

Days Of Old Sumner County

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Sumner County Historical Society

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Randy's Record Shop Gave Gallatin 'Glam'

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor
(From stories that appeared in the *News Examiner*)

Who would have thought that a small store in downtown Gallatin could evolve into, possibly, the most famous '50s record shop in the country—Randy's Record Shop—where the renowned DOT record label originated?

Randy Wood, founder of Randy's Record Shop and DOT Records, and his wife Lois are well remembered by longtime Sumner residents. Many frequented the shop in its heyday in the 1950s and followed the Woods' success as it spread across the country to California. "The Woods are Gallatin's very own Hollywood claim to fame," proclaimed the *News Examiner* in a story on May 23, 1990, quoted below.

"Randy Wood came to Gallatin from McMinnville, Tenn., in the 1940s. He and a partner used their \$1,750 in savings to open an appliance



Randy Wood

(See RANDY'S Page 10)



In this 2012 *Gallatin News* photo by Randy Cline, Johnny Maddox, world-renowned ragtime king (at right) played his first public hometown gig in Gallatin in more than 60 years with friend Adam Swanson.

'King of Ragtime' Still Unforgettable

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

A few years back Johnny Maddox, now 90 and living in the Gallatin Center for Rehabilitation and Healing, gave up performing the ragtime music for which he was famous, but he'll never give up on the memories. Ragtime is in his soul. The Gallatin native retired from an amazing career that spanned 80 years and was worldwide.

In younger days, Maddox's fingers flew across the keyboard, blazing out songs such as his "The Crazy Otto Medley," the first all-piano record ever made and one of the most popular. His recording years started about 1950 when his friend, Randy Wood, opened Randy's Record Shop in Gallatin then launched DOT Records with Maddox as an artist. Maddox's first single, "Crazy Bone Rag with "The St. Louis Tickle" on the flip side sold more than 22,000 copies in only five weeks. It put the DOT label on the map and pushed Maddox's career into high gear.

Maddox was already American's number one jukebox musician in 1954 when he recorded the Otto medley. It topped the charts for 14 weeks and was the first ragtime record to sell more than a million copies. It sold 2 million.

Maddox was aptly dubbed the King of Ragtime by fans around the world. His music helped usher in the ragtime revival of the 1950s. The fact that ragtime caught on so well at that time is something of a phenomenon in music history. Ragtime had first flourished as

(See RAGTIME, Page 11)

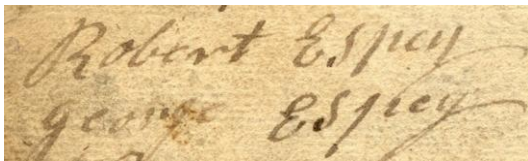
Robert Espy (Espy) – Early Pioneer of Sumner County

By Jack Masters

As many of you know a project is underway which updates the placed North Carolina land grants which appear in Volume 1 of *Founding of the Cumberland Settlements*. This exercise includes the earliest deed transfers starting in 1786 as well as the first Sumner County Deed Books. After the New Tennessee Land Laws in 1806, the addition of Tennessee land grants are being added as well. A final part of the project will be the addition of select Kentucky grants. See my article in “Days of Old Sumner County” Vol 8 for details. As I was starting this work, the various land grants “became alive” as a record of the sale of part or all of the grants commenced. Robert Espy’s grant will be discussed here to share in what can be learned from the work.

Three Espy’s signed the Cumberland Compact, in 1780. Each of the four signature pages were likely circulated about the settlement to obtain the 248 signatures shown within the pages

As shown on the original document, in 1780, Robert and George Espy signed in the first column of page 2 and James Espy signed in column 2 of the same page.



Early pioneers who were living on the land as of June 1, 1780, were entitled to a grant of 640 acres known as a preemption. While the relationship between the three Espy signers is not known, it is likely that there was one. Robert and George signed the compact together and James located his Land Grant south of Robert.

Shirley Jones^{CG} found in a previous study, “A genealogy on the Espy family indicating they came from Ireland to Highland Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and then to Mecklenburg County North Carolina before coming to Nashville.” Additional information Shirley Jones discovered:

- On 1 February 1790 Robert Espy married in Sumner County to Curry Cribbins.
- Espy had previously sold Thomas Cribbins 200 acres from his Grant. The relationship here is unknown.
- In 1792 Robert was taxed on 640 acres of land.
- On 3 April 1797 Robert bought a slave named Cloe aged 14 years from

Armstead Rogers who on the same date had sold him 110 acres on the northeast corner of his Land Grant.

Sumner County Deed Book A. pages 132 & 133 provides interesting conditions for use of the final 130 acres of the grant intended for Robert.

“This Indenture made this twenty second day of March one thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Eight Between Robert Espy of Sumner County and State of Tennessee of the one part & John Espy and Alexander Espy Sons of the Said Robert Espy of the other part, Witnesseth that the said Robert Espy as well for and in consideration of the Natural Love and Affection he bears to his Sons John Espy & Alexander Espy as also for the better maintenance Support Lively hood by them the said John Espy & Alexander and a Suitable Maintenance from the said John and Alexander to me Said Robert Espy hath given granted and Confirmed and by these presents Doth give grant and confirm to the Said John Espy and Alexander Espy their Heirs and Assignees all the tract or parcel of Land whereon I now live in Sumner County 130 acres.....”

Robert Espy died sometime before 1802 when his sons sold the 130 acres in two tracts:

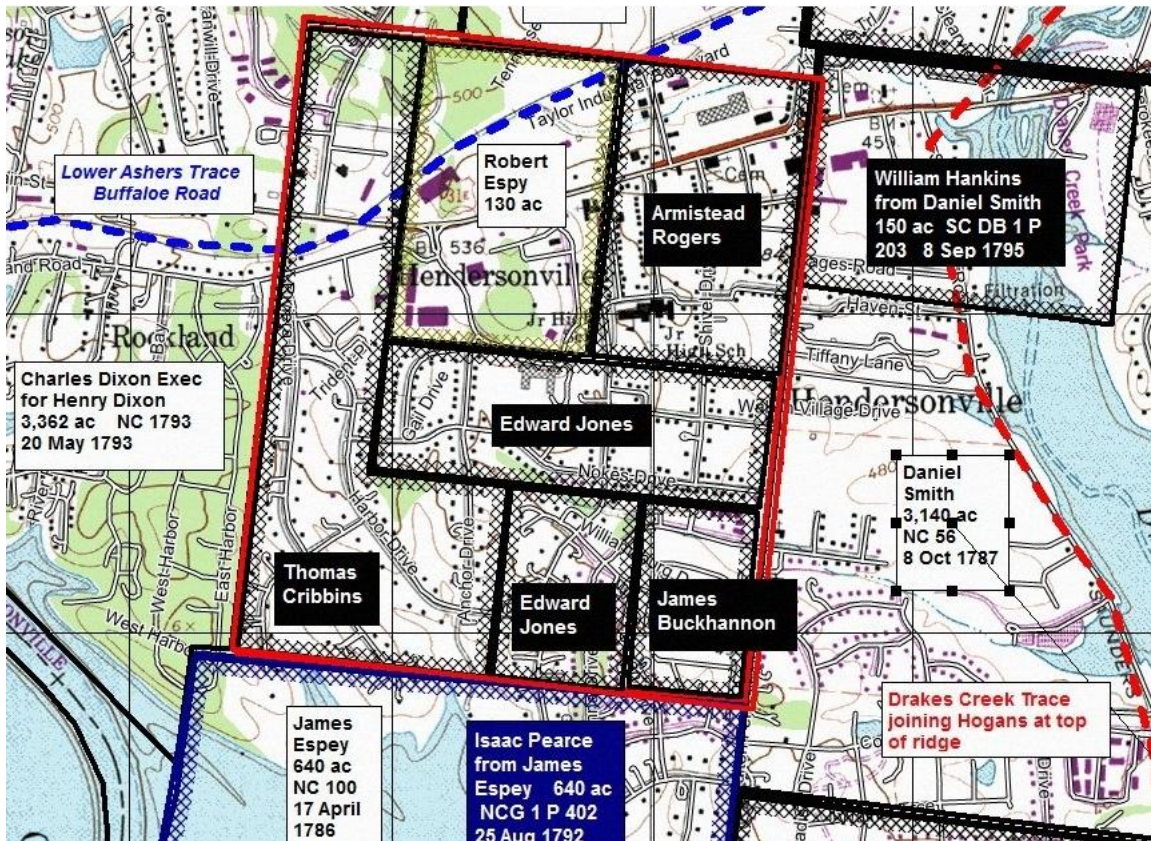
- Samuel Shannon for \$500 - 80 acres of land. The area was the upper portion of the 130 acres Robert occupied upon his death.
- William Henderson for \$400 – 50 acres of land. The lower area of Robert’s land was adjacent to the Edward Jones tract. It’s my guess that this was the area of Robert’s home and very likely the site of his spring and other improvements. The site today would be southeast of the intersection of Rockland Road and West Main Street in Hendersonville.

The 50 acres Henderson purchased cost him \$8 dollars an acre in 1802 as compared to the 640 acres James Espy sold 10 years prior to Isaac Pearce for “230 pounds current money of Virginia.” Pearce later sold most of his land for \$1 an acre. Reference the map on the adjacent page for the purchasers. The first land Robert sold in the 1790s averaged \$1 to \$2 per acre.

No mention of Robert’s wife can be found nor any evidence where they were buried. They are likely resting somewhere on the 130 acre tract in an unmarked grave known only to God.

640 Acre NC Land Grant 322 – Robert Espy

Present area of Downtown Hendersonville, TN



Robert Espy's 640 acre land grant (shown with red outline above) was surveyed on February 12, 1785, by his neighbor Daniel Smith. Chain Carriers for the survey team included James Espey and Phillip Trammell, who were both grant holders to the south and bordering his land grant. The 640 acres in bounded on the east by Walton Ferry Road, which was one of the early pioneer roads. The grant area includes West Main Street of Hendersonville and to the north much of New Shackle Island Road. The southeast corner of the tract is just north of the intersection of Walton Ferry Road and Connie Drive. The 130 acres shown is that deeded to his sons for his lifetime.

Notice that all the surveyors lines are tilted approximately 7 degrees east of north, which is due to the magnetic effects of the surveyors compass. The effects of this phenomenon exist today in our cities and countryside.

The location of the land grant is very interesting and was proven to be valuable in the resale of portions of the land for several reasons.

- Lower Ashers Trace, one of the first major area thoroughfares, traversed the upper western portion of the 640 acres. This provided easy travel access west to Mankers Lick or east to Bledsoes Lick. Another route was Drakes Creek Trace which allowed access to the north and Kentucky or south crossing the Cumberland River.
- Both Drakes Creek and the Cumberland River were located in close proximity.
- Espy's spring branch, flowed from the south central part of the grant indicating an abundant source of water.
- One has only to look at the land as it exists now to realize the quality and potential for living and farming.

The spelling of Espey or Espy has been somewhat confusing. All who signed the Cumberland Compact used Espey while land grants were issued using Espy. The spelling on this article reflects that of the source documents.

History of Indian Lake Peninsula, Batey Farm

By Shirley Wilson, Genealogist

Editor's Note: In a period of less than six months, more than a thousand Hendersonville residents and businesses raised and donated more than \$1.06 million by July 1 to purchase 38 acres of farm land—part of a Revolutionary War grant—to become a new park in the city. The land, called the Batey Farm/Batey Hill after previous owners, will be combined with more than 35 adjacent acres purchased by the City of Hendersonville on the Indian Lake peninsula to create a 73.5 acre park/green space. The deal was done to prevent massive new development that many Hendersonvillians believed would have destroyed the character of the peninsula.

From the Beginning

The Indian Lake community like the rest of Sumner County was formed in 1786 from Davidson County, then North Carolina. Much of the county was settled by North Carolina's Revolutionary soldiers who were paid for their services in land warrants that could be redeemed in this area. In 1790 when North Carolina ceded its Tennessee lands to the federal government, Sumner County became a part of the Territory south of the River Ohio.

Finally, in 1796 the Indian Lake Peninsula became a part of the new state of Tennessee. At that time, Sumner was a huge county extending as far east as Clay County and as far south as northern Rutherford County.

Originally, much of the land on the Indian Lake Peninsula was patented by General Daniel Smith who built Rock Castle there toward the end of the 18th century. A 50 acre tract was granted to the general from North Carolina on May 18, 1789. He received this land as the assignee of Colonel Martin Armstrong, who was the surveyor for the lands and also a Revolutionary Soldier. It was a military land grant based on Armstrong's service. The grants around it were awarded for Smith's service, but not that 50 acre tract.

As late as 1878, there were very few families living on the Indian Lake Peninsula, perhaps no more than a dozen. Most of them were Gen. Smith's descendants. Residents in that area lived along what Hendersonville now calls Gallatin Road and what Gallatin refers to as Nashville Pike. The land descended through the Smith family until Dec. 12, 1890, when the tract was sold out of the Smith family as 48.5 acres by Horatio Berry to Eugene F. Kranz.

Kranz sold it in 1919 to S. A. Williamson who sold it to the Jenkins family.

Over the years, the Indian Lake Peninsula has not changed much in size or shape, except when Old Hickory Lake was impounded in 1956 causing both the Cumberland River and Drakes Creek to widen. Hendersonville remained a small village until after the impoundment, but it began to grow by leaps and bounds when waterfront property became available on Old Hickory Lake.

It is interesting to note that although its ownership changed over the years, the 50 acre grant in 1789 to Gen. Smith remained virtually the same until 1958 when the Jenkins family conveyed the land to C. W. and Ruby Shackelford. They had it subdivided into nine parcels, each of five-plus acres.

This 50 acres was located at the intersection of what is today Indian Lake Road and East Drive, known to locals as the 4-way stop. This parcel of land, which wraps around and is part of Point of View subdivision, was sold at auction in the early 1960s to Ed Batey and others from whom he then acquired the land.

In 1964, Ed Batey and his wife Betty allotted 35 of the 50 acres to surround the home they built at 120 East Dr., where they lived and reared their five children. They added a barn a few years later and kept horses and cattle. After Ed Batey's death, Betty Batey remained in the home until 2010.

The property is known for its amazing profusion of buttercups that bloom each spring and cannot possibly be overlooked by anyone who drives past. The flowers mark the location of an earlier house that once stood on the property.

A rare American holly tree still grows in front of the Batey home. A friend of the family once told them that it was fully grown when he saw it as a boy more than 90 years ago.

The Bateys bought the tract now called Batey Hill from the Anderson family in 1967. It was the last remaining portion of Point of View subdivision.

Nearly 60 years ago, Ed Batey and his brother, Tom, started Batey Construction company, joined later by a younger brother, Charles. Ed's sons, Roger and John, Tom's son Trey and Roger's son, Parker, are all now part of the business. The company developed subdivisions, including Point of View, throughout the peninsula.

In 2016, the Batey family sold the farm and Batey Hill tract to Destiny Land Partners.

Hendersonville Commandos' Story: How a Team Began

By Jim Lind and Students

Editor's Note: The following story by former Hendersonville High history teacher and coach, Jim Lind includes his introduction to a 125-page book, *The First Commandos. It was compiled by him and seven of his students (Natalie Diaz, Veronica Sales, Audrey Mefford, Jennifer Rutter, Samantha Martin, Bailey Dillehay, Hailey Treloar) in 2009 as their senior project.*

"Their [football team's] story began in 1941 when Hendersonville had a four year high school for the first time. The small school wanted to have a football team, and the interested parties approached the principal, Mr. V.G. Hawkins, about starting their own team. However, Mr. Hawkins' answer was, "We have no money, no field, no schedule and no uniforms."

"Undaunted, the boys did not give up and continued to beg Mr. Hawkins. Finally, he relented and told the boys that the school would purchase helmets, shoulder pads, sweatshirts and pants, but they would have to supply their shoes. It should be noted that when it was announced that Hendersonville would field a football team, the small town became very supportive of the boys and their endeavors: it became a football town. John Paul Brown, a faculty member, became the first coach and "Dink" Newman became the first assistant coach.

"Hendersonville High School had only 125 students, yet 23 young men tried out for the football quad. There was only one senior, Claude Reese, and only two players, Roy Dorris and Herbert Rice, had ever played on a football team before 1941. Practice was held on a field behind the Hendersonville Grammar School and was generally two hours in length without water breaks. It was several weeks before there was a facility for showering, so before that L.W. Oliver Jr., the team manager, hosed down the players after practice. Most of the boys were from farming families, and after the two-hour-long practices they had to walk three or four miles home and still do chores.

"Eventually, the school managed to schedule seven games. They joined the Cumberland Valley Conference, but seeing as how there was no home field they would have all away games. Most of them were played on Friday afternoons. The popular offense was the single wing, and that was the one Coach Brown taught his boys. Dink, who had previously played at Gallatin High School in his youth, was also the line coach and tried teaching his inexperienced linemen little tricks to use against the more experienced linemen they would face later in the season. One trick that he taught them was to grab the ankles

of the opposing linemen; the officials would be looking for holding around the upper body, not the ankles.

"During this time, the games were played on dusty fields with no scoreboards, and time was kept by an official on the sideline or by a designated timekeeper. Mr. Hawkins would occasionally keep time, and he would get so involved in the game that he'd forget to stop the clock during timeouts, and the game would be delayed until the time was corrected.

"Even though they did not have uniforms yet, they opened the season by playing Lafayette. By the second game, Vanderbilt University provided some used uniforms for Hendersonville. They were black uniforms with gold numbers: 20-30. Through this kind gesture, Hendersonville not only received uniforms, but they also adopted school colors and a mascot. The Commandos were chosen because of the rough and tough British elite forces of World War II. During the course of the season, when substitutes were needed, the players had to swap uniforms to enter the game seeing as how there were only 11 uniforms.

"Coach Brown set some rules for letters that season; any player that had played as least a quarter of each game would receive a letter. And at the end of the season, 15 out of the 23 players lettered."

When the team took to the field for the first time, they had only practiced three weeks. They wore the white practice jerseys to which they added numbers painted on with a bottle of Bixby's Jet Oil Shoe Polish.

Before that first game, Coach Brown told Harold Gore that he would call plays from the huddle. This was a shock to Harold because Brown had called all the plays when the boys practiced. Harold's response to Brown was, "Ah, let Howard [Boone] call the plays." Boone stepped up and called the plays then and for the next two years. The team eagerly took to the field, which was simply a dusty, red clay spread of land in Lafayette. Team members recalled that it was so dry that they and officials both had to wait until the dust settled to see how a play turned out.

The experienced Lafayette team scored in every quarter and overwhelmed the newly formed Hendersonville squad for a final score of 59-0. Hendersonville had only one first-down for this game, made by Herbert Rice. After the game, the players showered off under an elevated water tank in Lafayette.

Early Residents Leave Fountain Head Memoir

By Al Dittes

The first Adventists to settle in 1907 in Fountain Head, now considered part of the Portland area, left behind them a remarkable description of the community of their day and its early founders, some of whose families moved here early in the 19th century. A surviving manuscript contains no author, yet a careful reading of it shows that one of the early Adventists had to have written it.

A young man named Braden Mulford was the leading spirit among the Adventist pioneers to Upper Sumner County. He comprised part of the original student body of Madison College, founded in 1904. He was one of the first to go out and start an extension school of Madison near Ridgetop, Tenn., with another man, Charles Alden. Then Mulford went out on his own and bought a farm near Fountain Head, the site of Highland Academy, Highland Elementary School, The Bridge at Highland and the Highland Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Mulford then asked his sweetheart, a young school teacher named Pearl West doing mission service in Africa, to come home and marry him. She accepted. Her brother, Forrest West, and his wife, who was Braden Mulford's sister, joined them in Fountain Head. The two couples were the nucleus and the beginning of the Adventist community.

I assume one of them wrote the following article. It shows that these founders made an effort to know their adopted community and its culture, and it expresses their philosophy of education.

'Fountain Head' by Unknown Writer

The term [Fountain Head] was not coined by us, for long before our arrival at this place, Fountain Head was here, and occupied a most prominent point in the mind of many who have been here before us. Going back to pre-Civil War days, we find some of the most prominent families of this section living at Fountain Head. Some of these have occupied places in the State Legislature, or were County

Judges and members of the County Court.

It is interesting to note that there was organized at Old Fountain Head, in the year 1812, the first Methodist Episcopal Conference in this part of the country, under the leadership of Bishop [William] McKendree. Bishop McKendree was a close relative of the Payne's, who had been leading lights in the community for more than a century.

Two of the families that had much to do with the earlier days were the Sarvers and Hodges. Henry Sarver came from Germany and settled in North Carolina with his wife, Thamer Holle Sarver. In 1806, this family moved to Fountain Head. Isam Hodges came to America from England and settled in Virginia. Later, he moved with his family and settled at Fountain Head about the same time with the Sarvers. We got this part of our story from Mrs. John House, who is a daughter of Elder M. Hodges, a Baptist Minister. Mrs. House is 93 years old and remembers well the days of her girlhood. Her grandmother, on her father's side was Elizabeth Clay, a first cousin of Henry Clay. The Butlers and the Ponds have added much to the community since for the past 75 years.

Space forbids our mentioning others by name, but we do want to add that when we came to this spot a quarter of a century back, we found a community of most splendid citizenship. We found lands that had been cleared by others. Many other opportunities were ours because of the energetic effort of men and women who had given their lives for the cause of progress. We stepped into generations of accomplishments. It was only left for us to build upon what they had already laid out in a most substantial manner. To do this in keeping with the splendid foundation handed us was our duty—our most sacred trust.

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(MEMOIR, Continued from Page 6)

As stated above, the term "Fountain Head" was not coined by us. Neither was it made up by those of the immediate generation before us. For when the Sarvers and the Hodges came in 1806, they found the place already named. From the best data that we can get, we are led to conclude that the name came from the earlier settlers recognizing that this is the highest point in the Highland rim, and too, because near this point they found a bursting, bubbling, ever-flowing spring of sparkling water.

We are glad that it was so named, and as evidence that those men were right in their conclusion, it is an established fact, that just to the north of Fountain Head Station is the highest point between Louisville and Nashville, and the spring is still flowing as it was found by them 125 years ago. We are glad for the name. We could not add to it. We shall use every effort to not detract from it.

It is hard for us to approach the subject of our own work. We would rather dwell upon the doings of those hardy men and women before us. But we have been asked to give a short story of the establishment and development of our work here, known as The Fountain Head Sanitarium and Rural School.

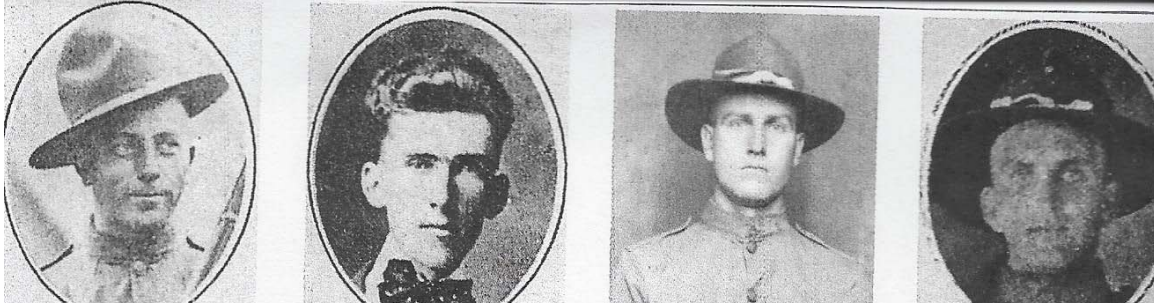
In giving the story of our own work, we feel that we must in this, also, grant to others the planting of the seed and the subduing of adverse mental decisions. For a considerable time before the first step was taken to open up an institution in this place, we had the privilege of being in close contact with a group of educators, who were ploughing up virgin soil in the educational field. These men and women had stepped out from most prosperous positions in schools and

colleges, and had come into the South with very limited funds, with the thought in mind of establishing a school on a farm, and to make that school 100 percent self-supporting to the student and to the teacher.

This same group of teachers said that young men and young women, the future home makers of our land, should be trained to honor the soil. That true education would bind up in its curriculum that combination of intellectual and industrial which would bring labor up to its rightful place. It was urged that the type of industrial training that should be given should include the various lines of work that must be done on the school farm, fruit growing and stock raising. Also that cooking and dress making should be a part of this. To these activities were added various other lines of work such as carpentry, blacksmithing, auto repair and weaving.

Still another phase was added.

Recognizing the value of good health, it was urged that every student should receive definite instruction along the lines of diet, treatment of the simple diseases and the prevention of same. It was urged that individuals, rounded out with this sort of training would make efficient home builders and community leaders. These men and women urged, much to the chagrin of educators in higher schools of learning, that for a student to learn to bake a loaf of bread and prepare a well-balanced meal, was a point of development of far more real worth than an accomplishment in the field of the languages or higher mathematics, without this practical training. We have reference to The Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute, founded in 1904 by Doctors Sutherland and Magan, Prof. Alden and their colleagues.



Privates Robert Empson of White House, Macey Lee Briley of Fountain Head, Johnnie Hodges of Westmoreland, Blonnie Legg of Cottontown were among the victims of the flu epidemic of 1918. (*Soldiers of the Great War*)

Spanish Flu Devastated the Troops at War's End

By Judith Morgan

Editor's Note: In her book, *Sumner County in the Great War: Let us Remember*, author Judith Morgan chronicles the months leading up to armistices when optimism over victory was overshadowed by horror as the death toll from disease mounted. "Another enemy was abroad during the last desperate days of the Great War," Morgan wrote, "an enemy that was stalking its prey by the millions around the world: influenza." The dead included local soldiers, especially new recruits who died just as the war drew to an end.

Morgan wrote, "The conditions of the war had created the perfect storm: overcrowded troop trains, overcrowded training camps, overcrowded ships, one of the coldest winters on record, and constant trips at top speed back and forth across the ocean. The situation was ripe for the spread of infections..."

She noted that mumps, measles and other diseases swept through the ranks all during the war, leading to pneumonia, which was the leading cause of death by disease. "But the pneumonia sweeping the camps in both America and France in late summer 1918 was different, unexpected, more violent...Circumstances conspired to keep the spread of the disease quiet [when the epidemic first began]. Government control over the press was absolute at the time. Any news that could hurt morale was strictly banned in America, as well as in France, Great Britain, even Germany. The government took no public notice of the disease, as if it did not exist. So it was that when the virus invaded Spain, a neutral country, and reports of its spread began to appear in the Spanish newspapers, the new disease became the 'Spanish flu.' By late September, even American newspapers could no longer keep a lid on the news, and small paragraphs began to appear in papers like the *Nashville Tennessean*: 4,000 quarantined at the Great Lakes Training Camp with 'Spanish flu' on September 18; 23,000 cases in the training camps by September 25; 20,000 new cases of 'Spanish influenza' in camps by October 1;

50,000 cases in the South, with schools and theaters closing everywhere by October 9.

"The virus mutated and crossed the ocean again and again with the troops. It was in its second incarnation that the horror began. By September, the disease was both rampant and lethal. Sidney Barry of Cottontown was already at Camp Merritt in Hoboken, N.J., ready to ship out when he grew ill. He died in the camp hospital on September 30. Charles Young Hibbett of Gallatin was already on board a troopship ready to sail from New York when he sickened. He died in a New York hospital on October 8.

"The camps became death traps. At Camp Sevier, Ernest Bradley of Gallatin died on October 10...At Camp Green, North Carolina, Floyd Kennedy of Bethpage died on October 17. At Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina, one more Sumner boy would fall victim on November 17: Elzie Arterburn of Edenwold. The cause of death was often listed as pneumonia. Like measles, influenza usually killed through pneumonia..."

Some physicians tried to convince President Woodrow Wilson to stop sending men to France until the epidemic was controlled, but other generals successfully convinced him to allow ships to continue, and "transports became 'floating caskets.'"

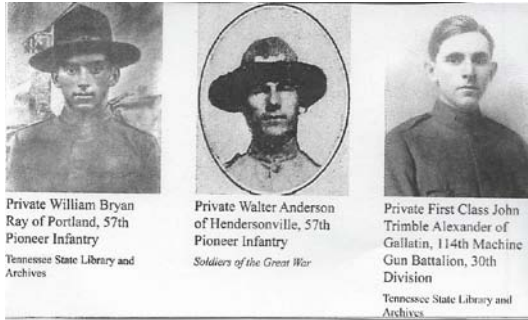
Thirty-two black draftees left Gallatin on June 21 and shipped out on September 15. "The Sumner men all survived the trip over, but many were infected on board ship or were infected in camp after arrival. Three of them, all from Gallatin, died one by one: Harrison Parks on October 13, Lee Burnley of October 18 and Johnnie Balentine on October 21. They would be the only wartime deaths among black soldiers from Sumner County. Luther Bratton witnessed it all. He would live to be the oldest surviving African American veteran of Sumner County..."

"Forty-five white draftees left Gallatin on Sept. 6, 1918, for Camp Wadsworth, assigned to

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the 57th Pioneer Infantry. With only three weeks of any kind of training, they shipped out on Sept. 29-30 aboard the former German ship *Vaterland*, now the *Leviathan*, the largest ship in the world...Suffering from influenza enroute, several Sumner County boys were taken straight to the hospital from the ship. They would die one after another: Monty Allen of Cottontown and Robert Empson of White House on October 14, William Bryan Ray of Portland on October 19, Macey Lee Briley of Fountain Head on October 21. The regiment moved on from Brest; so did the flu. Johnnie Hodges of Westmoreland was already so sick when he entered the hospital near Chaumont on October 28 that he died the same day, unconscious the whole time.



"Pioneer units were not the only ones going overseas; more and more men were drafted as 'replacements.' They were sent to the front wherever needed to replace casualties. In one such unit were Virgie Stewart of Mitchellville, Edison Cliburn of Westmoreland, and newlywed Blonnie Legg of Cottontown. All had been drafted and sent for Camp Gordon...They shipped out on September 20. Blonnie never made it to France, dying on board October 3. Virgie died soon after arrival on October 9 and Edison on October 31.

"Two other draftees, Willie Graves of Westmoreland and Nathan Franklin of Gallatin, volunteered for special instruction. They left on June 30 for the University of Tennessee, where they trained in motor truck transport. Willie was especially adept, scoring number four in a class of 500. The two sailed in late September on one of the ships destined to be visited by death.

Nathan survived, but Willie died on October 10 and was buried at sea a day later. There his story ends. His name appears on a bronze "Tablet of the Missing" at the Suresnes American Cemetery near Paris, one of nearly a thousand other names...

"Next to the 30th Division, more Sumner County boys were in the 81st Division "Wildcats" than any other division. They trained at Camp Jackson, S.C. Two of them, Joe Keen of Bethpage and Walter Dobbs of Fountain Head, were draftees who had left Gallatin on April 27 and arrived in France in mid-August. The flu struck the 81st in late September while they were in frontline training with the French. Joe died on October 1; Walter on October 5."

The flu traveled from port cities to the battle zones in France, worsening as it went. Soldiers who caught the flu early usually had a milder form of the disease and built up resistance to the more virulent strain, which overcame the troops in the fall of 1918. One in every 67 soldiers in the army died of the flu, most in the 10-week period beginning in mid September of that year.

Among the most touching cases was that of John Trimble Alexander of Gallatin, one of the first draftees on Sept. 21, 1917. He survived the ocean crossing. He was part of the 30th Division, the "Suicide Gang," and lived through battle after battle only to die of the flu on Christmas Eve 1918.

In addition to the military, civilians were also struck down by the flu, dying by the thousands in Europe and at home. Flu arrived in Sumner County in late September, and 67 people died by the end of October. "So many Sumner County doctors were in training camps or overseas that those remaining were overwhelmed. Oscar Harrison's mother described the plight of Westmoreland [in a letter to her son] in late October:

"Well Oscar [there] is lots of sickness here now nearly every family has two or three sick at a time and some of them is all in bed at one time with the influenza. [There] is one or two burials per day [Me] and papa hant took it yet...Dr. Carter is in bed now so we are without a doctor here now all the young doctors has gone to the war... "



**Randy's Record Shop
(Toronto Showtime Museum Archives)**

(RANDY'S From Page 1)

and radio repair shop on the corner of North Water and Franklin Streets in downtown Gallatin. They carried a few records, and their Saturday customers liked to listen and buy records.

"Wood became convinced that records would be the wave of the future.

"In 1947, he bought out his partner and opened his now-famous record shop. Wood pioneered the idea of mail-order records. To promote his new business, he bought air time on WLAC-AM in Nashville which he called, naturally, 'Randy's Record Shop.' The radio station was carried in over 30 states and resulting record sales came in from all over the U.S...

"Randy Wood did not stop with being the mail order record king. In 1950, he started a recording business with a group of boys from East High School in Nashville. Later that same year, he recorded local ragtime piano player Johnny Maddox and the Rhythm Masters. Maddox was a former clerk in Randy's Record Shop! Thus, DOT Records was born.

"DOT Records was Wood's sideline until the "Hilltoppers," a group of college boys from Western Kentucky, made their first record,

"Trying." The group produced hit after hit and were in demand all over the states. This discovery was followed by other artists such as Pat Boone, the Fontanes and Gail Storm. Even Debbie Reynolds recorded for DOT Records.

"DOT Records moved to Hollywood, Calif., in July 1956, where it was later purchased by Paramount Pictures. Woods remained with the company as vice president [a title he held through retirement]. While in California, Wood formed the Ranwood Label, recording such artists as Lawrence Welk..."

Wood, who was born in 1918, died at the age of 94 in California in April 2011. In an obituary in the *News Examiner*, Gallatin residents recalled their experiences with Randy's Record Shop. "It was like a family," said Jo Womack, who was one of the many people from Gallatin employed by Wood to work in Randy's Record Shop.

"He started in a small store down the hill on North Water," said Womack. "He then moved to the location of the plaque [on the corner of North Water Avenue and Franklin Street] and later to West Main Street, across from Roger's Market.

"My mother [Lorene] and Mrs. Helen Barber worked there," said Tom Neal of Castalian Springs. "Randy always sent them a box of candy at Christmas after he moved to California..."

Neal also said that the volume of the mail-order business at the record shop was the impetus for the Gallatin Post Office to enlarge.

Among the top Dot Records are at least five number one hits: "Melody of Love" (Billy Vaughn, 1954), "Calcutta" (Lawrence Welk, 1961), "Hearts of Stone" (The Fontane Sisters, 1955), "Young Love" (Tab Hunter 1957) and "Love Letters in the Sand" (Pat Boone, 1957).

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(RAGTIME, Continued From Page 1)

America's popular music from the 1890s through the turn of the century. Those happy days returned in the 1950s, and Maddox played the music that accompanied them. His retro style should have made him a musical dinosaur. Instead, it made him a star.

By 1955, he'd hit the big time! He performed onstage with artists such as Patsy Cline, Pat Boone, Eddie Arnold and Lawrence Welk. He played Las Vegas and the Stork Club in New York, one of the most prestigious night clubs in the world and one of his favorite venues. He was on the Jack Parr and Milton Berle shows, Soupy Sales, Patti Page's Big Record Show and many other shows. He gave audiences a good time.

During his career with DOT Records (until it sold in the '70s), Maddox recorded 50 albums and 87 singles. His records sales topped 11 million, and he had nine gold singles. His hits, "Little Grass Shack," "In the Mood" and "Josephine," each sold more than a million copies.

He even got a gold star on Hollywood Boulevard's Walk of Fame. Maddox told the *Tennessean* in a 2008 story that he didn't know about the star until it was down. A notice was sent to him, but he never got it. Walking down the boulevard after a recording session, he looked down and almost fainted upon seeing his own name on the star right beside Will Rogers'.

Maddox did stage shows, including the Riverboat Follies in Memphis, where he shared the spotlight with a comedian, a line of dancing girls, a full orchestra and a magician. He participated in thrill shows from 1956-'58, performing on a piano mounted on a stage in the back of a pickup truck. A hydraulic lift hoisted the stage 15 feet in the air while he rocked the audience with music. On one occasion, the lift caught fire and smoke billowed around him, but he kept right on playing.

Early Years and Family History

Born on Aug. 4, 1927, Johnny Maddox is a sixth-generation Gallatinian. His family lived on Winchester Street. Maddox's grandfather, one of Robert E. Lee's civil engineers present at the Confederate surrender at Appomattox, came to Gallatin after the Civil War.

Maddox's aptitude for music was no surprise to family and friends. His father, John Sheppard Maddox, was a trombonist who performed with an orchestra and with the locally popular Commercial Club Band of Gallatin. Johnny's great aunt Zula Cothron, was a renowned pianist who played ragtime in an all-girl orchestra at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis.

It was she who taught him to play and set the example of ragtime. Under her supervision,

Johnny plunked out his first tunes at age three. He started playing publicly when he was only five. The sound of his lessons—he also studied with Mrs. Prudence Dresser and others—was well known in the neighborhood.

Gallatin businessman and historian Bill Puryear recalled, "One of the favorite memories I have of growing up in Gallatin is that of the faint tinkling of distant piano keys a few doors down East Main from where we as kids played football. Johnny Maddox took piano with Lela Donoho, herself a local character. His music seemed to me then as it did throughout his career to convey the spirit of Gallatin to me like nothing else."

By 1939, Maddox was playing piano with a dance band for \$3 a day—not bad for a 12-year-old! He also played the violin, trombone and pipe organ. During WWII, Maddox entertained the troops. He married and had four sons.

Maddox was in his 20s when "Crazy Otto" fame took him out on the road. In a 1990s story in the *Washington Post*, he said that after 34 years of Crazy Otto he was feeling a little crazy himself and would retire. He moved to Salzburg, Austria, renowned as Mozart's hometown, and avoided his old life until he finally realized he missed his friends and fans. Deep down he that he still had something to offer. He traveled and performed again but at a slower pace, eventually finding a permanent venue in Durango, Colo.

He returned to Tennessee about six years ago and was presented Tennessee's Distinguished Artist Award (the state's top honor in the arts). He also performed his first hometown concert in 65 years in May of 2012 at Gallatin First Presbyterian Church.

Amazing Music Collection

In addition to his fame as a performer, Maddox is known to music scholars for his collection and knowledge of music. Throughout his career, he amassed a world class collection of more than 30,000 78 rpm records, Edison wax cylinders and piano rolls, as well as a sheet music collection of more than 200,000 pieces. Among his rarest finds were an 1899 first-edition of Scott Joplin's "The Maple Leaf Rag" and a copy of the first official state song of Maryland ("Maryland, My Maryland") and many pieces of Confederate music from the Civil War era.

Puryear said, "Johnny was an explorer, recovering forgotten ragtime and blues, putting his unique rhythm and spirit into each of those he brought to life... Thank heaven for Templeton's orchestra and for Randy Wood's Record Shop, who spread the music of Gallatin throughout America. We love you, Johnny!"

Sumner County Historical Society

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To: