Days Of Old Sumner County

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Sumner County Historical Society
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Whatever Happened?

The Story of Rock Castle's Polly Smith

By Melinda Gaines

Editor's Note: Sumner history enthusiasts may have heard the story of Rock Castle's 18th century teenager Polly Smith: her elopement with Samuel Donelson against her father's wishes, her romantic climb from an upstairs window to ride off into the night with Donelson and Andrew Jackson, their meeting with a waiting preacher. But, there is more to Polly than just that story. You have to wonder: Why did her father object to that eminently suitable marriage? And whatever happened to Polly afterwards?

Mary Ann (Polly) Michie Smith was born in Virginia in 1781, the second child and only daughter of Daniel and Sarah Michie Smith. When only three, she traveled to the Tennessee Frontier. Soon after their arrival, Daniel Smith began excavating limestone to build Rock Castle.

Her childhood would have been filled with threats of Indian attacks and with isolation, the nearest neighbor being several miles

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Pictured in the Nov. 10, 2010 *News Examiner*, Sumner Sheriff's men break up a still on the Tom Link farm

1903: Gallatin Vote Ushers In Prohibition

By Tim Takacs

A heavy rain fell throughout Election Day, 1903. Mud and water stood ankle-deep around the polls at the courthouse on the square at Gallatin.

In a town of 4,000 inhabitants, only 187 votes were cast. Notwithstanding the light turnout, the outcome of the vote was never in doubt. On that winter day, Feb. 14, 1903, the citizens of the city of Gallatin voted *to surrender* their charter of incorporation to the Tennessee General Assembly and become an unincorporated town. The vote allowed Gallatin to embrace prohibition.

The Temperance Movement in Tennessee

General interest in prohibition waxed and waned in Tennessee in the latter half of the nineteenth century. As early as 1829, the Sumner County Temperance Society, an auxiliary of the American Temperance Society, was organized, but it and the temperance movement appeared to wield little influence in the political, economic, and social affairs of the county.

By the 1880s, however, temperance societies could be found in most Tennessee counties. In 1880, the Independent Order of Good

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Salt Licks, Springs and Public Areas in Davidson, Sumner

By Jack Masters

Early in Middle Tennessee's history, salt licks and springs were designated as public lands, not to be used as land grants. In 1783, North Carolina established a Military Reservation in what is now northern Middle Tennessee. The Reservation included Davidson County and later Sumner County, which was formed in 1786 from lands originally designated as Davidson County.

Currency poor but land rich, North Carolina intended to award land for military service. The state recognized the importance and potential scarcity of salt and established areas where salt could be obtained by all. The North Carolina Commissioners set aside Public Areas for the purpose of extracting salt from licks and springs. No grants were issued that included any of the salt licks or springs.

The physical confines of the several areas set aside by the Commissioners in North Carolina for salt licks and springs can be located primarily by the physical features of the grants surrounding them. It is evident that the deputy surveyors knew exactly the locations of the various areas; however, I have never seen a survey associated with any of the areas in question. Land adjacent to designated areas, which normally included 640 acres, was considered very desirable and was quickly taken up after the establishment of the areas.

Listing of North Carolina Public Areas in Davidson, Sumner Counties

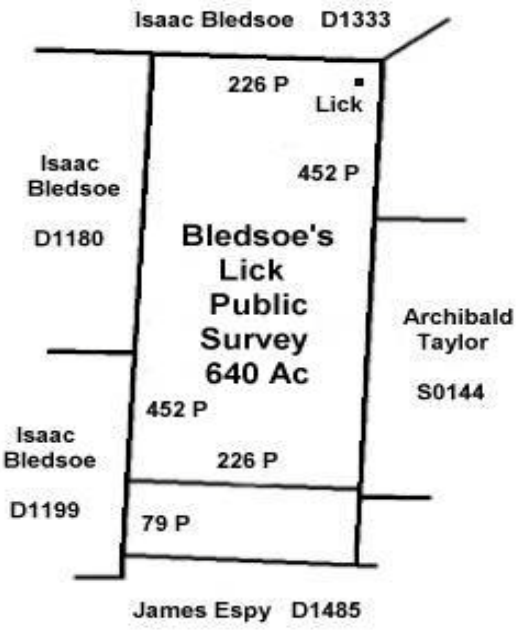
Bledsoe's Lick 640 Acres
Drake's Lick 580 Acres
Maddison's Lick 640 Acres
Neely's Lick 640 Acres
French Lick 200 Acres
Denton's Lick 365 Acres
Heaton's Lick
Mansker's Lick 640 Acres
Stoner's Lick 365 Acres

Realizing that salt extraction was primitive and that only limited amounts could be efficiently produced, the North Carolina Legislature issued Legislation on Nov.15, 1789, to hold public auctions to dispose of the salt licks and springs along with their adjacent 640 acres of land.

Also stipulated by North Carolina was the requirement of advertisements of the pending sale at the local court houses for a minimum of three months. Proceeds were to go for various improvements in the district. One final requirement was that the new owners would not enclose the lands to exclude livestock.

The survey of Bledsoe's Lick illustrates how land grants were situated around public licks. **(See LICKS, Page 3)**

LICKS, Continued from Page 2



Bledsoe's Lick Public Survey 640 Acres

The location shown for the lick corresponds exactly with the present location at Castalian Springs. Distances for each of the sites are listed in poles which correspond exactly to the 640 acres specified.

Surveyors in the adjacent survey all call for the corners or lines contained in the survey. Isaac Bledsoe owned three grants north and west of the survey which would be considered extremely valuable property.

The surveyors plat for the disposition of Bledsoe's Lick is shown below. The surveyor started the plat adjacent to the lick; his first call was south 426 ½ poles. The orientation can be confusing since the surveyor chose to show the "South 426 ½ poles as a horizontal line rather than vertical. I have come to believe the reason for this is simply the potential to run out of paper should it be shown any other way.

Edward Douglass and Isaac Bledsoe 640 Acres – Salt Lick and Spring known by the name of Bledsoes Lick, Grant 2583 Issued 17 Dec 1794, S1014

Jack Masters and Bill Puryear co-authored a trilogy on the history of the Cumberland Settlements. Additional details on this subject and others may be seen at: www.cumberlandpioneers.com

The Gambling House (above), built of logs in 1792, was destroyed by fire this January. This old photo shows: (l. to r.) William T. Daughtry and Mrs. Daughtry, June Daughtry Buck, Mrs. Richard Bennett, Mamie Leggett Briley, Mrs. Thomas Leggett, Elber Leggett, Thomas "Dan" Leggett, Mrs. Whitnell Leggett, Richard Leggett, Henry Cummings, James Daughtry, Sewell Daughtry, Mrs. Uriel Mitchell, Arthur Leggett Cummings.

Historic James Gambling House Destroyed

By Ken Thomson, president SCHS

On Sunday, Jan. 19, 2014, fire razed one of Sumner County's oldest houses. Built in 1792 by Revolutionary War veteran James Gambling, the house was on an 85-acre tract that he purchased from Justinian Cartwright for 50 pounds North Carolina currency.

The house was a typical double pin log house with a second story. Each room had a stairway that led to the room above. At the rear of the dwelling was a detached kitchen and smoke house.

The land was originally a portion of a 640-acre pre-emption land grant to George Payne in 1788. On the adjoining property, Station Camp Baptist Church was established in 1796 and today remains an active congregation.

Prior to building the house, Gambling served in the Continental Army from Camden, N.C., in the 2nd Regiment under Col. Alexander Martin with Major White as Corporal. Gambling joined Gen. George Washington's Army in Philadelphia and was involved in the Battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth.

Besieged in Flank's Point Fort on North (Hudson River), Gambling was taken prisoner and kept in close confinement for two months in the notorious British prison, "The Sugar House," in New York City. He was exchanged and sent to Charleston, S.C. Gambling served in the war a total of four years.

James Gambling was a son of John Gambling, a native of England, and his wife Mary Terry, who migrated from North Carolina to Maury County, Tenn., where she and her husband lived out their lives.

In 1780, James Gambling married Mary Stalcup. She was a daughter of Errick and Mary Twiggs Stalcup, both natives of New Castle County, Delaware, who had settled in North Carolina.

In their Sumner County home, James and Mary reared their family, who intermarried with the Strother, Cotton, Hollis, Pitt and other neighboring families in the Cottontown Community of Sumner County. James died here at age 91 in 1843, and Mary died here at age 91 in 1850.

In 1851, the heirs sold their farm to Whitmill Leggett, Sr., for $2,000. This property remained in the Leggett family for 163 years and is currently the property of Whitmill Leggett Sr.'s great-great grandson Vance Cummings, who occupied the house until it was razed by fire.

Sumner County Archives Resources

Tax Record Index 1787-1870 Created

By Randy Tatum, SC Archive Assistant

They may seem like dusty old files filled with nothing but lists and numbers, but old tax records can be a wealth of information for those searching for any tidbit that will help them along on their family genealogy search.

You can find answers to such questions as whether your ancestors were owners of property or where they lived in Sumner County. Were they affluent enough to afford slaves, stud horses, a pleasure carriage or gold and silver watches?

To make searches through tax record books easier, the Sumner County Archives staff has been indexing old tax records that date as far back as 1787.

Early Organization of Records

Tax records in Sumner County were first organized by Militia District.

In the early days of Sumner County, settlers were widely scattered up and down the Cumberland River as far north as the Kentucky border. Tennessee counties, like those in many other states, were originally divided into Militia Districts. These districts were created to organize military companies to defend the area from Indian raids or other threats. The Militia Districts were also used as divisions for census taking, voting, organizing road maintenance and taxation.

A militia captain was selected to represent each district to coordinate these needs. As a county continued to grow, these districts eventually became what we now refer to as numbered civil districts instead of being referred to as a Captain's district. Militia and later civil districts did not adhere to county lines.

Many of the early tax records at the archives include areas that are now in other counties, which were formed out of Sumner, including Wilson, Smith, Macon and Trousdale. It is helpful for genealogists to know when these counties were formed as they look for their ancestors. It may be that families in these counties were a part of Sumner at some time in the past.

The names listed in these records were not organized alphabetically, and finding a person's name can be time consuming. In addition, names are sometimes difficult to read since they were handwritten. Also, genealogists must be aware that the enumerators of the lists spelled names as they sounded, not necessarily as they were. Also, writing skills among enumerators varied and were sometimes poor.

The records typically list the number of white male polls above 18 or 20 years of age, the number of black polls, the number of acres owned, if any, and in the early years the property location in relation to a watercourse such as a creek or river.

They may have included information such as the ownership of stud horses or a pleasure carriage, items that could be an indication of how affluent they were in the community.

Many of the tax records are missing, and some of the later years during this time period are incomplete.

Nevertheless, these records can be a valuable resource to place your ancestor at a particular location and time, and possibly give you a feel of their status in the community. They can also indicate when people arrived here or left the county to move on to other regions of the country.

Counties Formed From Or Linked to Sumner Co.

1786: Sumner from Davidson
1799: Smith from Sumner
1799: Wilson Co. from Sumner
1801: Jackson from Smith
1806: White from Smith, Jackson, Overton
1809: Humphries from Smith, Stewart
1842: Macon Co. from Sumner, Smith
1842: Putnam from Smith, White, Dekalb, Overton, Jackson
1870: Trousdale from Macon, Smith, Wilson
1870: Pickett from Overton, Fentress

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Elmer Hinton Put Portland on the Map

By Albert Dittes

When Elmer Hinton died at the age of 74 in 1979, obituaries referred to him as an "author, gospel singing advocate, dispenser of country wit and homespun virtue and a veteran *Tennessean* columnist affectionately known as 'Uncle Elmer'." And the *Tennessean* itself described him a "columnist and reporter for this newspaper for 37 years." His boss, publisher John Siegenthaler, wrote, "Elmer Hinton was a great human being. He had the qualities that made him an outstanding journalist: brains, heart, wit and a tremendous insight into the human personality."

The Nashville *Banner* wrote that his "characters such as Old Bluestreak, Cousin Nud and the feed mill keg-sitters gave a generation respite from modern day pressures. His homespun humor and wisdom appeared daily in the *Tennessean* column Down to Earth for nearly 30 years and weekly since 1972."

Knowing his serious side, another writer commented, "As much as he enjoyed the simpler things of life, he did not shy from involvement with the hard realities of a modern society."

Elmer Hinton, the country boy from Mitchellville, was famous with newspaper readers as a wisecracking, yarn-telling country humorist, but he also left a lasting mark on Portland through his popularity and also by promoting his beloved hometown with public relations and political action. He served on the Sumner County Court for 18 years, including the road committee, which made Hwy. 109 a reality. During his first term as mayor of Portland, the great Strawberry Festival began. The second time voters elected him, Portland laid the foundation for future industrial development by starting its important natural gas distribution system.

Hinton was born on April 26, 1905, on the family farm to Jesse and Lou Canida Hinton. His education, following the great American tradition of Abraham Lincoln and Mark Twain, came from a rural grade school, the family farm and sawmills. He learned printing as a young man and married Lucille Woods in 1926. Together they founded the *Upper Sumner Press* in 1931, and Hinton wrote a weekly column, "Hog Head and Hominy." The paper merged with the *Portland Herald* in 1942, and the entire enterprise sold in 1948.

Elmer Hinton (Sumner County Archives)

By that time, Hinton was involved in Portland politics and was a state editor, reporter and columnist for the *Tennessean*. He was first elected mayor of Portland in 1939. A letter shows him writing to a company in Indiana, encouraging them to move to Portland. That effort fell through, but celebrating the harvest of a bumper strawberry crop did not. The first strawberry festival in 1940 attracted 10,000 people.

The outbreak of World War II in 1941 put this event on hold, but it resumed after the war. Hinton used his position at the *Tennessean* to give the festival full coverage, making it a premier event attracting governors and senators. The *Tennessean* called the 1954 Strawberry Festival "the gander pullingest, peafowl pickingest, hog callingest to-do ever held in Middle Tennessee."

Hinton built Uncle Gabe, a character first created in the *Upper Sumner Press*, into a "rugged, jolly, snaggle-toothed, balding and unpredictable old gentleman who once jumped to his feet in church and called the preacher a liar. . . unforgettable,

(See ELMER, PAGE 7)

ELMER, Continued from Page 6

outlandish, an old scounderel, a reprobate and a card." His Down to Earth columns like "Real Fiddlin at Hardison's," "Chiggers and Pickin' Poke," "Don't Fret, Spring will get here" and "You can't fool a goose," also reflected his country humor. His last column—Nov. 25, 1979—was "A device to put a Bee in your Bonnet."

For many years, Elmer Hinton's column kept readers informed about when to plant, fish, harvest, butcher and give thanks, wrote Kathleen Gallagher of the *Tennessean.* "Whether it's the origin of an expression like 'jackleg' or the exact duration of the Dog Days, every subject gets a thorough discussion, with plenty of comments from the keg-sitters and the readers…Down to Earth has frequently provided city folks with a link to their rural roots. It's nostalgic, it's non-violent, and it promotes harmony between the good earth and the good people."

Gallagher wrote that Hinton never could figure out whether his column had more appeal with country or city folks. The head of the medical school at Vanderbilt was one of his most faithful readers. Gov. Buford Ellington was also among his faithful followers.

Hinton claimed to get most material for his columns from reader mail and his keg-sitter friends at United Farm Supply in Portland. Gallagher visited there one day and found the Hinton gang in full force, "playing checkers, drinking sassafras tea, and handing out advice on whittling, beekeeping and birdhouse making."

Hinton wrote serious stories for the *Tennessean* as well and garnered his share of journalistic awards. In 1950, *Official Detective Stories* magazine featured him for identifying a waitress found murdered in Franklin, Tenn., without ever seeing the body. By telephone, Hinton had learned that a slip of paper beside the murdered woman's body listed a street address but no town. Hinton recalled that address being in Portland. This information led to the arrest and conviction of a mother and son.

In 1957, Hinton went to Alexandria, Tenn., to write a story about its telephone system and came back with an idea for an all-day gospel sing there. His first Gospel Sing attracted 500 people, and the show grew. The *Tennessean* and local Lions Club co-sponsored it. People enjoyed good food and heard their favorite gospel groups perform, all with Elmer Hinton as master of ceremonies. Song directors from across the Mid-State were a big part of the program.

Hinton semi-retired in 1972 and cut back his Down to Earth columns to once a week. It gave him more time to spend with his "keg-sitting cohorts" and to operate a print business with his wife and son.

A heart attack ended his life in 1979. "With his passing, an era has ended," commented the *Tennessean*. "He probably would grieve for the city folks who won't have the chance to learn about their country roots, to remember or learn through his words the joy of living a simple life."

Annual Historical Society Dinner, Membership Drive

The Sumner County Historical Society's annual dinner meeting will be Thursday, April 24, at 6:30 p.m. in the First Baptist Church Bldg. B, located at 290 E. Winchester St. in Gallatin. Food will be by Dessie's Catering Service.

SCHS President Ken Thomson will be the featured speaker with a talk about Peter Vertrees (1840-1926), noted Gallatin African American minister of the First Baptist church for 60 years. Vertrees was a Confederate soldier, serving as a bodyguard and cook for his white soldier uncle. Vertrees was a Quadroon and was never a slave.

Though invitations to the dinner are being mailed to members, the SCHS welcomes anyone who wants to attend. Reservations are necessary. Cost is $17.50 per person.

For reservations or if you wish to become a member of the society, contact:
Bonnie Martin, Sumner County Archives
365 N. Belvedere Dr.
Gallatin, TN 37066

You may call the archives at 452-0037. SCHS membership is $25 per family or $20 for an individual or $10 for a student. All current members are asked to renew. Also, the organization is always eager to find new members who enjoy local history.

How Nickelson Souvenirs Ended Up Back Here

By Ken Thomson, President of SCHS

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a story in the January newsletter about the Nickelson family.

The Nickelson family, which lived on North Water Ave. in Gallatin in the 1800s, is remembered in local history for its prominence, its idiosyncrasies and because of family historical documents and souvenirs, including a handmade purse that family patriarch Samuel Nickelson took with him to the California gold rush. These items were donated to the Sumner County Museum.

Their return to Gallatin provides what the late Paul Harvey used to call *"the rest of the story"* about the Nickelson family.

Three of Samuel and Darthula Nickelson's grown children—Edwin, Leola and Victoria (both unmarried)—kept the Nickelson house after the 1904 death of their mother, buying out other siblings. But when Edwin died in 1918, Leola and Victoria were forced to sell their home of 51 years. (Note: The house was destroyed sometime later, but there are a few old-timers who remember it and its residents.)

A few years earlier the two maiden sisters had taken in their great niece, (Mary) Frances Brown. She was the granddaughter of their sister, Ophelia King, who was also Victoria's identical twin. *(The twins were so close that both marched down the aisle when Ophelia married; both wore wedding gowns, and Victoria went along on the honeymoon.)* Ophelia's daughter, Hattie, and Newton Edward Brown, married as teenagers in 1909 and divorced soon after Frances' birth. Hattie moved to Chicago, leaving Frances to be reared by the aunts.

With their home sold, Leola, Victoria and young Frances moved to Nashville to live with another niece, Victoria Ophelia King. Leola lived into her 95th year and Victoria into her 90th. At age 18, Frances fulfilled her lifetime dream and joined her mother, then married to Claude W. Poe, in Chicago.

Frances married and divorced twice in the 1930s before meeting her husband of 60 years, Solomon Maurice Solares, on a holiday in Mexico. He died in September 2004, and she died two months later. The couple lived their last 40 years as virtual recluses in Farina, Ill., in a house crammed with Frances' purchases and keepsakes.

Frances' death opened a Pandora's Box. Acquaintances knew of no relatives, and no one came forward to claim the estate. In Illinois, anyone to whom money is owed by a person who dies intestate can file for papers of administration to get paid. The funeral filed and hired an attorney, Mark Haney, to handle the legalities. Thus, e process of finding Frances' family was set in motion.

To the surprise of all involved, they learned that Frances had two living half sisters—Jane Brown Patterson of Georgia and Ann Brown Tru of Nashville—the children of Frances' father Newton Edward Brown by his second and third wives. Jane recalled meeting Frances when she was a child, but Ann did not know she existed. Ann's mother kept secret the fact that her husband had married three times and divorced his first wife, Hattie.

Both Jane and Ann were overcome with the developments surrounding their unexpected inheritance. Jane said, "This is all becoming an unusual event in my late life, an extended fairly tale."

Attorney Haney contacted Gallatin officials, looking for an appropriate repository for historical Nickelson pictures, documents and other items. Consequently, some of these things were placed in the Sumner County Archives and the Sumner County Museum. Among the Nickelson treasures is a photo of Samuel Nickelson's Woolen Mills, c. 1870, the oldest known photo of Gallatin.

Hugh Rogan: His Local Descendants

By Luke Corbitt

(Editor's Note: Luke Corbitt, who wrote this story, is the historical society's youngest member. He is a home-schooled 15-year old with a passionate regard for our local history.)

Marion Thomas "Chet" Rogan, of Gallatin, is one of the few descendants left in Sumner County of the well known Irish pioneer, Hugh Rogan.

When I decided to include Rogan into a "work-in-progress" book of genealogy that I am writing, I tried to locate descendants that still live in the area. My grandmother, also my partner in genealogy, referred me to her friend Clara Rogan, Chet's wife, for information about the family.

We visited Clara Rogan at her house to discuss our ancestors and my goal of including her in my book. I knew from talking to her over the phone that she was interested in genealogy and had many old documents and papers about the Rogans that I had never seen before. We talked for hours, and she shared stories of her parents and grandparents that she remembered from when she was little. I took down all of the information so that I could get to work on the Rogan family tree.

Chet Rogan is the son of Richard Rogan (1885 – 1969) and Betty Lee Duncan (1903 – 1988). Richard and Betty Lee are buried in the Mount Zion Cemetery off of Hwy. 31. Richard Rogan was the son of David Augustine Rogan and Sarah V. Rogan. David Augustine was born at Rogana (the Hugh Rogan home) on May 26, 1859. His wife, Sarah was born in 1868 somewhere in Sumner County.

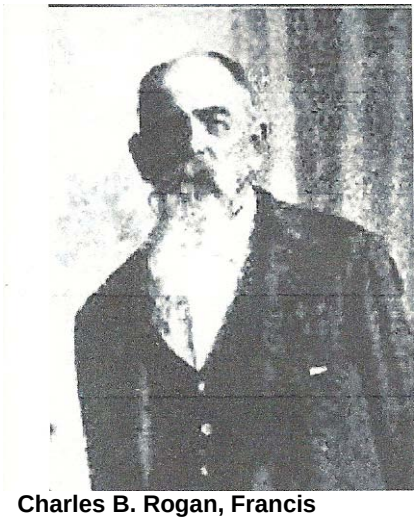
I discovered that David Augustine was the child of two Rogan slaves: Anthony Simpson and Pomilia Rogan. Anthony and Pomilia were born, lived, toiled, and died at Rogana. Pomilia was one of the many illegitimate children of Francis (Frank) Rogan, Hugh's youngest son.

Francis Rogan was born on Sept. 14, 1798, at Rogana. He grew up there and built his brick home onto his father's home, Rogana. The house has since been moved to Ireland, where it is now a historic site in Glentown park. We know that Francis owned slaves and had children with many of them. We found records that listed all of his many illegitimate children.

Francis eventually married a woman named Martha Lytle Read on March 21, 1831, in Sumner County. They had five children: Catharine, Clarissa, William Read, Charles B. (Bernard most likely), and John Montgomery. Francis died on Sept. 26, 1885, at the age of 87, at Rogana.

To summarize: Frances Rogan had a child named Pomilia with a slave girl. She grew up at Rogana, and married another slave named Anthony. Pomilia and Anthony lived at Rogana and had a child named David Augustine. David married Sarah V. Rogan and had a son named Richard. Richard married Betty Lee Duncan and had a son named Marion Thomas "Chet" Rogan, who still lives happily in Gallatin with his wife, Clara.

William Read Rogan, Francis Rogan's oldest son



Charles B. Rogan, Francis Rogan's second son

Nashville Falls in February 1862

Morgan Brings the Fight to Gallatin in March

By Jan Shuxteau, editor

In his 1982 book, *Rebellion Revisited*, the late historian Walter Durham of Gallatin tells the story of Sumner County after the Confederacy's defeat at Fort Donelson and the subsequent surrender of Nashville on Feb. 25, 1862.

It was less than three weeks after Nashville fell that fight came to Sumner County, when Capt. John Morgan's Confederate Calvary staged a daring raid in Gallatin. Locals were still reeling from the knowledge that so many friends and neighbors in the Confederate army had been captured at Fort Donelson and were now prisoners of war. "Among the troops surrendered at Fort Donelson was the largest number of Sumner Countians taken by the enemy at any time or place during the war," wrote Durham. They were loaded on steamboats and transported up the Mississippi River to Camp Butler in Illinois, Camp Chase and Johnson's Island in Ohio, Camp Warren in Massachusetts and elsewhere.

At about the same time, Union troops began moving through Sumner County from Kentucky, heading south on L&N trains, and federal leaders decided to make a public display of their presence in the area. "The imminent arrival of the first federal troops at Gallatin was signaled in the streets by the excited cry, 'The Yankees are coming!' Church bells were tolled as for a funeral, and some citizens draped white bed sheets from the windows of their homes," Durham wrote. These first soldiers got off the train at the railway station in Gallatin, assembled behind a brass band and marched to the public square while frightened citizens watched. They left quickly; no troops stayed behind in the city.

News that Gallatin was unguarded inspired Morgan to make a dash into Sumner County to try to halt the flow of troops on the L&N. "Taking a detachment of 40 men, Morgan moved under cover of night to Lebanon, crossed the Cumberland River at Canoe Branch Ferry on March 16, and descended [unexpectedly] on the Wynne home at Castalian Springs for breakfast about 10 o'clock in the morning," Durham wrote. The men, dressed in captured Yankee overcoats, caused an initial panic for the Wynnes who were hiding a few southern soldiers in the house. The Wynnes and a few near neighbors speedily provided 43 breakfasts for Morgan's men.

By noon they were on their way to Gallatin, arriving at the edge of town about 3 p.m. Morgan and three of his men, disguised as federal agents, went to the L&N depot, where they took the telegraph operator, his instruments and books. Joined by the remaining men, Morgan captured train crewmen and carpenters repairing the road. They seized an engine and all the rolling stock in the Gallatin yard, including 15 or 16 cars of a construction train, which they burned. They destroyed the huge water tank at the depot early the next morning.

That same morning, Morgan and a few aides drove the engine a short distance north of town, searching unsuccessfully for a mail train that was due to arrive. Deciding that its lateness signified that Yankees had discovered their presence, they hurried back to the depot where they destroyed the engine. "The entire populace seems to have turned out to cheer and assist the soldiers in their preparations to depart," wrote Durham. "Many Gallatin people followed Morgan's detachment to the river where the prisoners, under guard, were pushed across."

The extensive destruction of the railroad at Gallatin was noticed as far away as Chicago. "A correspondent for the *Chicago Times* looked beyond conventional military operations for an explanation of the Rebel success," wrote Durham. "It was no mystery, he [the correspondent] said, nor was it solely the work of Morgan's men. He explained: 'Gallatin is a hot bed of treason.'" The article went on to blame Gallatin attorney Jo Guild for masterminding the raid, but investigation by Col. David R. Haggard, fifth Kentucky Cavalry, USA, proved this to be untrue. Guild had been at the depot asking Morgan not to burn the station or inflict other damage that would hurt the town.

"To guard against a recurrence of the embarrassing raid, a Federal garrison was established at Gallatin. On March 22, two companies of the Ninth Pennsylvania Cavalry…were ordered to Gallatin," Durham wrote. "A few days later, the Fifth Regiment Kentucky Cavalry, Col. Haggard commanding, joined them. On March 31, Col. Haggard and his 789 men were officially mustered into service at Camp Sandidge at Gallatin."

POLLY, Continued from Page 1

away. Her older brother, George, would have been her main companion, and both would have been educated at home in their early years. As a child, Polly scrawled this verse in the family Bible:
Mary Ann Michie is my name,
And happy is my life.
Happy will the young man be
Who gets me for a wife.

Elopement With Donelson

When Polly was 15, she fell in love with Samuel Donelson, son of Col. John Donelson and brother-in-law of Andrew Jackson. Samuel was a young attorney of good family, an outstanding match for Polly. But her father, Gen. Daniel Smith, thought Polly too young to marry and refused his consent. He had made grand plans to send her to his sister, Lydia Hansborough in Philadelphia, to attend a school for young ladies. She pleaded with her father to reconsider, as did her mother, reminding Smith that she was 15 when they married.

Before Smith could send Polly to Philadelphia, and with the encouragement of Andrew Jackson, the young lovers decided to elope. One night in April, 1796, Donelson, Jackson and another brother-in-law, John Caffrey, came on horseback and helped Polly escape. They crossed the Cumberland to Jackson's home, Hunter's Hill, where Rachel and a preacher were waiting. Polly and Sam were married that night.

Jackson was left with the task the following day of crossing the river again, this time to tell the Smiths that their child was now a married woman. Smith responded, "Tell her to forget that she has a father and mother, and we shall forget that we ever had a daughter. Tell Sam Donelson to keep out of my way." The following year, when Polly had General Smith's first grandson, apparently all was forgiven.

A Second Marriage, 18 Children

Sadly, Sam Donelson only lived nine years, leaving Polly a widow at 24 with three small sons. John Samuel Donelson was born in 1797, Andrew Jackson Donelson in 1799 and Daniel Smith Donelson in 1801. The sons became the wards of Andrew Jackson, sometimes living at the Hermitage.

A year later, Polly married James Sanders (as in 'Sanders Ferry'), a major landowner and widower with six children. He lived across Drakes Creek from Rock Castle and was a friend of her father. Together, they had nine more children, making Polly the birth mother of 12 and step-mother to six more!

The Sanders' were leaders in the Methodist Church, giving land for a meeting house. The graveyard of this church is still visible from the access road to Sanders Ferry Park.

Sadness came to the family in 1817 with the death of Polly's firstborn, John Samuel (Jacky) Donelson. The following year, she mourned the death of her father.

James Sanders did not have a good relationship with his Donelson stepsons. Their care and education was provided solely by Andrew Jackson. In 1823, the Donelsons and the Sanders became embroiled in an inheritance dispute. At issue was the land that had belonged to their father, Samuel Donelson. Polly wanted to sign over the deed to her sons, but her husband refused, stating that Samuel Donelson's land was his and his alone. Further, the stepsons accused Sanders of being abusive to them as children and to abusing Polly. They severed their ties with Sanders, and even after his death in 1836 remained estranged from Polly.

Polly lived until 1857. She was laid to rest in the Methodist graveyard at Sanders Ferry beside James Sanders and his first wife, Hannah. In the 1970s, her marker and that of Sanders were moved to the Rock Castle property. Her stone reads, *"Truly a Mother of Israel,"* likening her 12 children to the 12 tribes.

Pictured in the *News Examiner*, Chief Roberts of Sumner County impounds a still

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Templars was active in Sumner County; around 1900 Sumner County's chapter of the Anti-Saloon League organized.

The Four Mile Law

The first major anti-liquor legislation in Tennessee was enacted into law by the General Assembly in 1877, at the behest of the University of the South in Sewanee. Major G.R. Fairbanks, the school's business manager, begged the legislature to do something to stop the saloons, which his students were frequenting all too often.

The law prohibited sales of intoxicating beverages in an unincorporated area of the state within four miles of a chartered school – hence, "the Four Mile Law."

Ten years later, the state's anti-saloon interests succeeded in extending the Four Mile Law's reach – this time, the law prohibited the manufacture and sale of liquor within four miles of *any* school, public or private. The defect in the original law had been remedied, driving the saloons out of almost every rural area of the state.

The Local Option

State Senator J.J. Coile, who represented Cocke, Jefferson, Sevier, and Hamblen counties, had objected to the bill because it took from the public the right to vote. Passage of the bill, he predicted, would concentrate the manufacture and sale of intoxicating beverages in incorporated cities and towns.

Indeed, Coile's predictions proved true. By 1899, for instance, eight saloons were located in Gallatin – one for every 500 inhabitants. Further, the second Four Mile Law prompted pro-saloon interests to petition the General Assembly to incorporate virtually every little village in Tennessee, whether its citizens were ready for self-government or not, or even whether the citizens themselves sought the benefits of the law.

Clearly, for the prohibitionists, more needed to be done to "fight to the death" against the saloons, said Anti-Saloon League president Edgar E. Folk.

In 1899, the third Four Mile Law was enacted into law, extending prohibition to towns of not more than two thousand inhabitants that incorporated after the passage of the law. In 1903, the General Assembly passed the fourth Four Mile Law (House Bill No. 1 and Senate Bill No. 1), which allowed the citizens of any incorporated town of five thousand persons or less to incorporate after the law was passed.

Wrote the Nashville *American* on January 13, "This leaves the matter to the vote of the people, and is the issue upon which the League has made its campaign."

The New City of Gallatin

After the 1903 amendment to the Four Mile Law was enacted, Gallatin's Anti-Saloon League immediately put measures on the ballot to un-incorporate and then reincorporate.

The bill to repeal Gallatin's charter was introduced in the General Assembly in mid-March. The corporation of the city of Gallatin, in continuance existence since 1817, expired on the 30th day of May, 1903, at 11:59 P.M. For one minute, the assets of the unincorporated town of Gallatin passed into the hands of a receiver, Charles A. Foster. At the stroke of midnight, May 31, the new corporation of the city of Gallatin came into being.

By mid-summer, all of its saloons were closed. Gallatin and Sumner County were dry.

Editor's Note: Tim Takacs, a Hendersonville attorney, is also the author of *The City by the Lake: A History of Hendersonville, Tennessee 1780-1969.*