

Days Of Old Sumner County

Newsletter No. 19, July 2017

P.O. Box 1871, Gallatin TN 37066

Sumner County Historical Society

www.sctnhs.org

(615) 461-8830



.Portrait of A.R. Wynne

Facelift for Portrait

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

The nearly 190-year-old oil portrait of Col. A.R. (Alfred Royal) Wynne that has hung for decades in Wynnewood's parlor is now being restored to its original glory by Wynnewood State Historic Site, with extra funds from the Sumner Chapter of the DAR and Hendersonville Questers.

A.R. Wynne was one of the builders of Wynnewood (1829), in Castalian Springs. The house, originally called Castalian Springs, was long thought to have been a stagecoach inn—every history of the house written before 2015 says so—but recently found family papers and news clippings show that it was instead a mineral springs resort. The immense house—the main

See PORTRAIT, Page 10

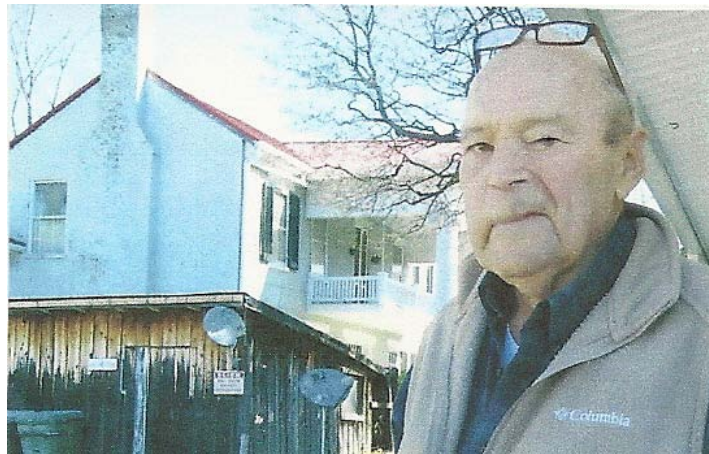
John Garrott: Sumner Benefactor Dies

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Members of Sumner County Historical Society grieve at the loss of one of Gallatin's favorite sons, John Baker Garrott, Sr., whose love of local history, leadership and philanthropy were the moving forces behind most of the historical preservation in Sumner County.

A lifelong member of Gallatin Presbyterian Church, John retired as president of Garrott Concrete, a family business founded by his father in 1950. He often joked that being in the construction/concrete business was great for finding and fixing historic buildings.

John was the Sumner County Historian and was president of the Sumner County Historical Society for many years. He co-founded the Sumner County Museum in 1975. He was also formerly president of the Bledsoe Lick Historic Association and was heavily involved in Bledsoe's preservation for more than 40 years, beginning when a friend bought the fort site. He helped with the restoration of Wynnewood and Cragfont State Historic Sites in Castalian Springs and of Rose Mont in Gallatin. He was instrumental in donating and furnishing Hugh Rogan's cabin, which was moved piece by piece to Ireland's Ulster American Folk Park, and he visited Ireland in 2012 to see it. In July of last year, Garrott received the Tennessee Historical Commission's Preservation Leadership Award in recognition of his efforts to preserve Sumner County's history. In addition, he was an active member of the Gallatin Noon Rotary Club for 61 years.



John Garrott is pictured in 2015 behind his workshop and home

In 2015, John donated his historic 1830s home on Gallatin's Main Street to his beloved museum and helped the museum purchase the Carriage House next door to house its collections. "This location will draw more people," he said then. "I want them to come to the museum and appreciate everything that has been collected. I want

See JOHN, Page 11

Identify and Plot early Sumner County Land Grants Tennessee and Kentucky Land Grants

By Jack Masters and Shirley Wilson

The Sumner County Historical Society, in cooperation with the Sumner County Archives, is sponsoring a project to identify and plot early Sumner County Land Grants. These grants came about as a result of the new land law of 1806 when North Carolina relinquished the process of granting land in Tennessee.

Sumner County was a part of the old Military Reservation which became the 1st District as a result of the 1806 law. Records for the 1st District are a part of Record Group 50 and the land grants are on 6 microfilm rolls containing 6,787 pages. These microfilm pages contain as many as four land grants each and show copies of the actual surveyor calls and plats for the period 1807 thru 1837.

Each survey made for the current land area of Sumner County is being copied from the original film by historian Jack Masters of Gallatin and Shirley Wilson, genealogist of Hendersonville. Individual grants will be placed into creek drainages and placed, geographically in the county.

Another key to the puzzle will be inclusion of the Kentucky "Land Grants South of the Walker Line 1825-1923". Six microfilm rolls of the collection contain an as yet to be determined number of grants in Sumner County. These grants will be integrated with the previous North Carolina and Tennessee Grants in the same process. The determination has been made that Kentucky Land Grants will be considered up to and including 1837 to be compatible with the period available of Tennessee Land Grants. Randy Tatum of Sumner County Archives will be working to copy applicable surveys from this microfilm collection.

The first goal will be completion of the review of Record Group 50 as well as the Kentucky group with map placements in Sumner County. Completion and availability of maps to SCA patrons is a project priority. Accurate indexes will be a paramount objective in the project to aid the many researchers who will come in the future to gain access to this "goldmine" of early records.

Any further action will depend on the decision of the board of directors of SCHS as well as the availability of those who wish to help in any transcription process.

To our knowledge a project such as this or of this magnitude has never been attempted in Tennessee or very likely anywhere else.

The following documents are representative samples of early Tennessee Surveys. Notice the interesting information included by the surveyors within the calls in these surveys. Space limitations limit details included for publication here.

50 Acre Tennessee Land Grant to Elizabeth Mitchell

Assignee of William Alberson of the heirs Joseph Massey

- Plotted by a Scale of 100 poles to an inch
- West Tennessee First District is issuing District
- 50 Acres of land in Sumner County on the Waters of Summers branch of Red River. Source of document is Record Group 50 Roll 27E Page 358
- Begins on west boundary line of a grant of Matthew Brooks 560 acre survey
- Includes an improvement where Solomon Mitchell formerly lived
- Surveyed 29 October 1811 by Wm Bracken DS (Deputy Surveyor)
- Sworn Chain Carriers (S.C.C.) were Wm Alberson & James Alberson

355

1811
Elizabeth Mitchell
50 acres
East 56/2

Plotted by a scale of 100 poles to an inch
West Tennessee
First District

Made road
this 9th August
1818 by me
Solomon
Mitchell
administrator
of John Mitchell
Estate for
a further detail

By virtue of a Duplicate Military Land
Warrant No. 5282 Entered the 29th of October 1811
and Location No. 742. I have surveyed for Elizabeth
Mitchell, assignee of William Alberson of the heirs
Joseph Massey, fifty acres of Land in Sumner
County on the Waters of Summers branch of Red
River beginning at a small hickory on the west
boundary line of Matthew Brooks' five hundred
and thirty acre survey, running thence West
Eighty six poles to a black-jack, thence South nine
thirty poles to a post-oak, thence East Eighty six
poles to a black-jack on Brooks' line, thence North
with said line, ninety three poles to the beginning
including an improvement where Solomon Mitchell
formerly lived, given under my hands this 29th day
of Oct. 1811

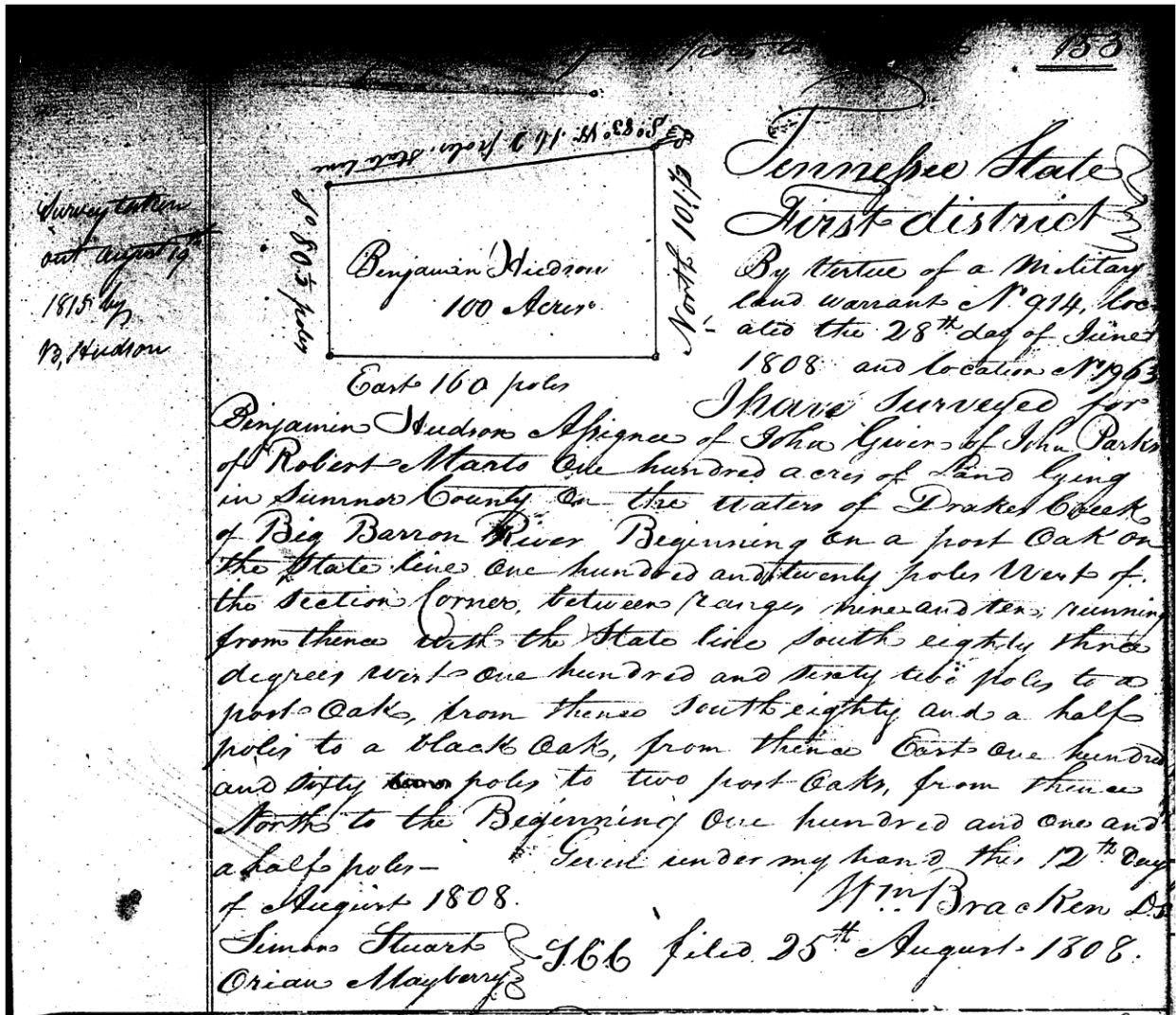
Wm Alberson
James Alberson S.C.C.

Wm Bracken D.S.
Filed Oct. 29. 1811

100 Acre Tennessee Land Grant to Benjamin Hudson

Assignee of John Gwin of John Parks of Robert Marts

- Plotted by a Scale of 50 poles to an inch
- West Tennessee First District is issuing District
- 100 Acres of land in Sumner County on the Waters of Drakes Creek of Big Barron River. Source of document is Record Group 50 Roll 25B Page 153
- Begins at a post Oak on the State line 120 poles West of the Section Corner between Ranges nine and 10.
- Surveyed 12 August 1808 by Wm Bracken DS
- Sworn Chain Carriers were Simon Stuart & Orian Mayberry



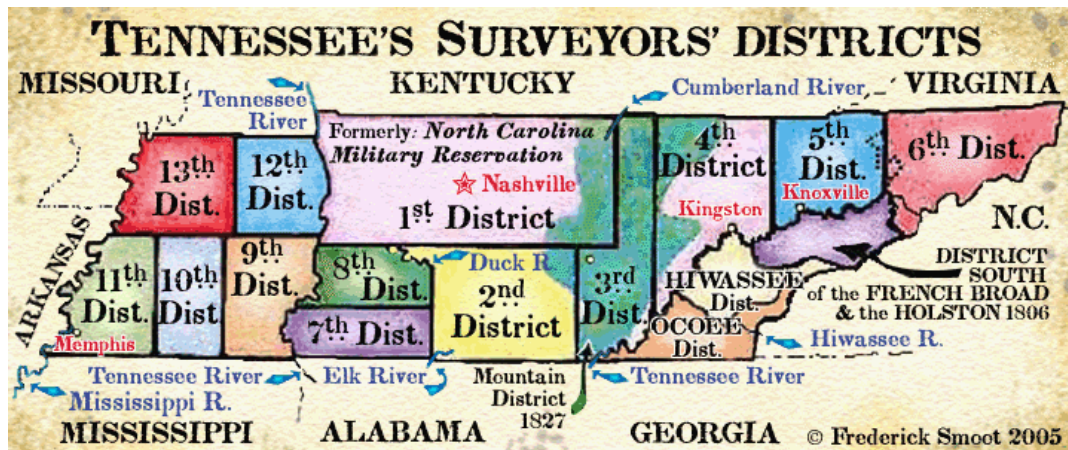
The 1806 Tennessee Land Law

By Jack Masters

An act of Congress passed on 18 April 1806 authorized the State of Tennessee to issue grants and perfect titles to certain lands and to settle the claims to the vacant land.

The law was long and detailed and is well beyond the scope of this article to define all areas. See <http://www.tngenweb.org/law/tnland-1.htm> for the complete text of the actual law. The very basics concerned the development of Surveyors Districts, shown below, along with appointment of Principal Surveyors to govern the development and operation of each Surveyors District. Registers of the Land Offices were established in Knoxville for East Tennessee and Nashville for what was then West Tennessee.

Sumner County was located in the 1st Surveyors District which basically included the former North Carolina Military Reservation. A complete schedule of fees, payable to the various entities was established to initiate and maintain the process. William Christmas was appointed Principal Surveyor for the 1st District with offices in Nashville.



A partial listing of Deputy Surveyors appointed to conduct Land Surveys in what is now Sumner County included: Thomas Anderson, John Blackmore, William Bracken, John Crawford, Stephen DeBow, Edward & James Gwin, Thomas Harney, Josiah Howell, Thomas Murray, Daniel & William Montgomery & Reuben Searcy.

Prudence Dresser: A Lady Ahead of the Times

By Judith Morgan

This is the second part of the story of Prudence Simpson Dresser. In Part I, printed in the April edition of this newsletter, a Kentucky family traced their "haunted" piano to Gallatin. Local pianist Johnny Maddox was certain it had once been the property of Prudence Dresser. Unusual for the early 20th century, Dresser owned and ran her own business, a music school. She was also a social activist for health issues and women's suffrage. Part I of her story ended in 1916.

The U.S. declared war on Germany in April 1917, and the country put other issues aside to support the "boys" enlisting or being drafted. Sumner County's chapter of the Red Cross, organized by none other than Prudence Dresser, went into action. Its members were everywhere: providing meals for local draftees, waiting at the depots with coffee and sandwiches for boys on the packed troop trains, and making bandages.

"Food preparedness" was urgent. As much food as possible needed to go to the boys in France. Austerity on the home front was vital. Within a month of the declaration of war, Dresser had organized "a mass meeting for the colored people of Sumner County at the courthouse in Gallatin...in the interest of food preparedness." Race relations were another area in which Dresser was ahead of her time.

To fund the war, a series of "Liberty Loan" campaigns soon began. As president of the Ensemble Club of Gallatin, part of the statewide "federation of women's clubs" dedicated to unified war service, Dresser reported \$1,350 raised in 1917 by that group (similar clubs were reporting amounts like \$150-\$250). As chair of the county's Women's Committee, Dresser worked with the overall Liberty Loan chairman, Gallatin banker W.Y. Allen, to exceed Sumner County's quota time after time. She chaired four loan campaigns, and tried to decline a fifth in 1919, but the state president of women's activities made a special plea, and "Mrs. Prudence S. Dresser of Gallatin...consented to again serve as chairman of Sumner County..." Dresser also organized women in her voting district in March 1919 to solicit funds door-to-door to aid the plight of Belgian orphans.

When the war ended--on November 11, 1918--the time for women's suffrage finally came. It took courage for women to support it. Women in Sumner County were known to be spat upon for suffrage activities! Yet in 1919 Dresser was both president of the local suffrage association and first vice-president for the Middle Tennessee state association. That year, although ratification of the equal suffrage constitutional amendment

still lay ahead, Tennessee women were granted the right to vote in presidential and municipal elections. Dresser was among the first women in the county to register and vote. She also served as a delegate to the League of Women Voters' first state convention in 1921. She and Kate Trousdale Allen of Gallatin were also co-chairs for Sumner County in the push that made Tennessee the "Perfect 36": the state that clinched ratification of the 19th Amendment.



Prudence Dresser (Ken Thomson collection)

But suffrage was only one of Prudence Dresser's interests. She continued to perform and to run the music school. She sat on the board of the Tennessee Tuberculosis Association from 1916-1937. She was responsible for establishing a Tuberculosis Clinic in Gallatin in 1924.

Her activism extended to any number of areas: Why, she demanded to know in a 1920 letter to the *Nashville Tennessean*, should the same brand of coal from the same mine be sold at a higher price to dealers in small towns like Gallatin than to dealers in Nashville? "If prices and distribution," she wrote, "can not be more equitably adjusted, we would better return to the war time control of a fuel administrator."

As time passed, her skills remained much in demand. Of the 16 members of the Board of Directors of the Sumner County Council of Agriculture, the body that worked with the state agricultural extension office, she was the sole woman. She faithfully served the Clark Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, performing at meetings and memorial services, and organizing events. She continued to perform and teach music to the very end, and among her last students was Johnny Maddox. Prudence Simpson Dresser died on March 23, 1938, at the age of 69.

Now the question is: Did the spirit of Prudence Dresser remain with her much-loved piano? Perhaps if, in fact, the piano is haunted; and if the haunted piano was hers, the owner may one day feel a sharp rap on her knuckles when she is not doing her best. Then, perhaps, we will know for sure...

Information in this article courtesy of Johnny Maddox, Lucy Richey, Kenneth Thomson, and numerous articles from the Sumner County News, Nashville American, and Nashville Tennessean.

The Rest of the Story... Of Senator Joseph Fowler

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

This is the conclusion of the story about the controversial years of Senator Joseph Smith Fowler. For the beginning of the story, see the April edition of this newsletter.

By the end of May 1868, Joseph Smith Fowler—then a lawyer, Tennessee U.S. Senator and former Gallatin educator—went from being a highly revered lawmaker among Unionists to being their most hated and denigrated member. On May 16, Fowler committed political suicide. He cast the deciding vote *against* prosecuting President Andrew Johnson during Johnson's contentious impeachment trial.

After the war's end and President Abraham Lincoln's assassination, radical Republican Unionists believed the South deserved punishing reconstruction. When Johnson tried to soften this approach, follow Lincoln's guidelines and return civil government to local control, radicals (including Fowler) were enraged. Hatred for Johnson flamed to a climax in early 1868. In fury, the House of Representatives voted to impeach him. They wanted him out!

At one time, Sen. Fowler and Johnson had been good friends, but by 1868 friendship had been replaced by hostility, and everyone knew of their hatred. Still, Fowler had a reputation for fairness, and he knew the law, so he was selected as a member of the jury in the impeachment trial. It was a thankless job. He and other jurors were lambasted by pleas, tirades and even threats by radicals to convict Johnson. Setting aside personal animosity, Fowler resolved to vote according to the law, not his personal animosity. He voted "not guilty," and his verdict encouraged six other Republicans to vote the same. Johnson was acquitted of the charges against him. Afterwards, Fowler stated, "It was not for me to do as others pleased. I acted for my country, and have done what I regard as a good act."

Storms of protest against the verdict went on for weeks. In the immediate aftermath—three days after the verdict—angry radicals made sure Fowler was replaced on the National Committee of the Republican Party.

The Governor Has His Own Scandal

Gov. William "Parson" Brownlow, stood at the forefront of condemnation for Sen. Fowler. Formerly editor of *The Whig* newspaper in Knoxville, Brownlow was known for his outspoken and vitriolic hatred for the Confederacy and for those who sought to mitigate its disgrace. He was enraged by

Fowler's vote and sponsored a strong condemnation against him.

At about the same time, a Louisville newspaper reported that Brownlow had, in fact, tried to bribe the senator to vote guilty. According to the paper, Brownlow sent a telegram offering to make Fowler a State Supreme Court judge if he would resign as a juror and allow a substitute to give a guilty plea. For almost a month, scandal surrounded Brownlow. He eventually denied sending the telegram and later made an attempt (uncharacteristically lame and certainly questionable) to deny the whole thing.

Fowler Retains His Integrity

Sen. Fowler stayed loyal to the party despite being its despised member. He supported the Republican nominees, Ulysses Grant and Schuyler Colfax, even attempting to speak for their ticket at the Capitol in Nashville on October 28. He was shouted down and left the hall, followed by the crowd's catcalls.

After Grant and Colfax were elected, the Radicals took further revenge against Fowler. "Eager to purge him for his vote to acquit Johnson, they raised questions about his membership in the party and asked him to stay away from party caucuses at the Capitol," wrote historian Walter Durham in the *Tennessee Quarterly*. "He was stripped of his committee appointments, and by March 10, 1869, seems to have been read out of the Republican Party."

Nevertheless, in the 1869-1870 session, Sen. Fowler led the effort against a plan to remand the state to a military government. The entire Tennessee delegation except for Fowler and Col. Isaac Hawkins favored the plan when it was proposed.

"Although Sen. Fowler's term in the United States Senate would not expire until March 4, 1871, the election of his successor was held by the Tennessee Legislature in the autumn of 1869," wrote Durham. "Stung by his own party's harsh rebuke, Fowler had decided he would not seek re-election."

When his six-year term as senator ended, Fowler remained in Washington, D.C., working as a lawyer. He became less radical in his views and did not support Grant for re-election in 1872 or again for a third term.

In his later years, Fowler wrote many letters to his family and former associates, often citing literary, scientific, political and religious works. He suffered from poor health for many years and died at the age of 82 on April 1, 1902 in Washington, D.C.



The Colorful Past, Promising Future of Rose Mont

By Frank Leigh Branham, Jr.

My mother, Bettie Guild Branham, never referred to the Gallatin home where she was born, raised, and married as “Rose Mont” or a former “plantation” or “thoroughbred farm”, or a “manor house”. She always just called it “out home.”

To me growing up it was a special, mysterious old place where my mother’s younger brother, Uncle Jo, and my Aunt Joan (Jo-Ann), lived with their daughter, Joan, my first cousin. I am pictured below as a two-year-old in a photo in Sumner historian Walter Durham’s book, *Josephus Conn Guild and Rose Mont: Politics and Plantation in Nineteenth Century Tennessee*, posing imperfectly on the front steps with my grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Little did I know then what a remarkable life my great-great-grandfather (1802-1882) had lived, what noteworthy events had transpired at the house he had built, and what a special legacy he left.



Guild Descendants 1946

Born in 1802, orphaned at age 11, Josephus Conn Guild and his brother, James, were raised by his uncle, Major Josephus H. Conn, of Cairo, Tenn. Jo, as he was called, studied law and by the age of 20 had opened a law office in Gallatin. By Durham’s account, Guild was vigorous, dedicated, and eloquent in pleading his cases without a hint of malice. He was capable of using humor, yet he was a serious “legal philosopher” with a profound admiration for the U.S. Constitution and rule of law. As a teacher at a university in California in the 1970’s, I happened

to pull a book off the library shelf called, *Professional Lives in America*, by Daniel H. Calhoun and was amazed to find a chapter about circuit-riding lawyers in Tennessee, featuring Jo Conn Guild. The author quoted from Guild’s own recollections in his memoirs and Tennessee politics, *Old Times in Tennessee* (1878).

Guild was elected to the Tennessee General Assembly in 1833, 1835, and 1852. He achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel during the Seminole War, and he was a State senator in 1837 and 1845. He was a Jacksonian Democrat and friend of Andrew Jackson, yet he delivered a moving speech in the 1833 Legislature, opposing the extension of laws and jurisdiction of Tennessee over the land occupied by the Cherokee. Before and after the Civil War, Guild represented many slaves and ex-slaves in court, contesting the actions of their owners.

Beginning in the 1830’s, when Sumner County was famed as the center of thoroughbred racing in the United States, Guild began acquiring, breeding, and racing horses in the South, including in New Orleans. While visiting the Crescent City with his fellow turf enthusiast and former law partner, Balie Peyton (later to become a U.S. Senator), Guild was impressed by the architecture of the homes he saw there. At the time, Tennessee houses typically were plain and box-like, modeled after late Georgian or Federal designs. In planning Rose Mont, he incorporated Creole, Greek and Italian design elements, including large windows, separate wings, wide open-air breezeways, a raised basement, a back stairway and a majestic north portico. The house was built by slaves from 1836- 1842 with the center section, galleries and detached kitchen were constructed first, followed by the wings with bedrooms up and down, and the Judge’s elegant farm office on the lower northeast floor. The name Rose Mont was chosen based on the vast four-part rose garden that Guild envisioned and grew. The main facade (east front) is based on classic Italian design featuring Ionic columns.

(See ROSE MONT, Page 9)

(ROSE MONT, From Page 8)

Today the home is a beautiful and romantic setting for weddings, with receptions held at a hall behind the home. Interestingly enough, my grandfather, Judge Lewis Cass Guild, was well known in his lifetime for being “the marrying-est Judge” in the state. He officiated at hundreds of weddings and elopements, including a few he conducted in his nightgown and one he did while milking a cow in the barn.

During Jo Guild’s time in the legislature, he sponsored the bill that chartered the L&N Railroad and brought the tracks through Gallatin even though Springfield offered a more direct path. The Rose Mont estate of the mid-19th century was a 500-acre longhorn cattle and thoroughbred horse farm, forested with cedar, silver poplar, oak and other trees that the Union Army cut down and removed by the wagonload. The grounds were also the site of numerous well-attended and enthusiastic Democratic Party rallies in the Judge’s day as a party leader.



Jo Conn Guild

Guild’s career as a judge began in 1860 when he was elected chancellor of the 7th Chancery Court, but his tenure was interrupted by the Civil War. Because he spoke out so strongly against the Union Army’s occupation of Gallatin, then-Governor Andrew Johnson, a former political ally of Jo Conn’s, sent troops to arrest him in March of 1862 and escort him, along with Congressman George Washington Barrow and William Giles Harding, owner of the Belle Meade plantation in Nashville, to Fort Mackinaw, Mich. where they spent six months as political prisoners. Guild and Harding must have had some lively talks about race horses during their “incarceration” at a local hotel. After the war, Judge Guild sold Harding a prize colt named Jack Malone that became America’s leading thoroughbred sire for six years in the 1870s.

Because the Union Army confiscated many of the best horses, Jack Malone and Hiawatha (another of Guild’s prized stallions) were kept in the basement during daylight hours. During the occupation, the Union picket-line extended just beyond the main house. “Uncle Ike” Foxhall, Rose Mont’s loyal head groom, would bring corn whiskey to the Union sentries to assure that they would be asleep when he took the horses out of the basement for nightly exercises. Hiawatha won a large purse at Albion Downs in Gallatin and lived to the ripe old age of 24. Beeswing, another winning thoroughbred raced by Guild, was one of the 12 fastest horses of his time.

During the Union occupation, Federal soldiers confiscated a fine table, took it outside and began playing mumblety-peg on it, putting numerous knife-cuts in the wood. When Guild’s wife, the high-spirited Katherine Montgomery Blackmore, realized what was happening, she ran into the yard demanding that the “damned Yankee Hessians” return the table at once.

Jo Conn Guild and Katherine had two sons, George and Walter, who both served in the Civil War. Walter died at the age of 36 from complications from war wounds. George was an officer in the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry and later was Mayor of Nashville from 1895 to 1900.

Rose Mont remained in the family until 1993 when it was sold to the City of Gallatin. Rose Mont Restoration Association, Inc. was established with significant assistance and patronage of Ellen S. Wemyss. My Aunt Joan Guild continued to live in the home until her death in 2004. Money from the City of Gallatin, Board members and volunteers made it possible to restore Rose Mont to some of its former glory.

Still, there is more to do. Replacing deteriorated mortar is estimated to cost upwards of six figures. Rose Mont needs significant donations to remain as a tourist attraction, meeting and event venue, and site for teaching of history. The Board holds two major fundraisers yearly—the Merry Mantles Christmas party on the first Saturday of December and the “Run for Rose Mont” Kentucky Derby Party the first Saturday in May.

In April, the Rose Mont Board appointed Kendall Masters as the new Site Director. An enthusiastic supporter of Rose Mont since childhood, Masters has already planned an ambitious schedule of special events and educational initiatives. To make a donation or inquire about upcoming events, contact Masters at (615) 451-2331 or at historicrosemont@hotmail.com.

(PORTRAIT, Continued from Page 1)

structure is 142 feet long—is the largest pioneer log structure in Tennessee. There is a lengthy breezeway attached to the house. Small cabins on the property were used as guest houses, a post office, a general store and doctor's office. Mineral springs were across the road.

The portrait shows a 30-something-year-old A.R., dressed in formal black and white. Like many early American portraits, it was unsigned. Though its exact age is unknown, it is known that the portrait hung in the house as early as 1834, when Wynne bought out his partner-builders (Stephen Roberts, Col. Humphrey Bate and William Cage) and moved in with his family. He and his wife Almira Winchester Wynne had 14 children.

Wynne (b. 1800-d. 1893) was reared by his grandfather from the age of two after his father died and his mother remarried. As a teen, he worked in the Winchester & Cage General Store in Cairo, Sumner County and by the age of 22 opened his own general store there. At age 29, he traded slaves domestically, a practice he continued until the Emancipation Proclamation. His other businesses were: milling, land speculation, river transport, breeding horses and farming. He was commissioned Col. Commandant 15th Regiment Sumner County Militia at age 35 and was referred to as Colonel the rest of his long life.

The Work of Restoration

Nashville art conservationist Cynthia Stow is doing the portrait's restoration work, stretching and cleaning the canvas. When it's complete, viewers will be able to see "the original" painting. For example, they will be able to see the contrast between A.R.'s dark hair and jacket and the dark background and to tell that his suit is double-breasted.

"Cynthia will use a chemical to stabilize the painting, put on an appropriate lining and stretch the canvas. Luckily the canvas is still flexible, which makes working on it easier," said Robin DeVilling, vice president of Wynnewood.

Restoration of the portrait will be about \$3,250, and there will also be the cost of an antique frame. The present frame is too small. DeVilling explained that someone in the past folded the portrait about two inches on each side to fit it in the old frame. A newly purchased frame will allow the full canvas to be seen.

"We're looking for an old frame from that period and debating what to buy," said DeVilling. "It's an interesting search."

Wynnewood is, in fact, always conducting interesting searches for additional period furniture, books and utensils. "We find things all

the time," said DeVilling. "We've been able to set up the dining room again, and we received the donation of an 1830s bed. We know that when people came here to the resort in the 1800s, they would have stayed for weeks. We know that there was a Castalian Springs library here, so there should be books somewhere. We're looking for them."

She noted that mineral springs were popular tourist destinations in the 1800s. "Just think about it. Back then people didn't just drink water. They feared it wasn't healthy, and they didn't bathe much for the same reason. If you were lucky, you could go to the country, drink water full of what you thought were healthy minerals and swim in the springs. Just being clean and hydrated probably did make them feel better."

Wynnewood Holds Monthly Presentations Through October

Historic Wynnewood is presenting a series called "If These Logs Could Talk" held on the breezeway/dogtrot of Wynnewood on the third Sunday of each month through October at 2 p.m. Each month a subject regarding life in and around Wynnewood is shown. The events began in May and continue as follows:

July 16: Kim and Paul Caudell showcase their musical talents and discuss the history of 19th century music.

August 20: Jeff Wells will educate visitors on the civility of baseball played in the 1860's.

September 17: Ehrin Ehlert portrays Thomas "Big Foot" Spencer, the first white settler who lived alone in a hollow, giant Sycamore tree at Bledsoe's Lick during the winter of 1778.

October 15: Brian Allison, historic consultant and author, will share Irish ghost stories that would have been told in many a home in this area.

The program fee is included with the regular cost of admission which includes a tour of Wynnewood. The cost for the presentation only is \$5. Proceeds go to the collections fund for Wynnewood. Please check the website--- www.historicwynnewood.org or call 615-452-5463 for more information.

Wynnewood State Historic Site is located at 210 Old Highway 25, Castalian Springs, TN.

(GARROTT, Continued from Page 1)

them to come to the museum and appreciate everything that has been collected. I want the people of Sumner County to realize that this county was the second county in Middle Tennessee. It was important because of the people who came here and had to cut through the wilderness, build forts and battle the Indians just to survive.”

John died of cancer on June 19 at the age of 88. Though he struggled with the disease for years, he happily continued various hobbies—talking of local history (his knowledge was vast), working on collections and furniture—until the end.

“He was out in his shop still making furniture a month before he died,” said Ken Thomson, SCHS president and John’s neighbor. “He couldn’t see much of what he was doing, but he kept right on.”

“I always smile thinking of him in his dusty work shop surrounded by his furniture with Fat Cat and Sawdust, curled up their boxes,” said Bonnie Martin, director of SC Archives.

“John Garrott was the *go-to* person for all information past, present and future on this county he loved so dearly,” said Bill Puryear, Gallatin businessman and author. “Not only was he an avid collector of all things Sumner, he shared them, especially with young people, when he created and endowed its museum.

“In addition to his other interests, John was a skilled craftsman and made fine furniture,” Puryear added. “When my granddaughter, at age six, found an arrowhead on our farm and a fossil in Bledsoe Creek, she was so excited that she herself had found such relics of our ancient past, she looked for a special place to keep her precious treasures safe. When she asked me who could positively place them in time and identify their nature, I took her to see John. Excited by a child so young’s interest in Sumner’s ancient history, he dropped what he was doing, took her to see *his* arrowhead collection and gave her two pieces to add to her collection. A week later he appeared at her house with a custom-made wooden Treasure Box, crafted of beautiful wood, with a hinged lid, and the words “My Treasures” and her name inlaid on it. A week later he came again with a beautiful hand crafted small chest of drawers to fit at the foot of her bed, where she stored her very special box of treasures. From that first day, they formed a special bond, and I never saw John that he did not ask about ‘his special girl.’

“John never failed to find time to help his friends. He was generous to a fault, and he did not back off anything until it was finished,” said Juanita

Frazor, a longtime friend and former museum director. “Any project he started, he finished.”

John gave financial support to projects but was also “hands on” with them. Genealogist Shirley Wilson, the archive’s founder, remembers one episode clearly. “We got a huge donation of metal shelves, but no one wanted to install them. So, John did it. He dragged those heavy shelves in, manhandled them into place, and he didn’t lose any body parts in the process though I thought he would. He built the access ramp too. I wonder how long and how many committee meetings the county would’ve to do that?”

Martin said, “His unique ‘get it done personality’ accomplished more for Sumner County than any citizen in past history. Not only did John preserve and promote the history of Sumner County, he contributed his talents, energy and assets to civic and church needs. We will remember John through his legacy of historical restorations, the Sumner County Museum and many kind deeds.”

Puryear said, “He was a man of unflinching courtesy, unflagging energy and civic accomplishment, kind and caring to all he met. I expect we shall never see his like again.”

His Historic Past

John came from a long line of Sumner Countians. His family lived here for six generations. His mother lived to 96 years and was descended from Isaac Baker. She retained her faculties until her death and instilled an appreciation for the past in her children. Among Garrott’s earliest memories was listening to his mother’s family stories while walking “downtown” to Gallatin square on summer nights for a soda.

John and his wife, June, who survives him, graduated from Gallatin High School in 1947. He had already started collecting old things by then, many of which he eventually gave to the museum. These included the oldest car he ever had, now 108 years old, which he bought at age 16. This year, he donated his collection of 7,000 glass negatives done by the renowned photographer of the early 1900s, E.M. Stark.

John loved best the history of the first western movement into Middle Tennessee—the late 18th century—when settlers pushed from the East into the wilderness. “Sumner County was the pathway west,” he said. “We became a county in 1786—*10 years before* the state of Tennessee was formed in 1796. At the time we became a county, we were part of North Carolina.”

In addition to his wife, John is survived by his son, Johnny, (Pam) and daughters, Jane Sudbury (Steve) and Betsy Hunter (Jim), all of Gallatin, eight grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren, as well as numerous other relatives.

Sumner County Historical Society

Post Office Box 1871
Gallatin, TN 37066

To: