Days Of Old Sumner County

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Sumner County Historical Society

P.O. Box 1871, Gallatin TN 37066
www.sctnhs.org (615) 461-8830

What Sort of Man Was Jethro Sumner?

By Helen Marshall, General Jethro Sumner DAR Chapter

Both Sumner County and the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution are named after Revolutionary War hero, Jethro Exum Sumner, one of the most distinguished officers of the Continental Line to survive the war.

Though there is no record that Jethro Sumner actually set foot in this county, the name Sumner, was considered worthy of perpetuation in history due to the man's distinguished service to his country before, during and after the Revolutionary War. The county itself was formed on Nov. 17, 1786 as part of North Carolina, and presumably given its official name then. "Sumner" would have been a familiar name to the inhabitants of his namesake county; Jethro had only been dead a year and had been a North Carolina hero.

David Schenck, Superior Court Judge of the 9th District of North Carolina and president of the Guilford Battleground Co. had this to say about Sumner: "The greatest soldier of that day, from North Carolina was Brigadier General Jethro Sumner of Warren Co. We know that he passed, without reproach, through terrible campaigns…and survived as one of 700 from a brigade of more than 5,000 and was promoted for gallantry and skill displayed amid those bloody scenes. Under his eye, and with his discipline and example to prepare and encourage them, the North Carolina regulars and militia were among the foremost in the fight. He struggled manfully against every obstacle and danger, until at last he was able to put in the field three battalions… who gave the final and fatal blow to British prestige and power in the South.

(See SUMNER, Page 11)

Newly Restored Blythewood House on Hartsville Pike

Blythewood: A Piece of History Saved

By Jan Shuxteau

The house called Blythewood, one of the oldest houses in Sumner County, has been saved from deterioration and restored, retaining its fine federal style and distinctive façade. Located at 814 Hartsville Pike, the house was named after one of its 19th century owners, Samuel K. (Sam) Blythe, but it is best known as the home of the late, famous Johnny Maddox, who bought the house about 35 years ago.

It is a fascinating place, and no one knows this better than Kris Coker of Gallatin, an independent contractor with Century Renovations, who bought the place and has been restoring and renovating it, all the while trying to unearth more of its history.

"I am adamant about keeping as many of the historical features of the house as possible," said Coker, who renovated three other historic homes before tackling Blythewood. Consequently, various features remain: prominent Paladian windows fronting the house, the original wide, ash wood floors, the stairs, fixtures and outer walls of handmade bricks placed in the Flemish style, one small brick between two large ones. Past owners painted the house white, then yellow. Coker blasted away layers of paint to reach the original brick. He also replaced the front porch, giving it a 19th century look.

Inside, he replaced wide chair rails that had been removed, basing the new rail design on one small piece of trim that remained undetected in a bathroom. He removed drywall and returned the walls to plaster. He added a modern kitchen, closets and bathrooms.

(See BLYTHEWOOD, Page 2)

BLYTHEWOOD, Continued from Page 1

"There was an outside kitchen that was torn down long ago, along with the privy and barns. There was a horse barn here because this was a thoroughbred farm at one time," said Coker. While working in the kitchen area, he found piles of pottery. In the yard, he found clay marbles and Civil War bullets. In the cellar, he found a pair of men's pants dated to about 1880 and old grain sacks with the manufacturer's name.

House History Revealed

Information about Blythewood's origin is difficult to piece together. Local historians first believed that Blythewood was on a land grant that went to Capt. John Ingles, but more recent research says different. Jack Masters of Gallatin, an authority on land grants reported, "Blythewood is on the original land grant [640 acres] issued to Frederick Edwards which was later sold to Joseph Motheral." (Sumner County Deed Book A, Page 101 - 25 November 1797.) Masters is co-author of the *Cumberland Pioneers* series and other publications.

The Edwards grant, #135, was issued April 17, 1786, The land was "lying on Indian Creek" in what was then Davidson County, N.C., and, according to the records, was surveyed by "James Sanders, D.S. and Daniel Smith, Surveyor," who signed off on their work in 1784. Various trees (An Ash, Elm, Spanish Oak, Sugar tree and Hickory) were among the markers delineating the grant's boundaries starting "from David Wilson's line."

A hand-written deed shows that Edwards and his wife, Mary, sold the property on Nov. 25, 1797, for 210 pounds "lawful money of Kentucky" to Joseph Motheral of Davidson County, Tennessee. The last name is also spelled as "Motherell" and "Motherall" in documents.

A family history written by Motheral's great grandchild (no name) and other memorabilia were given to Coker by Johnny Maddox's son, Scott, when Coker bought the house. The Motheral history says that Joseph Motheral was a Scottsman, born May 6, 1739 or 1759, and married to a woman named Sarah. "They first settled on Mill Creek," it reported, "not far from Nashville, Tenn., then came to Sumner County and built a home in the year 1792, which is still standing (1922) and where they both died and were buried in the old Shiloh Church yard, which was built on their farm in 1793. Their oldest child, Anne, was born at Mill Creek."

Either the deed or the descendant's information was a few years off. *Or,* the deed--hand-written and hard to read—could have read 1792 instead of 1797. If Joseph Motheral bought the property in 1797, he wouldn't have built a house or anything else there in 1792. However, Motheral donated some of his property for old Shiloh Presbyterian Church, "the log temple in the woods," in 1793, according to a church history compiled in 1938 by Alice Baker Guthrie and available online. Motheral was a founding member of the church.

The family history also said, "An old lady named Anne Greer lived with Joseph and his wife Sarah. She was one of the witnesses of his will and I have been told she was his mother."

The Motheral history said that Joseph and Sarah's daughter, also named Anne, was born in 1790, followed by Jane in 1793 and later by Elizabeth (Betsy) and Polly. Sumner County Court records show that Joseph Motheral made a Deed of Gift of 24 acres to his daughter, Anne, and her husband Joseph Robb on Jan. 25, 1815. Joseph Robb also bought 127 acres from the heirs of Anne Greer [his wife's grandmother], for a total of about 152 acres. The Robbs sold property (Deed Book 9, Page 238) only three weeks later to businessman, Sam K. Blythe, on Feb. 13, 1815, for $1,520—a huge amount of money if he only bought 24 acres. SCHS President Ken Thomson noted that the Robbs may have sold Blythe the full 152 acres, at a more reasonable $10 per acre--though the deed does not list this —or, they may have sold him property that already had a house on it.

Meanwhile, Joseph Motheral died on Feb. 28, 1816, and left a will dividing his estate among his wife and four daughters. The will, which he signed on Oct. 23, 1815, stated, "It is my will that my beloved wife have one half the house wherein we now live, and half of the kitchen furniture, and half of the barn and half of the farm…"

Thomson and Kate Todd Malone of Gallatin, a descendant of one of the owners of Blythewood, still remember a building being on the property. They remember that it was made of logs, remodeled after the Civil War and eventually torn down. They think it could have been Motheral's house. Coker thinks it was the original log Shiloh Church, in close proximity to the graveyard. He believes the research he has shows that Motheral's house is today's Blythewood.

No one knows for sure. We do know that Blythe lived in the house now called Blythewood until 1830. According to Walter Durham's book, *Old Sumner*, Blythe was a member of the Board of Trustees of Transmontania School and owned Gallatin Warehouse.

In 1830, Sam sold Blythewood to his brother-in-law, James King, and went to Texas. King sold Blythewood to Rev. John Wortham Hall, described by peers as a "scholarly man," who was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Gallatin beginning in 1830. He helped establish Sumner Female College before moving in 1841 to Ohio, where he was president of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, from 1854 to 1866.

At some point, Hall sold Blythewood to Jacob Levi Warner and wife Elizabeth. They were the grandparents of Percy Warner for whom Percy Warner Park in Nashville is named. According to papers provided Coker by Scott Maddox, "[In] 1841, the place came into possession of [Dr.] James A. Blackmore and wife, members of prominent Sumner County families, and in 1874 was sold to William Young who deeded the same July 21st 1879, to his daughter, Lucy E. Allen, wife of Mr. Van Allen, a noble woman of generous deeds,

(See BLYTHEWOOD, Continued on Page 3)

(BLYTHEWOOD, Continued from Page 2)

This is an old photo of Blythewood before restoration

whose kindly presence graced and blessed his home…A son, W.Y. Allen, succeeded…Later owners of the place were Dr. Burr Ferguson and wife…Mr. [E.M.] Baggett came next, with dreams of a dairy farm, and in the spring of 1913 the property came into the hands of Col. J.B. Malone, a worthy son of the Old South, who was one of the most appreciative owners the place ever knew."

Durham reported in *Old Sumner* that Blackmore was a member of the state medical society as of 1830. He lived in Blythewood during the Civil War and probably used the house as a hospital. There are still a few blood stains on the hardwood floors.

Malone sold the house to K.B. Hearn who sold it to someone with the last name Smart, who sold it to Dr. Fred R. Woodward and his wife Sarah Peacock Woodward. She sold the house to Johnny Maddox after her husband died.

Maddox was already a world famous pianist when he bought Blythewood. He grew up in Gallatin on Winchester St., a sixth-generation Gallatinian. His grandfather, one of Gen. Robert E. Lee's civil engineers, was present at the Confederate surrender at Appomattox. This ancestor brought the family to Gallatin after the Civil War.

Maddox began recording in 1950 when his friend, Randy Wood, opened Randy's Record Shop in Gallatin. Wood launched DOT Records with Maddox as an artist. Maddox's first single, "Crazy Bone Rag" sold more than 22,000 copies in only five weeks, putting the DOT label on the map and boosting Maddox into stardom. His biggest song, "The Crazy Otto Medley," recorded in 1954, sold 2 million copies. He went on the road, performing with artists such as Patsy Cline, Pat Boone, Eddie Arnold and Lawrence Welk. He was on the Jack Parr and Milton Berle shows, among others.

During his career with DOT Records (until it sold in the '70s), Maddox recorded 50 albums and 87 singles. His record sales topped 11 million. He had nine gold singles and was awarded a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

In his later years, Maddox bought Blythewood as a home base though he had another home and performance venue in Colorado. He returned to Gallatin about 10 years ago, and he performed his first hometown concert in 65 years in May of 2012 at Gallatin First Presbyterian Church. He died in 2018 at the age of 91.

If you know more about the history of Blythewood, especially its origin, please contact the historical society through Jan Shuxteau, shuxteg@comcast.net.

(Note: Sumner Co. was created from Davidson County, North Carolina, in November 1786. North Carolina ceded its western territory—Tennessee—to the new federal government in 1789, paving the way for Tennessee to become a state June 1, 1796.)

A Never Ending Quest!

Tracing Deeds Is Not As Easy You Think

By Ken Thomson, SCHS President

For nearly 70 years, I have attempted to abstract many historic properties here in Sumner County.

Through the years many obstacles have thwarted my efforts. I realized early on that the Master Index omitted about 40 percent of the registered deeds recorded.

Most problems were incurred from 1860 backward to the early 1780s when this area was Davidson County, North Carolina. Many properties were sold through estates having the name of the executor listed when the property was sold. Therefore, many estate records required researching.

Another obstacle was when a property owner appointed a Power of Attorney to sell their property or a guardian was chosen to sell property. Also, when property remained in a family for several generations no deeds or transfers were ever executed.

Property sold at a sheriff's sale often was represented by an attorney in whose name the title was recorded.

A small percentage of deeds are recorded in the County Court Minutes and in lawsuits.

Actually, some deeds were never recorded. So, you see, abstracting property is no easy undertaking. The most difficult research I have ever encountered is to find a starting point (date) and going backwards page by page through the deed books until discovering the next earlier deed. Out of every five abstracts that I have pursued, only three are easily completed.

Your Annual Dues Are Needed

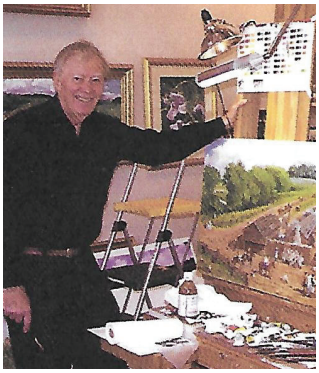
Please pay your annual dues for membership to the Sumner County Historical Society. Mail your name, address, email and phone number plus $20 for an individual membership or $25 for a family membership to:
Sumner County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1871, Gallatin, TN 37066

Membership entitles you to this quarterly newsletter and all previous newsletters and enables SCHS to assist in saving Sumner's historic buildings and publications. New members and gift memberships are encouraged!

We Remember Bill Puryear: Businessman, Historian, Artist

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Sumner County's historical community is saddened by the loss of William "Bill" Puryear, a cherished friend, who died on Feb. 16, 2023, after what friends say was "a full and joyful life." He was 89.



Bill served as a board member of the Sumner County Historical Society as well as the Tennessee Historical Commission.

A Gallatin native, Bill was born Aug. 17, 1933, to the late Judge William P. Puryear, Jr. and Judelle (Reynolds) Puryear. His family lived in Middle Tennessee from the 1780s. He and his beloved wife, Claudia, who preceded him in death, were the parents of five children, grandparents of 15 and great grandparents of two.

He graduated from Gallatin High School (1951) and Vanderbilt University. He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict, serving with the Army's 24th Infantry Division along the Korean DMZ. After Claudia passed in 2015, he published *Letters to Claudia*, a book featuring the letters between them during their courtship, especially when he was in Korea.

In 1961, he founded independent CPA firm William Puryear and Co., which continues today as Puryear & Noonan. He served his profession as a lobbyist for the Tennessee Society of CPAs, both in the Tennessee Legislature and the U.S. Congress. In 1965, he joined others as founding Treasurer and Trustee of the newly formed Nashville Memorial Hospital. He later became Chairman of its Board of Trustees and continued in that position with its successor, The Memorial Foundation, a charitable foundation funded from the proceeds of the sale of the hospital in 1994. The Memorial Foundation has distributed more than $190 million in grants to charities in Middle Tennessee. After 50 years of service, Puryear was elected Chairman Emeritus, an active position he retained until his death.

Puryear was also the founding Chairman of Sumner Academy in Gallatin, founding Treasurer of Pope John Paul II High School in Hendersonville, and a founder of St. John Vianney elementary school in Gallatin, as well as Gallatin Day Care Center.

He was a Renaissance man—what SCHS President Ken Thomson calls "a personality 'extraordinare' with a multiplicity of talents and interests." As a historian, he authored or co-authored with Jack Masters several historical books. They wrote the landmark series *Founding of the Cumberland Settlements; Thoroughfare for Freedom*; and *The First Southwest*, in 2012.

They spent hours researching and collecting information. Masters recalls, "While Bill held God and Family above all, he certainly was never happier than when we were in the rural county looking for old roads, historical sites or first hand accounts of the rich history of Sumner County and Middle Tennessee.

"The last 15 or 20 years would typically begin with a telephone call anytime after 3 or 4 in the morning. The topic of conversation might be the location of an old road or historical account we had questions about. Our favorite resolution to any unknown question was to apply what we called 'The Overnight rule.' Simply stated, the reasonable solution would, more times than not, be crystal clear the next morning after a good night's sleep. Many decisions concerning a multitude of questions were decided by this simple rule over the years in the process of compiling and publishing our books.

"The Sumner County historical community will miss this man and the knowledge he represented. I miss him greatly as will all who knew him."

Puryear was also an artist his entire adult life. His fascination with writing and art resulted in a monthly website called the *Artist's Almanac*, published online from 2004 until his death. His paintings, often with historic themes, hang in museums, private homes and institutions. The painting below is in the Almanac.

"Through his artistic abilities with the brush, he illustrated the stories of his origins," says Thomson. "He was indeed the sage of Sumner County."

Cragfont Gardens by Bill Puryear

Editor's Note: In 2012, Bill Puryear and his good friend and fellow board member, Jack Masters, neither of whom I had ever met, asked me to "volunteer" to develop and edit a local history newsletter. The result is this publication, now in its 11th year.

Organization: A Sumner County Methodist Milestone

By Albert Dittes

An important milestone in Methodist Church history took place in Sumner County's Fountain Head in November of 1812 with the organization of two conferences.

According to an early history of Methodism, "Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present, and the former spoke of it as a profitable session and also spoke of the great need of more preachers for the Mississippi country."

Thanks to the labors of many preachers crisscrossing the then-South West frontier led by Bishops Francis Asbury and William McKendree, the frontier Methodist Church was a success story.

Young Asbury had accepted a call from John Wesley in 1871 to evangelize the 13 North American colonies with Methodism using Wesley's circuit riding plan developed in England. Asbury first ministered in the Eastern Seaboard colonies, then in 1785 turned westward as people started pouring into the region west of the Appalachian Mountains after the War of Independence. *The Journal and Letters of Bishop Francis Asbury* reports, "Largely because of the Great Revival and the accompanying camp meetings in the regions of Tennessee and Kentucky, the (Methodist) membership of the Western Conference approximately tripled between 1801 and 1803…the Revival strengthened and invigorated the church and by 1808 the Western Conference had five districts and nearly 20,000 members."

The Revival began in 1799 but had run its course by 1811, when a series of earthquakes in the central Mississippi region affected another great increase in the membership of the church. The General Conference of 1812 divided the Western Conference into the Ohio and Tennessee Conferences." The Ohio Conference consisted of the Salt River, Kentucky, Miami and Muskingum Districts. The Tennessee Conference included Tennessee, Illinois, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, parts of Kentucky and Indiana. Its first session was held at the Fountain Head Methodist Church in Sumner County. The membership included 20,633 white and 2,066 colored persons served by 36 traveling preachers.

The thoroughly-organized Methodists printed a complete book of minutes for all of the 1812 conference meetings in the eastern United States, including Middle Tennessee. It listed James Gwin of Fountain Head as the presiding elder of the Cumberland District of the Western Conference, with a Frances Travis representing Fountain Head. Red River, Goose Creek, Roaring River, Wayne, Somerset, Green River and Barren.

James Gwin, an early settler of Fountain Head, came to Tennessee in 1791, working as a surveyor. He was admitted into the Methodist ministry on trial in 1803, according to the archival records at the Heritage Center of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of the United Methodist Church, and appointed to the Barren River circuit. His obituary stated that he organized the Barren Circuit in the southern part of Kentucky. He was appointed as a missionary to the Cumberland District, appointed to the Nashville circuit the next year and admitted into "full connection" in 1811, ordained as an elder and appointed to the Red River Circuit. He served as president elder of the Cumberland District in 1812-1814 and was assigned to the first African Mission of the Tennessee Conference--slaves living in the Nashville area-- in 1833. He later moved to Mississippi and died in Vicksburg on Aug. 3, 1841.

The Western Methodist churches continued to expand with the emergence of the new United States. The Tennessee Conference ultimately evolved into the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference with churches in the Caney Fork River, Cumberland River (Nashville), Harpeth River, Metro (Memphis), Mississippi River, Purchase (Kentucky), Red River, Stones River and Tennessee River districts. Fountain Head (and later Portland) remained in what is now the Cumberland River District, which now has 85 churches.

Walter Durham's Work Lives On

Ten years ago on May 24, 2013, State Historian Walter Durham, a lifelong resident of Gallatin, died at age 88 after a heart attack. Nevertheless, his legacy of work lives on today.

He was, in fact, healthy and working on a story for this publication only a week before his heart attack. It is likely that words from his books and articles have appeared in every issue of *Days of Old Sumner County*.

Durham wrote 25 books about Sumner County and a mountain of historical articles. He was described by the *Gallatin News Examiner* as "a walking encyclopedia of Tennessee and Sumner County history." He founded the Tennessee Preservation Trust, chaired the Tennessee Historical Commission and was a president of the Tennessee Historical Society.

For the first edition of *Days of Old Sumner County* in January 2013, Durham wrote: "Few counties in the United States have a history as important to our country and as interesting to readers as Sumner County. As early as 6,000 B.C. Native Americans camped and hunted in this area. Today, inspections of the remnants of earthen mounds reveal villages of the 15th century that were occupied by precursors to the Cherokee, Creek and Chickasaw, who regarded this region as a jointly held hunting ground.

"When explorer-hunters appeared across the Appalachians in the 1770s, an irrepressible westward movement began. It would sweep settlers into Sumner County and adjacent areas of what was then the western portion of North Carolina. A widely held fascination with the West led to further immigration surges that ultimately reached all the way to the Pacific Coast."

Hville's Fred Foster Founded Monument Records

By Tena Lee and Jennifer Bruce

Editor's Note: The following story appeared in the book *Southern Music Icons of Hendersonville, Tennessee*, written by Tena Lee and Jennifer Bruce and published in 2022. In it, the authors describe Hendersonville's rich musical history– beginning with Roy Acuff in the mid-1950s to a youthful Taylor Swift in the early 2000s. Record producer Fred Luther Foster, the topic of this story, was one of an incredible number of talented people who called Hendersonville home. Others included: Johnny and June Cash, Roy Orbison, Marty Stuart and Connie Smith, Conway Twitty, the Oak Ridge Boys, Roy Acuff and Kitty Wells, "Rocky Top" writers Boudleaux and Felice Bryant; "Heartbreak Hotel" writer Mae Axton, Bobby Bare, Ricky Skaggs, T. G. Sheppard, Kelly Lang, Dan Seals, Kelly Clarkson and, of course, Taylor Swift. The story says:

Boudleaux Bryant met producer Fred Foster during a visit to Acuff-Roses's Nashville office some time in 1959. Foster, a former songwriter who started Monument Records a year earlier in Baltimore, had been making frequent trips to Nashville for business. Almost immediately, the two hit it off an developed a close and lasting friendship. Bryant encouraged Foster to move to Nashville, even promising to build him a new office building in Hendersonville.

Foster temporarily leased office space on Hendersonville's Main Street in July 1960, while construction was started on a new building down the street…In 1961, Foster convinced Braxton Dixon [a local master builder] to leave a PTA meeting the two were attending so that he could show him a piece of property he'd just bought around the corner from Boudleaux's home. As the two surveyed the lakefront land at the end of Riviera Drive, the two noticed two B-29 bombers cross each other in the air over the lake.

"With their wings swept back—one triangle over another, I said 'that's the shape of the house,'" Dixon later recalled. The palatial home, built of concrete block with stone veneer, was extremely modern for its time. "It was one of the first houses to have a thermostat is each room," said Dixon, who would go on to build homes for Roy Orbison and, most famously, Johnny Cash. Country music singer Tammy Wynette would later own Foster's Riviera Drive home with her husband, George Richey, from 1980 to 1984…[The house has since burned down.]

A visionary producer, Foster had a knack for developing talented new artists. One of his first and perhaps best known to this day was Roy Orbison. Orbison was immensely successful with Foster while also drawing international attention to Monument Records. Foster produced a string of Orbison's best-known songs in the early '60s, including "Only the Lonely," a song Orbison wrote with frequent co-writer Joe Melson (1960). Foster trusted the musical instincts of Boudleaux, who often sat in on recording sessions. Boudleaux played guitar on a few of Orbison's sessions, including "Crying," (1961) and a song written by the Bryants, "She Wears My Ring" (1962).

Fred Foster, seated on the right, is pictured with good friends and music icons Boudleaux Bryant, seated on the left, and (standing, l. to r.) Wesley Rose and Roy Orbison, all Hendersonvillians. This photo is reproduced courtesy of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

Sumner County Chancery Court Judge Louis Oliver III remembers running errands for Foster at Monument Records in the early 1960s. Oliver's dad, the town's postmaster, had become friends with Foster and his business partner, Jack Kirby. "There was a lot of interaction between the post office and Monument Records because they did all of their business by mail back then," said Oliver. "When I was about 13 or 14 years old, my dad asked Fred if I could work there."

Oliver would often spend his summers and after-school houses at the record company. His first job was calling radio station at night promoting records like Orbison's "Mean Woman Blues." "They had me calling the stations and asking, 'How's Mean Woman Blues doing?" he recalled…

One day while Oliver was still in school, he was summoned down to the principal's office. When he arrived, Kirby was waiting for him. He asked if Oliver could get three or four friends and come to Monument's office right away. "He said, 'We've got to have this done today. We've got this record that we've got to get out to the radio stations right away."

Oliver said he and a few friends left school early to go stuff the records into envelopes and get them in the mail…The single Oliver and his friends worked so feverishly to get in the mail ended up selling more than 7 million copies and becoming the number four song in 1964: Orbison's "Oh, Pretty Woman."

Oliver was working in the mail room on another evening when one of Foster's staff members asked for his help. He said, 'I'm glad you're here. This woman has been worrying me to death all day, trying to get me to hustle up and get her record out,'" Oliver recalled. "And here comes this woman, and she's probably in her early twenties and she says, 'Hey, help me get my record out, we've got a great thing here.'"

The assertive young blonde then introduced herself as Dolly Parton. Foster signed the 19-year-old Parton to Monument Records in 1965. Two years later, the singer released her first hit single, "Dumb Blonde," on Monument Records.

A soft-spoken man who was always immaculately dressed, Foster played a vital role in Kris Kristofferson's music career. The idea for Kristofferson's song, "Me and Bobby McGee," later recorded by Janis Joplin, initiated in Foster's Hendersonville office with a joke between Boudleaux and Foster. Foster would often make trips to Boudleaux's second-floor office. One day, the songwriter joked, "Fred you're not fooling me. You're just coming down to see Bobbie McKee, my good-looking secretary."

The thought stuck with Foster, and he mentioned it as a possible song title to Kristofferson…Kristofferson mistook the secretary's name, and "Me and Bobby McGee" was first recorded by Roger Miller in 1969. Kristofferson gave Foster a co-writing credit to thank him for the inspiration.

Foster signed Kristofferson to his publishing label, Combine Music. He also signed the singer-songwriter to Monument Records, which released the debut album of Kristofferson in 1970. The album contained several Kristofferson-penned songs that were made popular by other artists, including "Me and Bobby McGee," "For the Good Times" (Ray Price) and "Sunday Morning Coming Down," (Johnny Cash). Kristofferson's 1973 country gospel hit, "Why Me" was also released by Monument.

Foster later sold Combine and Monument Records in the 1980s to Sony after moving the labels' office to Nashville. However, he continued to work within the music industry, producing the 2007 compilation album, "Last of the Breed" in 2007, featuring Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard and Ray Price.

The successful producer was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2016. He was also presented with a Trustee's Award for Lifetime Achievement by the Recording Academy that same year. He died in 2019 in Nashville at the age of 87. "I am heartbroken that my friend Fred Foster has passed on," Parton said in a statement. "Fred was one of the very first people to believe in me and gave me chances no one else would or could. We've stayed friends through the years and I will miss him. I will always love him."

Fred Foster's obituary appeared in the *New York Times* on Feb. 22, 2019. It noted that he was born on July 26, 1931, on a farm in Rutherford County, N.C., the youngest of eight children. His father, Vance Hampton Foster, raised cotton and sorghum and played the harmonica. His mother, Clara Marcella (Weaste) Foster, was a homemaker. He had a son, Vance, and daughters, Micki Koenig, Leah Alderman, Brit Rothstein and Kristen Foster; and four grandchildren.

Southern Music Icons of Hendersonville, Tennessee, is available at Ace Hardware in Hendersonville, Walgreens, Barnes & Noble, Walton Ferry Used Books and Music, and on Amazon.

Cumberland Winds Throughout Sumner County's History

By Randy Tatum

The Cumberland River has a unique place in the history and development of Sumner County as many of the first settlers came here on its waters.

Documentation of how the river was navigated and crossed is important in researching how this area was settled and how its early residents lived. While navigation up and down the Cumberland today is done through a series of locks and dams, for early settlers access across the river was not so easy.

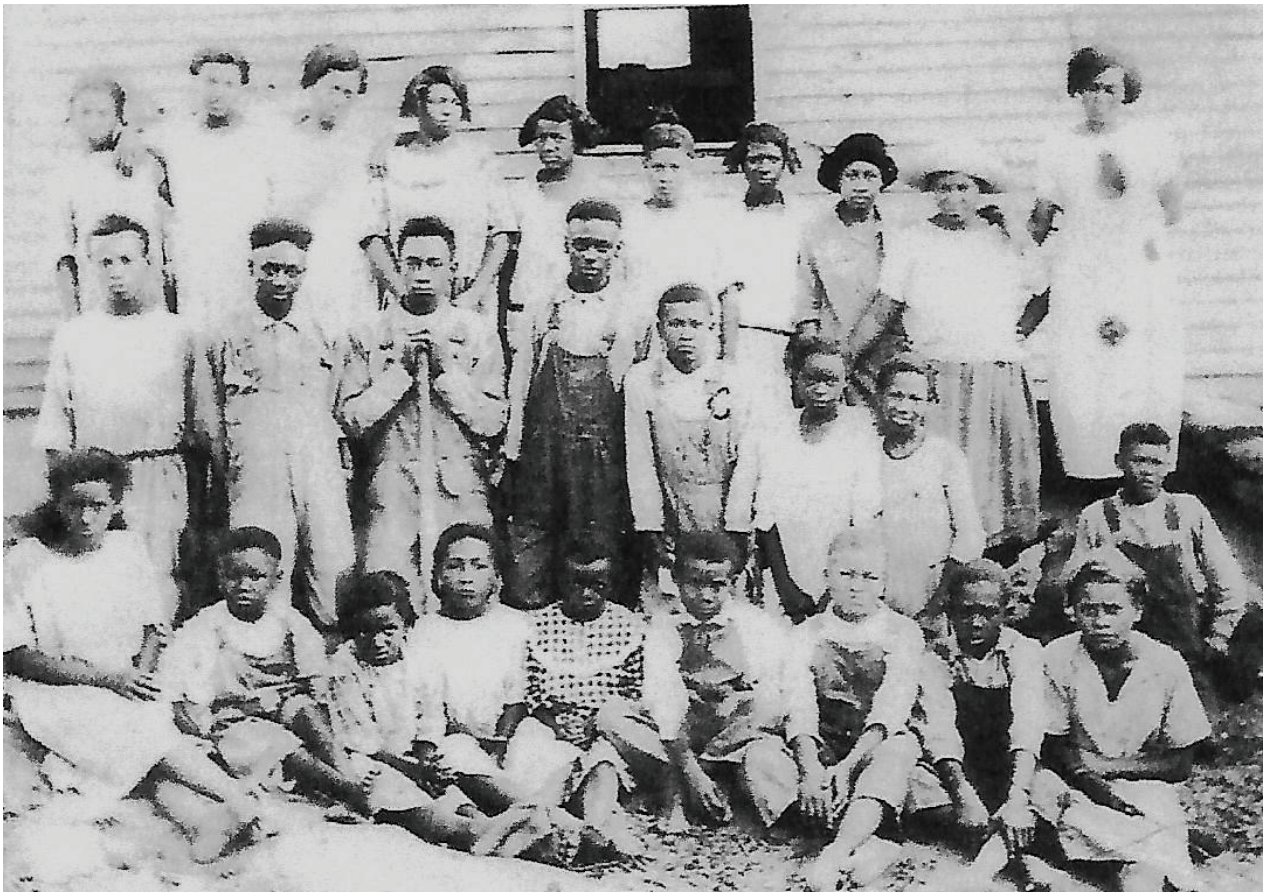
It was accomplished first by wading or swimming and later by ferries powered by horses or mules and then by modern bridges. This is why maps of the river before the lakes we know today are so valuable. They help us understand the river as our forefathers knew it.

Maps providing a graphic representation of the river before impoundment of the lakes along the river were obtained by the Sumner County Archives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. With property acquisition maps of Old Hickory Lake (a 1930s topographic map of the river), archive's staff created a 12-foot long map of the river from the Nine Mile Ferry site in Pennington Bend in Davidson County to Dixon Springs in Smith County.

On the 12-foot map are shown the sites of old ferry crossings and the one bridge across the Cumberland in existence at that time in Old Hickory. The Cordell Hull bridge in Carthage was not built until 1936 and bridges at Highways 109 and 241 and 141 were not in place until much later.

Other features of the 12-foot map include: the ferries in 1930, horse crossings, the old lakes and ponds that were taken over by Old Hickory Lake.

For anyone trying to find where their Sumner County ancestors lived, the Old Hickory property acquisition maps show what land was taken for the impoundment of the lake, who owned the property and how many acres were purchased from each property owner. The maps also show the shape and location of the property in relation to the river.



In 1931, this Scattersville School, pictured in the book, *Images of America: African American Life in Sumner County* by Velma Brinkley with Mary Huddleston, was one of many small African-American schools in Sumner County. Rev. Peter Tyree and Ola Bate (pictured) taught in this one-room school building.

Freedmen Were the Foundation of Sumner's Scattersville

By Beverly Bragg, President of the Trousdale Place Foundation

The Portland community of Scattersville came about as a result of Sumner County's effort to adjust to new realities after the Civil War.

In his book, Rebellion Revisited, historian Walter Durham noted that when that war ended, Sumner, as well as the rest of the South, began a time of "readjustment and reconstruction." Although "acts of terror and repression" still existed, "the vast majority of blacks and whites worked and lived together peaceably." And although "neither the freedman nor the white man was comfortable in their greatly changed relationships [they] both faced the new order with at least a minimal willingness to adapt themselves to the demands created by the changes."

One such change was Congress' creation of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, also known as the Freedmen's Bureau in 1865. The main purpose of this agency was to help African Americans establish themselves and their families in their respective communities as they transitioned from slaves to free citizens. In general, this federal agency was tasked with providing food to the needy, supervising and ensuring fair contracts between employers and former slaves, managing abandoned lands, and organizing and operating schools for freedmen.

At the local level, officials were responsible for defending the rights of freedmen in civil and criminal justice matters and reporting instances of harassment and violence when they occurred.

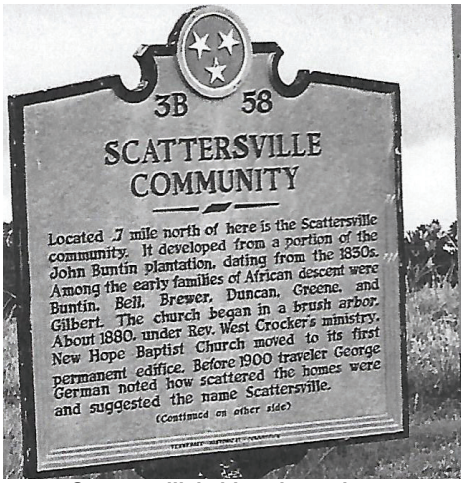
Differing opinions, however, existed within the local community regarding the establishment of a bureau to help freedmen. In September 1865, Alfred R. Wynne (1800-1893), merchant, planter, and horse breeder at Castalian Springs voiced his opposition to the bureau in a letter to President Johnson: "this Bureau, as it is now constructed, is the greatest destroyer of the peace and quietude and prosperity of our people [and] is not only in direct conflict with our civil authorities but supersedes their operations to a great extent."

On the other hand, Dr. James Shelley Mulloy (1816-1903) of Mitchellville advocated for the establishment of a bureau office in Sumner and Robertson counties. Mulloy, who was born in Robertson County, Tennessee, and graduated from the medical department at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, practiced medicine in

both Robertson and Sumner Counties. He also represented Robertson County in the House in the 34th Tennessee General Assembly. In a letter dated September 6, 1865, addressed to General Clinton B. Fisk, the head of the bureau in Tennessee and Kentucky, Dr. Mulloy asked for immediate assistance for former slaves, now freedmen, against "ex-rebel slaveholders [who] are driving off the aged and infirm, the women and children, destitute, almost without clothes, and without food, thrusting them forth houseless and homeless in the midst of a prejudiced and hostile community, [therefore] I desire to urge establishment of an agency of your bureau in each county."

Despite contrasting viewpoints regarding the detriments of the bureau versus its benefits, the Freedmen's Bureau in Sumner County, headquartered in Gallatin, opened at the end of September 1865. The agent responsible for overseeing the freedmen working in the fields, the freedmen who were yet to be employed, and a school attended by approximately three hundred students was Union man A.L. Hawkins.

By October 6th, the bureau's focus had shifted away from maintaining camps, homes, and hospitals for former slaves and toward education and school operations. This shift, according to Durham, meant "many questions raised by freeing the slaves remained unanswered [and] none was more pressing than the question of where freedmen could live." Durham goes on to explain that in response to this need, some "whites sold or gave small acreage tracts with the result that small communities of freedmen congregated" in different areas of the county. One group of freedmen settled and started the Scattersville community in Portland, Tenn.



Scattersville's historic marker

The community of Scattersville was established around 1875 by former slaves of John Buntin, turned sharecroppers, on the tracts of land they had once farmed. A historic marker honoring the Scattersville Community can be viewed on State Highway 52 in Portland, Tennessee, 0.1 miles west of New Deal Potts Road.

Early African American families that lived on the land were represented by Henry Greene, Greene Gilbert, Seten Bell, Joerome Duncan and Ike Brewer.

According to a history of the Scattersville community provided, by Wava (Bratton) Young, the way in which the little community received its unique name was based on how far one lived from their neighbors: "a traveler came through named George German, and because the houses were far apart and scattered, he said, 'you all can call this community Scattersville.' And that is how this community got its name."

As in most Sumner County communities, religion and faith were a commonality amongst the Scattersville residents. Community members held their first church services in a brush arbor, but by 1880 the first permanent church had been organized by Reverend West Crocker. New Hope Baptist Church, named by Lulu (Buntin) Parrish, was built on land purchased from Ike Brewer. The first deacons of the church included John Branham, Charlie Brown, and Jim Goodall. In 1923, the church was rebuilt under the direction of Reverend W.M. Thomason.

Scattersville was a farming community, and in the spring of 1919 residents planted and subsequently harvested their first strawberry crop. Local citizens from Portland provided the plants, fertilizer, and straw.

Scattersville continued to grow, and by the early 1900's it boasted three lodges – the Odd Fellows of America, the Household of Ruth and the African Bell Association. Additionally, there were two grocery stores operated by Ike Brewer, Wilmus Turner, and Jake Rankins; a baseball team; and a band. Nancy Goins, Ike Brewer, and Jake Rankins were among the first residents to own telephones.

Community and economic growth were important to the citizens of Scattersville and so was the pursuit of education for their children. The first school in the community was a log building at Corntown off Buntin Road. Mary Wallace was the first teacher assigned to the school, and each term started in July and ended in December. Around 1908, Henry Seten Bell and his wife Sarah Bell deeded land for the construction of Scattersville Public School. The school was attended by students from Scattersville, Mitchellville, and Corntown.

By 1931, students in the one-room school in Scattersville were under the instruction of Ola Bate and Rev. Peter Tyree. Ola Bate had graduated from Agricultural and Industrial State College in 1926 and was the first African American female from Sumner County to earn a college degree. In 1900, Charles Brimage Bate, Ola's father, was the first African American man from Sumner County to earn a degree, which he obtained from Roger Williams College. After 41 years as a teacher, Ola Bate retired in 1968. Tyree taught for 36 years and retired in 1946. The school still stands today and is used as a community center.

Speech Reveals More Interesting Facts about Jethro Sumner

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Editor's Note: After reading the Page 1 story about Jethro Sumner, you may enjoy learning more details about the man. The following excerpts are from the 50-page "Address on the Life and Service of Brig. Gen. Jethro Sumner" by Kemp P. Battle, given on the battle ground of Guilford Court House in North Carolina, July 4, 1891. Spelling was not a priority in this address, so I've made essential corrections. The excerpts provide colorful insight about the life, habits, battles and 18th century thinking of the man for whom Sumner County is named.

Health, Vigor and Food

Battle said, "There was a strange hallucination in regard to spiritous liquors in the 'good old days.' The men of that [Sumner's] generation thought they were drinking health and joy and long life. In truth, they were drinking down gout and dropsy, and liver disease, and kidney troubles, and short life. There were few old men of that generation. Sumner was like the rest—he kept the prevailing fashion. [He] was a 'facetious' man. Doubtless, he told good stories about his experiences with the peculiarities of the unlettered backwoodsmen with whom as sheriff he had dealings. He was "of person lusty and rather handsome…that is he had a strong body and vigorous health and a fine manly bearing.

"All those colonial gentlemen understood the art of 'giving good dinners.' The woods swarmed with fat turkeys, tame and wild. Pigs were always read to supply the luscious barbecue. Steams of venison or tender beef, hot biscuits and glorious cornbread may be found on Southern tables, savory ham and fresh fish from the fish trap in the creek, together with abundant vegetables and the jams and preserves and plum pudding which his young wife with her snowy apron and her stately courtesies knew so well how to make; all these things and more smoked on the table, while the odors of nutmeg and mint floated in the air. We can easily call to our mind the Jethro Sumner of that day, at the age of 42, his long hair combed back so as full to expose his rubicund face, tied in a cue behind, his countenance frank and open, looking one straight in the face with a clear bright eye, his body inclining to portliness, as became the devourer of good cheer; vigorous from out-door exercise, on foot or on horse, in sport and on business, having the air of authority as became the executive officer… At the dinner table in the familiarity of social intercourse with a young military officer of wealth and good blood, he showed appreciation of a good joke…"

Loyal Colonist Changes His Mind

Battle goes on to say that though Sumner fought loyally for the British in the French and Indian War, he was a man of "violent principles in regard to the pending quarrel between the mother country and the colonies. Being a man of ardent temper, he embraced the cause of the colonists with his whole soul…"

Battle explained the thinking of an Englishman versus a colonist. "The last French and Indian War left Great Britain with a debt so enormous in the eyes of the financiers of that day it seemed impossible to pay, $700,000,000. To an Englishman, the claim that the colonies should help pay these expenses incurred partly for their own benefit seemed reasonable. It seemed equally clear to him [Englishman] that Parliament should exercise the taxing power for securing such payment. To Americans also the first proposition was not unreasonable, but to the second [taxation] was determined and angry dissent…"

Sumner and His Minutemen

"Captain Sumner was chosen Major of the minute men of the Halifax District. They were in effect volunteer militia, with the privilege of electing their company commissioned officers. A bounty of 25 shillings was allowed privates to buy a uniform, to consist of a hunting shirt, leggings and black garters. An allowance of 10 shillings for a smooth-bore musket and 20 shillings for a rifle was made to those furnishing these weapons…The minutemen were to serve six months and to be drilled 14 days…Major Jethro Sumner at once showed the superiority natural to one who had learned the art of war under Washington."

Valley Forge Winter and Beyond

"The North Carolina brigade went through with fortitude the heart-rending sufferings at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777-'78…In May 1778, on account of its diminished numbers, the North Carolina battalions, as they were called after joining Washington's army, were consolidated…the 5th into the 3rd under Col. Jethro Sumner.

"After the battle of Monmouth, there was little fighting by Washington's army until the Yorktown campaign…Sumner was promoted for his faithful services to be Brigadier General on January 9, 1779. The North Carolina regulars, dwindled to only 700 men, were ordered to the South for defense of Georgia and South Carolina…Gen. Sumner and his brigade had the post of honor in the attack on the entrenchments of the enemy at Stono Ferry on June 20, 1779…Soon after the battle, active operations ceased, on account of the heated air laden with malaria. Sumner's strong constitution, which had resisted the fierce cold of a Pennsylvania winter, could not save him from the prevailing fever. He was forced to ask leave of absence, expecting a speedy recovery in the highlands of Warren. His presence in North Carolina was [also] needed to aid in forwarding recruits to his depleted brigade. His request was granted early in July, and he was therefore not engaged in the disastrous assault on Savannah by the French and American forces on Oct. 9, 1779."

Sumner At the End of the War

"Gen. Sumner was one of the most active and efficient officers in the movement which led to the salvation of the Carolinas…In the closing years of the war only the energy generated by fears of defeat and ruin had kept up

the people to the fighting point. After the capture of Cornwallis, there was a universal feeling that the war was practically over. The exertions, which were the result of terror and despair, gave way to supineness and lethargy. The poor soldiers, far from home, seemed to have been forgotten…In some commands there were mutinies and threats…The great and good Washington, by the union of kindly sympathy and occasional force, quieted these troubles…"

He Was a Man of Means

Battle noted, "Gen. Sumner was exempt from some of the trials suffered by his compatriots. He was a man of large possessions. His home was not in the track of the armies and suffered no injury…His neighbors were all loyal to America, and we find no deprecation of Tories or deserters in Bute. His prudence kept him from debt. In the midst of admiring friends, enjoying the satisfaction of a well-earned reputation, he spent the residue of his days in the management of his estate, the care of his slaves and his blooded horses, the training of his children and the exercise of a generous hospitality. His wife probably died during the war, as she seems to have been living in 1781 and was not living in 1785…

"Before closing, I must give you some details throwing light on Gen. Sumner as a citizen. We have the inventory of his effects…Including the bounty lands in Tennessee, he left over 20,000 acres of land, besides town lots in Halifax, Louisvurg and Smithfield in Virginia. He owned two valuable farms in Warren County, one called his 'Manor Plantation' and the other his Bute Court House Plantation.' On them were 35 slaves, nearly all able to work and 17 horses, some of them racers; and about 240 hogs, 20 sheep and 86 head of cattle. The possession of this large amount of stock, together with 150 barrels of old corn and a quantity of bacon and beef and six hogsheads of prized tobacco…is a pretty good showing for his management. The mention of a 'quantity' of quart bottles, some rum, brandy, cider and wine, five large China bowls…shows that he kept up the convivial habits which distinguished Warren society…

"There is an enumeration of large quantities of earthenware and china, silver and ivory handled knives and forks, two square tables, two round tables…army certificates, his silver-handled sword, bequeathed to his eldest son; his fire arms bequeathed to his second son, and his camp beds, bedsteads and furniture, which he gave to his daughter.

"The silver salver, silver spoons, large and small, silver-handled and ivory-handled knives, chinaware and other furniture, gold watch and silver watch, show that he lived in good style, while his division of his printed books between his two sons, in that day when books were quite rare, indicates that he had some taste for literature."

Sumner's Early Death

"The end was much nearer than the age of 52 years would seem to make probable. The exposures of war from the bitter cold of Valley Forge to the fever swamps of South Carolina, whence deadly miasma rises almost like a visible mist, undermined his strong constitution. Gen. Sumner's will is dated March 15, 1755." [He is thought to have died on March 18, 1785].

(SUMNER, from Page 1)

It is not recorded of him that he ever fled from the foe or left his soldiers in the field. He enjoyed the full confidence of Washington, LaFayette and Greene."

Jethro Sumner was born in 1733 in Nansemond County, Va. (now Suffolk, Va.), the son of Jethro Sr. and Margaret Sullivan Sumner, and grandson of William Sumner, also of Nansemond County.

Sumner's military service began when he joined Virginia's Provincial force while in his early 20s to fight for the British in the French and Indian War (1754-1763). He was commissioned as an Ensign in 1756; as a Lt. in Wm. Byrd's Virginia Regiment in 1758, and became the Commander in '58 of Fort Bedford, a log fortress erected that year in what is now Pennsylvania to protect British supply lines.

When the French and Indian War ended, Sumner moved to Bute County, N.C. (now Warren County, N.C.), where he married Mary Hurst of Granville County. They had three children, but no grandchildren. According to an article about Sumner revised in January 2023 by Jared Dease of the North Carolina Government and Heritage Library in *NCpedia*, Sumner's wife's sizable inheritance allowed him to become a planter and operate a tavern. By 1768, he had risen to justice of the peace, and he served as sheriff from 1772 to 1777. Most importantly, he represented Bute County in North Carolina's third Provincial Congress in 1775.

This was a big deal. These congresses, five in all, created a structure for government, organized an army for defense and wrote a constitution and bill of rights that established the State of North Carolina. The third North Carolina Provincial Congress (Sumner's congress) authorized the creation of six battalions of "minutemen," each consisting of 10 companies of 50 men each. He was a major in the Halifax minutemen.

Also, he was appointed colonel of the 3rd North Carolina Continental Troops on April 15, 1776. Still a colonel, Sumner served at Valley Forge with Gen. George Washington during the winter of 1777- 78. Sumner received his appointment as Brigadier General in the Continental Army on Jan. 9, 1779, while still in command of the 3rd North Carolina Continental Regiment until the end of the war.

When released from active military duty, he returned to his home and tavern. He received a land grant as payment for his Revolutionary War service. He was elected to the Continental Congress and helped found and was elected the first president of the N.C. division of the Society of the Cincinnati. (This society was composed of officers who had served under Gen. George Washington.)

Sumner died on March 18, 1785, at age 52, in Warren Co., N.C. and was buried there. However, in 1891, his remains and grave monument were moved to the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park in Greensboro, N.C.

Sumner County Historical Society
Post Office Box 1871
Gallatin, TN 37066

To: