Days Of Old Sumner County

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Sumner County Historical Society

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Let's Fix This:
1923 Fairvue Wedding

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Editor's Note: In the story, "Home Wedding at Fairvue in 1923" printed on page one in the November issue of this publication, I inadvertently left out the last two lines of the story, which identified its authors. The missing lines were: the "Opening paragraph written by Rebecca Johnson Lunsford, niece of Mr. Carroll Johnson, the groom. Article researched and compiled by Kay D. Hurt, Archivist." I apologize for the omission and thank Rebecca Lunsford and Kay Hurt for their work. Here is their story again:

Home Wedding at Fairvue in 1923

The big day is fast approaching, and preparations are underway. The mirrors are polished; floors are mopped and waxed. All the silver is shining. Linens are washed and pressed. All the table settings are sparkling and ready to be placed on various tables. Pristine white tapers rest in silver candelabra backed by bowers of white chrysanthemums in the drawing rooms.

Fairview [now Fairvue] is excited about the upcoming nuptials of Miss Mary Jane Franklin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Joseph Franklin, and Mr. Carroll Johnson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Johnson, all of Gallatin.

The big day has arrived—November 2, 1923.

The following article is taken from the *Sumner County News*., Nov. 8, 1923:

Johnson-Franklin

A home wedding of beautiful appointment was that of Miss Mary Jane Franklin and Mr. Carroll Johnson, which was solemnized

(See WEDDING, Page 11)

Stewart Made His Family Rich

By Forrest Anderson

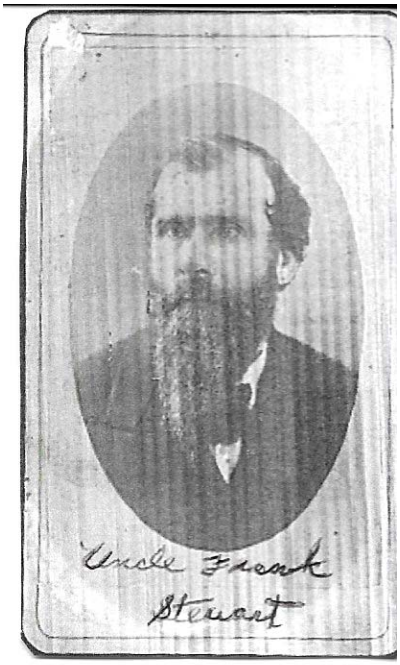
Editor's Notes: In this story, Mr. Anderson provides a newspaper account of Frances Marion Winn's lucky inheritance and unravels the mystery of his great grandmother Amanda's wealth. Both are tied to Frank Stewart, Amanda's half brother. He was one of the young Sumner County men who made his way to fame and fortune in California during the days of the California's gold rush. Years later—out of the blue—he bequeathed a fortune to his Sumner County relatives. First, below, is an interview of one heir, carpenter Frances Marion Winn:

Fortune's Favorite: A Young Carpenter Who Gets $12,500

Romantic Life of a Tennessee Boy Who Went to California Long Ago

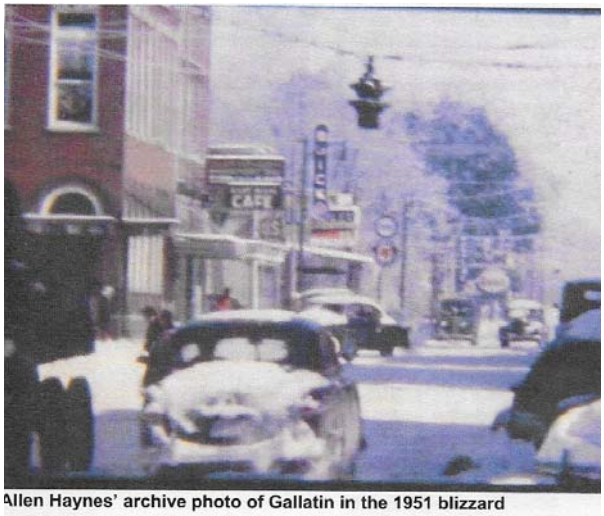
"Correspondence of *The American*, Carthage, July 16 - The mystic wheel of fortune sometimes turns up in the broad sunlight and brings upon its shining rim trophies to those who are least expecting it. We have frequent instances in newspaper literature of fabulous amounts poured out in the lap of fortunate ones by the lucky lottery ticket and the like, but what we have here is a genuine case right in our midst in which the victim of good fortune gets a handsome sum and no discount.

"At work on the large livery stable being erected here by Day and Allen, honestly and modestly plying his plane, is Mr. Francis Marion Winn of Hartsville, a carpenter of several years experience. One sees his quiet, unassuming appearance as he works from early morn till the sun takes its rest in the evening in the middle of sultry July. [You] could hardly be led to believe that a lawsuit involving half a million dollars had recently been decided in California, in which he is to be the happy possessor of $12,500 in cool cash. But such is the case.



"Two years since, Frank Stewart died in Stockton, California, leaving a wife and no children. Previous to his death, he had made his will, disposing of his entire estate, amounting to about $470,000. To an adopted daughter whom he had raised, he bequeathed $30,000; to a charitable institution he bequeathed $5,000 and some other donations… about $50,000. His indebtedness, amounting to about $90,000, he ordered to be paid, which together with other expenses, including $9,000 for a vault, left otherwise to be distributed, the sum of $300,000. This he ordered to be given, one-half to his widow and the other half to be divided equally among his four brothers and sisters, which gives to the latter each $37,500.

(See STEWART, Page 10)



Allen Haynes' archive photo of Gallatin in the 1951 blizzard

Recall the Blizzard of '51?

By Bonnie Martin

There is a saying in Tennessee: "If you don't like the weather, wait an hour." Tennessee is not a state famous for cold winter weather. Few Sumner Countians have laced up a pair of skates or careened down a snowy slope on a Flexible Flyer, but ask them about the Great Blizzard of 1951 and a visible shiver will be detected.

January 1951 began uneventfully: Christmas was over, children were back in school and spring's arrival was anticipated. A year before—Feb. 8, 1950—the temperature was 62 degrees: crocus were flowering, hawthorn trees were a mass of blooms and peach buds were almost open.

January 1951 was a hopeful time for Sumner County. Employment was plentiful at General Shoe Corporation. A 1951 Studebaker was a "gas mileage champion," and a 1951 Ford had something new called "Fordomatic Drive". Kroger Grocery advertised potatoes at $1.29 for a 50 lb. bag; picnic hams were 39 cents a lb. and bread 15 cents a loaf. The Palace Theater ran "Snow Dog" and "Broken Arrow" with James Stewart from January 28 to the 30th, and The Roxy Theater responded with "The Mad Ghoul (Frankenstein was a Sissy!)" and "The Glass Menagerie" with Kirk Douglas. Life in tranquil Sumner County was looking up. Then the snow began to fall.

Jan. 28, 1951, recorded a balmy 59 degrees with rain. On Jan. 29, a cold front swept over the area and afternoon temperatures fell. A wintery mix of snow and sleet began. By evening 1.6 inches of snow had fallen; the temperature was 31 degrees with a north wind of 15 miles per hour.

On Feb.1, an additional 5.2 inches of snow and freezing rain fell on Sumner County, and by the end of the day 11 inches of snow and ice covered the county.

On Feb. 2, the temperature was -15 degrees, a record that stood until 1985. Falling limbs and trees caused widespread damage to electric and telephone lines, and roads were impassible for repair crews. Business was at a stand still. General Shoe Corporation shut down, and mail was undeliverable.

Without electricity most Sumner County residents were without heat or light. The fortunate few with wood stoves huddled around them, their front side scorching, their back side freezing.

Pipes froze and running water stopped. Resourceful Sumner Countians broke off the massive icicles and melted them for water. Food supplies and fire wood grew scarce. One newspaper article told of an ingenious cooking method involving a flaming can of Johnson's Wax.

Allen Haynes was eight that winter and remembers that Great Grandmother Sally Ann Forbes passed away during the storm. Impassible roads kept the funeral home snow bound but Great Grandmother remained comfortable in his Grandparent's icy house for the duration of the storm. Allen's family melted four foot icicles for wash water, and a neighbor's well supplied drinking water.

Outdoor conditions were bitter cold, and the continuous rifle crack of trees and branches snapping under the weight of ice echoed through out Sumner County.

Hendersonville resident Roy Butler's recall of life in his family's concrete block house reminded him of living inside a freezer.

Kay Hurt's family then living in Hendersonville remained warm with an oil stove, but water had to be carried from the creek in chunks of ice.

Bill Puryear slid through the streets of Gallatin on his sled and went home to Mother's hot chocolate and the warm coal furnace his Father kept stoked. School was closed for two weeks, and with time on their hands Bill and friends decided to try ice fishing. While walking on the frozen creek, the ice suddenly broke, plunging them into the icy depths. However, the water being only 18 inches deep did little harm except for wet, cold feet.

James Johnson's family lived the rural life in the county with a wood stove and one electric light bulb. When the light went out, they didn't notice much difference.

Brother Leroy and buddies thought it was a perfect time to joy ride the back roads. When inevitably the car slid off the road, it was no problem. Boys piled out, picked the car up and put it back on the road.

For those younger than 12, it was a glorious adventure: candle light and story telling around the fireplace with parents reassuringly beside them. For the adults, the dark and bitter cold, snow and isolation pressing in around them must have been unnerving.

The thaw finally came Feb. 5, and those who could get out descended on Gallatin for supplies. The stores did a booming business, and the sidewalks were crowded with people greeting their neighbors and retelling their stories of the ordeal. It took weeks to fully restore services to Sumner County; however, spring did arrive and life returned to normal.

Dr. James Franklin: Ledgers Show 19th Century Remedies

Sumner County Archives recently acquired the 1866-1871 ledgers of Dr. James Franklin (b.1816, d.1896) of Gallatin. He was the son of James Franklin, Jr. and Prudence McKain and the grandson of James and Mary Lauderdale Franklin.

Grandfather James, a Longhunter, was one of the "immortal seventy," original settlers of the Mid Cumberland settlement. He and Mary arrived in Sumner County in the 1780s, and according to Ken Thomson, president of Sumner County Historical Society and a Franklin descendant, had 10 children: John, James, Jr.; Mary Jane, Margaret, Annie, Isaac, Sarah, William and Frances.

Dr. Franklin's ledgers, smelly from surviving a house fire and absorbing smoke, are fragile and require gentle handling, according to Julie Kincheloe, Sumner County Archive clerk. "The entries are handwritten and not easy to read," she said. "Though they do not contain biographical or factual information about the doctor, they provide interesting information about what he did and what he prescribed for patients, as well as who they were and how much they paid him. Payments are recorded--cash for the most part—but people also paid on credit and, occasionally, with farm animals and corn."

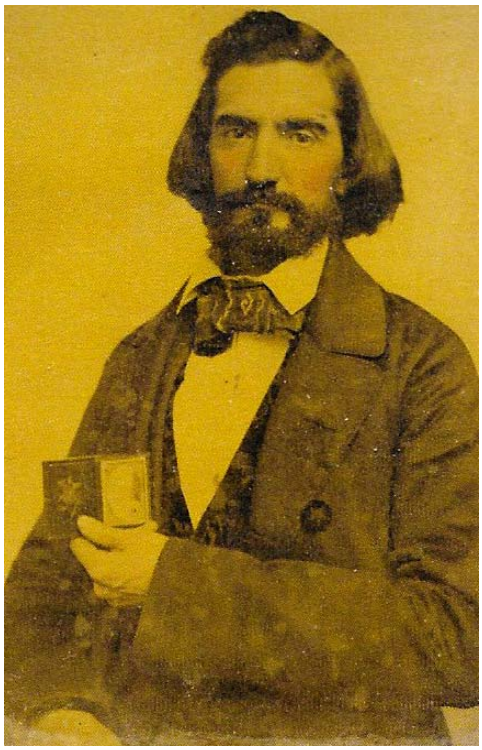
She discovered that Franklin treated black and white patients alike. He treated everyone who needed him.

"Treatment payments ranged from $2 to $3 to $4 and up to about $10 for a one-time visit, depending on the complexity of the treatment or disease," she said.

Franklin apparently jotted down a few reminders in the ledger. For example, he wrote, "I have used Felow's Syrup of Hypophosphites in cases of tuberculosis with gratifying results." He also prescribed tobacco in some instances, but how or why he thought tobacco would be a good remedy remains a mystery.

Dr. Franklin was "a man of letters." He received his secondary education through private tutors. Though the second Seminole War in 1836 briefly interrupted his education, by 1838 he had graduated from Transylvania University at Lexington, Ky. It was the third largest medical school in the United States and the oldest college west of the Allegheny Mountains. It was always his dream to become a physician, a dream shared by his older brother John and several first cousins.

In college, Franklin and other medical students researched diseases and cures, dissecting and studying cadavers, a radical practice in that period of American history. They secured the bodies from grave diggers, whom they paid to bring them the corpses. Records show that his parents spent $1,235 for his college education.



Dr. James Franklin

Dr. Franklin married a near neighbor, Mariah Louisa Cage, the daughter of Jesse Cage, a banker and planter, who also bred race horses. They married five months after his college graduation and eventually had six children.

Though medicine was his primary focus, Franklin was always interested in politics. He was a staunch and lifelong Democrat.

However, at one point, he considered joining a new political party, called the Know Nothing party and/or movement, which rose briefly in the mid 1850s. Its name came from the fact that party members were advised to reply, "I know nothing," if asked to discuss specific policies espoused by the group. Supporters of the Know Nothing party believed that foreign groups were organizing to subvert America's traditional political and religious beliefs. Many people, particularly in the North, feared that Catholic priests and bishops were conspiring to control a large voting bloc.

When Franklin discovered that the Know Nothing party had declared a mandate of "none but Protestant American-born citizens shall rule America," he decided that the party was "too prescriptive and intolerant" for him. He remained a Democrat.

Dr. Franklin lived to be 80 years old, dying in 1896 after a full and interesting life.

Neophogen Male and Female College

Co-Ed College Comes Early to Sumner County

By Beverly Bragg, President of Trousdale Place Foundation, Inc.

In 1873, a co-ed college, known as Neophogen Male and Female College, opened in Cross Plains, Tenn. and later in Gallatin by educator John M. Walton. Labeled by former Sumner County historian Walter T. Durham as Walton's "dream school," Neophogen was one of the first colleges in the South to implement coeducation.

A Student Becomes an Educator

John M. Walton, son of Dr. Thomas J. and Martha Bartlett Walton of Cross Plains, was born May 7, 1832. When he was 14, Walton enrolled at Franklin College in Nashville, Tenn., studied there for two years, then moved on to Bethany College in Virginia for three additional years of education. Afterwards, he studied law at the Law School of Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tenn. and graduated in 1859.

In 1861, as The Civil War loomed on the horizon, Walton enlisted in the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry and subsequently participated in the Battle of Shiloh. His health, however, prevented him from remaining in the military and as a result, he settled down in Cross Plains and in 1866, began his teaching career.

From Cross Plains to Gallatin

In 1874, a fire destroyed Neophogen (see clipping on next page). Walton moved the school to Gallatin, where he leased land and buildings from the Howard Lodge to house students. The coeducation Walton promoted in the classroom and on campus, however, did not apply to students' living quarters. Thus, the coeds were assigned to the dormitory area of the old Howard College's main building, and the male students took up residence a city block away, at 332 East Main Street, the former home of Mr. and Mrs. John Garrott of Gallatin, known today as historic Stonewall.

Although these facilities were once home to Howard Female Institute, Walton made a conscious decision not to resurrect the Howard name. Instead, he continued to use the name Neophogen, as he had in Cross Plains. However, this caused confusion in the community, and in 1878 when D.C. Beers published a comprehensive map of Sumner County the map-maker listed the property at 332 East Main Street as Howard Male College instead of Neophogen. According to Durham, the map-maker and many living in Gallatin were familiar with the name Howard, but found the name Neophogen difficult to pronounce. Durham goes on to state that Neophogen, when translated, means "new-light-producing," and coeducation appears to have been the new light Walton sought to ignite.

New-Light-Producing Education

Most of the Gallatin newspaper files from the Neophogen era (1874 – 1878) were destroyed by fire, thus it is difficult to piece together a weekly account of the college's happenings. Still, a few clippings found tucked away in scrapbooks and various write-ups from the school's catalogs survive (published in 1875 and 1877) and provide enthusiastic commentary regarding activities at the school.

One such clipping from the Gallatin *Examiner*, dated May 7, 1875, gives a glowing report of the crowning of the May queen: "the students of Neophogen College had a

delightful May festival last Friday night at the college Building . . . the ceremony was performed in beautiful style [and the Queen] was most royally attired, and well became her regal position, bearing herself with great self-possession and dignity."

In June of that same year, 9-year-old Katie Trousdale, granddaughter of former Tennessee Governor William Trousdale, is listed as a musical performer on Neophogen's program for their closing ceremonies. Her father, Charles Trousdale, noted on his program that this was Katie's first public performance.

Comparably, through newspaper articles, school programs, and catalog advertisements, the atmosphere of Walton's school was described as "harmonious," the teachers he employed as distinguished, and his students as talented, industrious, and disciplined. Indeed, Walton was so passionate regarding the relationship between discipline and new-light-producing education that he invited "anyone wanting light in the highest order of discipline" to stop by the Neophogen's study halls and recitation rooms and observe the process in person.

Two Humorists Visit Gallatin

Another medium employed by Walton to attract enrollment was the monthly school magazine, *The College Pen*, which printed scientific, historical, and romantic articles. Walter Durham goes so far to say of the magazine: "probably the most outstanding service rendered by the *Pen* was providing a job as a typesetter for a young Kentucky newspaper editor whose work paid his way through school at Neophogen. The ambitious young man was Opie Read (left), later to become one of the most prolific writers on the American scene."

Read was born in Nashville and moved to Gallatin as a child. He was 21 when he became editor of the weekly newspaper *The Patriot*, published in Franklin, Ky. In 1874 or 1875, he left the *Patriot* and enrolled at Neophogen.

Read, however, is not the only celebrated author associated with Neophogen. In his book, *Mark Twain and I,* Read remembers when Walton brought Mark Twain to the school to lecture the students. Prior to Twain's arrival, Walton told the students they would have an opportunity to visit with the writer after his lecture but cautioned them that Twain was not a fan of tobacco. Read recalls: "when the thrilling talk had been given, the elder students invited Mark Twain into a small room [and] soon [after] we began lighting our pipes. After a few moments when some of us began to cough, Mark Twain inquired, 'are you fellows smoking sawdust? Wait a minute, I think I have some regular tobacco.'" Read states Twain took a pipe from his pocket, filled it with tobacco, and began to smoke. Later, writes Read, "when we had coughed our way out of the room, we saw Mark Twain silently laughing, as he walked beneath the trees."

Walton Leaves Gallatin, Goes Back to Cross Plains

Despite impressive lectures, high enrollment rates, multiple classes to select from, and well-trained faculty, Walton was unable to raise enough money to pay his lease and fund his ambitious plans for the school, and in 1878, he left Gallatin and returned Neophogen College to Cross Plains.

After several successful years, Walton had a disagreement with his business partners and was forced to leave the school. After his departure, the school was renamed Cross Plains Normal College. Walton continued to live in the community and managed a local private school for the remainder of his life.

Below is a clipping about the fire at Neophogen in Cross Plains with words from irate citizens after Walton moved the college to Gallatin.

Published by the *Nashville Union and American*

The People of Cross Planes Indignant after Removal to Gallatin

Cross Plains, Tenn., Oct 5, 1874--On behalf of the people of this community, we desire to ask you to publish the following statement: "On the night of the 27th of May, at 1 o'clock, 147 students and the professors of Neophogen College, at this place, were turned out by the burning of the College. Barefooted and in their night clothing, over 40 young ladies were hurried from the burning building, losing everything. The remainder, young gentlemen were also turned out houseless and homeless. In our great calamity, we knew not what to do. While the flames were still raging, every citizen of the town came forward to our relief. Every lady and gentleman was taken to a hospitable home, and cared for as a member of the family. On the following morning, every merchant in the town except one opened his doors and told each student to furnish himself with what he needed. The young ladies were supplied with what they required. All that a noble, liberal-hearted, generous people could do was done for the inmates of Neophogen College.

When the immediate necessities of all had been met, the people supplied as either means to reach our several homes. Dr. Taylor nobly furnished over $400. After doing all of this, the citizens of this community, a few days after the fire, convened in an enthusiastic assembly and proposed to rebuild the college. President J.M. Walton heartily approved of the proposition and wrote his terms. In a few days, over $12,000 was raised, and the work on the new college commenced. Every exertion was made by the workmen and building committees for the early completion of the new college, and every one was rejoicing at the thought of a happy reunion of students from 13 different states. But, alas, after all the kindness, unparalleled generosity and noble sacrifice on the part of the people of this enterprising village, President John M. Walton quietly went to Gallatin and made an arrangement for the removal of his school to that place. Such a course on his part naturally excites the indignation of the citizens of
CROSS PLAINS"

An Artist Rendering of a Methodist Camp Meeting

Tennessee Camp Meetings Started Here in 1800

By Al Dittes

"John McGee, a Methodist minister, held the first known Tennessee camp meeting at Drakes Creek, Sumner County, in August 1800, and revivalism quickly spread throughout the fall of 1800 and 1801," according to the *Tennessee Encyclopedia.*

Little is known about the actual event, but this gathering turned out to be an important step forward in bringing the Gospel to a hardscrabble frontier, and the concept immediately caught on. Later on that summer, several Methodist and Presbyterian clergymen conducted a sacramental camp meeting in Sumner County on the ridge northwest of Gallatin near the Robertson County line. In his book, Cross and Flame, *Two Centuries of United Methodism in Middle Tennessee*, John Abernathy Smith said that the event was so successful that they organized a larger camp meeting at Blythe's Big Spring close to the Cumberland River attracting several prominent ministers.

These were not the first actual camp meetings in this region. "Historians disagree on the exact origins of the camp meeting, but most suggest that James McGready led the first revival recognizable as a camp meeting in July 1800 at Gasper River in Logan County, Kentucky," according to this same source. "Brothers William and John McGee attended one of McGready's early camp meetings and brought the revival spirit to Tennessee. This and similar meetings were followed by the best known camp meeting in August 1801 at Cane Ridge in Bourbon County, Kentucky. Led by Barton Stone this meeting boasted an attendance estimated at 10 to 30 thousand people."

The outdoor setting, where participants camped for the duration of the meeting (usually four days), provided the most distinguishing characteristic of the camp meetings. Most services took place in a "brush arbor," a cleared area surrounded by trees with overhanging limbs that formed a shelter. Fixed structures later replaced the brush arbors.

Camp meeting normally occurred in the late summer and provided a break from the hard work routines of farm life. Thus, the gatherings became as much a social event as a spiritual one and provided a meeting place for old friends and new ones, a respite from work, and an opportunity to find suitable marriage partners. An atmosphere of recreation and spiritual renewal permeated the revivals. It is not surprising that camp meetings were marked by extreme emotional and physical "exercises," with participants shouting, "jerking," "barking," falling down, or dancing about in spiritual ecstasy. Lorenzo Dow, a famous itinerant frontier evangelist, described the jerking exercises he witnessed while preaching at Knoxville. Dow noted that these spiritual exercises affected men and women of various ages, races and economic levels.

The camp meeting movement grew out of the great migration of people from the eastern seaboard following the War of Independence. The British government had outlawed settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains after driving the French out of North America in 1763. Nevertheless, some individuals crossed the mountains and liked what they saw.

Long Hunters would spend much of a year alone in the wilderness and return home reporting rich farming and hunting lands. Other settlers crossed the mountains into East Tennessee and actually bought land from the Indians. They found a need for a government to protect themselves from hostile Indians and renegade whites and religion to make their lives sound and wholesome. “There was a great moral laxity,” state Marvin Kincheloe and Robert L. Hilten in their book *Bishop Asbury Comes to Holston*. “War and frontier life tended to harden and brutalize people.”

Among the religious leaders recognizing this need, perhaps the most prominent and best prepared was Bishop Francis Asbury. He had joined the great revival of John Wesley in England and from that religious leader learned the importance of following up conversions with organization. Wesley commissioned him to reproduce this successful evangelistic model in the North American English colonies in 1771.

“Asbury saw the West as a promising mission, appointed Odgen and James Haw to minister and then sent others,” according to John Abernathy Smith in his book *Cross and Flame, Two Centuries of United Methodism in Middle Tennessee.*

In the spring of 1787, Bishop Asbury appointed Benjamin Ogden to minister to settlers in the Cumberland settlements, the beginnings of United Methodism in Middle Tennessee, but progress was slow.

Ogden spent a year in the Methodist ministry and at the end reported 63 Methodists on the Cumberland circuit—barely one percent of the population, but the religious work continued. James Haw and Peter Massey began to organize Methodist societies in Middle Tennessee, one being in 1789 on Drakes Creek near Saundersville. Another Methodist Society was organized at Cage’s Bend in 1791 or 1792. (It now operates as the Saundersville and Rehoboth United Methodist Churches.)

Henry Birchett was said to have preached at Edwards’ School more than two miles northwest of Gallatin. “Often they took to the fields and grove as Birchett did when his congregation overflowed the schoolhouse,” commented John Abernathy Smith. Presbyterians started Shiloh Church near Gallatin in 1793, calling William McGee of North Carolina as pastor. McGee transferred to Beech Church on Long Hollow Pike near Goodlettsville. According to Smith, the congregation met there until the mid-20th century, changed locations three times then sold their facility to the Anglican Church. The Baptists started a church along Station Camp Creek, which is still in operation. Hubbard Saunders, a former itinerant, settled near the Sumner community that bears his name. John Sewell located in Cage’s Bend in 1797 or 1798.

And Bishop Asbury kept pressing on, applying the Methodist organizational system to isolated settlers in places like Sumner County. He sent preachers to new territories to see if circuits could be established. A preacher would seek to find a dozen places to preach, and preaching six days a week make a circuit every two weeks. When preachers were appointed in pairs, as they usually were, they would set up twice as many preaching places and follow each other in two-week intervals. After 1784, when two or more circuits were developed, an ordained elder was sent to supervise the work and provide communion and other ordinances.

Out of this effort to reach isolated families came large-group gatherings, such as the 1800 Drakes Creek camp meeting, bringing civilization and religious growth. While the original circuit riders would minister to families in their homes, an increasing population enabled the people to congregate in large groups, meeting their social as well as religious needs. The Methodists and Presbyterians worked together in these revivals, circuit riding and camp meetings, at one point seeming almost to form a joint denomination.

Asbury had been coming to East Tennessee since 1788 and preached his first sermon in Middle Tennessee in 1800. At Beech Church after the first camp meeting, a thousand-person audience listened to him, and he heard reports of at least a thousand people attending the day before. Not wanting to preside over just an emotional spectacle, he had been wary of camp meetings, but seeing them in action changed his attitude.

He wrote in his journal, “Yesterday, and especially during the night, were witnessed scenes of deep interest. In the intervals between preaching, the people refreshed themselves and returned…The stand was in the open air, embosomed in a wood of lofty beech trees…Fires blazing here and there dispelled the darkness and the shouts of redeemed captives, and the cries of precious souls struggling into life, broke the silence of midnight…We suppose that there were at least 30 souls converted at this meeting.”

Asbury also preached at Richard Strother’s meeting house near Cottontown and presided over the first annual conference of the Methodist Church in Middle Tennessee Oct. 2, 1802. The Cumberland Presbyterians formed a synod in 1813, and Bishops Asbury and William McKendree organized the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church at Fountain Head in Sumner County in 1812.

Frances ‘Fannie’ Peyton Lived a Family Life

By: Susan W. “Sue” Burgess
Vice President, Trousdale Place Foundation, Inc.

Editor’s Note: This is the final part in a story about Gallatin’s Frances “Fannie” Trousdale Peyton, who was born July 19, 1843, and died at age 71 on March 21, 1914.

Fannie Peyton’s obituary in the *Nashville Banner* noted that she “lived a quiet, unostentatious life, but was recognized as an unusually high type of Southern womanhood and she was widely esteemed…” It is a apt description. Her life revolved around family. While her father, husband, brother and sons ventured to far distant places, she stayed home—steadfast within the family circle—spending most of her time in Gallatin to keep the home fires burning.

Fannie grew up in the close-knit and prominent Trousdale family, idolizing her father, Gov. William Trousdale, and devoted to her mother Mary. In her childhood, Fannie watched as Mary, an educated lady, took over family affairs when William traveled. Mary managed the family finances, the house, their farm and its improvements, the children’s education, social activities and the family’s enslaved servants.

Fannie was the youngest of the Trousdale children, a pretty girl with even features and dark hair like her sisters. As a teenager, she caught the eye of John Bell Peyton, the handsome son of old family friends, the Bailie Peyton family, also of Gallatin. Seven years older than Fannie, John Bell graduated from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tenn., and practiced law for five years in Memphis. At that point, he ended his practice, returned to Gallatin and worked at his father’s flour mill. Civil War broke out in April of 1861. Six months later, in October, John married 18-year-old Fannie. They moved to the Peyton’s Station Camp farm and lived there through the war. Like everyone else, they endured hardship and misery. They also endured the difficulty of divided loyalties.

By the war’s end, a pattern of informal separation existed between Fannie and John Bell. He spent much of his time working and living away from home at the mill outside of Gallatin, presumably trying to keep the business afloat. The mill failed anyway, and John Bell wrote in a 1872 letter to Fannie’s brother, Charles “Cap,” Trousdale that the mill would be sold to pay its mortgage.

In 1865, the couple’s first son, William—called Willie or Will—was born. Other children were: Ophelia, whose birth date is unclear; Balie III, born in 1867; Mary, born in 1871; Julien, born in 1874; Louise, born in 1876; Frances, born in 1880 and Julius, born in 1886. Ophelia died in 1870, and Julien died in 1876, shortly before Louise was born.

Jumping Ahead in Time

Fannie’s latter years, from the 1880s to 1914, were all about the children. In ’89, son Will still worked for L&N Railroad in Nashville, lived at home and continued to get money from his rich uncle Cap Trousdale. Son Balie “Bale” completed his studies at Vanderbilt (paid for by Cap) and moved to Birmingham, Ala. Uncle Cap continued to give him money several times a year.

In April of ‘89, John Bell, apparently living in Florida, returned home “very enthusiastic about his Florida [fruit] groves,” according to a letter written to Bale from his Uncle Julius “nicknamed Munch” Trousdale. John Bell didn’t seem to think much of his hometown. In a letter to Bale that same month, he wrote “Gallatin is as ever dull….”

It is then no surprise that January of 1890 found John Bell in New Orleans in pursuit of a new business venture. (The rest of the family endured a major outbreak of tornadoes on March 27, 1890. Sumner County was hit from the northeast and survived a path of death and destruction.)

By the summer of 1891, John Bell was back in Florida in pursuit of a phosphate mining business. His son, Will, and daughter, Mary joined a group of friends at Forrest Springs, Allen County, Kentucky, and Fannie stayed at home with her youngest son, Julius, called Jule. Christmas arrived in Gallatin that year with all of the trimmings: turkeys, cakes, and parties! John Bell joined the family in Gallatin again.

Fannie wrote many letters to family and friends in 1892 and ‘93, including a missive to Bale, telling him that Cap was taking Katie (Cap’s daughter) to the world’s fair in Chicago. This event featured amazing new things: the Pledge of Allegiance, the ferris wheel, Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show, neon lights, Juicy Fruit gum, postcards, Hershey’s chocolate, and zippers!

1893 was also the year of “The Panic of 1893,” which created an economic depression that lasted almost five years. Cap provided financial help for the Peytons and Trousdales as well as other Gallatin families.

Even with the depression, the days passed by as they always had in small town Gallatin with both planned and impromptu entertainment. Will Peyton and his cousin, Katie, attended parties, including an event at Fairvue, Charles Reed’s world-class estate, the previous home of the late Isaac Franklin and Adelicia Hayes Acklen Cheatham.

Tennessee’s Centennial

1896 was a busy year for all of Tennessee as everyone prepared for another centennial event that would be held in 1897 – Tennessee’s Centennial Celebration of Statehood, 1796-1896. The Peyton family was scattered at that time. Fannie and Louise spent some weeks at Boiling Springs on holiday. Will was in Nashville and Bale in Gallatin. John Bell was in Florida, and Mary was in Gallatin with her younger siblings, Fannie, and Jule.

Tennessee’s Centennial Exposition opened on May 1, 1897. By that time, Will Peyton was a part of Nashville’s social scene, as well as Gallatin’s, and was one of the founding members of the Belle Meade Gun Club. He no

longer had a job in the Nashville office of the L&N Railroad, and his future with the railroad was unclear. He told his mother, “While I have not decided yet on anything definite, I am alright and you need have no uneasiness on my account.”

Bale Peyton returned to Birmingham, and Fannie, her daughters, and Jule remained at home in Gallatin. On October 1, 1897, the Centennial closed. Most of the buildings were put up for sale, and by Nov. 1, 1897, the plans to turn the Centennial grounds into a park were underway.

Also in October, Will left Tennessee to find fame, and fortune in the Klondike, Alaska. Fannie must have been crushed to see her oldest son following in the footsteps of his beloved Grandpa’s—both Peyton and Trousdale—who traveled the world, and his father who had yet to settle down in Gallatin. John Bell was once again in Florida. It was said that Fannie felt ill and depressed all that winter.

She was aggravated with John Bell for taking off to Florida again and said to Bale, “Your father wrote you two days since, and I presume gave you a detailed account of his phosphate prospects in Florida, poor fellow. I verily believe he is demented; he really thinks he will grasp his fortune in a few months…I wish I could have such feelings for a little while. I am equally as confident that I will go to the “Poor House” in the course of a year.”

In May of 1898, Will boarded the steamer *Jessie* for the final leg of his trip to Alaska. Late in the day on June 27, a bad storm overtook the ship, and on June 28, the *Jessie* wrecked and all aboard were reported lost. Fannie’s oldest son, the handsome William Trousdale Peyton, only 33, was gone.

The news did not reach Gallatin until August. On the day of Will’s death, John Bell was once again away from home. This time he was in Washington, D.C., in the failed pursuit of one of the government jobs (U.S. Army Paymaster) created by the Spanish American war. He was back at home in Gallatin on Aug. 8 when the fateful letter arrived with news that all aboard the *Jessie* had perished. For awhile, the family hoped that Will had survived; however, his death was soon verified.

The family pitched in to help Fannie. She was overwhelmed by condolence letters and asked Bale to reply for her. He wrote a sort of form letter, which Fannie approved and sent in response to each condolence letter. Cap, himself unwell, did what he could. He sent money to Bale in Memphis, probably for a trip home to visit his mother. He gave John Bell money, and paid for the winter’s supply of coal for their Gallatin home, Peyton Place.

Death was not done with the family. Fannie’s niece, Mary Ann Trousdale, died in August 1899 at age 18. In September 1899, Fannie’s brother, Julius, who had been ill for some time, also died. He was 54. Fannie’s brother, Cap, the mainstay of the family, died on Jan.14, 1900. He was 61.

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John Bell was once again unemployed when his brothers-in-law died, and by 1903 he was away from home for months at a time, traveling between Gallatin and Florida.

With the losses of her oldest son and both of her brothers, Fannie looked to Bale for comfort though he no longer lived in Gallatin. By 1904, Bale had become a successful stockbroker in Detroit. He had confided to his mother that he had visited a fortune teller and had been told that he had a very pronounced penchant for speculating. “I asked her if she meant I was a gambler? She said not necessarily, but rather in the lines of legitimate speculation and investment, and that I would some day have money, which would come to me through this source….” Bale said. He had had problems with gambling debt in the past.

In late summer of 1904, Fannie, Jule, and the girls left Gallatin to visit Bale in Detroit. At that time, he owned a Cadillac and a home with “many Yankee conveniences.”

John Bell stayed behind in Gallatin. His disgruntled letters to Fannie speak plainly of how dull and dead he still considered Gallatin. Family and friends noted behavior changes: he often forgot the time and didn’t arrive or leave when planned. These were probably the first signs of the dementia that plagued John Bell in his last years. In fact, he grew so unpredictable that Fannie despaired of him ever keeping a promise to anyone.

Fannie remained with Bale until the holidays, but her daughters came home earlier, and Jule moved to Charlottesville, Va., to attend the University of Virginia. It soon became known that Bale’s gambling problem had not gone away. He borrowed money from his mother and lost it. He sent a message to Fannie via his father rather than tell her himself. He sent his mother what little money he had left, promised to pay back what he had borrowed, moved to New York and from there to Galveston, Texas.

The next we hear of Bale is a news story announcing his marriage in Galveston to Gladys, the daughter of an old, prominent Michigan family. Bale invited Fannie to visit in 1909 when he lived in David City, Neb., and again in 1912 when he lived in Louisville, Ky.

In 1913, Fannie and her two unmarried daughters, Louise and Mary lived together at Peyton Place. John Bell lived in Florida, supposedly because the climate was better for his health but probably because it was easier for the family to disguise his mental illness. In November of 1913, Fannie’s health began to decline. She died on March 21, 1914, at the age of 71.

Fannie is remembered still by the United Daughters of the Confederacy for presenting a Southern flag that had been sewn by local ladies to the “Sumner Legion” under the command of Captain William B. Bate as they left Gallatin on May 3, 1861. Many of those Confederate soldiers fought and died at the Battle of Shiloh.

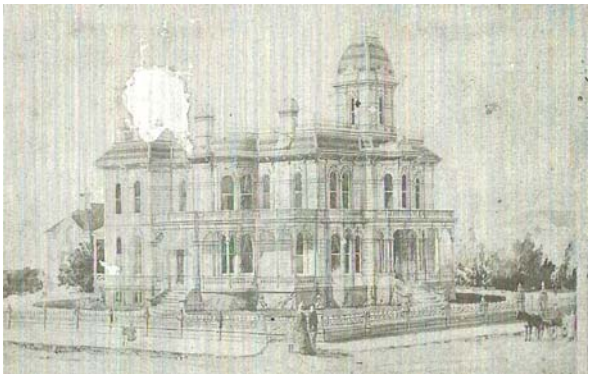
(STEWART, Continued from Page 1)

"Mr. Winn and one brother and sister, whose mother was one of the four brothers and sisters, takes her share, which divided gives to each the handsome little fortune of $12,500. The suit which has just been decided was an action by the widow contesting the will. Her attorneys insisted that by the laws of the State the widow took one-half of the entire estate and that the testator recognized this fact and gave her one half of the remainder which virtually gave her three-fourths of the entire estate and sought to have the will so construed. The court, however, decided in favor of the legatees. The widow has appealed to the Supreme Court of the State and the cause will be finally heard next November.

"Mr. Winn gives the following interesting account of his uncle's fortunes. At the time of his birth, his father was living on a small rocky hillside farm in Macon County, a few miles above Echo. He had two boys, Frank and his brother Marion and one daughter, Mr. Winn's mother. They subsequently moved to Sumner County to Scottsville Pike, where their mother married the second time. By this marriage, there were two children. The union did not prove to be as agreeable as it might, and the two boys were bound as apprentices to a saddler in Gallatin to learn the trade. This was in 1842, and the two boys remained there until 1847 when Frank left his employer and went to the Mexican war.

"After the war, he came back to Nashville and worked at his trade again. He only remained there a short time, however, when he went to Mississippi, where he worked for some time. Falling in with a number of the young bloods of the neighborhood who had the "Go West" spirit to fever heat, he and they embarked on their Western tour flushed with hope and love of adventure, and in due time arrived in Stockton, Calif., which was then but a small place.

"Stewart, having a small sum of money, rented a room in an old house and set up the saddlery business. In those days the profits in his line of business were immense, and Stewart coined money fast. In one single year he made $40,000. He continued at his trade for 15 or 20 years, and, being a good financier, he accumulated a large estate. He then went into grain speculation, in which he was engaged when he died.



Frank Stewart's mansion in Stockton, Calif.

"The latter event was in the following tragic manner: He and his partner were inspecting a car-load of grain, which was piled up at the depot. Two disconnected cars stood on the track, and Stewart attempted to pass through to the other side, but, just as he got between them an engine struck one of the coaches, and the two coming suddenly together he was caught, and one leg and thigh were smashed. He was given medical attention at once, but his leg had to be amputated, from which he died.

"That's a heap easier made than shoving a jack-plane", smilingly said Mr. Winn, as your correspondent turned to leave. [Nashville Daily American, Saturday Morning, July 18, 1885, Pg 8]"

More About Frank Stewart

The deceased, John Francis "Frank" Stewart, was born April 24, 1824, in what was then Sumner County to Alexander Stewart and his wife, Mary "Polly" Carr, who married on Feb. 1, 1821. Polly was born Aug. 24, 1801, the daughter of William and Elizabeth (Dobbins) Carr.

Frank had two full siblings: one older brother, William Marion Stewart, born Dec. 20, 1820, and Elizabeth Ann Stewart, born Feb. 11, 1826.

Estimated from his estate records, Alexander Stewart seems to have died around 1832. As a widow, Polly subsequently married John Crenshaw on May 14, 1834. She and her three Stewart children moved to Crenshaw's farm at the southwest intersection of Scottsville Pike and Desha Creek. This was John's third marriage.

John and Polly subsequently had five children, two of whom lived to adulthood. These two half-siblings to Frank were Amanda Brown Crenshaw, born on Dec. 11, 1838, and Louisa Victoria Crenshaw, born on Sept. 15, 1844. John Crenshaw died April 1, 1849, and it appears that William Marion Stewart, his step-son, continued to live on and operate the farm for his twice widowed mother. Marion, as he was known, married Mary Jane Harris, a daughter of Greenberry Brown Harris on Feb. 21, 1854.

Frank's sister, Elizabeth Ann Stewart, known as Bettie, married Richard Winn, Jr., on Nov. 6, 1845. The young carpenter interviewed in the above newspaper article, Francis Marion Winn, was one of her three children. Elizabeth died on Dec. 11, 1853.

After arriving in California, Frank initially set up in a rented room to pursue his saddlery trade. He married Bettie and the couple appear to have adopted a daughter named Bessie.

By February 1870 Frank had been elected Vice President of First National Bank of Stockton and by October mention was made in the local newspaper of a warehouse he owned containing 7,000 tons of grain. By April 1873 Frank was Trustee for the Pacific Paper Manufacturing Company and by May of 1875 was Director for Stockton Building and Loan Association. By January 1878, Frank had been appointed by the Governor to be a director for the

(See STEWART, Page 11)

(STEWART, Continued from Page 10)

Stockton Insane Asylum. By October 1881, Frank was on the Board of Directors for the Lamphear Gold Mining Company of California doing business in Stockton. In September 1882, the San Joaquin Veterans of the Mexican War elected Frank Stewart President for the coming year. In February 1883, the Triennial Conclave of the Knights Templar met to appoint Frank to a committee to "procure funds to meet the requirements of the Conclave."

The value of Frank's estate was estimated at $300,000—more than $8 million today. Half went to his widow. The remainder was to be divided among his four siblings, or $37,500 each [$37,500 has a current value of more than $1 million dollars]. Bettie's three children each received $12,500 as their portions.

Frank's half-sister, Amanda Brown Crenshaw, married James Overton Harris, and they had 12 children. Three died young. Overton died in 1883 and left Amanda a widow with nine children.

She should have been very poor, but her actions were not that of a poor woman. In 1889, Amanda rented a Bethpage farm and purchased for $10,000 cash a larger house and farm, Maple Cottage, on Long Hollow Pike. She raised her children here, remaining until the last one married. She sold the farm in 1909 to Byrd Anderson and moved to live the remainder of her life with her eldest son, Green B. Harris, on Liberty Lane, just off Red River Road, where she died May 17, 1924.

Author's Note: My mother, Margaret Anne (Harris) Anderson, lived in the house on Liberty Lane while Amanda, her great-grandmother, resided there. Byrd Anderson was my great-grandfather. Until discovering data regarding the death of Frank Stewart, I had often wondered how Amanda had managed to purchase the Long Hollow property, to raise and well educate her children, to travel as she did, to loan money to her own children and to others in the community.

The young man interviewed by the newspaper was known in Trousdale County as F. M. Winn, called Marion by his family and friends. He was married three times and was known to have had a large number of children. Some of those children travelled with him and his last wife to California in 1913 where they settled at Redlands. As a contractor, one of his last efforts in Hartsville was the present county courthouse built in 1905. He also owned a general hardware store in Hartsville.

(WEDDING, Continued from Page 1)

Friday afternoon at 5 o'clock at Fairview, the country home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. B.J. Franklin. The house was elaborately decorated with quantities of specimen chrysanthemums, lilies, ferns and palms. In the hall, autumn's foliage with chosen flowers were featured. Rev. R.G. Cawthorn officiated in the presence of a company of over 200 relatives and friends. The altar of ferns and lilies before which the bridal party were grouped was placed before the large double windows in the reception rooms. Candelabra holding white tapers shed a soft glow over the bridal scene, and the flowers and lights made a lovely effective background.

A program of nuptial music was given by Miss Annettee Draper of Gainesboro, pianist; Mrs. Florence Kennon of Cleveland, Tenn,, violinist; and Miss Robbie Neal of Watertown, vocalist.

The rainbow colors were featured in the wedding colors. Miss Elsie Shueman of Cincinnati, Ohio, who served as maid of honor, wore pale yellow georgette trimmed with gold lace. Miss Irene Sharp and Miss Katherine Hewgley, bridesmaids, were in pale green and lavender georgette trimmed with silver lace. All three carried French bouquets and wore bandeaux of silver leaves in their hair. The little ribbon bearers, Barbara and Elsie Franklin, wore pale pink georgette, and Annilee Franklin and Elizabeth Moss wore pale blue georgette. Virginia Moss, ring bearer, wore pale lavender, lace trimmed. All five dainty frocks were lace trimmed. Mr. Paul Kirby of Nashville served the groom as best man, and Mr. Cordell Johnson and Tyler Ford were groomsmen.

A reception followed the ceremony, and the bridal couple were assisted in receiving by the bride's parents. Mrs. Franklin wore a handsome afternoon gown of black satin.

Miss Ruth Hewgley kept the wedding register at the reception.

The bridal table, where the wedding party was seated, had as a central decoration a large wedding cake in the shape of a ring. Satin ribbons radiated to the name places with the symbolic emblems.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, after a wedding trip to St. Louis, will be at home with the groom's parents until after December 1, when their new home will be complete.

Out-of-town guests were Dr. and Mrs. E.B. Shuerman of Cincinnati, Mrs. Frank Richmond, Mrs. Claude Darwin of Cookeville; Mr. and Mrs. Earl T. Franklin, Chillcothee, Ohio; Miss Louise and Robbie Neal, Watertown; Mr. T.J. Draper of Gainesboro.

Research indicates no pictures were taken of the wedding or the couple.

Author's Note: The Benjamin Joseph Franklin family moved to Gallatin in 1908 from the Flynns Lick community in Jackson County, Tenn. Franklin purchased Fairvue in 1915, and the property was sold in 1935 to William H. Wemyss, after Franklin's death, Sept. 4, 1934. Benjamin Franklin was not related to Isaac Franklin, builder of Fairvue.

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