

Days Of Old Sumner County

Newsletter No. 35, Aug. 2021

P.O. Box 1871, Gallatin TN 37066

Sumner County Historical Society www.sctnhs.org schstn1786@gmail.com (615) 461-8830

'That Extraordinary Mound at Bledsoe's Lick'

By Kevin E. Smith, MTSU
Professor of Anthropology

Nestled in the rolling hills of eastern Sumner County, the modern rural community of Castalian Springs is centered on the rich concentration of mineral springs first named "Bledsoe's Lick." The herds of Ice Age mastodons, piglike flat-headed peccaries, and other long since extinct game animals drawn to the salt and mineral rich waters likewise attracted Native American explorers there more than 12,000 years ago. As thousands of years passed, the Native Americans of Sumner County would develop and build a major town at Castalian Springs – serving as what we would today call a "county seat" of politics and religion.

The 132-acre tract that is now called the Castalian Springs Mounds State Archaeological Area was purchased by the State of Tennessee in 2005 from the heirs of Leon and Julia Ellen (McKee) Shoulders. Soon thereafter, I initiated the Castalian Springs Archaeological Project (CSAP) as a multi-year (and ongoing) research project sponsored by Middle Tennessee State University, the Bledsoe's Lick Historical Association, Tennessee Division of Archaeology, and Tennessee Historical Commission. Over the past decade plus, the research team has engaged hundreds

(See MOUND, Page 4)



In his most recent painting, artist Bill Puryear of Gallatin envisions Hendersonville's Rock Castle with its owner Daniel Smith sitting on the front porch reading the proclamation of Tennessee's statehood in 1796.

Daniel Smith of Rock Castle: Early Years

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

For much too long historians and teachers more or less passed over the life of pioneer Daniel Smith (1748-1818). He's been relegated to being an historic footnote, described in a ho-hum way as a colonial land surveyor. True, he was a surveyor, but he was so much more—a rock star among a host of competent peers.

"He was a man of many parts—could do almost anything: warrior, legislator, accountant, builder, farmer, family man [though business kept him from his poor spouse too much] honest, dependable, well liked—we make a big mistake in thinking of him only as a surveyor, though he was the best of those," said Gallatin businessman and artist Bill Puryear, who recently completed the above painting of Rock Castle, which includes a depiction of Smith on the porch.

It is a "depiction," only because no portrait or likeness of Smith has ever been found, just descriptions. Historians theorize that any Smith portrait likely burned in one of the house fires that befell the family. In the painting, Puryear envisioned Smith, who was also a general of the Tennessee militia, standing on the porch speaking to a crowd while his militia men are mustering for review.

"The idea is that Smith, whose appearance and dress I took from his re-enactor on Daniel Smith Days [an annual Rock Castle festival] is reading the 1796 proclamation of Tennessee statehood from his front porch, which couldn't be more fitting. As Secretary of its previous status—a Territory—he was instrumental in securing a majority for Tennessee's admission as a state, a state for which he laid off the boundaries and even named."

(See SMITH, Page 10)



In 1970 officials broke ground for Vol State College . Classes started in 1971.

Vol State Celebrates 50 Years of Classes

By Eric Melcher

Groundbreaking for Volunteer State Community College was held on a cold and blustery day in November of 1970. It was culmination of three years of work.

Approval for a community college to be located in Sumner County was given by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission in June of 1969. State Education Commissioner, J. Howard Warf, and his staff members Hal R. Ramer and T. Wesley Pickel, toured four possible sites for a community college. In July of 1969, they announced that a 100 acre tract on Nashville Pike, known as the Frost property, was the chosen site. The county acquired the land and deeded it for the college later that year.

In 1970, Commissioner Warf presented Hal Ramer as his candidate for president of the new college. Ramer suggested the name Volunteer State Community College to Commissioner Warf. It was approved in July.

Vol State is marking the 50th anniversary of the college in 2021. The very first classes, starting in October of 1971, were held even before the completion of the Gallatin campus. Administrative offices were located in the Cordell Hull building in downtown Gallatin and classes were held

wherever space could be found in Sumner County.

“We had classes at three churches on the square in Gallatin, the armory on Water Street and the bowling alley,” said founding employee, Sue Pedigo. “They were all over town. There was a lot of pride in finally being picked to have a community college in our area. It provided so much opportunity for so many people.”



Founding employee Sue Pedigo in 1971

John Newman and Joni Steinhauer, both of Hendersonville, were the first official students.

“My dad was in the legislature and did the

(See VOL STATE, Page 3)

(VOL STATE, Continued from Page 2)

legislation that approved the college,” said Joni Steinhauer Worsham. “It was kind of expected that I would attend. Wade Powers (Director of Admissions at the time) actually brought me the application, personally.”

Five-hundred and eighty-one students were enrolled that first quarter. “We students had gotten really close because we were so packed into those classrooms in the churches and the old hotel,” said Worsham. “We got close to our teachers, because we spent so much time with them.”

War protests, riots and other public disturbances had many people on edge in 1971 America. So, the sudden appearance of so many young people in downtown Gallatin was a topic of much conversation. Graduates remember the Dairy Queen became the unofficial student hangout. But those first weeks also formed a bond between the students and the faculty members.

“I was the first class president,” said Ed Mayberry, Class of 1973. “We made great relationships with students and instructors. We had a lot of interaction with the faculty because of the small size of the college at that time.”

Vol State athletics began in 1971 with Men’s Basketball. “I remember the first Vol State basketball game was held at Hendersonville High School,” Pedigo said. “It was like the biggest thing in the world to have basketball at the college.” New sports were added through the 1970s. In 1975 and 1993 the Women’s Basketball Team won the NJCAA Region 7 Championship. The Men’s Basketball Team won the championship in 1982. The Pioneers Baseball Team won championships in 1995, 1999, and 2001. The Softball Team won a championship in 2011.

The Gallatin campus opened in the winter of 1972. Sidewalks were still under construction, so boards were used to cross mud patches.



An aerial view photographed in 1972 of the college and the surrounding farmland

“Back in 1972, and the early years, I remember arriving to and leaving from work listening to the cows mooing in the pasture across the street,” said Betty Gibson, a long time employee of the college. Acres of open land surrounded the campus. The nearest business to the college was a drive-in movie theater.

The first commencement ceremony was held on June 9, 1973 with 57 students graduating.

Vol State achieved a record enrollment of 9,227 in fall of 2019. Academic offerings now span more than 100 areas of study in six divisions: Humanities, Health Sciences, Business and Technology, Math and Science, Nursing, and Social Science and Education. The main campus in Gallatin has expanded to 18 buildings, including the recent additions of the Wallace Health Sciences and Steinhauer-Rogan-Black Humanities buildings.

William Coley, president of the Gallatin Chamber of Commerce predicted at the 1970 groundbreaking that this new college would provide “years of much academic, economic, and social improvement” for Sumner County. The college has awarded more than 30,000 associate degrees and certificates in the past 50 years. The total number of students attending in that time is more difficult to ascertain, but estimates are more than 175,000 people.

Vol State has had three presidents thus far. Hal Ramer served until 2003. Warren Nichols held the position until 2011. Jerry Faulkner is the current president. He is set to retire this summer after serving more than nine years.

“As my time as President of Vol State comes to a close, I am keenly aware of the impact of the college on the 11 counties we serve here in Middle Tennessee,” said Faulkner. “When I arrived in 2012, the college was on a charted course to excellence and I was just happy to take the helm for a few years. Many of the accomplishments of the past nine years are because of the work of my predecessors and the wonderful folks that have served the college for the past 50 years.”

Editor’s Note: The college is encouraging graduates and former students to post their memories and old pictures on the college Facebook page at www.facebook.com/volstate. For a timeline of the college history visit: www.volstate.edu/50th



Mounds at Castalian Springs



Ralph Earl's 1821 sketch of earthworks at Castalian Springs

(MOUNDS, Continued From Page 1)

hundreds of students, volunteers, and archaeological specialists to reveal a detailed story of this prehistoric Sumner County town.

The Castalian Springs Mounds have been known as one of Tennessee's most impressive late prehistoric landmarks for over two centuries.

In October 1821, Ralph Eleaser Whiteside Earl, famed portrait painter and confidante of President Andrew Jackson, wrote a lengthy letter from Cragfont describing his explorations of "that extraordinary mound at Bledsoe's Lick."

In addition to archaeological excavations spanning 10 summers, the CSAP has focused on research in archives and museums through much of the eastern United States in search of early documents and artifacts pertaining to the site.

Earl's map of the mounds and enclosing town wall and his artist's sketch of Mound 2 – the central public earthwork of the town – are the earliest known examples from Tennessee and provide an amazing level of detail about how the site appeared before subsequent centuries of plowing. Mound 2 was indeed "extraordinary" by any standard – its base covering an area approximately the size of a football field, rising to well over two stories in height, and containing an estimated 400,000 cubic feet of earth. During its

active use by native peoples around A.D. 1300, this massive earthen platform supported multiple large buildings, including the palatial residence of the ruling elders, workshops, and other buildings.

More than a century ago in the winter of 1916-1917, William Edward Myer from Carthage – described by some as Tennessee's first home-grown professional archaeologist – would return for his third season of digs at Castalian Springs, funded by a grant from the R.S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology in Massachusetts. Myer's earlier investigations in 1891 and 1893 produced some of the most famous artifacts from the site and another detailed sketch of Mound 2, but on his third visit he was also armed with a camera. His detailed records and photographs curated by the Smithsonian Institution's National Anthropological Archives were also rediscovered during the MTSU archives project and have informed and guided modern archaeological research and interpretations.

Modern archaeology on Mound 2 in 2008 and 2010 shows that the entire earthwork was built in only two stages between A.D. 1275 and 1350 and was surmounted by multiple large (and ultimately burned) buildings.

(See MOUNDS, Page 5)



Volunteers work at Castalian archaeological site

(MOUNDS, Continued From Page 4)

While these early records provide insights into parts of the prehistoric town at Castalian Springs, the modern project has used cutting-edge technologies and modern archaeological methods to develop a far more detailed understanding of the “history” of that community and the daily lives of people who lived there. Based on more than 40 high-precision radiocarbon dates, the native community at Castalian Springs was founded as a small town of a few hundred people about A.D. 1150.

About a century later, the town had grown to perhaps as many as 1,000 citizens and embarked on an ambitious expansion project to create a mound center – including creation of the impressive set of mounds, earthworks, and town wall in less than 50 years. The project has explored the archaeological remains of dozens of structures – from small typical family houses of about 250 square feet, comparable in size with the log cabins of later eras, to half a dozen enormous public buildings and temples that range from 1,300-12,000 square feet. Modern people tend to underestimate the architectural abilities of prehistoric Tennesseans.

Please Pay Your Dues

Because of the pandemic, Sumner County Historical Society did not hold its annual fundraising dinner this spring.

However, we ask that you please pay your yearly dues: \$20 per individual and/or \$25 per family. Dues support this newsletter and other projects.

Make your check out to Sumner County Historical Society and mail to: P.O. Box 1871, Gallatin, TN 37066.

H’ville Police Department Begun 50 Years Ago

In April 1970 Hendersonville’s first city manager Sam Walton recommended to the three city commissioners that the city, incorporated only a year before, start a police department. At the time, police service was provided by subscription to George Thompson, owner of the Hendersonville Fire and Police Department. Walton said, “It became obvious that if you are going to take taxes, you have to provide services.”

Mayor Dink Newman agreed, and the city moved to start a police department. Fire protection took another year. The city did not become involved in ambulance service, leaving that to continue to be provided by the city’s two funeral homes.

The city-run police department began operating on July 1, 1971, from the rear of the residence at 112 Shivel Drive, a residence that later accompanied 114 Shivel Drive as the city’s administrative office.

Chief Henry M. Heer, a retired highway patrol officer, was hired and supervised officers Eugene T. Johnson, H.E. Basore, and Freddie Watson. They leased two patrol cars.

Soon the police hired an additional officer, and in March of 1972 Newman proposed stepping up to 20 employees and around-the-clock service.

George Thompson offered to sell his building, which had formerly housed the department, plus the land and police equipment to the city.

In September 1972, the city took over the building on Sanders Ferry Road with the help of a federal grant. The one-story building, which still stands at 144 Sanders Ferry Rd., became the home of fire and police.

The fire department soon relocated to two new firehalls on Luna Lane and Free Hill Road. The police department remained on Sanders Ferry Road until 1993.



The date of this photograph of Old Beech Presbyterian Church is unknown, but the fashion of the girls' dresses suggests late 19th or early 20th century. The stone building was erected in 1828, but the church was organized 30 years earlier in 1798. The sanctuary is in the old building, but wings have been added.

Beech Church: The Past Set in Plain Stone

By Jan Shuxteau

Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church, located on Long Hollow Pike in the heart of the Shackle Island community, was organized in 1798, making it the oldest church in Middle Tennessee. The state, itself, was founded only two years earlier on June 1, 1796. Prior to '96, Sumner County was part of the western portion of the North Carolina territory.

Tennessee was then the western frontier. Settlers, who began arriving in Sumner County in the late 18th century, followed the Wilderness Road from Pennsylvania. They endured the hardships of pioneer life: staving off starvation, hacking out farm land, surviving Indian wars, wild animals, loneliness and fear. They were accustomed to Pennsylvania meeting houses, and they built Beech Church along those same lines. It was erected 30 years after the church was organized.

The church is on land where settlers came for days-long "camp meetings" to hear preaching from traveling ministers, typically Methodist or Presbyterian. The denominations often worshiped together.

According to church documents, the Beech camp land was sold for 50-cents to church trustees, John McMurtry and James Kirkpatrick, by pioneer settlers William Montgomery and Mrs. Francis Ketring. Montgomery, his wife, Jane; Mrs. Ketring; and the Rev. Hugh Kirkpatrick and his wife, Isabella, were charter members of the church. According to Richard Beard's *Brief Biographical Sketches of Some of the Early Ministers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church*, Kirkpatrick was one of the first men

ordained after the organization of the Cumberland Presbytery in 1810. The biography says, "He was a good man, and spent most of his life and ministry in Sumner County."

Camp meetings such as those at Beech drew hundreds, possibly thousands, of people from miles around—creating a temporary community that was larger than the permanent one. People camped in the grove of Beech trees that stood immediately in front of the present building. Worship services were held in a log building situated on the campgrounds. Rev. Kirkpatrick wrote an account of one Beech camp meeting, which he said resulted in 500 conversions and 125 new church members.

The famed Bishop Francis Asbury may have preached at a Beech camp meeting. Asbury, who lived from 1745 to 1816, was one of first bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. Originally from England, he traveled thousands of miles by horseback in the American wilderness to spread the gospel to people living on the frontier. Bishop Asbury's journal, prized by scholars for its descriptions of life in colonial times, has an entry on Oct. 21, 1800, which gives an account of attending a camp meeting on Drake's Creek, which runs parallel to New Shackle Island Road.

Asbury wrote, "*Yesterday and especially during the night were witnessed scenes of deep interest. In the intervals between preaching, the people refreshed themselves and horses and returned upon the ground. The stand was in the open air,*"

(See BEECH, Page 7)

(BEECH, Continued From Page 6)

embosomed in the wood of lofty Beech trees. The ministers of God, Methodists and Presbyterians, united their labors and mingled with the childlike simplicity of primitive times. We suppose there were at least 30 souls converted at that meeting."

Church documents note that "In 1828, the Cumberland Presbyterians decided to erect a new building. They rejected the gift of another site and chose to build near the campsite because of the cemetery which was nearby. In 1828-1830, the stone building was erected on land just back of the campground. William Montgomery gave the land to Hugh Kirkpatrick and Robert Taylor in trust for 'said Society of Cumberland Presbyterians, for the purpose of having a permanent place of worship for the Society of Cumberland Presbyterians to convene for that purpose, and where they will feel themselves free to manage the life of the congregation in their own way.' Montgomery stipulated that 'within seven years the congregation was to build a suitable house of permanent materials, say brick or stone, and put a wall around the yard of brick or stone of proper height to keep out stock.'"

Robert Taylor, who also constructed houses in the community, was the church builder. Laborers were paid 25-cents a day. A man named John Clendenning carried up the last stone for the church walls. The stone walls are three feet thick and have survived two fires, one in 1940 and another in 1951.

In May 1976, then pastor Alfred Bennett, who loved and studied the history of Shackle Island, told the Hendersonville *Star News* that the pews and pulpit are original furniture of the sanctuary.

Church records say that William McGee was the first pastor to preach in the stone church. Born in Guilford County, North Carolina, in 1768, he was educated for the ministry by his pastor and sent west as a missionary sometime before 1796. He was also pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian church, north of Gallatin. In October 1810, McGee and his congregation united with the Cumberland Presbyterians.

Church records say that "The cemetery [which adjoins the church] was deeded to the church in 1799 for a community burying ground by Francis Catron [Ketring] and William Montgomery.

Among the many graves in the cemetery are those of John McMurtry and Francis Ketring, who fought in the American Revolution. The cemetery contains the old box tombs of Ketring, Montgomery and Kirkpatrick families and the grave of Hugu Kirkpatrick.



At top, Robert Taylor's name is at the bottom of the right hand page. Below, a beautiful woodcut drawing is shown.

Taylor Bible Donated to Church

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

The 18th century Bible that belonged to Robert Taylor, builder of Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church, was recently donated to the church by David Bowden, a longtime resident of the Shackle Island community.

The Bible is missing its covers and most of Genesis and Revelations. It has old-time woodcut pictures of biblical themes and includes a chronology that shows some of the Taylor line with dates. The name "Robert Taylor" is clearly visible. "Some of it [the chronology] was written with walnut juice, which has faded, but the parts in ink are legible," said Bowden.

He was given the Bible by Mattie Light, shortly before her death in 2015. Mattie was the widow of, Albert Light, Jr. (Junior), who received it from his aunt, Mrs. Dora Herron Taylor.

According to Bowden, Dora sold Taylor property in Shackle Island in 1949, and she and her son Robert moved to Greenbrier, Tenn. She gave Junior and Mattie the Bible in gratitude for their help with the Taylor property and her move.

"She [Mattie Light] passed the Bible on to me. It was a treasure I coveted. However, in my heart I knew it needed to be shared, especially with history buffs," said Bowden. "I asked Beech Church to please find a proper place in the history room of the church. They were very receptive of the gift and are doing a great job showing and protecting it."

Timing Mattered In the Bank Trial of G.D. Moore

By Albert Dittes

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a story by Albert Dittes, entitled 'Depression' Struck Portland Early When Bank Failed, which was published in the May edition of this newsletter. It described the Oct. 4, 1926, failure of the Portland Bank. This failure led to the fall of several important businesses in town meaning lost jobs and life savings.

On September 28, 1928, a Sumner County Grand Jury found G.D. Moore, a vice president of the failed Portland Bank, guilty as charged of accepting a \$466.42 (\$6,979.88 now) deposit from C.W. Kerley on Oct. 4, 1926, the day the bank closed.

The recommended maximum punishment was three years in the state penitentiary. The State Attorney General prosecuted the case with a jury consisting of Sam Eidson, Albert Bloodworth, N.M. Pikard, R.S. Dudney, Bate Armstrong, H.S. Kirby, G.L. Brooks, T.R. Brent, J.J. Ray, W.H. McMurtry, Don Spears and Tom Thompson.

The defendant remained free on bond after the ruling and filed for a new trial on Oct. 5, 1929, asking the court to set aside the jury verdict due to lack of evidence to support the verdict and a prejudicial jury.

Reasons for a New Trial

"The verdict was against and contrary to the law given to the jury by the court," according to a newspaper account of the defense case. "The court erred in refusing to grant the defendant a change of venue. He could not have a fair and impartial trial in Gallatin guaranteed by law because of the feelings and prejudices existing against him in Sumner County and wanted to quash the indictment."

Also, the defense argued that the court didn't exclude the testimony of many Portland debtors owning large tracts of land, the sale of which was made a year- and-a-half after Oct. 4, 1926, date of the Kerley deposit or the testimony of appraisers of the Portland Bank assets after its closing when the value of said assets had materially changed.

The motion further complained that the court erred in sustaining prejudicial testimony and excluding from consideration the testimony of G.D. Moore, defendant, and other witnesses, like R.D. Moore, president and founder of the bank and who had managed it since 1903. The defense pointed out that Moore, father of G.D. Moore, and a former county recorder as well as chairman of the Board of Education, had taken part in a very bitter political contest for the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction a short

while before the bank closed. For this reason, and in the discharge of his duties, he had made a number of enemies who were very bitter toward him. They continually withdrew their deposits until the last day the bank was open, Oct. 4, 1926, taking out more than \$10,000 on that day (\$147,111.86 in 2020).

The motion alleged that the Court erred in overruling the defendant taking exception to the testimony of witness W.T. Hardison, who on cross examination by the Attorney General, had not been paid one dollar with respect to the indebtedness of the Portland Bank when he was asked this question.

The defense also alleged that the court erred in permitting the Attorney General, on cross examination of W. T. Hardison, to ask and have answered, "In giving your reasons for depression in 1927-28, the main reason for the depression was the fact that about \$127,000 or \$128,000 of the people's money was in the Portland Bank and the people could not get a dollar of that." (6p. 88)

The defendant took exception, and the exception was overruled.

The motion claimed that the Court erred in excluding Hardison's testimony that he and his wife had two-fifths interest--he one fifth and his wife one fifth--in the Crate Factory worth \$60,000 to \$65,000.

E.T. Peden, J.V. Kerley, and L.D. Austin testified to the amounts paid to their creditors more than a year later by the Highland Rim Crate and Furniture Co., Portland Milling Co., Moore and Riggsbee, Moore Feed Co. and G.W. Moore. These businesses--all large creditors of the Portland Bank--went into bankruptcy subsequent to the failure of the Portland Bank and made distribution to their creditors.

It All Came Down to 'When'

Moore admitted receiving the \$466.42 from C.W. Kerley, but insisted "that at the time he received such a deposit the bank was not insolvent, or in a failing condition."

The Portland Bank had been in operation for many years under the management of G.D.'s father, Risdon Dick Moore, who had founded the bank, and was at all times including on October 4, 1926, the one in control of its policy and operation. The senior Moore did not direct his son to refuse deposits or to close the bank at any time prior to the reception of this money.

(See TRIAL, Page 9)

(TRIAL, Continued From Page 8)

When he received the deposit in the early morning of Oct. 4, 1926, he did not then know nor have a reason to believe that the bank was insolvent or in a failing condition. On that day Oct. 4, 1926, there was an unusual run on the bank from men who personally and through the mail presented checks. Something like \$10,000 was withdrawn.

On this last day, and after 3 p.m. he, his father and all the directors met in a special session. At about 6 or 7 p.m., they determined that the bank had insufficient funds to meet the cash demands.



Risdon Dick (R.D.) Moore

They then decided to turn the bank over to the State Superintendent of banks, which was done immediately by telephone. Failing to get him by phone, the bank was turned over to the state superintendent the next day and a notice to this effect was posted upon the bank.

The Attorney General told the jury that the

1,200 depositors would not get any of their money back.

The defendant asked the jury to return a verdict on his behalf and alleged that the money was the property of J.E. Kerley and his three sons, C.W. Kerley being one of them.

The charge to the jury stated that the defendant was guilty *if he knew the bank was insolvent at the time of the deposit and not guilty if he did not know.*

Risdon Dick Moore, the big boss, 69 years old, died on July, 1928, before the case would have gone to trial if a retrial had been granted. Other Moores left the community--G.D. Moore moving to Clarksville, Tenn., and Paul Moore settling somewhere in Texas.

The Sumner County Court, with the consent of both parties, turned the matter over to the Tennessee State Supreme Court. A search of its archives' website shows no record of a hearing on this case there.

Indian Lake Road: A Little History Of a 'Fisherman's Dream'

In her 1973 book, *Historic Rock Castle*, local historian and teacher Mrs. Willie McGee Ellis, included seven paragraphs about Hendersonville's Indian Lake Road, now one of the city's main streets. She wrote:

"Indian Lake Road got its name from a natural lake east of Indian Lake Forest Road. Col. Harry Berry attempted to drain the lake by running tile from the lake to a nearby cave near the mouth of Drake's Creek. Berry's attempt was partially successful, and the new water reserved was called, 'The Ten Acre Pond.' After a few years, the tile was stopped up with debris so the lake was drained by a deep ditch to the cave. From the cave, the water would sink into Drake's Creek. The cave was referred to as 'The Sink.'

"In 1932 Col. Berry built a dam at the lower end of the lake so when the Cumberland River overflowed into the lake it would be freshly stocked with river fish. A piece of chicken wire was put across the spillway of the dam so that the fish could not return to the Cumberland.

"A fish camp was operated at what now is the end of Indian Forest subdivision. There was an open-faced shack where fishing supplies, cold drinks and hot dog buns could be purchased. There were some 10 or more steps cut in the ground, held in place by small wood logs that went down to the water where small boats were tied to tree limbs. These small boats rented for 25-cents, and if an attendant was desired, he would charge an extra 50-cents to do the paddling. There was one large boat that rented for a dollar that could accommodate three or four persons. The fish camp also offered cabins for the night. The cabins offered sleeping facilities only.

"A fisherman was usually always rewarded for his efforts as the lake was well-stocked with bass, bream, crappie and catfish.

"Mr. Walter Shivel and his teenage sons, Bill and Jim, operated the camp during summer and fall... Jim Shivel relates that the most exciting experience he had at the camp as a young country boy was when Boss Crump of Memphis came with his escort of troopers and motorcycle police for a day of fishing. Jim says that after the Cumberland overflowed, river fish could be caught. Spoonbill cats tow and three-feet long were caught back of the chicken wire fence across the spillway.

"Indian Lake, like many other things, no longer exists since Old Hickory Dam has been built. But, Indian Lake will always be remembered as a 'fisherman's dream.'"

(SMITH, Continued from Page 1)

It's hard to find a true measure of the man because he didn't write much about his personal life. In 1976, the late Walter Durham of Gallatin, who was also Tennessee's state historian, wrote Daniel Smith's biography, *Daniel Smith Frontier Statesman*. He lamented that Smith "left enough material to be tantalizing but not enough to portray him without splices, patches and paste." Durham noted "While much of his [Smith's] official life was made a part of the public record, little information concerning his private life has been preserved."

This story, focusing on Smith's early life and work as a surveyor, is the first of a series about the man and his career. Most people don't know that this Hendersonvillian (okay, there was no town by that name then, but Smith did live on what is now Hendersonville's Indian Lake peninsula) actually named the state of Tennessee.

They don't realize that he was likely the most respected pioneer surveyor in this part of the new nation, mapping out Tennessee's borders, powering through the wilderness, trudging over mountains and across rivers with his tools, his rifles and knives.

But people in that period of history understood that surveying was not a profession for the faint of heart or ignorant men. It was common knowledge that Smith's most respected—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Albert Gallatin and others—were all notable surveyors. In fact, six out of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence were surveyors.

"Smith was known for unimpeachable integrity," said Gallatin businessman and author Jack Masters, who studied and placed copies of Smith's grants in many of the books he co-authored with Puryear. He knows the caliber of Smith's work and the respect he earned.

At the age of 25, Smith had already gained a reputation for his work. "Daniel Smith studied Surveying in his early life and was appointed Deputy Surveyor of Augusta County Virginia in 1773," said Masters. "He was appointed in 1779, along with Dr. Thomas Walker to survey the line between Virginia and North Carolina which would later become the Kentucky and Tennessee line. That line was accepted by Tennessee as the northern boundary upon statehood in 1779, however, Kentucky disputed the boundary for years before final acceptance in 1820.

"Upon establishment of Davidson County North Carolina, he was elected County Surveyor. He hired the District Surveyors and developed the framework for

surveying and distributing the lands in the region. He assigned for surveying the warrants to many other surveyors including: Anthony Bledsoe, John Buchanan, James Sanders, Thomas Molloy, James Mulherin and Robert Weakley," Masters continued.

"The men were very diligent in defining their surveys and took obvious pride in efforts to identify streams, buffalo paths, traces and other various physical features of the lands. It was not uncommon, however, for corrections to be made on the surveys by other District Surveyors when reviewed by Daniel Smith. Smith made corrections as he deemed necessary for correct interpretation.

"However good the various surveyors were, Daniel Smith stood out as the best. His penmanship and ability to produce accurate surveyor sketches or plats was without a doubt superior to most all of the other surveyors," said Masters.

"Smith surveyed several parts of Sumner County, including his land on Drakes Creek on the Indian Lake peninsula.

"He chose Drakes Creek for placement of his 2,500 tract awarded for his services in laying off the Continental line of the state. Along with the 640 acres awarded for his preemption, the total of 3,140 acres was surveyed by him and his son-in-law, James Sanders in early 1784," Masters noted. "Smith chose to buy and hold land rather than turn it for quick profit as did many others during this period of time. This point is obvious by looking at the relatively few land transactions then made," said Masters, pointing out that Smith kept his accumulated holdings of prime land for himself and his heirs for many years.

Daniel's Early Years

Daniel Smith and a twin sister named Sarah were born on Oct. 17, 1748, to Henry and Sarah Crosby Smith of Stafford County Virginia, both first generation English American. Baby Sarah survived barely long enough to be baptized, but Daniel thrived. Daniel's family was large, normal for the time. He had six (living) older siblings and four younger. Durham wrote about the family, "Living was done in the style of country life in England, although usually on a much reduced scale. Daniel's family not only had life's necessities, but many of the luxuries afforded by the planter-slave culture."

Sometime in his youth, Daniel was sent to Baltimore for some schooling, but no details have been found about that. It was mentioned by Daniels' only son George a hundred years after the fact, along with the comment that most of the

(See SMITH, Page 11)

(SMITH, Continued From Page 10)

learning Daniel did there was from “private application.”

We do know that before 1768, Daniel went to live with the family of Dr. Thomas Walker at his home in Castle Hill, Virginia. He was sent to study “psychic” or medicine and also to tutor Walker’s son, Francis. Papers left by Walker, a popular and well respected physician, surveyor and businessman, indicate that Daniel earned his room and board by tutoring. “But,” wrote Durham, “at the same time, Daniel took up surveying and also assisted the doctor in attending to his extensive mercantile transactions. When his protege showed little interest in entering the medical profession, Dr. Walker guided Daniel’s learning in fields other than ‘physic.’ Walker was competent to have trained him in surveying, mathematics, keeping accounts and the law...

“As a young man, Daniel Smith had a sober head and a mind for business. Dr. Walker recognized these qualities and would later see that Smith used them well for the Loyal Company in the sales and surveying of its Southwest Virginia Claims,” Durham wrote. The Loyal Company of Virginia, which existed from 1749-1776, was a land speculation company, approved by the Virginia House of Burgesses.

“By his twentieth year, Daniel Smith had begun to make land surveys for the public. A surviving survey book in his own handwriting bears entries made as early as May 8, 1770, and spans the years 1770-’73, the last entry dated Nov. 6, 1773. Most of the lands listed were located in Albemarle County [Virginia]. The journal descriptions indicate that most of the surveys were the original or first surveys,” wrote Durham.

It was customary for the surveyor to use two sworn chain carriers to mark a tract. Smith’s chain carriers were often the owners of property adjacent to that surveyed, which ensured that everyone connected with the property was satisfied that a fair survey had been conducted. His survey book lists the names.

In 1771, Smith listed 15 surveys, the largest of which included almost 18,000 acres. In 1772, he recorded 58 surveys starting in mid February.

“In his early field work, Smith became acquainted with large numbers of settlers in Albemarle County. Had he been more interested in politics at this time, he might have been a formidable candidate for local public office simply by marshalling the voting power of those for whom and with whom he had worked on surveys!” wrote Durham.

In 1773, he continued to churn out surveys until late April and was by then familiar with landmarks such as Jameson’s Mountain, Rock Creek, Pasture Fence Mountain, etc.—all recorded in his survey book. His record book stopped at April 24 and didn’t pick up again until June 24—no surveys.

Smith Marries Then Back to Work Again

In that interval, Smith courted and married 17-year-old Sarah Michie, a Walker family friend, on June 20. He took a three-day honeymoon then hit the road again. Five days after his wedding, Smith surveyed a parcel of land sold by Sarah’s relative, Robert (a brother? cousin? uncle?). Smith recorded little work for the rest of the summer then embarked on a series of assignments from September 23 to November 6, which was when he wrote his last entry into his 1773 survey book.

By that time, Daniel and his teenage bride had decided to move to the upper Clinch River in Fincastle County, where Daniel would work for Walker. Durham wrote, “Smith would not only become an agent for Dr. Walker who already had lands there, but would also become a surveyor for the Loyal Land Company, in which Walker was a principal partner. Walker owned the Wolf Hills tracts of approximately 9,000 acres at the site of present Abingdon, Va. The Loyal Company had title rights to 800,000 acres anywhere they might be entered west of the Blue Ridge. The company was charged with surveying this land within four years.

“Opening the territory west of the Alleghenies to surveys was one of the colony’s first official responses to the renewed interest in westward expansion prompted by the signing of the treaties of Fort Stanwix, New York, and hard Labor, South Carolina in 1768.” Durham wrote.

“Smith was enchanted by the West,” Durham added. “As a student and associate of Dr. Walker, he had been plied with stories of exploration and discovery in the Southwest where 20 years earlier Walker, following the southwestern course of the valleys of Virginia, had discovered the Cumberland Gap. The Gap, an east west pass in the rugged Cumberland Mountains, would become a familiar landmark to Smith and the gateway to the West for the middle colonies in the period 1770-1800.”

Sumner County Historical Society

Post Office Box 1871
Gallatin, TN 37066

To: