most prosperous part of the country and it was inhabited by a people who were happy and contented as they had everything they wanted to make them so. Rich land and Negroes to till it, good crops, and when their crops were made there was no difficulty getting them to the market as the Yazoo was one of the best navigable streams in the United States. The forests were full of all kinds of game: bear, deer, wild turkeys, geese, ducks, squirrels, and the lakes and bayous full of fish.

Each plantation owner had a name for his plantation. In our neighborhood were Raito (Mr. Mead), Rough and Ready and Joe Walk (Dr. Wm. Yandell), Pecan Grove (Esq. Paul), Oak Valley (Harrison Barksdale), and Gander Leigh (Wilson), Potato Hill (Wm. Wheelless), Holly Bend (Col. Wm. D. Gale), and Gestro and Abydos (Dr. Thomas Gale. Dancing and card parties were a frequent occurrence. Generally when we met at a

place, we spent the night, and if the weather was bad, several days or until the weather cleared off. In the fall, we had camp hunts and in the spring fish fries, Glorious Days. I never expect to see such time again. Not that we had nothing to do, far from it, each of us had duties to perform which could not be neglected and if we were necessarily absent the manager always attended strictly to whatever was to be done.

Our household consisted of Henry (man servant, carriage driver, and gardener), Louisa (his wife and our cook), Betsy (my wife's maid) and Frank, house boy about 10 years old. We had two fine mules for the carriage and my wife had a fine saddle horse named Magippa (Henry always called him Zippa) given to her by her father.

My wife not being an early riser, frequently along the 1st of Dec, when the mornings were clear and frosty, I would take my rifle and start out from the house about 4 o'clock a.m. so as to get out into the range by day light, and kill two and sometimes three deer and get back home about 9 o'clock to find my wife up and ready for breakfast.

In 1862, we had our first overflow, it was during the first seize of Vicksburg. The Yankees cut the levee at Hushpuckanee, a point on the Mississippi River about 50 miles northwest of Gander Leigh, when the water was at its highest and let the water down on us. We were overflowed from 2 1/2 feet to about 10 feet. It looked then like complete destruction but we managed to survive it. When I saw the water was coming over, I put the negroes in the gin house, the hogs in the cotton seed room, the cattle on the large mound in Mr. Wheelless field and the mule and horses on a smaller mound on the same plantation. My wife and I stayed in our dwelling house until the water got within about 6 inches of the floor, when after mopping the furniture up about a foot higher we took a skiff pulled by two good men and went up to Yazoo City and from there to my friend Dr. Cox 17 miles out in the hills. The water stopped rising the day we left. Dr. Cox was a particular friend of mine and had sent his carriage to meet us at Yazoo City. We stayed out at Dr. Cox for more than a month, I going back and forth to the plantation on Mazippa as far as Yazoo City and to the plantation by skiff.

GENEALOGY OF THE CARNEY FAMILY

Researched by Susan G. Daniel (there may be errors)

William Carney (1779-1840) m. Mary Hargis (b. 22 July 1779, d. 17 Aug 1836, buried 1st Old City Cemetery, re-buried Evergreen Cemetery, Murfreesboro, Rutherford Co. Their son:

LeGrand Hargis Carney (b. 1 Jan 1808 Person Co., NC, d. 29 Apr 1884, buried Evergreen Cemetery) m. 2 Aug 1831 Rutherford Co., Catharine "Kate" Wells Lytle (b. 6 Mar 1814, d. 15 Apr 1892, buried Evergreen Cemetery), daughter of John Taylor Lytle & Tabitha Morton, granddaughter of Capt. William & Nancy Taylor Lytle and James Blythe & Catharine "Kitty" Wells Morton. Children of LeGrand & Catharine Carney:

1. William J. Carney (b. 8 Mar 1834, d. 17 Aug 1911 Evergreen Cem.) m. 14 May 1856 Rutherford Co., Mariah L. Butler (b. 10 July 1839, d. 23 Dec 1894 buried Evergreen Cem.). Children:
 - A. Thomas Butler Carney (1857-1915) m. Allie Fletcher (1860-1938)
 - B. Robert H. Carney (1858-1922)
 - C. Kate Wells Carney (1859-1867)
 - D. Walter Overton Carney (1862-1931) m. 1st Nancy Belle Jones (1863-1901) m. 2nd Sarah Hackney
 - E. Pamela Carney (1867-1948)
 - F. Mary Carney (1872-1946) m. James M. Thacker (1844-1907)
 - G. Maurice L. Carney (1876-1910)
2. John Lytle Carney (b. 6 Feb 1837, d. 28 Oct 1904 Clarksville, TN) m. 27 May 1857 Rutherford Co., Amanda White Turner (b. 22 May 1839,

d. 9 Dec 1913 Nashville, TN) daughter of Thomas Joseph Blanks Turner & Sarah Amanda Wilson Jetton [home known as "Boxwood" located on Salem Pike, Murfreesboro]. Children:

- A. Legrand Hargis Carney (1859-1875)
 - B. Thomas Turner Carney (1861-1878)
 - C. Sallie Carney (1862-1928) m. James Harvey Turnley (1859-1911)
 - D. Katie Carney (1867-1958) m. Walter B. Gray (1863-1945)
 - E. Josephine "Josie" Carney (1869-1960) m. James Hicks Hill (1859-1897)
 - F. John Lytle Carney, Jr. (1870-1919)
 - G. Margaret "Maggie" Carney (1873-1925) m. George Morton Turnley (1870-1931)
3. Mary Hargis Carney (b. 12 Sep 1839, d. 19 Dec 1903 Davidson Co.) m. 18 Jan 1859 Rutherford Co., Dr. William Lunsford Wilson (b. 10 Nov 1833, d. 31 Jan 1914) son of John A. Wilson & Eliza Belle Black. Children:
 - A. Katie Eliza Wilson (1864-1949) m. William Young
 - B. John Robertson Wilson (1867-1937) [appears to be unmarried]
 - C. Fanny Lucy Wilson (1870-1955) m. Ulysses Samuel Shacklett (1867-1932)
 - D. Infant son Wilson (-1875-)
 - E. Legrand Carney Wilson (1877-1959) m. May Hopkins (1880-1959)
 - F. William Lunsford Wilson, Jr. (1880-1952)
 4. Catharine "Kate" Sills Carney (b. 27 July 1842, d. 28 May 1930, Clarksville, TN) m. 2 Feb 1875 Rutherford Co., William Spencer Poindexter (b. 1 Feb 1830, d. 24 Jan 1890, Clarksville, TN). Children:
 - A. William Spencer Poindexter, Jr. (1877-1937) m. Irene M. ?
 - B. Rosa Kathleen Poindexter (1879-1963) m. Thomas William Binns (1874-1958)
 5. LeGrand Vanhook Carney (b. 18 Oct 1844, d. 23 Oct 1901, Lee Co., Texas) m. 21 Feb 1869 Rutherford Co., Mary Jane Overall (b. 1847, d. 1894). Children:
 - A. William Carney (1869-d. bef 1880)
 - B. John Fletcher Carney (1873-1942) m. Maud C. ?
 - C. Legrand V. Carney, Jr. (1877-1937) m. Nancy Jane Orrell (1880-1858)
 - D. Burrell "Bur" Dickerson Carney (1880-1956) m. Cleopatra Alexander (1882-1954)
 6. Tabitha Ann Carney (b. 22 Nov 1846, d. 9 Dec 1857) Evergreen Cem.
 7. Rosaline "Rosa" Carney (b. 24 July 1849, d. 9 June 1928 Evergreen Cem. - residence 503 N. Maple, Murfreesboro) m. 17 Jan 1870 Rutherford Co., James Archer Moore (b. 10 Mar 1840, d. 20 July 1932 Evergreen Cem.). Children:
 - A. Jennie Moore (1871-873)
 - B. Katie Moore (1874-1934)
 - C. James Carney Moore (1877-1955) m. Elsie Winkler
 - D. Rosaline "Rosa" Mae Moore (1880-1974) m. Thomas Batts Cannon (1872-1939)
 - E. Helen Whitfield Moore (1887-1905)
 8. Ephraim Love Carney (b. 1852, d. 6 Oct 1928 Ocala, Marion Co., FL). He attended West Point Military Academy 1872.
 9. Helen Lytle Carney (b. 11 Mar 1855, d. 25 May 1939, Monroe, LA) m. 1st 12 Dec 1877 Rutherford Co., Daniel W. Scott (d. 1879); m. 2nd 5 Nov 1879 Rutherford Co., Malcolm "Mack" Egbert Whitefield (b. Mar 1849, d. 13 May 1912). Children:
 - A. Lillian Aurelia Whitefield (1878-1961) m. John Murphy Butler (1874-1941)

- B. Katherine "Kate" Sophia Whitefield (1880-1974) m. Henry Hanna Blanks (1879-1962)
- C. Malcolm Egbert Whitefield, Jr. (1882-1910)
- D. Jennie May Whitefield (1888-1890)
- E. Lytle Briggs Whitefield (1890-1948) m. Lela Christine Brandau (1892-1970)
- F. Rosaline Carney Whitefield (1896-1982) m. Kinsman D. Ford (1885-1947)
- 10. Jennie Wells Carney (b. 23 Dec 1857, d. 13 Oct 1946 Evergreen Cem.) m. ca 1884, Samuel Hodge Mitchell, CSA veteran, 45th Inf. (b. 11 Mar 1843, d. 23 Mar 1941 Evergreen Cem), son of Addison Hodge & Bettie Hodge. Children:
 - A. Catherine Lytle Mitchell (1885-1907)
 - B. Samuel Addison Mitchell (1887-1953) m. Martha Jean Myers (1888-1951)
- 11. Kate Wells Carney (b. 6 Aug 1859, d. 1 Oct 1867 Evergreen Cem.)

ROCK SPRING BAPTIST CHURCH / CHURCH OF CHRIST

Originally submitted by Mrs. Robert W. Gwynne, Sr. (Pub. #3)

[Excerpted by Susan G. Daniel]

The history of the Rock Spring Church of Christ is the history of the oldest Church of Christ in Rutherford County [Ed. note: Possibly the oldest church in Rutherford Co.]. The Rock Spring Church, five miles northwest of Smyrna, was organized July 21, 1804 as a Baptist Church, and on May 5, 1832 the charter was dissolved by a membership vote, 39 to 3, to become a Christian (Church of Christ) Church, with the two faiths alternating use of the building.

The first meeting place in 1804 was under a neighboring grove of trees where a spring of water came up from under some sandstone, hence the name Rock Spring.

The first meeting place in 1804 was under a neighboring grove of trees where a spring of water came up from under some sandstone, hence the name Rock Spring.

Isaac Nance, in 1816, deeded a plot of land for the first church building, a log structure. Later a brick building was raised to replace the log structure, the bricks were made on the site, and the Church had two rooms. This building also served as a schoolhouse.

Rock Spring Church was on the direct route from Nolensville to Jefferson. The stage coach would travel by her doors once each week. The minutes of the Church from its beginning in 1804 were kept in the most detailed manner. A description of the entire service, who preached, the number of additions, if any, amount of offering, salary of the preachers, description of the weather, along with other interesting facts such as the "cost of demijohn for carrying wine, one basket for convenience of carrying loaf \$2.50, 10 yards bumbiscin for immersion robes \$1.25."

Male Charter members of the church in 1804 included, John Fly, James Hill, William Nance, Bird Nance, Isaac Nance, Balsam Newsom, Annas Phillips, James Gambel, Robert Burton, Joshua Philips, William Kimbro, Jesse Morton, Guy McFadden, Wiley Harmon, Ezra Jones, David Gooch, Nathan Williams, John Williams, Joseph Williams, Frederick Oliver, Enoch Davis, and John Morton.

Female Charter members of the church in 1804 included, Sally Fly [wife of John Fly], Nancy Nance, Polly Nance [wife of Bird Nance], Janie Nance [wife of Isaac Nance], Susanna Hill [wife of James Hill], Susanna Gambrill [probably the wife of Bradley Gambrill], Ann Davis, Eliza Harden, Eliza Newsom, Polly Harper, Frankey Anthony, Hanna Phillips, Mary Phillips, Nancy Phillips, Betsy Burton [probably wife of Robert Burton], Polly Smith, Peggy Jones [wife of Ezra Jones], Eliza Kimbro [wife of William Kimbro], Mary Williams, and Rebecca Sect.

The May 5, 1832, minutes include the vote on the proposal to dissolve its association with the Baptist Association. Those casting "yea" votes were: E. G. Courts, S. W. Goodman, M. A. McFerrin, M. D. Goodman, A. E. Courts, Jane Gooch, Frances Williams, Sentha Sanders, Mary Hamilton, Mary Smith, E. Sandford, Sarah Rice, Martha Gooch, Tabitha Harmon, E. Morton, Sallie Sandford, Ann Nevens, B. Hamilton, E. J. Todd, Henley Guthers, Elizabeth McFadden, Eliza McFadden, Acinith Blair, Sisley Williams, James Smith, William B. Goodman, Nathan Williams, William Hamilton, John Hall, Jeps Morton, J. H. Courts, J. M. Williams, W. L. Williams, Wyley Harmon, William Trenary, William W. Nance, Jr., R. A.

Yancy, C. D. Thompson, and Crafford Ellis. Those casting "no" votes were John Gamble, William Nance, and R. Blair.

Further information found on the above individuals:

1. John Fly - John Dixon Fly purchased 100 acres on Mill Creek and Hurricane Creek in 1803. His wife was Sally.
2. James Hill - signed the petition requesting the formation of Rutherford Co. 10 Aug 1803. He was appointed overseer on the road from Howell's Mill to the ford of Hurricane Creek where the road from William Kimbro's to Nashville crosses the creek; from Hurricane Creek to Hart's Spring Branch, July 3, 1804. He died in 1821 with Susanna Hill, administratrix.
3. William Nance - signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co.
4. Bird Nance - signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co. He received rank of Captain of Rutherford Co. Militia in 1811 and probably fought in the War of 1812. His will written in Nov 1814 was recorded July 1815. He married Polly Hannah.
5. Isaac Nance - signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co. He was made Captain of the Rutherford Co. Militia in 1812. He died in 1819 leaving a widow, Jane Nance.
6. Balsam or Balaam or Baylum Newsom - signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co.
7. Annas Phillips - this may be Amos Phelps who appears on the 1810 census for Rutherford Co.
8. James Gambel or Gambrill - signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co. He was probably the son of Bradley (died 1806) and Susanna Gambrill.
9. Robert Burton - purchased 100 acres in Rutherford Co. in 1807.
10. Joshua Phillips or Joshua Phelps - Joshua Phelps born 1782 NC and Rachel Phelps born 1781 NC appear on the 1850 census for Rutherford Co.
11. William Kimbro or Kimbrough - signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co. He was born ca 1750 in Virginia and rendered Patriotic service in the Revolutionary War. He married Elizabeth Gooch, daughter of William & Frances Rice Gooch.
12. Jesse Morton -
13. Guy McFadden - He and his wife, Jane, came to Rutherford Co. from Chester Co., SC about 1803.
14. Wyley or Wiley Harmon - married in 1826 Tabitha Nance, daughter of Isaac & Jane Nance.
15. Ezra Jones - was born 1772 in Rowan Co. NC. He married 1796 in NC, Margaret "Peggy" Hunt, daughter of Enoch Hunt. They later became members of the Bradley Creek Baptist Church. They are buried in the Jones Cemetery in the Milton area.
16. David Gooch [Sr.] - son of William & Frances Rice Gooch, married 1788 NC, Jane Williams. They are buried in the Gooch Cemetery, Kidd Rd., Nolensville.
17. Nathan Williams - may have been a lawyer since he was executor of several wills. He died ca 1840 leaving wife, Frances.

18. John Williams -
19. Joseph Williams - son of David Williams, a Revolutionary War soldier from Hillsboro, NC, signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co. He married 1813 in Bedford Co., Charity Turrentine.
20. Frederick Oliver - purchased 170 acres on the Stones River and Mill Creek in 1805.
21. Enoch Davis -
22. John Morton -
23. Nancy Nance -
24. Ann Davis - may be wife of Enoch Davis
25. Eliza Newsom - probably wife of Balaam Newsom
26. Polly Harper - Samuel Harper married 1 Dec 1804 in Rutherford Co., Polly Gambrill
27. Frankey Anthony - this may be Frances Anthony, wife of John or Jonathan Anthony who purchased land on Stewarts Creek in 1806. He signed the Petition of 1803 requesting formation of Rutherford Co. and was a Constable in 1804.
28. Hanna Phillips -
29. Nancy Phillips - there is a Nancy R. Phillips born 1782 NC living in the Gambrill (Dist. 2) on the 1850 Rutherford Co. census.
30. Mary Phillips -
31. Polly Smith -
32. Mary Williams -
33. Rebecca Sect - [probably misspelling of last name].

LETTERS FROM HOME - by Shirley Farris Jones

A poignant look back into the lives of a Coffee County family in the 1890's

The years following the Civil War were challenging times for everyone and the Farris Family of Prairie Plains was no exception. During the two decades following the Civil War, Dr. John K. Farris, a Confederate veteran, worked hard to establish a medical practice, while at the same time providing for his growing family, which now included four boys and three girls. By the end of 1885, the family had experienced the loss of one son and two daughters, as well as their mother, Mary, and grandfather, William Austell. And, somehow, Dr. Farris had managed to provide his two oldest boys with a college education. By the early 1890's, the eldest son, Sam, was Principal at Hartselle Academy in Alabama and John Jr., was teaching school in Texas. But, the shining star seemed to rest upon the fifth born child, a son, William Rice, who desired to follow his father's footsteps in the practice of medicine. The financial picture of the country was much improved and in 1892 Rice enrolled at The University of Nashville Medical Department, which had just become a part of Vanderbilt School of Medicine, offering a two year course of study to earn a medical diploma. High hopes and great expectations went along with this young man from Coffee County as he began his studies. His father was obviously very proud, and he received much encouragement from his two older brothers and two younger sisters. The next year, however, would bring a different picture into focus as a "panic" or major depression, hit the nation and money became almost non-existent. And when Rice became ill, it became a major struggle to continue his studies. During this bleak time, the "Letters from Home" from his family were the only bright spot which kept him going so that he was able to graduate on time. These letters were obviously very dear to Rice and as his health deteriorated, he read and re-read each one over and over, preserving them among his cherished possessions, before his passing at the young age of 25 in 1895.

One hundred years later in 1995, the letters came into the possession of his great-niece, Civil War historian and author, Shirley Farris Jones.

Through these letters, Ms. Jones provides a very personal glimpse into the times just before the turn of the 20th century, including friends and neighbors of the area along with a little local gossip, and of her Farris family, with humor and heartbreak, their trials and tribulations, their struggles to survive, and the hopes and dreams of young men and women over a century ago.

"Letters from Home" is available from the Coffee County Historical Society, Box 2, 101 West Fort Street, Manchester, TN 37355. The cost is \$20 + \$3.50 postage. Or, if you would like to pick one up from Shirley Jones, give her a call at 615 337-0489.

Shirley Farris Jones, Civil War historian and community activist, retired from Middle Tennessee State University, where she had been a staff member for more than thirty years. She has served as President of the Rutherford County Historical Society, the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities, Friends of Stones River National Battlefield, and the Martha Ready Morgan Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. In 2003, she was one of the founding members of the Middle Tennessee Civil War Round Table. A direct descendant of two Confederate great-grandfathers, Ms. Jones states that "Civil War history is more than just a hobby; it has been a passion since childhood." She has had numerous Civil War related articles published over the past three decades and is the author of four books, including the first and second editions of *Letters to Mary: the Civil War Diary of Dr. John Kennerly Farris*, *Harvey Calvin Neese: from Coffee County to Cripple Creek*, *The Un-Civil War in Middle Tennessee* and *Murfreesboro in the Civil War*, coauthored with Dr. Michael Bradley. Although born in Manchester, Ms. Jones is a lifelong resident of Murfreesboro, attended Middle Tennessee State University, and is a graduate of Knox Business College and Leadership Rutherford. She is married to Jerry Jones and they are the parents of one son, Jeff. She has been actively involved in historic preservation efforts throughout the community for many years.

THE CHILDRESS HOUSE - 225 North Academy

Long-time home of Mrs. Alice Newsom Ray (1916-2015)

The Childress House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in December 1979. An APTA marker has been placed at the house as well.

The Childress House gained its name and place in the history of Murfreesboro by being the home of John W. Childress, brother of Sarah Childress Polk.

John W. Childress was a leading citizen of Murfreesboro, as his

father Joel Childress had been before him. A native of Sumner County, Tennessee, his family moved to Murfreesboro in 1819. Later he attended and was graduated from the University of North Carolina and was admitted to the Tennessee Bar.

In 1824 his sister, Sarah, married James K. Polk, who became the eleventh president of the United States. John Childress was elected attorney general pro tem in 1829. Twenty years later he moved to a farm on the Shlebyville Pike and lived and farmed there until the outbreak of the Civil War. Besides operating his farm and practicing law, Childress served as director of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, director of the Bank

of Tennessee (1854-1856), president of the Planter's Bank of Tennessee in Murfreesboro (1859-1861), and president of the First National Bank of Murfreesboro (1872-1880).

During the Civil War John W. Childress and his family took refuge in Griffin, Georgia. At this time a bit of history was being made due to the romance of his daughter, Betty, and General John Calvin Brown, Commander of a regiment under Colonel J. B. Palmer. A military wedding was performed and upon Col. Brown's return at the end of the war, the family came back to Murfreesboro and found the Childress farm in shambles and moved to Nashville. Here Col Brown would later become governor of Tennessee.

John W. Childress was elected circuit judge in the capital city and formed a law partnership with Arthur and John Colyar.

In 1874 he purchased the brick house at 225 North Academy Street in Murfreesboro, now known as the Childress House. His sister, Sarah, then the widow of the president, was living in Nashville and visited the house often. Her arrival for one of these visits was always the signal for social calls, parties and sumptuous meals. Mrs. Polk had been, as First Lady, one of the great hostesses of her day. She had entertained a great majority of the famous, including one of the most famous hostesses in the country, Dolly Madison, also a former First Lady.

When John W. Childress purchased the two-story brick house, it had already had several owners, having been built in 1847 by a contractor named Jim Fletcher for Mr. Jim Bivins. Several houses built by Mr. Fletcher are still standing in Murfreesboro today.

In 1856 Mr. Bivins sold the house to Jefferson Leatherman, a merchant, whose great grandson, Charles, was a merchant in

Murfreesboro in the 20th century. Mr. Leatherman sold the house in 1874 to John W. Childress and the Childress family owned it until 1900. Even though John W. died in 1884, his widow and family continued to live there until it was purchased by P. R. Miller. Mr. Miller was an undertaker and furniture dealer. A larger door was opened in the old kitchen on the back of the house and the hearse was kept there. Furniture was sold in part of the first floor while the family lived on the second floor.

Barclay Rucker, circuit court clerk bought the house from Mr. Miller in 1920 and in 1927 the Thomas B. Newsom family purchase it and it has remained in the Newsom family since that time. Alice was his daughter.

Originally, the house was constructed in the Greek Revival style. The facade was altered in 1874-75 and columns on the porches were replaced with ornate gingerbread trim of the day. In 1913 a tornado damaged the house. The porches were repaired and the present clean lines and fluted pillars were used which reflect the influence of the Colonial Revival Movement at that time.

The house is built with hand made brick. All interior woodwork and floors are yellow poplar while the window frames, lintels and sills are cedar. The walls are plastered directly onto the brick and the ceilings have wood laths. The stairway ascends in the center hall and was designed using the turned balusters and large newel post, primarily walnut with some mahogany.

At the rear of the main house stands two one-story rooms with one chimney and one fireplace, these rooms were the original kitchen and smokehouse. Also in the back is a dependency, probably used for storage, since it contains a sunken, brick-lined cavity.

IN MEMORIAM

ERNEST "ERNIE" KING JOHNS
14 October 1934 - 12 March 2016
Charter Member of Rutherford Co. Historical Society

Rutherford County Historical Society
P. O. Box 906, 717 N. Academy Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0906