
Family Tales

Compiled and Edited by Steven Davis



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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the memory of my father, Larry Melvin Davis.



FORSYTH - Larry Melvin Davis, 76, passed away June 20, 2009, at the Medical Center of Central Georgia in Macon. He was born October 17, 1932, and was a long time resident of Monroe County. He graduated from Mary Persons High School in Forsyth in 1949, and attended the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

Mr. Davis retired from Robins Air Force Base after a career of 37 years. A devout Christian, he had been a long time deacon, adult Sunday School teacher, and treasurer of Midway Baptist Church in Lizella. He was a member of St. Andrew Christian Church in Macon. His hobby was genealogy and family history.

Mr. Davis was preceded in death by his parents, James Daniel "Dan" Davis and Jane (Childs) Davis. Survivors include his wife of 54 years, Ann (Pierson) Davis; children, James Steven Davis, Janice Dianne Davis Mallory, and John Carey Davis; son-in-law, Paul S. Mallory; grandchildren, Leah Pierson Davis Mallory, Paul Steven Mallory, Jr., James Daniel Davis II, Amanda Davis, and Alyssa Davis; brother and sister in law, Ronald and Hilda Davis.

Funeral services will be held at 11AM, Tuesday, June 23, 2009 at St. Andrew Christian Church, 6220 Thomaston Road, Macon, Georgia. The Reverend Bill Tyre will officiate. Burial will be private in the Forsyth City Cemetery. Visitation will be from 6PM until 8PM, Monday, June 22, 2009 at Monroe County Memorial Chapel.

Flowers will be accepted or donations may be made to Hospice of Central Georgia, P.O. Box 6533, Macon, GA 31208.

Monroe County Memorial Chapel has charge of arrangements.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my father, Larry M. Davis, who instilled in me my love for family history; he motivated me to learn as much as possible about my family and inspired my desire to record that history and share it with others. He wrote many of the accounts included in this book; without him, this book would never have been written.

I would like to thank my cousin Patricia Ann "Pat" (Mudgett) DeCaro, who provided "An Episode of the War Between the States," "Letters to Home During the War Between the States," and the obituary of Robert Lee Davis.

Finally, I would like to thank my cousin Elizabeth (Adams) Storey, who provided the accounts of Jeremiah and "Kitty" (Oxford) Pierson and James and Anna (Danielly) Pierson.

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Introduction

My father and I have been working on our genealogy since 1994; he had more than 16,000 people in our family tree file. In the process, we have collected a number of stories about the family and have written a number of “mini-biographies” about family members. While these are included in the genealogies of the various families, I thought that many people who might not be interested in the details of “who begat whom” would be interested in a collection of these accounts. Thus, this book. Sadly, my father passed away before I was able to have the book published.

I have added an introduction to many of the accounts to explain who the key characters were and their relationships to me.

Enjoy!

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Part I – The Joshua Davis Family

Joshua Davis, Sr. and his wife Ruth (her maiden name is unknown) were my great-great-great-great-grandparents. They were early settlers in Jones County, Georgia. About 1854, their son, Joshua B. Davis, Jr., and his wife, Elizabeth “Betty” (Green) Davis, bought the land in Monroe County, Georgia, where my parents now live, and where “An Episode of the War Between the States” took place.

An Episode of the War Between the States

by Robert Lee Davis
as told to Toivo Lindholm

Introduction

The “squirrel hunter,” Joshua James “J.J.” Davis, was my great-great-grandfather. His parents, unnamed in the story, were Joshua and Elizabeth (Green) Davis. The narrator of the story was Joshua’s son, my great-great-uncle, Robert Davis. The story took place in Monroe County, Georgia; when I was a child, we lived in the house that Isaac Pleasant “Bone” Davis built on the site of the original house in the story; my brother, Carey, lives there now.

The Story

This is a story of how during the War Between the States one man escaped hanging through another man's knowledge of his language.

(The narrator of this article is nearing eighty, and has been deaf all his life. He was educated at the Texas School for the Deaf, Austin, Texas, as were his three deaf brothers. He is a graduate of Gallaudet College, Washington, D.C., only college for the deaf in the world. He also has taught at the same Texas school for 48 years until his retirement in 1953 [actually, he retired in 1957].)

Fate had decreed that there should be a streak of deafness in my family. While my grandparents on my father's side were normal, of their twelve children [we have records of only 10 children], three boys were deaf, my future father among them. Some of their offspring in the second and third generations are deaf. My only child, Hazel, is deaf.

There is a story in the family concerning my father during General Sherman's March to the Sea, around 1864.

Events in the daily vicissitudes of life have a way of passing into oblivion, or getting blurred, and, unless revived in the telling, die with the actors of the time or contemporaries. This narration would not have survived, had not my father in his sixties or thereabouts [he died in 1930] turned reminiscent and told this tale to his children. So, here it is, such as I can recall, after checking certain details with my brothers and sisters and other relatives in the know. The tale is necessarily hazy in spots, but otherwise straight.

My future father, Joshua Davis, then 18 and unmarried and not called to war because of his hearing impairment, lived with his parents and deaf brothers near Macon, Georgia [in Monroe County, approximately 17 miles west of Macon], on a plantation with a big mansion with tall columns on the front porch. His father before him had several thousand acres of land; they were all living comfortably and happily.

One day, at the time that General Sherman was making a swath of destruction and pillage from Atlanta, Georgia, to Savannah to divide Southland up and deprive General Robert E. Lee, then in Virginia, of needed provisions for his army, this young man, Joshua, was squirrel hunting in a patch of woods near his home. Suddenly he found himself surrounded by Northern soldiers. He had been so occupied in his squirrel baiting that he had not noticed them creeping up on him – much less knowing war was so near his environs (in the deep South) – for then the war had been so remote to him.

Now he saw the soldiers yelling and threatening – now they were shoving him along. He gesticulated that he was deaf, but they did not seem to believe him. He was handled roughly and pushed along by the butts of rifles, and threatened with bayonets.

Coming into sight of his house, Joshua pointed there and they took him thither. There he saw other soldiers in large numbers milling around, some going in and out the house, hauling out furniture and household goods and food stuff, preparatory to setting the mansion afire.

The boy's captors (he learned later) were yelling they had caught a spy and were calling for a rope. It is not known why they took him for a spy. One can but surmise that his antics in the squirrel chasing had left the suspicion that he was hiding in the woods, dodging behind one tree after another.

Joshua's parents were both out in front of the house surrounded by soldiers. He pointed to them, and they told the captors the boy was their son and he was indeed deaf. But the fever of the soldiers was that of an unruly mob – there being no court of law and order – they were demanding the hanging be now, and questions be bothered with afterwards. They could not afford to dillydally! Not in war!

So Joshua was dragged along awaiting a rope – the parents' screams and implorations availing naught.

At this moment, a Northern officer on horseback rode into the midst of this scene, and a soldier shouted to him that they had caught a spy who pretended to be deaf. The officer reined in his horse and approached the boy, looked at him keenly, and spelled on his hands: “Are you deaf?”

Joshua, electrified that there should be one that could speak the sign language, and inwardly praying that here was succor, indeed, replied gleefully, “Yes!”

“Where were you educated?” was the next question.

“At Cave Spring, Georgia,” the boy spelled out. There indeed was such a school for the deaf there, which still exists to this day.

The officer then looked at his men, perhaps reflecting about their war-crazed attitude in dealing with others – well, such was a by-product of war. He ordered the boy released, the house spared, and the household goods returned to the house. He then dismounted and shook hands with Joshua. The boy thanked the man (and his lucky star) that he had been spared so opportunely. Amazed that the officer should know the sign language, Joshua wanted to know how come. The officer said he had a deaf brother at home in Illinois from whom he had learned the language.

Joshua's parents, greatly relieved at this turn of fortune, invited the officer to stay for dinner. While the dinner was acooking and the table prepared, they all had a nice time conversing in the sign language (it is assumed Joshua's two deaf brothers were included – it is not known what they had been doing all along). After the meal, the officer told the people concerned that his men would camp out ten miles away, and for them to let him know immediately if they were again molested by any of his men.

It is believed that at his stage the officer gave his name, rank, and address. But with the passage of time and the passing of the contemporary actors on the scene, name, rank, and address of the officer were forgotten. Inquires among the descendants living, search among the old papers, even in Georgia and Illinois, brought nothing to light.

Only the tale as given here remains, as told us by Joshua, who in due time married and raised a family of five boys and two girls.

Needless to say, this gallant, humane officer could not prevent the further looting of the premises. The demands of the war and the orders of officers in the higher echelon precluded all else. All the cattle, swine, horses, carriages of all kinds, farm implements, over a hundred bales of cotton valued at around forty thousand dollars (no market for it except in the North) were taken. My grandfather had \$100,000 in gold in a bank. Sherman confiscated it. Grandfather also had a trunkful of Confederate currency – now worthless.

Grandfather now had nothing with which to start new crops. He had no help. But the carpetbaggers, now flocking to the South, were making trouble, threatening Grandfather. Grandfather, helpless, beset with problems, broken in spirit, lived only two years after the war. [Actually, he lived six years after the war, and died in 1871. However, he was indeed broken in spirit; the 1870 census lists him as being “insane”.]

The land was broken up in parcels and sold, vastly below its worth, to meet mounting expenses. The house deteriorated from neglect, was later

torn down, its lumber used on a smaller house, a barn, and several sheds on the place.

Joshua, my father, struggling to make ends meet, eventually on a call from a brother who had preceded him there, moved his family to Texas, where he found happier days and unshackled from the sad past. I was three then [c. 1890], having been born near Macon, Georgia.

Such is the tale of my deaf father who escaped hanging through the providential appearance of one who knew the sign language.

Letters to Home During the War Between the States

Introduction

William Green “W.G.” Davis was my great-great-great-uncle, the oldest son of Joshua and Elizabeth (Green) Davis. His wife was Nancy America (Reynolds) Davis. I find it odd that, in his letters, he calls her “wife” and not by her name.

W.G. Davis enlisted as a private in County A, 1st Independent Battalion Georgia State Troops on October 21, 1861. He mustered out at Camp Lee near Savannah, Georgia, on May 2, 1862. He enlisted as a private in County K, 59th Regiment Georgia Infantry on August 16, 1862.

The First Letter

Orange County, Virginia
Saturday, May 16, 1863

Dear loves you will see we have been moving again. We started from Fredericks Hall where I wrote to you from last Sunday we are now in Orange County 40 miles from the _____ at place about 10 miles from Culpepper Court House where we were last fall before I was at home. So we are some 90 miles above Richmond and about 210 from Franklin where I wrote you from two weeks ago. We have marched all the way except the 35 miles I mentioned from Ives Station to Petersburg. You remember I told you I was afraid we should have to go to Fredericksburg. I have got what I was afraid of; we are now 30 miles from that place & on the upper side, up the river above. We have traveled 30 miles farther than we should have done to have gone straight from Richmond to Fredericksburg & yet we are 30 miles from it, coming a round about way. We have marched the last two days along the road the Yankees traveled a week before with their horses when the clay hills were wet; now it is in an ugly condition too torn all up about half leg deep & dried. I am standing the marching very well, my bowels trouble me a little sometimes but not much. The people in this section are mostly just planting corn, very little

has come up yet. The largest corn I have seen is only about two blades to the stalk, the oak trees are just blooming; peaches what I have seen are about as large as peas. You have probably heard before this reaches you that Stonewall Jackson is dead. He died last Sunday at Guiney's station some 20 or 30 miles from where we were about 3 o'clock in the evening. I am sorry we have lost him, not because I am afraid the Yankees will overcome us, for I don't believe that, but it will do them so much good to know he is gone. I am in hopes they will find his equal in the man who takes his place. The camp where we are now is in plain view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. I think we are close to the battleground at Cedar Run where Jackson whipped the Yankees last August. There are ten thousand of us along here as I told you I believe before. Major General Hood is in command of us all. It is now about 10 o'clock and we are under orders I suppose to march at 2 this evening but I don't know which way. Our caravans are just gone back the way we came. We never know where we are going now when we start we cannot tell which way we are going by the sun. I will attend to that bill of sale for K____ as soon as we get still long enough at a place & send it to you. I have not received a letter from you this week but I am not surprised at it, for the mails are very uncertain & slow coming to us when we are marching. I am in hopes this may find you & the children well. Give my love to Father & Mother, & excuse my short & badly written letter. I am seated on the ground with my back against a pine thicket, the trees about 40 feet high & pretty thick. You wrote to me to write you about what clothes I need. I don't need any at all of any kind & I shall not in some 3 or 4 months. Then I think I can get them from the government, so you need not trouble about fixing any. I wrote you about in my letter last Sunday but I mention it again for fear it may not reach you. Write & tell me about the bees & wheat, & strawberries, & corn, & c. I remain your affectionate husband,

W.G. Davis.

The wheat has not headed here yet, only in the foot.

The Second Letter

Saturday, May 30th 63

Orange County Va. camp near Rappahannock River May 30.

My dear wife,

I have not yet received your letter for this week. I would be glad to hear from you before I write, but I will keep my letter open 'til the mail comes this evening & see if it comes as you were complaining when you wrote. I am anxious to learn how you are. I am in better health now than I was when I wrote last week though I am not entirely well in my bowels. You don't know how much I think about you here. When I am not well I study more about home than ever. I believe the name wife is the dearest name to man in the world, at least I find it so, & long absence only seems to make the tie stronger. It is the hope I have of meeting you again in the world that makes me dread to meet the enemy. For if I was certain I should never see you again it would not make so much difference if I should get killed. Don't conclude from this that we are about to go into a fight. There is no more probability of that now than there has been for a long time. We are yet camped at the same place where we stopped two weeks ago today. My mess sleep here close to a big poplar tree every night; when it rains we stretch up two or 3 the blankets for a tent. It has rained very little since we have been here. It rained a little yesterday evening & looks like rain today. The ground is getting tolerably dry here. The farmers are complaining of their corn drying as it comes up. I have not told you I believe who my mess are. They are John Waldron (he has swapped to our company from Rylanders' battalion). He is the only one you are acquainted with of the mess. The others are Henry Waldron, a younger brother & John & George Hollomon from Crawford County (you recollect their father was killed 4 or 5 years ago there below Mt. Paran Meeting House) & one of brother William Long's sons named Madison & Joe McGee, cousin to Long. So there are seven of us in the mess. You know I told you about our strawberry patch here along the mountains. I ate a little bite of them yesterday evening. There are so many mouths to eat them they come very few to one mouth. They are just beginning to

ripen. Long's brother wrote to him yesterday about blackberry pies at home & our briars are only now blooming. I saw them yesterday. There are a good many dewberries too in our patch here. How much do you think I would give now for a dinner of green peas & Irish potatoes & chicken pie & blackberry tart to be at home & to look at you & the children & the war to be ended and peace made. But I had a chicken and buttermilk pie the other day, a real good stew dumplings. George Hollomon cooked it. We bought a hen for two dollars & 2 small ones a dollar each; they made us a good fry for supper & then the pie for dinner next day. We draw very nice flour & plenty of it & 1/2 lb of bacon a day & some sugar & peas & rice. Peas instead of rice & then rice instead of peas.

It is evening & the mail has come & your letter not come. I should have been glad to have heard from you; but I was disappointed. You have heard the news I reckon of the great fighting in Mississippi at Vicksburg, our people have driven back the Yankees there several times & slain thousands of them; it is said the dead Yankees stink so in front of our breastworks there that our people have to burn tar & c to prevent its making them sick. I am hopes our people may be able by the help of God & _____ to convince the foolish Yankees that they can't whip us and make slaves of us. I saw a report yesterday in the paper that our people have captured a regiment of Negroes in Arkansas & hung them all & the Yankee officers who commanded them. The Yankees in this section I reckon got so badly thrashed by Genl Lee on the 2nd & 3rd of this month that it will take them some time to recruit again for a fight. You must write to me how the wheat is & the crop generally & believe I want to see you very much.

Your affectionate husband
W.G. Davis

The wheat is beginning to head out here; it will generally be not very good here on account of the drought.

Sunday morning May 31st. We are under orders to move this morning at eight o'clock a mile or two only though. You will find a letter in this for Mother which you will see.

Epilogue

On July 2, 1863, shortly over a month after he wrote the second letter, W.G. Davis was killed in action during the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg. As for the other six men in his mess:

John J. Hollomon	Died of typhoid pneumonia in Crawford County, Georgia, September 7, 1864.
George W. Holloman	Captured at Knoxville, Tennessee, November 29, 1863.
Madison Long	Killed in action at Funkstown, Maryland, July 10, 1863.
Joseph S. McGee	Surrendered at Appomattox, Virginia, April 9, 1865.
John P. Waldron	Died in Bibb County, Georgia, date not given.
William H. Waldron	Surrendered at Appomattox, Virginia, April 9, 1865.

Isaac Pleasant “Bone” Davis

Introduction

Issac Pleasant “Bone” Davis was my great-great-great-uncle, son of Joshua and Elizabeth (Green) Davis and youngest brother of Joshua James “J.J.” Davis. His nickname “Bone” came from him being so big; he was anything but as thin as a bone. He married Carolyn Elizabeth “Betty” Davis, better known as “Aunt Betty”.

Uncle Bone

by Larry M. Davis (October 1995)

Uncle Bone was a huge man, and although he died over 12 years before I was born, the stories told about him made him appear to be a legend.

He was one of the best farmers in Monroe County and accumulated almost 2,000 acres of land.

He and his wife Betty first lived in a small house on the east side of Bagley Road. This house was in the edge of the woods and overlooked a spring that was their source of water. Both of their children were born and died in this house.

After his mother, Elizabeth, died, Uncle Bone and Aunt Betty moved into the two story house. About the time Grandpa Carey and Grandma Eula married, he had the old house torn down and a new house built. The new house was built by a contractor, Ruben Gentry, for the price of \$4,200. Long leaf pine was brought from South Georgia for the exterior boards, which were completely knot free. This lumber was delivered to the Moran Station by the Macon and Birmingham (M&B) Railroad. A tenant house was built across the road and other farm buildings were built with lumber salvaged from the old house. Both Daddy and Aunt Nan were born in the new house.

Uncle Bone was not satisfied, however; after a few years, he wanted to move again. He even considered moving to Barnesville at one time. Another piece of property he considered is now the home of the Macon Baptist Association on Georgia Highway 74 (Thomaston Road). He dismissed the thought of any property in Macon as he had a fear of the dam at Jackson Lake breaking and Macon being flooded. Most people thought that this was a foolish idea, but in 1994, I saw the Ocmulgee River flood Macon, even though Jackson Dam held. Just think what would have happened if this 84 year old dam had failed.

About time for Daddy to start to school, Uncle Bone bought the Edmund Jackson place, near Montpelier Springs. It was across the road from his church, Mt. Calvary, and the community school. It also had better roads and a much better source of water. He had T.H. Mosely remodel the house. This consisted of moving the old kitchen back and adding a new kitchen and dining room. The old kitchen was in poor condition and was not attached to the house. Because of the danger of fire, many old houses were built this way. Porches were extended to the northeast corner, down the east side, between the new dining room and the main body of the house, and along the west side of the new kitchen. At some time, carbide gas lights were also installed.

Uncle Bone had lived in the remodeled Jackson house less than two years when there was a heavy snow fall on Christmas Day, 1919. He had always wanted to go rabbit hunting in the snow so he could track the rabbits; this was his first opportunity. After the hunt, he contracted pneumonia. Aunt Betty became ill about the same time and both of my grandparents thought she was about to die. Uncle Bone was moved from their bedroom on the southeast corner of the house to the bedroom on the northeast corner, as Aunt Betty was deathly ill. On January 20, 1920, Uncle Bone died. The next morning, Aunt Betty said she felt good, got up and let the early morning sun come into what had been her sick room, and only then learned of her husband's death. She survived him by 21 years.

Several years ago, I saw an old black man, Buford Rutherford, who said he remembered Uncle Bone and the old two story house. He also said that whenever Uncle Bone would go to a store, he would buy all the black

children penny wheels. Penny wheels no longer exist. Through years of inflation, they got smaller and smaller, but in the early 1900s, it was all a small child could do to eat one.

Prosperity

from *The Monroe County Advertiser* (July 25, 1893)

Prosperity is a good thing to write and talk about, but better to enjoy. While depression and oppression is almost universal in the south, there is an exception in our community in the person of Mr. I.P. Davis (better known as Bone Davis). He takes things like a philosopher. He loves and enjoys prosperity and plenty of everything that is good for the inner and outer man.

He has the finest cotton by far that I have seen. Many of his cotton rows are six feet wide and will soon be locking across the middles, well formed and fruited from the ground. He has fine corn, peas, potatoes, watermelons, fruits of every kind, fat sleek mules and horses, fifteen fine graded Jersey milch cows, making seventy-five pounds of rich butter each week.

Best of all he is a stout, hearty man, and he takes a pleasure in having his friends around him to enjoy all these good things to eat. Go to his home when you may, you can get apple cider from twelve to thirty-six hours old; and with fifteen minutes notice you can have it fresh from the press, the capacity of which is about 25 gallons per hour.

In addition to all these luxuries, all his business moves in perfect order, just like a perfect clock, everything in perfect harmony. All farming business is conducted by the clock and bell.

One of the secrets of his success in farming is, he prepares thoroughly and plants well, fertilizes heavily and cultivates rapidly and well.

Mr. Davis is hard to down any way you take him. He raises the beam at 250 pounds, and can eat and drink (cider) in proportion. If you cannot drink a gallon of cider without stopping; and when seated at his table, if

you cannot eat seven pounds of steak and other things in proportion, he will laugh at you and make you think you are a little man. I have feasted on his hospitality, but always start out reconciled to be beaten and take no exceptions if I come out behind, which I usually do; but still I am not discouraged from trying again.

Indeed it is a real pleasure to meet a dozen of his neighbors at his home and enjoy his jokes, his varied luxuries and exceedingly liberal hospitality. I wish there was a Bone Davis on every hill top in this county. He has had good seasons all the spring and summer.

Some of his neighbors have not been so fortunate; some of us having suffered for rain ten days, but a gentle shower fell on the 18th instant.

Crops are generally poor, both cotton and corn. Stands of corn are defective and the weed small; seems to have been diseased nearly over since it came up. At this time it is the most unpromising cotton crops I ever saw. J.A.D.

Tom Coleman's Death

by Larry M. Davis (August 7, 1995)

I heard this story as a young man and will record it to the best of my memory for the Davis Family records.

March 5, 1917, Tom was riding north in a buggy on a road that connects Tharpe Road to Bagley Road. He beat his horse and the horse kicked him in the head, killing him instantly. After killing Tom, the horse turned left rather than right when he came to Bagley road. The horse was then confused and he turned back to the right onto the driveway leading to the home of Issac Pleasant Davis (Uncle Bone). He went to the rear of the house and stopped.

When Uncle Bone saw the buggy and no one getting out, he went to investigate. Uncle Bone found Tom dead on the floor board and sent for Sheriff T.S. Holland.

The Sheriff came from Forsyth as soon as possible. Forsyth was about 16 miles away and travel was by horse or horse and buggy. The Sheriff did not think it was an accident and placed Uncle Bone under arrest and prepared to take him to jail over the protests of everyone in the house.

As they were preparing to leave, a farm hand by the name of Tom Danielly walked up with the buggy whip in his hand. He told the Sheriff that Tom had passed him as he was working in a field close to the road. He also said that he saw Tom whipping the horse. He did not see the horse kick, but he knew the whip belonged to Tom.

The Sheriff then released Uncle Bone and Tom's death was ruled accidental.

Tom had a son named Thomas Jefferson Coleman that was born September 30, 1917, about five months after Tom's death. Thomas Jefferson Coleman died October 30, 1991.

Robert Lee Davis

Introduction

Robert Lee Davis, the narrator of “An Episode of the War Between the States”, was my great-great-uncle, youngest son of Joshua James “J.J.” and Nancy Louisa “Nannie” (Morris) Davis and brother of my great-grandfather, Carey Melvin Davis.

Obituary for Robert Lee Davis

1887-1973

On November 25 1973, Robert Lee Davis, '09, passed away at Rossmoor Convalescent Hospital, Walnut Creek, California. The immediate cause of his death was anemia, followed by pneumonia.

The youngest of seven children, of whom six were deaf, Robert was born of deaf parents on August 18, 1887, in Smarr, Georgia. When he was three years old, the family moved to Mart, Texas. He attended the Texas School for the Deaf in Austin, graduating with the class of 1904, and from Gallaudet College in 1909. At Gallaudet College Robert participated in numerous activities. He was a member of the baseball team, captain of the track team, and Grand Rajah of the Kappa Gamma Fraternity.

In March of his Senior year he was offered and accepted a teaching position at the Texas School for the Deaf in Austin, and his diploma was later mailed to him. He taught at TSD for 48 years, from 1909 until his retirement in 1957. As alumni editor of the Texas Lone Star for many years, he knew the whereabouts and activities of most of the deaf Texans.

While still an undergraduate at Gallaudet College, he met the girl of his dreams in Edna Rose Congdon, a student at Kendall School from Chicago, Illinois. They were married in 1912 and to this union was born a daughter, Hazel.

A man of humor, great warmth, and impeccable character, Robert was one of the most beloved deaf teachers of the deaf in the United States. This was demonstrated during the A.A.A.D. basketball tournament in Dallas, Texas last April, when he was literally mobbed by former students and well-wishers. Not only was he an exceptional teacher, but he possessed the ability to instill good citizenship, and his skill as a story-teller was legendary.

Among the many tributes to Robert were these:

- was a fine gentleman and a credit to the deaf
- was respected by all who knew him
- had a positive effect on the education and development of many deaf people
- was a great inspiration to many others
- was unequalled as a raconteur with his entertaining style of relating events of by-gone days

Memorial services were conducted in Oakland on November 27 and in Austin, Texas on December 8 with inurnment beside his beloved wife Edna, who preceded him in death in 1956.

He is survived by his daughter, Hazel Davis, ex-'38, a counselor at the Berkeley School and numerous nieces and nephews, among whom are Grace Mudgett, '31, of Jacksonville, Illinois, and Ruth Phillips, ex-'40, of Washington, D.C.

Carey Melvin Davis

Introduction

Carey Melvin Davis was my great-grandfather, son of Joshua James “J.J.” and Nancy Louisa “Nanny” (Morris) Davis, husband of Eula May Davis, and father of James Daniel Davis, Daddy's father.

Grandpa Carey

by Larry M. Davis (October 23, 1995)

Grandpa Carey was born in Monroe County, Georgia, but at a young age, his family moved to Texas in search of a better life [c. 1890, when he was about five years old]. He had normal hearing, but both of his parents and all of his siblings, except Mollie, were deaf. And Mollie was hard of hearing. Therefore, the entire family communicated with sign language. They moved in a wagon; I can remember him telling about walking along with the wagon in sticky black mud and heavy rain.

When he was about 18 years old, Grandpa Carey obtained a job as a fireman on the Central of Mexico Railroad. He also joined the Brotherhood of Firemen and Locomotive Engineers. His duties consisted of shuttling rail cars back and forth across the Rio Grande from rail yards in Mexico and the USA. He thoroughly enjoyed his job and was doing well; however, the union went on strike. He felt that he had to support the union even though he wanted to continue working.

He decided at this point to return to Georgia. His uncle, Isaac Pleasant “Bone” Davis, was living on the old home place; Grandpa Carey decided to live with Uncle Bone and his wife, Aunt Betty.

In order to make the trip, he “rode the rails” from Texas to Atlanta. The rail cars in use at the time had two rods that dropped down from each end to strengthen the chassis. These rods were about two inches in diameter and were spaced about three feet apart. “Riding the rails” meant riding on a freight train by lying across these bars. Grandpa Carey was 19 years old

at the time. He remained a member of the union until his death and set an all-time record for members from Georgia.

Uncle Bone had a large farm operation; Grandpa Carey became his right hand man. Through his association with Uncle Bone and Aunt Betty, he met and later married Aunt Betty's niece, Eula May Davis.

Grandpa Carey and his family lived with Uncle Bone and Aunt Betty as long as they lived. Although Grandpa Carey helped with the farm, he also worked as a carpenter and had several other jobs, including one at what is now Robins Air Force Base. He also cut pulpwood. Some of his carpentry jobs required him to stay in a distant area during the week; he came home for the weekends. At one time, he operated a trolley car in Macon for the Georgia Power Company.

One of the construction jobs Grandpa Carey had was building forms for the concrete work for the Juliette Milling Company's grist mill at Juliette, Georgia. When this mill was completed, it was the largest grist mill in the world. The mill has not been operated in many years, but the building was recently reopened as a mall containing a number of specialty shops.

Grandpa Carey had a problem with his throat; he often got choked when he ate. When Daddy and Aunt Nan were small children, this problem became so bad that his doctor sent him to Johns Hopkins as a last resort. His doctor, and two others who had examined him, told him that he would not live to return home. The doctors at Johns Hopkins fitted him with a feeding tube and taught him how to use it. His condition improved, and he outlived all three of the doctors who had given up on him. However, he continued to have problems swallowing for the rest of his life. The feeding tube was the only thing in Grandma's house that Ronald and I were not allowed to touch; in fact, we never even got a good look at it.

One thing of interest about Grandpa Carey was that he was born left handed, but had a teacher who required him to use his right hand. The result was that he learned to use either hand with equal ease. I have seen him saw a board with a hand saw, switching hands without missing a stroke.

Whenever Grandpa Carey cut fire wood or stove wood for the house, he always used a two man cross cut saw by himself. He would use one that was broken whenever he could, but if he could not find a broken saw, he would simply remove the handle from one end so that he could balance the saw blade better. He would never cut a live tree for wood. He would have sawmill slabs delivered, if possible; if not, he would find a dead tree to cut. I always considered this strange, as he, and Uncle Bone before him, would allow anyone living on the place to cut nice pine trees to burn in charcoal kilns at no charge, and the hardwood trees had no market value anyway.

When Grandpa Carey was young, some members of the Bittick family of Forsyth met him; they liked his name. They named their son Cary (pronounced the same, but spelled without an “e”); he was sheriff of Monroe County when I was a small child. He named his son Cary, and he also served as sheriff of Monroe County for many years. His son is John Cary; he is the current sheriff of Monroe County.

Many years ago, a tuberculosis epidemic swept through Middle Georgia; there was no known cure. On at least two and perhaps three occasions, male members of the McCallum family died from tuberculosis. In those days, family members and friends prepare the deceased for burial. Almost everyone except Grandpa Carey was afraid to be exposed to tuberculosis. He prepared the bodies for burial with no fear for his own health.

Grandpa Carey shaved with a double edge razor; in order to make the blades last longer, he would rub them back and forth inside a small drinking glass.

In his later years, Grandpa Carey would sit in the yard for hours at a time with a small screwdriver, pulling up every blade of grass he possibly could. He wanted a grass-free yard with only sand visible, like the old yards years ago. These sand yards were swept each Saturday with brush brooms made of several small dogwood trees.

Another interesting story occurred during the time the family lived in the old two story house. I think this was before he married Grandma, but she enjoyed telling about it. Grandpa Carey found an old key and patiently filed it to fit the lock on the wine cellar. Whenever Uncle Bone and Aunt Betty had to go to Forsyth or Macon to get supplies and attend to business, Grandpa Carey helped himself to the wine.

James Daniel Davis

Introduction

James Daniel Davis was the son of Carey Melvin and Eula May Davis and was my grandfather, my father's father.

James Daniel Davis

by Larry M. Davis (1996)

Daddy was born at home in the house that Uncle Bone built a few years earlier. His parents lived with and worked for Uncle Bone and Aunt Betty. Before he started to school, the entire family moved into the old Edmund Jackson house and he attended Mt. Calvary School across the road.

As a young man, he was a member of the first generation to have access to an automobile. In the late 1920s, he was driving a Willis-Knight and drinking moderately.

I never heard him call Ronald or myself by our names. I was always Cudda and Ronald was Brother.

When I was about five years old [c. 1937], he was working for Blue Lodge Motor Transport, hauling gasoline from Savannah to Macon. This was before pipelines brought gasoline into Middle Georgia and most petroleum products were brought to Savannah by barge and trucked throughout Georgia and the Carolinas. Blue Lodge had a fleet of White trucks with tanks mounted on the truck chassis and another tank mounted to a four wheel trailer. These rigs had a capacity of about 4,000 gallons. One day, about 40 miles outside Savannah headed for Macon, he met a Model A Ford carrying three or four drunk men. The driver pulled across the center line, forcing Daddy to pull off the road as far as possible. Nevertheless, he hit the car head on, killing three of the occupants. The car's engine was knocked completely out, coming to rest across a field. The truck was left

laying on its right side, bent in the shape of a horseshoe, with gasoline pouring into the ditch. It didn't ignite, however, and Daddy escaped by crawling through the broken windshield. Other than being bruised all over and several bad cuts on the back of his right hand, he was uninjured. This accident contributed to his growing dependence on alcohol.

At one time, he drove a truck delivering meat to stores for Armour. In addition to driving for Blue Lodge, he also hauled gasoline from Savannah for George A. Raymond, Inc., and Petroleum Carriers. He also delivered gasoline locally for Reginald Trice, the Sinclair distributor. About 1943, he drove buses for Southern Stages. Southern Stages had routes to Augusta, Columbus, and several other cities in Georgia that were not served by Greyhound.

Daddy owned and operated nine jukeboxes and other coin operated machines as a sideline. Although he never did this on a large scale, he made a good return on his investments.

Alcohol caused Daddy to lose his job with Southern Stages, so he went to Florida and got a job with Florida Motor Lines. Mama, Ronald, and I moved to Miami in September 1943. Later, we moved to St. Petersburg with him. Sometime after World War II, Florida Motor Lines became part of the Greyhound system; Daddy continued to work for them for several years. He came back to Georgia and hauled pulpwood for a while, but began to drink heavier. He died an alcohol related death in Jacksonville, Florida on January 14, 1956, just over three months before his first grandchild was born. He was only 44 years old.

Nannie Mae “Nan” Davis

Introduction

Nannie Mae “Nan” Davis was my great-aunt, daughter of Carey Melvin and Eula May Davis and sister of my grandfather, James Daniel Davis. Aunt Nan did not have any children; she treated us as her grandchildren and we considered her as another grandmother.

Aunt Nan

by Larry M. Davis (1996)

Aunt Nan attended nursing training at the old Macon Hospital, but she decided she would work as a bookkeeper rather than as a nurse. She lived in Macon and worked for several businesses, working for Mid-State Paint and Appliance Company longer than any of the others.

She was only 18 years older than me, and, since she never had any children, she felt like Ronald and I were her own.

In 1975, Aunt Nan moved back to Monroe County to be close to the rest of the family. After her mother, Eula May, died in 1981, Aunt Nan began cooking for the entire family on special occasions, just as her mother had done. This is a talent that no one knew she had, but she became an outstanding cook. She also became an excellent seamstress. Obviously, she inherited these talents from her mother.

The one thing that impresses me most about her, though, is that she is such a good aunt. [And a wonderful great-aunt! SD]

Part II – The John William Davis Family

John William and Matilda (Coursey) Davis were my great-great-great-great-grandparents. They were also early settlers in Jones County, Georgia; whether John and Joshua were related has not been established. John Davis and his family moved to Taylor County, Georgia; his son, Green William Davis, moved to Bibb County, Georgia and married Ann May. One of their daughters, Carolyn Elizabeth “Betty” Davis, married Joshua and Elizabeth Davis' youngest son, Isaac Pleasant “Bone” Davis. One of their sons, Daniel Searcy Davis, married Hattie Belle Williams, daughter of James Monroe “Jim” Williams and his first wife, Nancy Elizabeth “Nannie” (Jackson) Williams; their daughter, Eula May Davis, married Carey Melvin Davis, son of Joshua James “J.J.” Davis and his wife, Nancy Louisa “Nannie” (Morris) Davis.

Carolyn Elizabeth “Betty” Davis

Introduction

Caroline Elizabeth “Betty” Davis was the daughter of Green W. and Ann (May) Davis, wife of Isaac Pleasant “Bone” Davis, and my great-great-great-aunt.

Old Montpelier College

from *The Macon Telegraph* (1941)

“I was born in the community near Montpelier Springs,” said Norman Davis of the Macon farmer's market, “and I wish the Circle would print the history of the college that once flourished there. I enjoy reading about such things, and I doubt if a more interesting place could be found. I think a Catholic school was there as well as the Episcopal school. I have always heard that a Catholic priest's grave is in the woods nearby, and that he was buried with his head where his feet ought to be. I believe Miss Betty Davis can tell you all about it.”

“Miss Betty Davis” is Mrs. Isaac Pleasant Davis. She resides in the elegant old Edmund Jackson home about a mile from Montpelier Springs, and is now 82 years old. She has been operating the Jackson place since her husband, Isaac Pleasant Davis, died 21 years ago. Her father was Green W. Davis, but was not related to her husband. Her mother was Ann May of Crawford county.

“I was just a little girl,” she says, “when the college was being operated at Montpelier Springs. I think only the Episcopal college was there. I attended the community school at Mt. Calvary Church. The college girls were not allowed to come outside, and we children were not allowed to go inside of the grounds. They had boarding facilities at the Springs, and it was a nice place. I was merely a little girl when the school was abandoned, and I have very little knowledge of it. My husband and I had two children, a boy and a girl, but we lost both of them, one at six years, and the other at nine months. I can't hear very well, and I can't see very

well, and I can't walk very well. My nephew, Carey M. Davis, and his wife live here with me. I was born two miles below here toward Macon. Abe Davis lived near us until he moved to Macon. Miss Lizzie Moran, who married Gus Scott, was raised about five miles above here, and Mr. Scott's son married one of my nieces, Annie Davis.

“My mother and father had nine children, but mother died 20 years before father, and father married twice more, but had no more children. His second wife was Miss Sue Huguley, living about 20 miles above here. His third wife was Mrs. Fannie Whitehurst, and she came from down about Pinehurst. All nine of my mother's children lived to get grown and were married. The oldest was Susie, and the next was John, then Reubin, Elizabeth, Lucy, William, Sally, Robert, and Lee. All of them raised big families except me. I am the last one living.

“I am sorry I cannot tell you more about Montpelier Springs College, but the only picture I have in mind is seeing the girls come to the gate and look out.”

Aunt Betty by Larry M. Davis

I remember Aunt Betty well as I was nine years old when she died. Her name for Ronald was Sonny Boy, but I have forgotten what she called me.

In the interview with the reporter from the *Macon Telegraph* there are several mistakes. This was just a short time before her death and her memory was beginning to fade. Our family history is more correct than the information given in this interview. She omitted two of her brothers. One was Dave Davis, the only one of her siblings that she mentioned in her will; the other was Daniel Searcy Davis, his daughter, Eula May Davis, had lived with Aunt Betty and Uncle Bone ever since Eula married Carey Davis. Another error is that she stated that all of her siblings married and had large families. Her sister Sara had several strokes beginning in her childhood years; she died young and never married. Lee was her sister; her name was Lizzie Leigh Davis.

The night she was on her death bed and knew her time was short, Aunt Betty called for Sonny Boy and told him that he could have Uncle Bone's pistol, but his father was to look after it until Ronald was grown. She had previously given me her gold watch and chain. We still have those items.

Eula May Davis

Introduction

Eula May Davis was my great-grandmother, daughter of Daniel Searcy and Hattie Belle (Williams) Davis, wife of Carey Melvin Davis, and mother of James Daniel Davis, Daddy's father. Note that her middle name, "May", was not a misspelling of "Mae"; "May" was her grandmother's maiden name.

Eula May Davis

by Larry M. Davis (2003)

My grandmother, Eula May Davis was born in the edge of Bibb County and the family lived only a short distance from Midway Baptist Church. When she was about eleven years old the family moved to Dooly County. Her father, Daniel Searcy Davis, was a farmer and the land in Dooly County was much better for farming than the land where he was living so he made this move in search of a better life.

At the time he had eleven children; just as soon as they were old enough to work in the fields, they were required to work in order for the family to be able to maintain a decent living. It did not take long for Eula to have a dislike for this hard, hot work, but she was able to help with the cooking for this large family. She liked cooking so much better than the farm work she soon began to enjoy being able to cook.

In 1910, she married Carey Davis and moved to Monroe County with him. They lived with her aunt, Caroline Elizabeth "Betty" Davis, and Betty's husband, I.P. "Bone" Davis, who was Carey's uncle. She was now just a few miles from where her family had lived in Bibb County and was able to see her old friends and relatives again.

About this time, Uncle Bone and Aunt Betty built a new house and Eula became the cook for the whole family plus farm workers. She got better and better at cooking and Uncle Bone was a big eater and furnished all the

meats and vegetables that was needed in ample supply. She soon got the reputation of being a good cook.

Uncle Bone enjoyed eating so well that he invited a number of people to eat with them from time to time. He just took great joy in watching his friends eat along with him and he invited them often. After moving into the Edmund Jackson house about 1918, he invited the whole congregation of his church home to eat with him after the service, which was held once each month. Eula was the chief cook and in complete charge of the kitchen. This continued until Uncle Bone died in 1920.

Eula was a wonderful grandmother and most everybody loved her and liked to eat with her as often as possible; she enjoyed cooking for her family and many friends. She was noted far and wide for being the best cook around.

Earnest Lafayette “Judge” Davis

Introduction

Earnest Lafayette “Judge” Davis was my distant cousin (fourth cousin once removed) who was locally famous for, well, you have to read Daddy's story.

Judge Davis

by Larry M. Davis (June 23, 2003)

Although I had heard much about Judge Davis I did not meet him until 1953 when we both rode in the same automobile from Forsyth to Robins Air Force Base (RAFB for short) where we worked. Everything recorded here was verified by at least two reliable sources and much was verified by Judge himself.

Judge was a fairly good amateur magician but always needed a drink of whiskey as he said “to steady his nerves.” He had used this skill to entertain his fellow soldiers during World War II and this was written up in the *Macon Telegraph* at the time and also 50 years later.

Although these unbelievable stories are true, I do not know the sequence in which they happened and I will start with us riding to RAFB. We would leave Forsyth early in the morning with Judge setting in the middle of the rear seat. I was on the left and Mr. Robert Easler from Juliette was on the right. Since Judge was fairly tall and weighed about 275 pounds and both Mr. Easler and myself were much smaller, Judge took up about half of this seat. Mr. Easler and I only had about one fourth of the room each. Before we had gone about three miles, Judge would be asleep and leaning on me. I held him up as long as I could and then I would slide over closer to the door to give myself a little more room but Judge would spread out, absorb this little extra room and I would still be holding him up.

His job at Robins was driving a warehouse tractor (tug) pulling up to four small trailers loaded with materiel from building to building within the Supply complex. He never had an automobile or Georgia driver's license, but some way managed to get a Government license in order to operate the tugs. Since his supervisor had a hard time keeping up with him and he saw so many warehouse workers, this afforded him many opportunities to show his magic tricks and he always found a willing audience.

After being discharged from the Army and before going to work at Robins, his Aunt Elsie Kimbel and her husband John Norsworthy ran a small grocery store on Johnston Street in Forsyth; they had made a good living through the years. Judge's Uncle John died in 1949 and Judge had to help his Aunt operate this store until she got sick and was unable to help. More and more, she had to depend on Judge, but since he always liked to take a drink of whiskey and do the things that go with this life style, he needed a good bit of money from time to time. This is especially true since the sale of all alcoholic beverages was illegal in Monroe County. This necessitated him to catch a Greyhound bus, get a taxi or find someone to carry him to Macon where he would rent a room, drink for a day or so, and then have the same problem getting back home to Forsyth. This occurred almost every weekend. His aunt was totally dependent on him and he got to where he would spend less and less money restocking the store and all the time spending money to support his drinking habit. Needless to say, he could not keep the store operating with this style of management and, before long, he was no longer able to pay the bills so the store was closed. All this time, he was living with his aunt in her house located where the Bank of America now stands on South Lee Street. Both his aunt and uncle were thrifty people and they had a good bit of savings, but Judge started using this to support his life style.

One day, his Uncle Lumpkin Kimbel, noticed what was happening and told Judge that he should stop wasting so much money as his sister was sick and expected to die before much longer. He also told Judge that when she died he would not have enough money to bury her (she already had a cemetery lot and the total funeral expenses at that time were about \$700.00 plus about \$200.00 for a nice slab). This made Judge very angry, to say the least, so he went to the local funeral home, which was only

about two blocks from his aunt's house. He told Andy Dillon that he wanted to buy a casket; Andy asked him about the funeral arrangements, only to find out that Mrs. Norsworthy was not dead yet. Andy then told him he would not sell a casket under those conditions, but to wait until she died, and then he would provide the casket and services. This also upset Judge; he caught the Greyhound to Macon and then a taxi to Hart's Mortuary. When he told Freeman Hart, Jr., that he wanted to buy a casket, Mr. Hart showed Judge what he had available. After Judge selected one, Mr. Hart asked him where he wanted it delivered. After paying cash for this casket, Judge now had a ride back home and had the casket placed in the living room. A rumor got out that Mrs. Norsworthy was dead when people started seeing the hearse backed up to her front door. Judge immediately called his Uncle Lumpkin and told him to come over as he had something to show him. In almost no time Lumpkin arrived and Judge showed him the casket, told him not to worry about being unable to bury his aunt because he had already paid for the casket. Mr. Kimble almost had a heart attack. Later Judge started placing his aunt in this casket each day for some amount of time. She was small and bed ridden by this time. When he was asked why he was doing such a crazy thing, his answer was that he wanted her to get used to it as she would have to stay in it a long time after she died. Some of the people around Forsyth remember, as teenagers, going to Mrs. Kimbel's house and trying to look through the windows in order to see Judge placing his aunt into this casket. I can't help but wonder if the officials made a mistake when they carried his sister to the mental hospital years earlier. They may have carried off the wrong family member.

It was probably about time Judge closed the store that he went to Macon as usual and was returning on a Greyhound bus when the bus went over a hill and crashed into a loaded flat bed trailer truck loaded with bales of cotton. This was about 1950 and happened on US 41 at the Central of Georgia Rail Road underpass. The driver of the truck had stopped before going under this bridge in order to determine if he had enough clearance as the trailer was loaded with bales of cotton standing upright and on top of these there was another row of cotton bales laying on their sides. The bus was behind schedule and the driver was going too fast for the road conditions. By the time he saw the cotton truck was standing still, it was

too late for the bus to stop. When the bus hit the trailer, the impact destroyed the entire front of the bus, crushing the driver's legs and pinning him in such a way that rescue workers took several hours cutting twisted metal so they could get him out. He begged the police officers to shoot him in his head as the pain was so great. Of course, they did not shoot him, but he died a short time later. Several other people in the front of the bus also died as a result of this accident. I well remember reading all about this accident in the *Macon Telegraph*. Judge Davis was riding in this bus close to the rear and was not injured except by being shoved into the seat in front of where he was sitting. About the only thing wrong with him was that he was bruised. He got a lawyer and filed a claim against Greyhound's insurance carrier. This took about two years to get settled and all this time Judge walked around with his walking stick. Whenever anyone asked him how he felt, he would complain about his back, legs, and anything else he could think about. One day, a lawyer in Macon called Judge's lawyer to come to collect. Judge's lawyer picked him up and they went straight to Macon. The settlement amounted to about five years of work. When they left Macon with the check, they were almost where the accident happened when the lawyer told Judge they would have to go back. Judge asked why; his lawyer said that Judge had forgotten his walking stick that he had depended on so much. Judge said to just keep going, that he did not have any use for that thing anymore. Just like all of the family money that he spent, this also was wasted in a record breaking time. I think this was about the time he went to work at RAFB.

Another unbelievable but true story was that on one occasion Judge was looking at the television and got disgusted with what he saw. He then reached for his pistol and shot the TV right inside his aunt's house.

Judge Davis had worked his magic tricks for many years and always hoped to do these tricks as a professional rather than just being an amateur. One day, he got his chance as one of the Atlanta TV stations put on a talent search and had various acts of all kinds scheduled, with the winners being given a chance to move on into the entertainment business. As Judge had often said, he needed a good drink to steady his nerves before performing his tricks on stage. Well, he had to wait too long before his act was called and he constantly sipped from his bottle that he had

taken with him; as a result, when he was put in front of the camera, it was a total disaster. Just like many other times in his life whiskey made him lose out on something he could have otherwise succeeded.

Judge was liked by all that knew him but one of his main problems was his dependence on alcohol.

Part III – The Reuben Williams Family

Reuben and Mary Ann (Green) Williams were my great-great-great-great-grandparents. Reuben was an early settler in Jones County, Georgia; he and Mary Ann married on June 18, 1826, after he had moved to Bibb County, Georgia. In 1845, they donated the land on which Midway Baptist Church, my home church, is built.

The Williams Place
from **Humorous Travels**
from **Ridiculous to Sublime**
from **Laughter to Weeping**
by T.H. Mosely

Introduction

The following passage was written by Thomas Hubert “T.H.” Mosely. “Granpa Williams”, Reuben Williams, and his wife, Mary Ann (Green) Williams, were my great-great-great-great-grandparents. “Uncle Jim”, James Monroe “Jim” Williams, and his first wife, “Aunt Nannie” (Nancy Elizabeth “Nannie” (Jackson) Williams), were my great-great-great-grandparents; their daughter, Hattie Belle, was my great-great-grandmother, mother of Eula May Davis, my great-grandmother.

Mrs. Jackson's house, site of “Uncle Jim's” operation (you'll have to read the story), was the Edmund Jackson house, near Montpelier Springs; Mrs. Jackson was “Uncle Jim's” mother-in-law, Josephine (Battle) Jackson, another of my great-great-great-great-grandmothers.

The Williams Place

Macon, Georgia
Sept. 20, 1943

Mr. R.E. Williams
Williston, Florida

Dear Edd:

We are all well and we are doing some business at the warehouse although the cotton crop is short.

I told them all after I came back from Florida, how you were getting along, that you were about the spryest old man I had ever seen, that you and the madam got up early and ran a business like a factory every day, that you were not fishing with a sewing thread and a pin hook, but you had out a heavy line with a large bearded steel hook and your catch was worthwhile, with a pay roll of \$65.00 per day and an income sufficient for the day, and the future of old age.

I want to thank you and Lois for the courtesy you showed in helping me with the title. Nann and Emmett were as nice as they could possibly be and signed all the papers necessary. I think I have the title O.K. now, for which I thank you all.

When you and Lois come to Georgia, come to see us and we will talk about the good old bygone days.

Your cousin, T.H. MOSELY

P.S. I only intended to write you about a page, but I got to writing, down at the scales room, between weighing bales of cotton, and kept on writing, and thinking, and writing and writing. I hope it has not been tiresome, or very incorrect, or too presumptions. I have kept a copy, for review by the children and grandchildren. T.H.M.

My mind wanders back into the past and brings into recollection facts and incidents of interest told me by Mama, relatives, and by my own observation, relative to Grandpa, his family, and the old Williams home place.

Some old friends of Loyce's were up home recently working up the Ray and Goodyear Family trees. I think they got her Grandfather Goodyear into the Civil War, and he drew a pension. I don't know whether they got any farther back than the Civil War or not.

Anyway the lady working up the family tree asked me how about my family tree and the old Ancestors. I told her I was not much acquainted with this family tree business, that I thought none of my folks were much tree climbers, that as far back as I could ascertain they all stayed on the ground, and walked on two feet. She said she was not going to fool with me.

I could have told her that Granpa Williams was born in 1804, emigrated from North Carolina, when a boy, after staying in North Carolina long enough to get through chopping cotton by the 4th of July, and picked cotton as late as the next February with icicles hanging on the locks. When a very young man he moved to Georgia and drew 300 acres of land, by Government lottery, where he raised the Williams family of nine prominent men and women including my mother and your father.

	Born	Married	Died	Place
Reuben Williams	3-4-1804	Date Unknown ¹	7-17-1891	Bibb Co. Ga.
Mary Ann Williams	7-7-1810	Date Unknown ²	9-11-1857	Bibb Co. Ga.
Nancy Jane Williams	12-3-1828	Tillman Sanders	1897	Louisiana
Georgia Ann Williams	11/21/31	Sidney Mosely Jim Goodwin	7-16-1910	Taylor Co. Ga.
A. Judson Williams	4-23-1834	Saphroni Davis	11-19-1919	Bibb Co. Ga.
John H. Williams	3-14-1837	(Jackie)		Louisiana
Mary Addie Williams	4-24-1839	Bill Mosely	3-28-1913	Louisiana
Thomas W. Williams	11-7-1841		5-3-1863	Va. – Army
Sarah Eliz. Williams	8-22-1844	Jim Banks	3-12-1863	Monroe Co. Ga.
James Monroe Williams	5-19-1847	Nannie Jackson S. Aradona Evans	6-24-1916	Bibb Co. Ga.
Margaret C. Williams (My mother) T.H. Mosely.	11-3-1849	Wm. J. Mosely	9-15-1928	Bibb Co. Ga.

1 Reuben Williams and Mary Ann Green were married June 18, 1826 in Bibb County, Georgia.

2 See above.

Grandpa was a yearling boy when old Andrew Jackson destroyed the British Armies at New Orleans in 1812, during the second war with England. [Obviously, T.H. was mistaken, as Rueben was born on March 4, 1804 and the Battle of New Orleans was fought on January 8, 1815, so Reuben was 10 years old at the time.] He was old enough to make a full grown soldier in the Mexican war if the volunteers had not whipped the Mexicans before he got into the Army. He was an old man in the Civil War and stayed at home, farmed and sent rations and clothes, to four of his own sons, and scores of his neighbors' sons, while they were fighting on the battle fields of Virginia.

Sherman's raid passed through Georgia and burned Grandpa's Gin house with 13 bales of seed cotton in it, worth \$500.00 per bale, stole his horses and mules and threatened to kill him if he didn't tell them where his money was. The Yankees did kill old Mr. Petty (Mrs. George Yates' Father), and brought him on a stretcher and laid him in the yard under a tree.

Grandpa sent Uncle Jetty and old Wash to watch the horses, that were hid in the woods from the Yankees, one night. It was dark and they couldn't have any light. Uncle Jetty and Wash were crouched under the bushes near the horse pen and all was quiet. Way in the night they heard a stick crack and some leaves rattling. Uncle Jetty says, "Wash, I believe I see some men on their all fours by that big tree." "Where, Mars. Jet?" "Right there by the sweet gum tree, don't you see them?" "Yasser dat do look like men, Smoo Mars. Jet, I smell gun powder." Bullis vines, plum orchards, and rail fences didn't hold Uncle Jetty and old Wash. They tore back to the house at high speed and the Yankees stole the horses that night.

Mama told me when she was a little girl a cow hooked her mother (our grandmother) [Mary Ann (Green) Williams], and she died in the prime of life, leaving a motherless family, and Grandpa a widower for the balance of his life.

A chain of incidents followed along the old Williams place as time and generations progressed. You might know of scores of interesting

occurrences that I have never known, or may have forgotten. I will note a few of the most outstanding periods of my knowledge and recollection and would be glad for you to fill in the gaps, and make corrections.

Grandpa's land was well watered and well wooded with the finest long leaf yellow pine that ever grew. In the early part of the nineteenth century, Grandpa and neighbors hued long leaf heart pine logs, and raised a large double pen, story and a half log house, with sheds on the back and front, and a large wide front porch. Two large chimneys with arched fire places stood one at each end of the house, built of brick that they burned down on the branch (some of these brick are intact today). The well and lot were about 100 yards down in front of the house towards the big road and the natural ponds. Mama said the gin house used to stand between the lot and the big road.

A generation later lumber was sawed from long leaf timber that grew on the land, and a modern residence was built in front of the old log house. The log residence was torn down and a barn was built of the old logs at the rear of the new house. A new well was dug and the lot was moved to the rear of the new house. Both the modern residence and the old log barn are standing in good condition today. I put some fat lightwood sills under the old barn last fall that were said to be over 100 years old.

In the late sixties, 1868, Uncle Jim married Miss Nannie Jackson. In the early eighties, 1883, she died and left three boys and three girls motherless.

Soon after Aunt Nannie died in 1883, Uncle Jim was having some trees cut down and one of them lodged on another tree. When they cut the other tree, one of them swung around and caught Uncle Jim's leg below the knee. It buried his foot in the ground and he pulled so hard to get his leg out from under the tree, he pulled off his shoe. When they got his leg from under the tree it was broken. Dr. Chambliss came, set the leg, splinted it, put it in a wooden box and tied weights to the foot of the broken leg, to keep it from growing together and being shorter than the other leg. Weeks and months of suffering passed, and the bones did not knit together. They took him up to Mrs. Jackson's and on a table under the

trees, Dr. Chambliss cut off his leg just below the knee. My Father dissected the broken leg and found it was a compound fracture with decayed flesh between the ends of the broken bones and it never would have healed. They buried the broken leg in the garden at Grandpa's, and Papa made him a wooden leg. Uncle Jim got in good health, and could peg along about as fast as the average man walked.

The Charleston Earthquake

On August 31, 1886 about 9:30 P.M. the houses began cracking, doors, windows and dishes rattled and nearly scared everybody to death. Papa had remembered a similar occurrence when he was a boy, and told Mama it was an earthquake. A lot of people didn't know what it was. Cousin Tom Parker was at home by himself and he got his gun and shouted, "Stop trying to break in this house. If you come in here I'll kill you. If you don't get away from that door I'll shoot a hole through it." The next morning, he boasted that he bluffed them away. Bill Bonner had been down to our house to play the fiddle with Papa and he had just gone. He met Nero Jones and they stopped in the road and talked during the earthquake and didn't know anything about what had happened.

Papa said he could hear a powerful rumbling around in the North East and later we learned that Charleston, S.C. was the center of the disturbance. Streets sank down and water came up into the town and some buildings were shaken down, and some that can be seen today have sunken corners, and large cracks, tied together with iron rods. The First Baptist Church in Macon has a crack in the brick work under the steeple, that can be seen now, caused by the Charleston earthquake. We children wanted to go up to Uncle Jim's next day, to see if his house had fell in a hole.

Yes, I remember the earthquake. Mama woke us up and I heard the house cracking; and, I remember Uncle Jim's broken leg and Aunt Nannie's funeral. May and I wore brown dresses just alike and I was three or four years old, when we went to the funeral, three or four years before the earthquake.

The Woolfolk Killing

One bright quiet morning, August 6th, 1887, Mr. Sam Chambliss dashed up to our house early before breakfast on horseback and told Papa and Mama, in a sad, nervous tone, that somebody had broken into Capt. Woolfolk's house and killed him and everyone of the family with an ax, except Tom, and he jumped out the window and ran, and for Papa and Mama to go over to the Woolfolk house at once. Mr. Chambliss galloped his horse off up the road spreading the news. There was to be a big all day picnic that day at Montpelier Springs but as the people arrived at the picnic, they heard the news, and went right on to the killing. By 10 o'clock there were a thousand or more people there. A few of the prominent neighbors including Henry Smith, George Yates, Henry Brown, W.J. Mosely (my father) and J.M. Williams (your father) began questioning Tom and decided to strip him and make a careful investigation. They found dried blood in his ear and three inverted finger prints of blood on his thigh. They had my Father, W.J. Mosely, who was N.P. Ex J.P.³ to issue a warrant, and your father, J.M. Williams, who was District Constable, to arrest Tom Woolfolk for the murder of his family.

After two long trials in Bibb County and exhausting the Jury box, he was moved to Houston County, tried a third time and hung at Perry, Georgia, after three years. Nine plain brick graves, in a row, mark the resting place of the Woolfolk family in Rose Hill Cemetery at Macon. Tom was buried at Hawkinsville, Georgia.

Uncle Jim Marries Again

Close around 1890, Beulah and Hattie, Uncle Jim's two oldest girls, had married. Uncle Jim called the rest of the children in one night after supper and asked them how they would like to have a nice lady to come to the home, and help them sew on buttons, and cook pound cake, and go with them to meeting. They all agreed and it was not long before Uncle Jim bought a new buggy and went down in the lower Warrior District to Mr. & Mrs. W.T. Bartlette's residence, and married Susan Aradona Evans. That

3 Notary Public and ex-officio Justice of the Peace.

certainly must have been an agreeable union, because Ed, England, and myself married three of Aunt Donas' nieces. They are all dead, and buried in the Midway Church Cemetery, within ten paces of each other.

Another singular incident was, way back yonder, three of Uncle Jim's sisters married Mosely's. Aunt Addie married Uncle Bill Mosely, and went to Louisiana; Aunt Annie married Uncle Sidney Mosely, who was killed in the Civil War, and Margaret, my mother, married Wm. J. Mosely, my father.

What wonderful mysteries time doth wrought.

Uncle Jim and Aunt Dona had one little baby boy, that died in infancy, and soon another strong baby boy, who was dedicated by his parents to the Methodist Ministry, reared and named after his Grandfather Evans, a Methodist Preacher, Lucius Emmett Williams, who for nearly thirty years has been true to his calling and has continuously been in the service of some of the largest churches in the State.

The Rainy Night Visits

We lived two miles down the road from Midway School and Uncle Jim lived about one quarter of a mile up the road from the school. In those days we all walked to school. School buses were unknown. We were always glad when a long steady rain would come from noon until night, then we four Mosely children would go up to Uncle Jim's to stay all night. After supper they would have a big fire and we would play blind fold; william, william tremble toe, and Uncle Jim and the older ones, would tell us scary tales.

One night we were playing blind fold, and Beulah was the blind fold. We were running and screaming for dear life afraid she would catch us. Someone happened to look up and the blindfold had fallen from her eyes, and she was making us skeedadle, with her eyes wide open. Uncle Jim was sitting back just dying a laughing. Then Uncle Jim would tell us such scary tales, about Grancy Gray Beard, and Boney Peggy where is thy Golden Arm, until we would be afraid to stick our heads out of the door.

The Eternal Sleep

Grandpa was Deacon at the Midway Baptist Church and about the last time he ever went to Church he passed around the sacrament, on Communion Day. With faltering steps and bent form he managed to get around but complained repeatedly that he was mighty feeble, "Smack, smack, I tell you I'm mighty feeble." On July 17, 1891 he went to sleep, and never did wake up again. He just died from being worn out, with old age, when he was 87 years old. Cousin Henry Mosely preached his funeral at Midway Church, and he lies buried in the Midway Cemetery, beside his wife who had been dead for over thirty years.

The New Houses

After Grandpa died, Uncle Jim and Maggie C. Williams Mosely (my mother), being the youngest of the Reuben Williams family, divided the 300 acres of land. Grandpa had deeded the land to them before his death because they had stayed near and taken care of him, the last twenty years of his life.

They had never received any legacy from Grandpa's estate. The older children had married early in the 1850s and 60s, and each one received money and livestock, and some of them moved away, before the Civil War, to Louisiana and Texas.

In 1893, Uncle Jim and my mother and father hauled logs from their land to the saw mill and had the finest kind of long leaf yellow pine lumber sawed for the building of the new houses.

We built a nice seven room house near the Midway Church and school house and gin house. That is the first house I ever did carpenter work on in my life, at the age of fifteen. Since then I have built a great number of nice houses in Macon, Georgia and surrounding counties.

Uncle Jim built a new house in front of the old log house. I cleared and ploughed a straight four foot path across the field from our house to Uncle

Jim's. We could talk in a loud tone from one house to the other and we visited nearly every day or night. Mr. John A. Poole taught school at Midway. He and his wife boarded at Uncle Jim's.

After we moved to our new house near the school, the teachers boarded with us. Miss Maud Fellow, Mr. W.T. Wynn, Miss Mary Waite, Miss Eveland McDowell, and Miss Jennie Schaefer. We all had big times going to parties, reading clubs, picnics and Church.

The Cotton States Exposition

In the fall of 1895 Uncle Jim went to the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta. He went to the cork leg demonstration at the Exposition. He said there were folks up there with both legs cut off and they could put on those new patented cork legs and ride a bicycle, walk a tight rope, and turn somersaults. Uncle Jim had the plaster of Paris impression taken to have him one of those acrobatic legs made, but he never did send the order to the factory. Uncle Jim brought back such a glowing description of the exposition that Papa, Uncle Johnnie Mosely, and myself all went on the train and stayed three days at the Atlanta Exposition. I never did know before, that the world was so big, and had so much in it.

It seems like those fleeting years were crowded with important events, in rapid succession. In the summer of the next year, the old baptizing hole had gotten just about warm enough to go in swimming, and heavy thunder showers were coming up in the afternoon and night. One morning after a heavy thunder storm, the night before, Uncle Jim's boys went out to feed the stock and the lightening had struck the shed stalls on the old log barn, and killed a mule, a horse, a cow, five hogs, and about a half dozen chickens. We drug them all off, and threw them in a big gully, down near the cemetery. Neighbors and friends loaned their stock, and helped to finish working out the crops.

Almost Burned to Death

Chambliss Williams (Dock) was Uncle Jim's next to the oldest boy. He used to have epileptic fits, and at school he would have them quite often.

We thought some of them were put on. We boys used to have lots of fun at school, when the teacher would say, "You boys hold Dock again, he's got another fit."

One Christmas, Uncle Jim's folks had a big Christmas dinner and invited all our folks to eat dinner with them, there were twelve or fifteen grown people and children there for dinner. It was cold weather and they had fire in two or three rooms. In those days everybody had a long table, but when there were enough grown people to fill the table, the children always played and waited for the second table. The children were all supposed to be out playing. The grown folks were eating one of those most delicious Christmas dinners and were laughing and talking and finishing up the desert, and someone at the table remarked, "I smell hair burning." They began to look around, and in the back room they found Dock had fallen with a fit into the back of the fire place, on a large bed of live coals and was still lying there unconscious with his head, neck, and shoulder still burning to the bone. They snatched him out and thought he was dead, and he was pretty near it. They put out the fire on his clothes, found there was still life, administered what remedies they could, sent for Dr. Redding and Dr. Worsham. They found his hair and scalp burned off one side of his head, one eye burned out, his jaw, neck, and shoulder burned to the bone. They did not think he would live, but they doctored him the best they could. That broke up the Christmas dinner. We sat up with him every night for weeks and months, administering morphine, and doing what we could for his comfort and relief. The Doctors finally had to take out one eye, and they got new skin to grow over the deep burns, and Dock got well. We were thoroughly convinced then that his fits were not put on, although he never had but few fits after that almost fatal one. Dock got strong and active. He was full of energy, and the terriblest worker you ever saw.

Dock Shot John Flue

He farmed and ran the gin. He bought a new moving machine, new buggy, and kept the finest kind of watch and pistol. Old John Flue was standing up on the high bank of the road between the Church and gin house, where he thought Dock couldn't get to him from the road. They got

into some kind of argument about something or other, and Old John cursed Dock. No quicker than he did, Dock jerked out his pistol and shot John right center at the breast. John threw his hand in front of his breast and the bullet struck the flesh part of his hand, and ranged down toward his wrist. Striking his hand was all that saved his life. John ran up to the shop, where I was working and told me, Dock had shot him, and for me to go down there and take the pistol before Dock killed him. I told him to keep going away from there as fast as he could. The last I saw of him that week, he was heeling it over the hill toward Cousin Tommie's. His hand soon got well, and there never was a thing said or done about the shooting. Uncle Jim always said if Dock hadn't been afflicted, he would have been a rounder, he would have killed somebody, or somebody would have killed him. He had enough Jackson blood in him, not to take any foolishness from anybody, and he was not afraid of the old scratch himself.

Dock went off to South Georgia and ran some big machinery for some company down there, and married and made money. He took appendicitis, and they sent him up here, to the Macon Hospital, and he died at the age of 33. He left Uncle Jim a Woodmen of the World life insurance policy for \$1,000.00. He is buried in the Williams lot at Midway Church Cemetery.

Two Cousins

England, Uncle Jim's youngest son, and Homer, my brother, used to be chums, almost like twins. They were about the same age, went to school together, in the same class, always played together, but they did not work much together.

They started to going to see the girls about the same time, and had me to make them buggies, just alike and each one had a fine young red horse. I have always heard that fools built houses and wise folks live in them. I have made a number of new buggies, some rubber tire buggies that would be in competition with any factory made buggy, and I have made some good horse trades, for other people, but never owned a horse and buggy in my life. Homer and England would hitch up their fine horses and new buggies, and come flying by the shop, going to Quarterly meeting, or

Macon on Saturday, and I would be in the shop just a working. But they always paid me every cent they owed me, and they were satisfied and I was too.

England's Fatal Accident

One cold morning in January 1909, I was covering Milton Heard's house at 324 Carling Avenue in Macon and the telephone rang. Mrs. Heard called me, to come down to the telephone. Mr. B.T. Adams told me to come down at once, that the horse had run away with S.E. Williams,⁴ down town, and had hurt England mighty bad. They had sent him to the hospital. I went by to see him and his arm was badly skinned from sliding on the pavement, but no bones broken. They had dressed the wound, and I think he went home that day, or the next. We all thought it was a slight flesh injury and he would be all right in a few days. In about ten days he was taken considerably worse, and they had the best skilled physicians, to come out from Macon in Automobiles, which was a very rare thing in those days, but they could do nothing for him. He took lock-jaw and died right out. He left a wife and a young baby girl (Nannie), and \$1,000.00 in life insurance. He is buried in the Williams lot, at Midway, beside his wife, who died about 22 years afterward.

It seems after all these misfortunes and tragedies, there was nearly always a bright cheerful atmosphere, around the old Williams place. Uncle Jim always looked upon the humorous side of passing events and always enjoyed good jokes and hearty laughs.

The Blind Money

Lizella Methodist Church was to pay me \$2.00, to help Uncle Jim hang eight pairs of blinds to the Church windows. The Church had made up the money for hanging the blinds, and called it the blind money. At the next meeting, the Clerk of the Church asked Uncle Jim if all the blind expenses

4 Sherman England Williams.

had been paid. Uncle Jim reported, "Yes, Hubert got the blind money, and it will never see any way to get away from him."

Old Charley Harris used to come through Uncle Jim's yard going from the Rock Mill to the Hardshell meeting, over to the brush arbor, close to Mr. Pat McCallum's store. Uncle Jim, a staunch Methodist, used to hollow at him from the front porch, "Well, old Charley Harris you had better hurry up. The preacher will already have taken his text, and you won't know whether he is preaching from 'one eyed John', or 'two eyed Peter'." Old Charley would always have a reply. "Well, Mars. Jim, I know they won't be taking up no collection, nor using no soda water and crackers for the Lord's supper." "You old Hardshells are so stingy you won't buy any lamps so you can have night meeting," or "You all are scared the Devil will catch you in the dark." "Naw sir, Mr. Jimmie, the scripture says, let your (spiritual) light so shine, like a city set upon a hill. Us don't need no lamps, and den de scripture says ergin, 'Sinners love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil,' I just don't know why de Methodist have night meeting."

Good Moral Jokes

Uncle Jim could always tell jokes with the best kind of morals to them, which have followed us younger generations, on down through life. He told one that through the influence of the moral, might have prevented a many a fight afterwards. A cross-road bully had gotten mad with a little tallow faced dried up fellow. They met in the road and the bully was going to give the little fellow a whipping. The little fellow says, "Well, wait a little while, and let me pull off my Sunday coat, I don't want to get it messed up. And let me pray just five minutes." He then knelt down, and began to whet his knife on his shoe, and prayed, "O Lord, Thou hast been with me in all my many conflicts, Thou was with me when big Joe got cut on the wrist, and bled to death, Thou was with me when Bo-Bo got his throat cut from ear to ear. (Still whetting his knife) Thou was with me in the sixth trial, and Thou promised never to forsake me in the seventh." And when the little fellow raised up, the Bully had climbed a ten rail fence, and was burning the wind towards the woods.

Many Social Events

Uncle Jim always provided the best table, always kept good stock, and vehicles, raised and educated his children respectably. They all attended the highest order of social and religious events, attended and supported all the local Quarterly meetings, entertained the Presiding Elders, Stewards, and the most company of anyone in the community. If all the visiting company, stock and vehicles, and all the fine feasts that were prepared, and all the host of company that was entertained, at Uncle Jim's home were gathered together in one great day, the occasion would equal any Georgia Camp meeting, and the crowd would reach from Midway Church, to the Old Jones branch, clear across the old Williams place.

After the turn of the new century, our present generations have all married, moved away, and some of them have died. All of our Uncles and Aunts are dead and gone, and the old place has had all the timber cut off of it, and is washed up considerably. It has been forsaken, except by tenants, for the past thirty years. Our fond recollections, and memories of the past, are stored away in the garret of our minds, only to be reviewed, with joy and sadness, of the past.

Another Account of the Charleston Earthquake from Humorous Travels

The only earthquake recorded in the Southeastern part of the U.S. in our recollection was a little tremble compared to the San Francisco earthquake.

On August 31, 1886, about 10:00 o'clock P.M., our house began to shake, and the windows and dishes began to rattle. The old house reeled and rocked and there was a terrible roaring and rumbling sound throughout the elements. Father remembered when he was a small boy an earthquake visited their home, and he immediately pronounced our disturbance "An earthquake".

It was learned the next day that the center of the disturbance occurred at Charleston, S.C., and it has always been called the Charleston Earthquake.

There were very few casualties. A few buildings were shaken down and some were cracked and some sank down at the corners and sides. The subterranean was greatly disturbed and the streets of Charleston that bordered on the ocean front were under water from the cause of the quake. Today in Charleston can be seen buildings out of plumb, some with great cracks in them, some sunk down, and some bolted together with iron rods.

The Charleston Earthquake was pretty severe here in Middle Georgia. There can be seen today on the east side of the steeple of the First Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia, a distinct zig zag crack that was said to have been caused by the Charleston Earthquake. About the only damage done in the rural sections of Middle Georgia by the quake was a few broken window panes, some broken cups and saucers, a few old chimneys shaken down, and the tops of a lot of chimneys were shaken off and sent the bricks rolling down the roof and scaring more "Hell out of folks than Evangelist Sam Jones ever did with all his preaching of Hell, fire, and brimstone."

Bill Bonner had been down to our house after supper to play the fiddle with Papa, and had just left to go home, is the reason we were up so late that night. "Do I remember the Charleston Earthquake?" "Well, yes, I do." I was asleep during the first severe shock, but I remember Mama got me up and I heard and felt a return shock that shook the house and made the timbers creak and crack, and I heard my mother cry, "Oh! Lord it is coming back again. Have mercy on us."

A close friend of mine that wanted to tease me about my age said I was getting old and childish and forgetful and I had almost reached the age of "Once a man and twice a child", and I loved to live in the past and tell old time stories. Well, thanks for the compliment. I know some folks that can't see two inches ahead of their nose into the future, and they are not setting the woods afire at present, and their past has entirely escaped their feeble minds.

I related the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 because I was standing in the streets of San Francisco last month among the buildings and among the

people that were affected by that terrible catastrophe. It only shows how wonderfully they have survived and overcome the disaster.

I mentioned the Charleston Earthquake because it was the only earthquake of my recollection and the two incidents were associated with each other very closely.

Another Account of the Woolfolk Killings from Humorous Travels

This true story I am about to relate now happened just one year after the Charleston Earthquake within three miles of our home. I want to enter it here as a matter of record, because 90 percent of the people in Bibb County today do not know what an awful tragedy happened in this county during my first recollections.

All incidents related in the following case are a matter of court record.

Captain Richard Woolfolk, an ex-officer of the Confederacy, was a large land owner and a prosperous planter, who lived with his family in a large hip roof house in a beautiful grove, where he operated his farm about 14 miles west of Macon, Georgia, in the Hazard District of Bibb County, Georgia, on the Rock Mill Road. Captain Woolfolk married directly after the Civil War and had three children, including Tom Woolfolk. His first wife died and he married again and had two boys and four girls by his second wife. The two older girls, by his first wife, had married and moved away. Tom, the only son by his first wife, was living with his father and the younger family. Green Lockett, a colored trusted tenant, lived in a house in the rear of the grove.

On August 6, 1887, about three o'clock on a bright moon light morning, Green Lockett was awakened by the cows lowing and the dogs barking, cause by the animal instinct of smelling blood. As Green Lockett glanced out his window toward the residence, he told his wife, "There's something wrong up to the big house, because there ain't no light in the Mistress' bedroom and that lamp that sets on the table by her window has been burning all night long ever since I have been living here."

At that moment, Tom Woolfolk knocked on Green Lockett's door and told him to come and go with him up to the house, that somebody had broken in and killed his father and all the family. He said, "No, sir, Mr. Tom, I can't go with you up there. I'm scared of dead folks." But Green aroused other tenants on the plantation and sent runners on mules and horses to call in the neighbors.

Henry Smith, being the nearest to the Woolfolk residence, was the first to arrive on the scene. Tom was sitting on the root of a tree in the front yard in the full moon light. His face was as ghostly pale as death. Mr. Smith got off his horse and asked Tom, "What has happened?" Tom said, "Somebody broke in the house and killed my father and the whole family with an ax. When I heard the first blow, I jumped out the window and ran. Come and go with me into the house and let's see if they are all dead." Mr. Smith said, "No, Tom, I will wait until more of the neighbors arrive."

Tom had been sitting on the root of the tree barefooted in his night clothes. About that time a distinct sound came from the house, as if a chair had turned over. Tom immediately got up and went into the house alone. He came back and told Mr. Smith, "They are all dead. I examined all of them." Mr. Smith said, "Tom, look at your feet and hands"; they were bloody up to his ankles and elbows. Tom said, "I had better go and wash." He came back out of the house with a quilt and a pillow and laid down on the front porch on a pallet.

By this time, about the crack of day, many of the neighbors had arrived including Henry Smith, George Yates, Sam Chambliss, Henry Brown, Lon Parker, William Mosely, Jim Williams, and many others. This party got together and went into the house to investigate the situation.

The house was strewn with dead bodies and blood and brains were scattered from floor to ceiling. Richard Jr., the twenty year old son, slept in one of the front rooms with Tom. Richard was out of his room, lying on the floor of his father's room in a pool of blood with his head smashed in with the eye of a short handle ax, which was left in the hall, the same method was use in killing all of them. Captain Woolfolk, his wife, and the

18 months old baby, were killed in bed. Pearl, the oldest, 17 year old daughter, occupied the other front room and it is supposed she heard the disturbance and was met by the assailant in the hall. Her body had been carried to her father's room and laid across the foot of the bed. Five year old Charley was killed in his room. Annie and Rosebud, two teenagers, were killed in their room. Annie was clinging to the window sill, as if she were trying to escape. Poor old Mrs. West, an Aunt, visiting the Woolfolk family from South Georgia, was 84 years old and deaf as a post. She had slept gracefully, straight out on her bed with her night cap fitting snugly over her head, exposing her snow white hair as a frame around her peaceful countenance in her death slumber, from which she was never awakened.

Nine bodies were the victims of a swift murderer's ax, which took the toll of life from the innocent infant on through all the stages of life, including the poor old harmless octogenarian, without leaving one word of oral testimony for the prosecution.

These fearless conscientious citizens with suspicion already seriously aroused worked fast in the performance of duty. They organized a legal coroner's jury and asked Tom to come into a vacant room and be stripped for examination of evidence, to which he consented. Henry Brown discovered a dry splotch of blood in his ear. "Tommie, how come this dry blood is in your ear?" "When my father was struck, blood was flying everywhere." Henry Smith remarked, "Tom, you are the biggest coward I ever saw to jump out the window and run when your family was being murdered and needed your assistance, and then you are the bravest man I ever saw to return into the house alone, when you heard a noise, to see if they were all dead." They found inverted finger prints of dried blood on Tom's thigh, as if one of the victims was pleading for their life. For these finger prints, Tom had no explanation.

A coroner's jury was assembled in this same room and my father, W.J. Mosely, Notary Public and ex-officio Justice of the Peace, presided as

Judge and issued the warrant for Tom's arrest. My uncle, J.M. Williams,⁵ the authorized District Constable, executed the warrant and put Tom under arrest. When they were holding the inquest, George Yates said, "Tom, you had better move away from that window, somebody might take a pot shot at you." Tom thanked him and moved his chair to the center of the room. When my uncle told Tom to consider himself under arrest, he said, "Why, you all don't think I would kill my father, do you?" Henry Brown said, "We don't know, Tommie, it looks mighty suspicious."

There was a big annual all day picnic and dance to be held at Montpelier Springs that day, and people coming to the picnic heard about the killing, and most of them came on down to the Woolfolk house. By 11:00 o'clock A.M. there were thousands of people there. Miss Pearl Woolfolk and the girls had laid out their snow white apparel on trunks and chairs the night before preparatory for the picnic. Instead, they were used as shrouds to bury the victims of a vicious murder.

Tom was closely guarded after his arrest, and he returned to his pallet on the front porch. He called for a drink of water to be brought to him in a glass. He held the glass of water between him and the light and he scrutinized it carefully, but he did not drink. Feeling was running high and a lynching was apprehended. Sheriff Wescott and his deputies from Macon, Georgia, had a horse and buggy at the steps of the back porch, and they slipped Tom out the back way into the buggy and rushed him to the Macon jail for safety.

Tom's two older sisters, Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. McCowan, were in sympathy with their brother. Now they were sole heirs of the Woolfolk estate, and they employed the best legal talent for Tom's defense and the greatest criminal legal battle ever known in the State of Georgia lasted three years.

5 His Uncle Jim, James Monroe "Jim" Williams, my great-great-great-grandfather.

In a short time after Tom was secured in the Macon jail, the persevering citizens, still searching for conclusive evidence, noticed something floating on the water down in the well. They drug this well with hooks and pulled out a complete suit of man's bloody underclothes that compared with Tom's size and description, that he threw in the well when he cleaned up after the murder. That is the reason he called for a drink of water in a glass, to see if he could detect any blood in the water. Many of the citizens said if they had drug that well before the Sheriff carried Tom to jail, he would never have gotten away from that place on account of the high emotional feeling.

The Bibb County court tried the case thoroughly with scores of witnesses and the best legal talent that Georgia afforded for both the State and defense and found the defendant guilty of murder. It was brought out in the trial by the State that Tom had been heard to complain that he was terribly worried about his inheritance of his father's estate. The State tried to use this evidence as a motive. The night jailer also swore that in the dead hours of the night, he heard Tom praying aloud, begging forgiveness for killing his father. The State also tried to use this prayer as a confession.

After all this convincing evidence and the guilty of murder, without recommendation of mercy, verdict of 12 competent jurors, the defense maneuvered around and obtained a new trial. The same procedure was repeated and the same verdict seemed inevitable. The second trial was about to come to a close when an observer shouted from the gallery, "Hang him, Hang him." The defense claimed there was prejudice in the court room, and his client was not getting a fair trial. They halted this trial and obtained another new trial.

When the third trial came up, there were not enough impartial jurors in Bibb County to make up a panel, and they moved the venue of the case to Perry, Houston County, Georgia.

My father and all the witnesses had to go to court in Perry for a week or two. At the close of the testimony in the case, Tom's principal defense lawyer, Colonel Rutherford, who had been fighting Tom's legal battle for

defense for three years, spoke so long, so hard, and so strenuously for more than a day without stopping in Tom's defense argument, that he became so exhausted he fell on the court room floor, while speaking before the Jury. Colonel Rutherford died soon after this trial and it was said that he killed himself working trying to clear Tom Woolfolk. At the conclusion of this third trial in Perry, the jury found a verdict of guilty of murder, without recommendations of mercy to the Court. Judge Gustin sentenced him to be hanged on a Friday in the near future.

Near the Court House in the edge of town was a natural Coliseum. Public hanging was lawful, those days, in Georgia. For the execution of this notorious criminal, thousands and thousands of people came to the hanging. The scaffold was erected, the noose was fitted, the black hood was drawn over his head, the trap door was sprung by Sheriff, Major Cooper, and Tom Woolfolk was hanged by the neck, until he was pronounced dead, dead, dead.

Tom's body was taken to Hawkinsville, Georgia, for burial. The nine bodies he was convicted of murdering are buried side by side in Rose Hill Cemetery, Macon, Georgia.

Since all these dates, and earthquakes, and disasters, and murders all link together in my early recollections, I wanted to enter them here as a matter of record.

Mrs. Lillie Mae (Mosely) Causey

Introduction

Mrs. Lillie Mae (Mosely) Causey was T.H. Mosely's niece and my second cousin three times removed. On May 31, 2005, she was 100 years old. At the time, I taught the Adult I Sunday School class at Midway Baptist Church and published a newsletter, *CrossWalk*, for the class. I wrote the following article for the May 2005 edition of *CrossWalk* as a tribute to Mrs. Lillie Mae.

Mrs. Lillie Mae Causey

When Midway Baptist Church was renovated in the early '60s, the first teacher in what is now the Adult I Sunday School classroom was Mrs. Lillie Mae Causey. She taught the Primary Class, for children in the first through third grades. She was an excellent, inspiring teacher; I have many wonderful memories of her class.

Now, as I teach in what I'll always consider to be her classroom, I sit opposite the window that looks out at her house across the road, and remember the good times my sister and I had playing in her yard as children, the cottage prayer meetings, the pulpit committee meetings (we held them there because she was the oldest and least mobile member of the pulpit committee), and visiting with her to collect information for our family tree. Genealogy is one of my hobbies, and Mrs. Lillie Mae is my second cousin, three times removed. She happily provided a wealth of information, some from her memory, some from her "birthday book" – information that I probably would have never obtained otherwise.

Mrs. Lillie Mae has been a faithful member of Midway for many years. She especially liked working with children. As I said, she was a long-time Sunday School teacher. She was also a key Vacation Bible School worker. She served as an excellent role model for generations to emulate.

Mrs. Lillie Mae will be 100 on May 31 – an incredible milestone. Happy birthday, Mrs. Lillie Mae!

Part IV – The Jeremiah Pierson Family

Jeremiah H. and Keturah Payne “Kitty” (Oxford) Pierson were early settlers in Monroe County and my great-great-great-grandparents.

Jeremiah H. and Keturah Payne “Kitty” (Oxford) Pierson

Introduction

Jeremiah H. and Keturah Payne “Kitty” (Oxford) Pierson were my great-great-great-grandparents, my mother's father's great-grandparents. Carolyn Lou “Carrie” Pierson, the author of this selection, was their great-granddaughter, my first cousin twice removed.

Remembering Jeremiah and Kitty Oxford Pierson

by Carrie Pierson

Now, you ask if I can recall any memories of my great-grandparents, Jeremiah and Keturah Oxford Pierson. First of all, my father, Jerre, was named for him (why they did not call him Jeremiah I do not know). The Oxfords, like the Piersons, were among the early settlers of Monroe County, having come from North Carolina; however, the Piersons did stop over in several other counties before stopping here in Monroe County. Some of them (offspring) haven't stopped yet, as I have corresponded with many in Alabama, Texas, and Florida, as well as other places. I have always heard Keturah called Kitty Payne Oxford. Now, no one seems to find the origin of that name. [Carrie, I am sure that was her name because my mother always called her by that name when she referred to her grandmother – any way, it's a pretty name. Elizabeth Adams Storey]

Their home was located near to the location of the Pierson Cemetery today. They had eight children, five daughters and three sons. Jeremiah deceased at the age of 51. Keturah lived to be 78. Even though there are only rock tombs in the cemetery, my father always said they were for Jeremiah and Keturah.

As the legend goes, it was a great shock to the family and community when Jeremiah died suddenly, leaving his wife Kitty dependent on her single children. Aunt Lizzie was the “main stay” and looked after the

crops. Their servants were Anderson, Mary, Aunt Henny, and Samantha, etc. Jeremiah, Jr., wasn't very stout, and John was only a lad, Aunt "Turie" (Keturah) was frail, but Aunt Susan was a good helper. It has always been told to me that those girls worshiped their mother and treated her like a "Queen."

When Aunt Lizzie and Aunt Susie were somewhat younger, they were kept busy spinning and weaving cloth for garments from cotton thread, also carding and spinning wool for socks and shawls. They also dyed woolen thread and knitted beautiful coverlets for their beds, also their counterpanes were so pretty.

Their house was spotless. Yes, Aunt Nancy was busy helping with all the chores. Now, Aunt Jane was the literary minded one. Being persuaded by the neighboring community, she was a school teacher. She taught reading, writing, and 'rithmetic in a one room school house. It was told of her when they graduated from her school, the students could enter college.

Grandma Kitty was a Physician or Mid-wife. In her day, many women preferred her to a doctor. She was a dainty little woman and wore a lace cap on her head all day.

James Jefferson and Anna Castleberry (Danielly) Pierson

Introduction

James Jefferson and Anna Castleberry (Danielly) Pierson were my great-grandparents, my mother's father's grandparents; James Jefferson Pierson was the son of Jeremiah H. and Keturah Payne (Oxford) Pierson.

Memories

by Carrie Pierson

[Sunday afternoon, January 6, 1974, my family and I visited with Carrie Pierson, granddaughter of James J. and Anna D. Pierson. (Carrie lived most of her life next door to her grandparents.) She had just celebrated her 82nd birthday on the 3rd. A remarkable person for her age, still interested in current events, as well as by-gone days.

This particular afternoon, we asked her to tell us something about the likes and dislikes of Grandpa and Grandma in their everyday lives.]

Well, having lived next door to them I spent many happy hours listening to Grandpa relating family history, which I enjoyed very much. As you know, I have always been literary minded, music, art, and books have been my life. I have never enjoyed keeping house and cooking. I like to garden some. I always plant a row or two of cotton every year because I like to see it grow. With my vegetables I also grow herbs. I have pecan trees, fig bushes, pomegranates, and pear trees. I have been a healthy person with very few aches and pains. Home remedies usually cure my little ills.

[Carrie was only six years of age when Grandma died, and 19 when Grandpa passed away. So naturally she remembered quite a bit more about the life of Grandpa. On this day, she told us about a bit of history we had not heard before. She said one day while at grade school at

Culloden Academy the teacher asked each student to go home and ask their parents or grand-parents what country their families came from to America. Rushing home from school, she immediately ran up the lane to get the information from Grandpa to carry back to school the next day. She remembered him telling her, as if it were yesterday, his people came from Belfast, Ireland.]

Grandma Anne (Anna) was real small in stature. All of her daughters were taller than she. Even though my memories of her are very vague, I have heard many times that her influence over her sons was quite unusual in that day and time. Every Sunday she had their best clothes clean and pressed and saw that they were in church. They would go to Strouds, Yatesville, Culloden, rotating each Sunday according to where the preaching was going on.

Grandpa James out-lived Grandma about twelve years. Every day he wore a white starched shirt with pleated fronts along with a pleasant smile. He was a nice looking gentleman, and always of sober countenance. He was never known to utter an oath and was truly a moral upright God-fearing person. He was very devoted to his wife and family. I only wish all the grand-children had known them. I loved them dearly!!!

The photographs that have been passed down to our generation do not do them justice, because I remember them as a grand looking couple.

[Some of the things that Carrie did not have the time to collect her thoughts on that Sunday afternoon came to me next week in a long letter. What a beautiful hand she writes, and she is still using an ink staff with pen that she dips in a bottle of ink!]

After the older boys were old enough to tend the crops and other chores, Grandpa kept himself busy tanning leather. He tanned and sold cow, goat, and sheep hides. It has been told that he once tanned enough squirrel hides to make a pair of soft shoes which sold for \$90 (Confederate money). He also made baskets and caned chairs. He had a large apple orchard, grape vineyard, and several large scuppernong arbors. Just about every kind of fruit tree grew in his orchard. He had a sheep cote near the

flat rock back of the house. Wool was a necessity in those days. He had many bee hives.

The table was never set without a bowl of honey on it. Fowl, cows, and hogs, along with all the other commodities, kept Grandpa's family well clothed and fed.

One sport, I was told, that he enjoyed was fox hunting. In the 1870's, he would ride horseback to Talbot County to join in a big Fox Hunt.

One of the greatest pleasures of the olden days was syrup making time. Papa and Uncle Will, the oldest and youngest sons, along with one of Grandpa's servants, Albert Rawls, ground the cane. Papa cooked the syrup. Uncle Will hauled it to the kiln and many of us helped to strip the cane. We all drank the juice until it almost ran out of our ears. Those were the "Good Ole Days!"

What did the people do for entertainment? – well, before the turn of the century, small town and country children knew almost nothing about public entertainment, other than the Commencement Exercises at school closing for summer and summer picnics. Of course, we were carried to church twice each month. In those days, everyone had reverence for the Sabbath. Neighbors usually visited, most neighbors were close relatives, coming early and staying until time to return home before night only on the weekends. Buggies and surreys were their mode of travel.

One interesting old game was "Charade," which children loved. We also played "Drop-the-handkerchief."

Everybody enjoyed playing "Fruit-basket-turnover." Sometimes it got monotonous and rough. Uncle Will and Aunt Ida would direct the nieces and nephews in games. We loved for them to play with us because we thought they were no older than us. They were Grandpa's oldest children.

I recall once, when I was about eleven, agents rode around to homes with a sheet advertising, "A Wizard Oil Show" to be held at Culloden Auditorium the next evening. Uncle Will and Aunt Ida invited me to go

with them. I was so happy. That was the first moving picture I ever saw. A city in the background and a locomotive train running across the stage. My! what a sight it was in the long ago. It was in color, blue predominating. A little girl came out on the stage and sang, "Hello Central – Give Me Heaven." This all seems like a dream to me now.

I remember on a number of occasions after Grandma passed away Grandpa would pack his bag and go for a week's visit to his Danielly cousins in Crawford County, and then on to visit his relatives in Ft. Valley (Pierson's) before returning home. He always had a nice looking horse and buggy.

Aunt Nan was the longest lived of Grandpa's children and her life's years unique, having spanned the centennial decade 1868-1960. From careful observation, I find it something rare. Grandpa lived to be 84, 1827-1911. His sister, Elizabeth P. Crumbley, 95, 1836-1931, and now many of the grandchildren are well into their 80's.

Memories of Grandpa and Grandma (James and Anna D. Pierson)

as remembered by some of the other older grandchildren

J.T. Pierson, the elder grandson, remembers them as being the best grandparents anyone could have. One of his fondest memories, when he visited their home, Grandma would always go to the cupboard, and pull out a twenty-five pound flour sack filled with teacakes. "They were the best teacakes I have ever put in my mouth. You can bet, I hung around quite often."

Grandson Hubert Pierson also idolized his grandparents having lived in the home with them during the early years. He remembered Grandpa carrying them to ride in his pretty buggy pulled by a horse. His sister Thelma, only three years old at the time of his death, says he was a sweet Granddaddy; she remembers holding his hand going to the table.

Granddaughter Mattisue, daughter of James Monroe and Kate Holloway Pierson, recalls the time when her mother and father had only four

children and Grandma Anne came for a visit. She brought with her four gardenia bushes from her garden, and planted one for each of the children. Mattisue Pierson Brown and Carrie Pierson still have gardenia bushes that came from the original bush that belonged to the Grandmama Pierson.

Elizabeth Adams Storey also has a pomegranate and fig trees off the original trees that she has nurtured and prized through the years, even though they have been killed back several times. They always put back out from the roots. I got them from the old homestead about forty years ago.

Granddaughter Sara Haygood Bittick, daughter of Charles and Anna Pierson Haygood, has fond memories of her grandparents, having lived a short distance across the road from them. She, too, tells of the many goodies and delicious teacakes her grandmother kept for the children to eat. Grandpa always kept shiny apples in a nearby drawer that he was ever ready to hand out to the little ones. The dining table was always set with a pretty white tablecloth, and in the center was a large bowl of honey for every meal. Grandpa loved ho-cakes, egg custard, and coffee. Although she was very young when Grandma died, she remembers the anxiety all of her friends and loved ones had over her illness before her death.

Sara thinks it would be a good policy for all the generations to carry on Grandpa's remedy for wrinkled complexion. He would never bathe his face in anything but lukewarm water. To do otherwise, he believed, would cause wrinkles.

The Adams grandchildren, children of Milton and Ida Pierson Adams, do not remember their grandparents. But, they fondly remember the little mule Grandpa gave their mother. Her name was "Dolly". They had many good times with her and loved her dearly. It was a day of mourning in the Adams household the day Dolly died.

