

Days Of Old Sumner County

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P.O. Box 1871, Gallatin TN 37066

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

Coming Again: 'Billy the Goat's Tales of Two Towns'

By Annelle R. Huggins

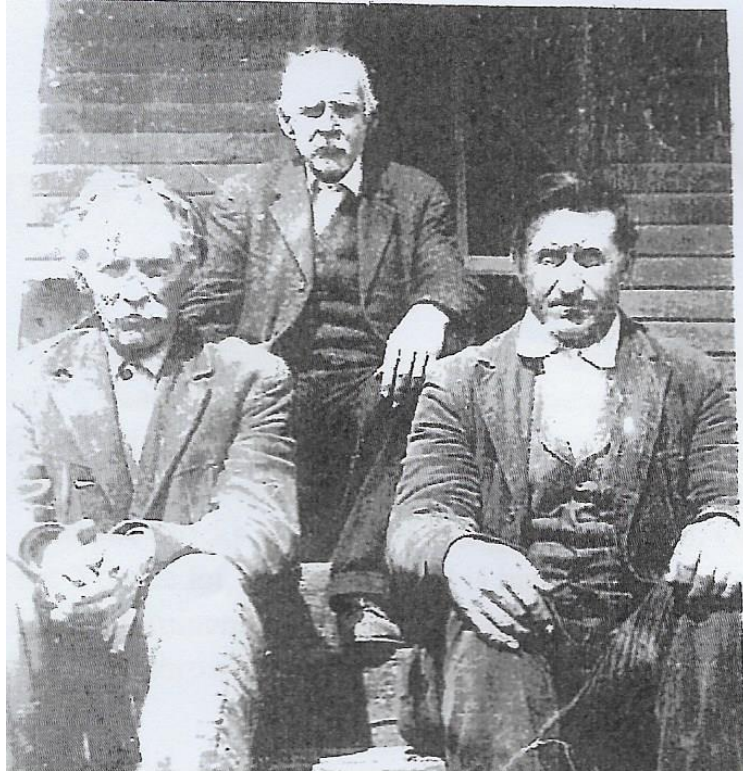
Editor's Note: The following story is part of a collection of columns by Luther D. Ralph, compiled by his granddaughter, Annelle R. Huggins of Memphis. The columns, including a lengthy index, can now be found at Sumner County Archives. Various selections will be printed in this newsletter.



Columnist Luther Ralph

In 1949 the editor of the *Goodlettsville Gazette*, having heard Luther D. Ralph tell many stories about the Long Hollow Pike area in Hendersonville over the years, asked him to write a column for the newspaper. This started 28 years and 625 columns written through 1976 of Billy the Goat's

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This photo from the collection of Ms. Sallie Hoopes, West Plains, Mo. shows (l. to r.) Solon G. Pruett, Morgan's Raider Patrick Espy Youree, Jr., and "Bud" Pruett.

Patrick Youree Jr: A Morgan's Raider

By John Aaron Wade

Though rarely heard today, the Youree surname was prominent in Sumner County history from the early days of civic affairs through the dark political clouds of the 1860's. Among its members was Patrick Espy Youree, Jr. He fought in the Civil War as a teenager under Confederate Gen. John Hunt Morgan. He was a prisoner of war, and at some point in his life got a hole in his head that was sealed shut by a silver dollar.

Patrick Jr. was born on Dec. 18, 1847, to Patrick Espy Youree, Sr. (B. Feb. 16, 1812-D. April 19, 1885) and Malvina Margurite Zimmerman (B. Feb. 12, 1817-D. May 28, 1883). During the 1850s, Patrick, Sr., Malvina and their children left Sumner Co. so he could try his hand as a merchant out West in Missouri. The western venture did not last long. By 1860, the family was back here, pulled by strong roots and ties in the Cairo community. This was the same time that the nation's roots and ties were being pulled apart by the Election of 1860.

The war erupted in April 1861, and by the summer of 1862 it was a personal and sorrowful reality for Sumner Countians. Nashville had

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Tracking the Life and Mystery of Jordan Gibson

This story comes from research by John A. Wade about the Jordan Gibson family.

Jordan Gibson was one of Sumner County's few black pioneers who was not a slave and whose history can be gleaned in bits and pieces from records, family lore and circumstantial evidence. Though a lot of information has been found, there are still questions about this Sumner pioneer.

The first mention of Jordan Gibson in Sumner County is reported in the *1770-1790 Census of the Cumberland Settlements*, which records Gibson's purchase of a bed from someone named Jas. McKain on Jan. 18, 1783.

(Editor's Note: The *1770-1790 Census of the Cumberland Settlements*, compiled by Richard Fulcher and published in 1987, is a record of the inhabitants of Davidson, Sumner, and Tennessee counties from 1770-1790 gathered from public records, wills, deeds, court minutes, marriage records, military records and other places. There is no "true" Tennessee census that goes as far back as 1770. Since the original settlers arrived at French Lick as early as 1779, the first 40 years in the area were a blank until Fulcher's Cumberland "census.")

It is likely that Gibson, a native of South Carolina's Cheraw District Welsh tract on the PeeDee River, headed west to Sumner County after the Revolutionary War. There is a Jordan Gibson listed on the Patriot Militia Roll. Like many other Patriot soldiers, he probably hoped to take advantage of the promise of free land, which was granted in exchange for military service. It is recorded that on April 17, 1786, the state of North Carolina awarded Gibson grant No. 154, which was for 640 acres on both sides of Bledsoe's Lick in Sumner County, bordering the property of Isaac Bledsoe.

By 1787, Gibson was counted on the Taxable Property List of Captain Morgan's District. The list shows that the Gibson household in Sumner included a black man and a black woman. It shows that in addition to Bledsoe, Gibson's neighbors included: Jacob Ziegler, Hugh Rogan, Charles Morgan and the heirs of William Hall.

Wade noted that tracking the life of Jordan Gibson of Sumner County is complicated by the fact that there were two Jordan Gibsons, father and son, who lived around the PeeDee River in South Carolina during the Revolution. They were both prominent in local affairs. "The designation of Jr. and Sr. appears as a constant upon the records of the 1760s through 1775 concerning land deals on the northeast side of the Pee Dee River," wrote Wade.

It was, he believes, Gibson Sr, who took his wife and part of his family to Sumner County to live next door to Isaac Bledsoe.

Jordan Gibson Jr. seems to have disappeared during the Revolution. However, Wade found that a man named Jordan Gibson – probably Junior—was listed by Loyalist Colonel Thomas Fletchall as being among the 300 South Carolina Loyalists and Tories killed by Patriots in 1780. From this, it appears that father and son were split in their loyalties--Senior to the Patriots, Junior to the king. It was not an uncommon situation among South Carolinians, **but was it true of the Gibsons, or did Col. Fletchall get the record wrong?**

The Back Story Is This

Confusion about the two Gibsons began after Charleston fell to the British May 12, 1780. There were horrendous consequences to the state's inland cities. British Major James Wemyss and his regiment marched inland, destroying Patriot homes and people. He hit the Pee Dee River area and actually kept a list of places he burned. He recorded that his troops burned the house of Jordan Gibson Sr. "at Little Bluff, or Wiggin's Landing." Jordan Gibson—probably senior—was listed on a roster of Patriots paroled after Charleston fell.

Wemyss' marauding intensified tensions between Patriots and Loyalists. "Partisan outrages were committed throughout the land," wrote Wade. "The young state had its share of Loyalists and Patriots. By all accounts, both groups proved to be extreme, vulgar and radical in conduct."

At this point, Junior was likely caught up in violence and killed; at least that's when Col. Fletchall listed him dead. Though Senior's home was torched, he stayed on the loose.

Violent clashes continued in 1781 with a Patriot colonel named Abel Kolb attacking Tories and outlaws in the Cheraw District, where both he and Gibson lived. Neighbor fought neighbor.

"In April of 1781, Col. Kolb met his end," reported Wade. "While at his home, Kolb, a Mr. Thomas Evans, and an unknown number, were 'murdered by Gibson, a coloured man, and his party of Tories, in a manner still more shocking to humanity.' Kolb had been asleep in his house with his wife, children and some neighbors when they were awakened by flames. A 'coloured man' named Gibson demanded that Kolb surrender himself. Upon leaving the home, Kolb was instantly shot and killed."

Wade noted, "As the embers of war began to cool in 1781, violent clashes between Tories and Patriots were still common in the South Carolina backcountry. In June of 1782, a Treaty for Peace between these parties was executed. General Francis Marion, 'The Swamp Fox,' represented the demands of the Patriots, and Major Micajah Ganey supplied the voice for Loyalists. Obviously, the murder of Kolb was something that proved unforgiveable in the eyes of local Patriots. Before any revenge could be exacted, the said Gibson 'escaped.' Where could such a despised man seek refuge? Anywhere but South Carolina would have to suffice."

The history here is confusing. Why did Gibson Sr., the Patriot, murder Kolb, another Patriot, and where did he get a party of Tories? If it was Junior, the Loyalist, who murdered Kolb, why was he listed on Fletchall 's roll of the dead the year before the murder?

Wade said, "What happened to Jordan Gibson, Jr.? Was he the man listed as a murdered Tory? If he was the son of Jordan Gibson of Sumner County, that means that we are looking at a man who risked his life for the Patriot cause, only to lose his home and somehow his son in the heat of war. If so, then we must ask the question: Who was the 'coloured' man named 'Gibson' who killed Patriot Col. Abel Kolb? Where did he run

to? Was the killer Jordan Gibson Sr.? Was this revenge for a son labeled and killed as a Tory?"

Sumner County Events

In any event, one of the Gibsons—likely Senior.—wound up in Sumner County and finally died here. Wade wrote, "Six years later on a wintry day in January, Charles Morgan and Jordan Gibson were making their way on a road near Bledsoe's Lick when both were attacked by Indians in a violent melee. A 13-year-old boy named William Hall remembered Jordan Gibson as having 'no white family' and the tragic event all too well, as it occurred near his father's home.

"The terror of frontier life was told back East in the papers," wrote Wade. The *Independent Gazetteer* in Philadelphia, Pa., reported on July 5, 1788. "The 17th of January, Messrs. Jordan Gibson and Charles Morgan were shot and scalped in the road between the Locust Land and Bledsoe's Lick, the former was a native of South Carolina."

After Jordan Gibson's death, his estate was divided among his son Roger Gibson, his son-in-laws James Harrison [husband of Cynthia Gibson] and James Odom [husband of Rhoda Gibson] and one unidentified daughter.

-----The Great Flood of February 1937-----



Pictured above is Main Street Hendersonville on Feb. 8, 1937, after a great flood. Rain, sleet and snow through January saturated the ground, and the Mississippi, Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers overflowed. This flood was considered the worst single disaster in American history to date. This photo was included in *Remember When*, a collection of stories about Hendersonville written and compiled by Hendersonville High School students in Jim Lind's 2008 Honors Topics Class.



Company D was leader of the drill movement. They are: (front, l. to r.) Sophie B. Foster (1868-1936) Keeble Trimble (b. 1841) Mai Buchanan (1872-1918) Annie Brown (1871-1953) Ione G. Lewis (1867-1946) Eliza Reid (1870-1950). (Back, l. to r.) Drillmaster Thomas Boyers Jr. (1859-1922) Ella Lewis (1860-1897) Adeline E. Baber (1858-1961) Augusta Sarah Stainbeck (1865-1949) Lucy Prince (1869-1959) and Lucy Elkin (1869-1936).

Memories of Gallatin's 'Splendid' Social Night

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

The following story was in the *Gallatin Examiner* on April 10, 1890. In flowery words, it describes a military-style competition of precision drill teams made up of local ladies. The society event took place in Tomkins Opera House theater. The Opera House burned in October 1886 and was rebuilt in 1888. A clipping from the Dec. 17, 1888, *Tennessean* describes the rebuilt facility as a "picture of neatness and comfort" with an auditorium 46x70 feet long with 475 of the "latest improved opera chairs" on floor level and 150 gallery seats and a 30x46 feet stage.

Merchants' Carnival Last Night at Gallatin Tomkins' Opera House Crowded with People

Beautiful Young Girls, a Splendid Drill and Enthused Auditors

Decidedly the best entertainment that ever held the boards at Tomkins Opera House was given tonight [April 10, 1890]. Every seat was sold, and it was the largest and most select audience that ever assembled in our handsome amusement hall. For weeks about 60 young ladies have been drilling daily and nightly for the purpose of giving an exhibition drill, which has been styled as a Merchants' carnival.

All Gallatin firms were represented, and the drill was as well executed as any that delighted thousands at West Side Park, when all Tennessee had the military craze. The various movements were perfect, and the management should feel justly proud of the

performance. Surely the audience was delighted, and never failed to applaud at the proper time. Some 60 people were on the stage in the grand march, when the various dance movements were gone through. The various companies were made up of our prettiest Sumner County girls—beauties and no mistake.

Company A was the first on the program, and when Capt. D.B. Anderson, the drill master, brought them to a company front the applause was deafening. Every movement was perfect, and they responded to all commands in a manner that would have done credit to the "Chicks," of Memphis...



Company A—(front, l. to r.) Kate Sullivan (1872-1960) Annie House (1868-1937) Mary Bugg Peyton (1871-1961) John W. Knight, Lena Hampton, Louise Trousdale Allen (1870-1959) Henrietta "Etta" Lewis (1869-1933). (Back, l. to r.) Drill Master Robert Knox Gillespie (1858-1895); Eleanor Katherine Trousdale (1866-1953) Mamie Gloster (1870-1957) Tennessee Woodson (1869-1939) Nell G. Prince (d. 1848) Clarabel Turner (b. 1872) Ellen "Ellie" Miller (b. 1874).

The second thing on the program was the recitation of Miss Lizzie Lewis, which was well received.

Company B, composed of 12 young ladies in bright costumes, followed, and put up a splendid drill, showing clearly that they were soldiers of the first water also. Their movements were different from Company A, but were superbly executed. Their wheels were loudly applauded, and when they were marched off the stage everybody claimed that it was a difficult matter to decide the better of the two squads.



Members of Company B are: (front, l. to r) David Blythe Anderson, Katie Trousdale, Annie House, Annie Powell, Mary Bugg Peyton, Laura Dulin, Lizzie Bell, (back, l. t. r.) Dr. Lewis M. Woodson in a Knights of Pythias uniform, Louise Allen, Eva Brown, Bessie Schell, Mrs. Maggie Spadlin, Carrie Powell and Ellie Miller.

This was followed by a song by Miss Eliza Reid, Gallatin's song bird. She was in fine voice, and rendered one of her sweetest melodies in a very artistic style. She was warmly encored and responded with that sweet old song from the Bohemian Girl, "I Dreamt in Marble Halls," which brought forth a storm of applause.

Miss Prudie Simpson followed and played a violin selection most cleverly.

Company O [probably C] was next to drill, and cheers and applause were so great that it was difficult to hear the commands. They stepped to martial music, "Down Went McGinty," like old veterans, and their wheels and flank movements were grand. The girls had watched closely every movement of the companies that had preceded them, and they were determined not to be outdone or lose any laurels, and they didn't. When they had executed the programe assigned by their captain, a shower of applause and flowers followed their exit from the stage.



Members of Company C are: (front, l. to r.) drill master Capt. David Blythe Anderson (1842-1919) Annie Powell (1865-1928) Willie Elkin (1866-1930) Grace Franklin (1874-1942) Minnie brown (1874-1926). (Back, l. to r.) William Young Allen (1863-1941) Minnie Powell, Eddie Cook, Ethel Somers, Lizzie Lewis (1872-1953).

After a sweet song by Miss Mai Buchanan, who sang in a most flexible and sweet voice, Company D entered the arena, and as this was the recognized leader of the drill movement, their appearance was the signal for rounds of applause. They put up a perfect drill and kept perfect time to the sweet music. There was no mixing of fours, rainbows, to the wheels and fancy movements. Distances were closely observed, and it was remarkable how well their part of the programme was executed. This squad was very uniform, being but a slight difference in height of any of the 12 young ladies, and they presented a most pretty picture.

After a recitation by Miss Katie Sullivan, the grand march was given, when all the companies took part. It was sort of a "pass in review" by the whole battalion, and it was the feature of the evening. Sixty people were on the stage at one time, and many pretty and fancy movements were introduced. The girls looked beautiful, and they were bedecked and bejeweled in sparkling diamonds, rubies and sapphires.

The four companies have been drilling daily for the past six weeks under the following drill masters: Co. A—R.K. Gillespie; Co. B—L.M. Woodson; Co. C—W.Y. Allen; Co. D—Thomas Boyers Jr., who have brought them up to such proficiency, and they deserve special praise. Each one of the drill masters formed his company and turned it over to Capt. D.B. Anderson, who was drill master for the evening.

The drilling was to piano music, furnished by Mrs. J.W. Knight, a most accomplished pianist, who deserves credit for her zeal in behalf of the carnival.

(Editor's Note: Names of participants follow in the original story. We have put names under pictures. The photos and news article are from the Ken Thomson collection of historic pictures and clippings.)

A Glimpse of Sumner 30 Years Before Civil War

By Tim Takacs

The following description of 19th century Sumner County is from Hendersonville attorney Tim Takacs' book, *The City by the Lake* (Vol. 1). On page 28, he reported:

"By 1834, Sumner County had a population of over 20,000. It was almost entirely rural. Gallatin, the only incorporated town, had 666 inhabitants, and, according to the *Tennessee Gazetteer*, a courthouse, a jail, one church for all Christian denominations, a print office, 12 stores, 11 lawyers, four doctors, one cabinet shop, one chair factory, three tailor shops and two shoemakers. Inside the city limits were 35 log, 38 frame and 27 brick houses.

"No count was made of the inhabitants of the little village of Hendersonville. It consisted at the time of the stagecoach station, store and post office east of Drakes Creek. Overlooking the creek on the other side was the Hendersonville Methodist Church. A smattering of homes dotted the main road between Mansker Creek at the Davison County line and the community of Saundersville to the east.

"On the most detailed map published up to that date, in 1832, two roads, the main lines through Sumner County, radiate east from Nashville to Gallatin: one passed through Hendersonville, the other through the little community of Shackle Island several miles to the north of Hendersonville. (Although neither community appears by name on the map, an honor reserved only for Gallatin, Cairo and Bedsoe's Lick.)

"By 1830 two stage lines came through Hendersonville three times a week originating from Nashville and bound north for Kentucky. In the 1840s, as traffic over the new Gallatin Turnpike increased, two stages lines—operated by Carter, Thomas and Hough of Nashville—stopped daily at Hendersonville's stagecoach and post office, to deliver the mail and pick up passengers. In this decade as well, William B. Walton, a Mexican War veteran, opened his ferry at the end of Walton Ferry Road..."

"By 1845, the slave trade in Sumner County was about at an end. There were a large number of slaves in the county, whose numbers would steadily increase to the end of the Civil War. Some slaves had traveled west with their owners in the great emigration to the Cumberland settlements at the end of the previous

century...Others were brought from Virginia and the Carolinas and sold in the west; early in the century the Franklin brothers of Gallatin made their fortunes in the slave trade in this manner. By 1849, most of the county's slaves had been born here..."

Rails Tie the Country

"In the late 1840s and the early 1850s, railroad fever gripped Sumner County. At a public meeting in Gallatin on Jan. 21, 1850, chaired by Clerk and Master William Blackmore and reported by George W. Winchester, a spirited crowd adopted resolutions and named delegates to deliver to the Tennessee General Assembly, then in session at Nashville, a request that the section of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad be routed through Gallatin. It was thought that the railroad was near to closing on an agreement that would locate the line on a direct route from Louisville to Nashville. This would take it through Bowling Green and by pass Sumner County altogether, an intolerable prospect.

"The county's legislators (William B. Bate, future Tennessee governor among them) were urged to work for passage of the charter. To prove to the legislature the importance of locating the line through Gallatin and Sumner County instead of the direct "airline" route through Bowling Green, the citizens sent Daniel S. Donelson, T. Buntin, Oliver Butler, Gen. William Hall, J. Harlan, T. Stalker, Thomas Watson, Dr. James A. Blackmore, Captain Y.N. Douglass, Josephus Conn Guild, J.W. Head, General Joseph Mill, George W. Winchester, J. Parker, L.M. Woodson and William Blackmore to lobby for passage of the bill. These gentlemen were the most highly regarded in the county to carry out this vitally important task, and many of them were of high prominence in the state as well.

"Their influence was persuasive; on Feb. 9, the General Assembly granted the charter the Sumner Countians wanted but stipulated that the Louisville and Nashville Railroad not enter the city of Nashville. The Nashville and Chattanooga had gotten there first and, in the opinion of the legislators, held the franchise to the city. The L&N would have to leave its bags, so the speak, outside, north of the Cumberland River, to be taken into Nashville by horse-drawn wagons."

Buggy Dispute Escalates to Peyton Murder

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

While Balie Peyton of Gallatin became well known as a politician, horse breeder and the U.S. Minister to Chile, an older brother Robert Holmes Peyton, also a Gallatin horse breeder, became well known for another reason. He was murdered. And, apparently, there were a lot of witnesses, so the news went out fast, and it went nationwide.

The murder was Oct. 7, 1851. On Oct. 9, 1851, *The New York Daily Tribune* reported "An affray took place near Gallatin...this morning [Oct. 7] between Messers John McElwrath and Robert H. Peyton, brother to Honorable Balie Peyton. Peyton struck McElwrath with a cane, then the latter stabbed Peyton to the heart, causing instant death."

Robert Peyton, 59 at his death, was part of the Peyton horse breeding enterprise. As a young man, he fought in the Seminole Wars. He volunteered for six months as a private in Capt. Jo C. Guild's company, which was made up mostly of Gallatin men.

Balie Peyton, then in Chile, got the news of his brother's death by letter as described by Walter Durham in his book, "Balie Peyton of Tennessee." Durham said, "Balie was shocked when he opened a letter bearing the news that his brother Robert Holmes Peyton had been killed in an altercation with their 64-year-old neighbor, John McElwrath. Robert Holmes had gone to McElwrath's place on Oct. 7, 1851, to retrieve a buggy that the latter had borrowed from his sister [Sarah Peyton Barry] but refused to return. McElwrath told Robert that he could have the buggy only if he took it by force. Undeterred by the threat Robert began untying the shafts. McElwrath pushed him back and drew a knife from his waistband. Peyton attempted to disarm his attacker by striking him with his...cane, but it broke and McElwrath drove his knife into the younger man's chest, inflicting a wound from which he died moments later.

"While at school in Virginia, Balie Peyton Jr. learned of his uncle's death and was so disturbed that he came home," Durham continued. "He sought out McElwrath, found him in town, cursed him roundly, 'and would have shot him publicly' had not the killer 'made off and shut himself up in a room.' Balie Jr. took

out his anger on one of McElwrath's servants by beating him severely because he had 'acted very impudently' to his aunt, Sarah Peyton Barry, owner of the carriage... Strongly persuaded by his uncle Thomas Barry [Sarah's husband], Balie returned to school.

"Saddened by his brother's senseless death at the hands of a neighbor, Balie was grateful that Balie Jr. had not compounded the violence by killing McElwrath. The courts would deal with the killer and Balie, as an attorney would accept the verdict," wrote Durham.

McElwrath was sentenced to two years in prison for the murder. However, he may have served less or no prison time. According to the Feb. 12, 1854, Sunday edition of the *Daily Union & American* newspaper: "John McElwrath, who was sentenced to two years imprisonment for killing Robert Holmes Peyton in Sumner County, was yesterday pardoned by Gov. [Andrew] Johnson. Mr. McElwrath, we understand, was an old man, being upwards of 60 years of age, was a soldier in the War of 1812 and was badly wounded at the memorable battle of New Orleans. These facts, together with his former peaceable character, have elicited much sympathy in his behalf; and we understand that exercise of Executive clemency was prayed for by two or three thousand of the citizens of Sumner County where the homicide occurred."

Balie Peyton Jr., 18 years old at Robert's murder, had already borne his share of the Peyton family's tragedies. His mother died in 1845 when he was 11, and two Peyton uncles, Joseph and six months later, Randolph, died. At about the same time,--May 1846--Balie Sr. took off to fight in the Mexican War, and his seven-year-old daughter--Jr's sister--Nan died after being thrown from her pony. At some point, Balie Jr. was moved from his home, which was then New Orleans, to go back to Gallatin to stay with Aunt Sarah Barry [of buggy ownership] and her husband, Thomas. When the Mexican war was over in 1848, Balie Sr. came home briefly only to be sent to be Minister to Chile. He took his oldest child, Emily, with him to Chile, but Balie Jr. stayed in the states in school and with his aunt and uncle.

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fallen to Union forces in February. The able-bodied men of Sumner County were long gone, living in camps and on distant battlefields. Patrick Youree Jr. at 14, was still at home.

Gen. Morgan to the Rescue

State historian Walter Durham in his book, *Rebellion Revisited A History of Sumner County, Tennessee From 1861 to 1870*, noted that the Louisville/Nashville Railroad in Sumner County caught the attention of both Federal and Confederate forces. Vital for providing Federal supplies and reinforcements, the railroad was the cause of most fighting here. Locals and Confederate Gen. John Hunt Morgan knew that the railroad track between South Tunnel and Fountain Head was vulnerable. It was largely unprotected and passed through a remote area encompassing hills and valleys.

On Aug. 12, 1862, Morgan and his force of Rebel Cavalry rode 80 miles in two days from Sparta, Tenn. They easily “secured” Gallatin during the morning hours, and proceeded to block the entrance to South Tunnel. They were assisted by Gallatin citizens who torched a railroad engine and burned 40 railroad cars. Morgan’s men also “ran a captured locomotive” into South Tunnel, in hopes of completely destroying the passage way. “Torches were put to the wreckage and to the tunnel work,” according to Durham.

General Morgan was viewed as a hero to the people of Sumner County, especially after facing Federal occupation so early in the war. General Morgan’s efforts did not go unnoticed by the Federals in Nashville, and neither did the local cooperation of those who helped pillage government railroad cars and supplies. There would be punishment.

Midnight Raid on Man and Boys

On Aug. 19, 1862, Union Lt. Col. Horace H. Heffren arrested about 130 male citizens whom he claimed were “aiders and abettors” of Morgan’s exploits. At midnight, Lieutenant Heffren and his prisoners began marching toward Nashville.

On the morning of Aug. 20, Gen. Morgan discovered Gallatin in an “uproar.” It was reported to him that “nearly every male inhabitant of the place above the age of 12” had been taken prisoner and forwarded to Nashville. Morgan’s men rode hard and fast. Like lightning, they reached Lt. Col. Heffren’s Federals, fought hard, and managed to free the prisoner-citizens near Saundersville.

Once again, Gen. Morgan executed another feat of patriotism and humanity for the people of Sumner County. We do not know who those boy-prisoners were whom Morgan saved, but they possibly were embellished with their own sense of patriotism after the event. Perhaps they were the beardless youths who made up the 9th Tennessee Cavalry Regiment C.S.A.?

Youree, 15, Joins the Calvary

Formed one month after Morgan’s rescue mission, the 9th Tennessee Cavalry had seven companies that hailed predominantly from Sumner County, and one containing a mix of Rutherford and Davidson County men.

Among them was Patrick Espy Youree, Jr. According to military service rolls, Patrick, Jr. was barely 15 years old when he joined the Regiment as a 4th Corporal. The youths of this regiment were baptized by fire shortly after its organization, and they participated in the following battles:

- Muldraugh’s Hill Trestle (December 28, 1862)*
- Morgan’s Christmas Raid (December 28, 1862-January 1, 1863)*
- Thompson’s Station (March 5, 1863)*
- Vaught’s Hill, near Milton, Tennessee (March 20, 1863)*
- Morgan’s Ohio Raid (July 2-26, 1863)*

Ultimately, the Ohio raid proved to be end of the 9th Tennessee Cavalry Regiment. Afterwards, Gen. Morgan pushed his riders more than a thousand miles, crossing the states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and finally Ohio.

Escape and Desperation

Patrick, Jr. was lucky. He survived the raid and was one of the men—two companies worth, only of the 9th Tennessee—to escape across the Ohio River at Buffington’s Island. These survivors marched through western Virginia to Morristown, Tenn., to regroup as the remnants of Gen. Morgan’s command, according to service records and Confederate Gen Basil Duke’s *History of Morgan’s Cavalry*. (Note: Duke was Morgan’s brother-in-law and second-in-command and became a noted historian.) It was on this trek to Tennessee that the men of the 9th took up the motto, “Nil Desperandum,” or “Do Not Despair.”

Patrick, Jr. continued fighting for the cause and was captured Oct. 9, 1863, at Sugar Creek, Tenn., a couple of months before his sixteenth birthday. He was imprisoned at Camp Morton, Indiana, which was one of the largest of the Union’s eight prison camps for Confederate noncommissioned officers and privates.

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Patrick, Jr. took the Federal Oath of Allegiance on Feb. 21, 1865, and was paroled from Camp Morton. His destination was Sumner County, Tennessee.

Life after the war for Patrick, Jr. was one of tumultuous events. He outlived his parents, never married, and spent time in the Tennessee Hospital for the Insane "as a lunatic or person of unsound mind."

Apparently, Patrick, Jr. had a "hole knocked in his head," in which a silver dollar was inserted to seal the wound. Not surprisingly, he displayed odd behaviors such as: when visiting his doctor, he would constantly try to stand on the doctor's feet, and when family visited he would pin children to the ground with a chair and then sit on the chair as if to trap the child. (Note: These stories came from Ms. Sallie Hoopes of West Plains, Mo., the great-granddaughter of Alexander Reed Youree, Patrick Jr.'s, brother. Her mother, Queen Holman Blake, born in Nashville in 1892, told Sallie about visiting Uncle Pat Youree, including how he forced her to the ground with a chair to trap her.)

In 1893, Patrick, Jr.'s brother, Dr. Charles S. Youree of St. Louis, Mo., attempted to deprive Patrick, Jr. of land that had been left him by his mother. Charles claimed that Patrick, Jr. was too "unsound," to hold the property and that his guardian was another brother, Henry Hudson Youree. Charles Youree's petition was not granted. In fact, in 1894, Patrick, Jr. stood before a jury of inquisition to answer questions and was proclaimed to be of sound mind and entitled to his land.

On Feb. 15, 1923, Patrick, Jr. died at age 75. His name was added to the memorial to his parents in the Gallatin City Cemetery, where it can be seen today. As a gallant Confederate soldier, he won glory and suffered the hardships that all Confederate soldiers bore. Unfortunately, his war service was something that haunted him until his final days. As a mere youth, he stood up for the cause his state adopted. In old age, his neighbors stood up for him and saw to it that he was not stripped of his property or dignity.

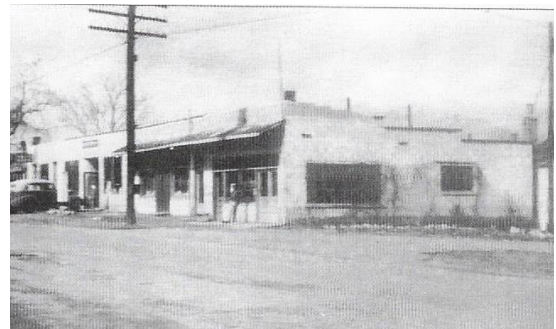
Patrick, Jr. lived with Paul Prewett and his family for the last 29 years of his life. Though never married, he was never alone in Sumner County.

--The Old Gallatin Post Office--



From the photo collection of Ken Thomson, this picture is of the old Gallatin Post Office, circa 1910, with Post Office clerks (l. to r.) Effie Lassister (b. 1881-d. 1946) and John Beale Swaney (b. 1884-d. 1961). Not pictured is Harry Swaney (b. 1873-d. 1960) who was postmaster from 1902-1914.

--Old Hendersonville Post Office—



This group of buildings on Hendersonville's Main Street housed Hendersonville's Post Office, the office of Dr. J.H. Stephens and general merchandise. Located at the corner of Old Shackle Island Road, these businesses were replaced by Freed's Hardware and Stewart's Five and Dime and later by various other businesses. Hendersonville's post office moved and expanded in August 1964 into a one-story, red brick building at 336 W. Main Street and again in 1980 to its present location. This photo was included in *Remember When*, a collection of stories about Hendersonville written and compiled by Hendersonville High School students in Jim Lind's 2008 Honors Topics Class.

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"Tales of Two Towns" in the weekly newspaper. At one point during the 28 years, the *Goodlettsville Gazette* and the Hendersonville *Star News* had the same owners, and the columns were duplicated in both newspapers.

The first column was published in the *Gazette* on Sept. 8, 1949. It starts:

"You who don't know, Shackle Island is located in Sumner County at the exact spot where the buffalo trail through Long Hollow crosses Drake's Creek. And, that by the way, is the same spot the Yankee gunboat came to during the Civil War. We will tell you more about the gunboat in a later issue..."



Above are two of the mastheads used over the years for Luther Ralph's 'Billy the Goat' columns.

Luther's Early Life

Luther David Ralph was born on Nov. 30, 1890, in a log cabin in Sumner County. The area was known as Shackle Island, on Long Hollow Pike, about half way between Goodlettsville and Gallatin. His parents were Effie Gilliam and John Lafayette Ralph. He was the oldest of 12 children.

Family story states that Luther found that the house was becoming crowded after the fourth child was born, so he announced he was moving out at seven years of age and going to live with his maternal grandparents, whose house was just across the road. This is early evidence that Luther was "his own person" and, perhaps, a portent of his future column heading.

Luther's family history included a grandfather, William Bennett Gilliam, who fought with the Confederate Army and was wounded at the Battle of Shiloh, and a great-grandfather, John McMurtry, Sr., who was recognized in 1947 by the Daughters of the American Revolution as the soldier from the furthest west to fight in the Revolution. His final cabin in Shackle Island was restored and is located in the woods near Old Beech Cumberland Presbyterian Church. His grave in the Old Beech Cemetery carries the DAR marker.

Luther started school at the Old Patton Schoolhouse on Madison Creek Road between Goodlettsville and Shackle Island. He often spoke and wrote of the

headmaster and his favorite teacher, Mr. D.A. Montgomery. In one column, Luther wrote:

"I started school at an early age at Patton's School. One of my teachers was that veteran teacher and politician, the Honorable D.A. Montgomery, a born diplomat, who they never could beat for any office. He never met anyone that he didn't say something good to or pleasing about." (*Gazette*, Feb. 29, 1968)

Luther then moved to St. Francis School, which was in "downtown" Shackle Island. His grandparents helped him continue school at the Winthrop Academy in Nashville. Luther wrote:

"This happened at old Winthrop School in Nashville one cold day when we boys were eating lunch. We were upstairs in the chapel with the door closed, when two bantam rooster type boys, about 16 and built like bulldogs, got into a fight. An older boy, a tall fellow from a place called Goodlettsville, intervened to stop the brawl. However, there was another boy there, older and taller than this fellow—a 25-year-old Indian from Oklahoma—who locked his arms around the peacemaker and exclaimed, "Let 'em fight—I've got a sister." And that they did until both of them became exhausted and had to stop. Then the Indian ordered them to shake hands and smoke the pipe of peace. This was one fight the faculty never knew about, for no one dared tell because the Indian refereed it, and he was bigger than any of us. (*Gazette*, Aug. 4, 1966)

Author's Note: Winthrop Academy would eventually become Peabody Demonstration School and then the University School of Nashville, and not only would several of Luther's grandchildren attend and/or graduate from the school, but one of his sons and a son-in-law would teach there. Also, one daughter-in-law would be the cafeteria manager.)

During his later school years, Luther became a member of what he called a "band of mischievous boys" that terrorized and tickled the Shackle Island community a half century ago." He wrote:

"They began when a prominent chicken breeder placed a little painted house, built for something else, near the highway to house a pen of chickens. It scared people's horses, and the boys were told to move it.

"After the chicken breeder was threatened with the law for weeks, the boys sent her a nice letter protesting that kind of building so near the road and signed it J. Proctor Knox, Pres., and John Randolph Wilkerson, Sec., Shackle Island Board of Health, Democrat Building, Room 6 and 10th floor, Shackle Island, Tennessee.

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“No one ever really got mad and the Board of Health became legend for its pranks for which members played safe by having for their leader the constable, who was single and only a few years older.”

The Board of Health's pranks were immortalized among them in a song someone wrote, which ran in the *Gazette* on Feb. 23, 1961. It began:

**“Listen all you rounders from far and near,
To a story of a gang that roves around hear.
Board of Health is their official name.
By moving hen house they won their fame.
Called to order on Christmas night,
In the year of night owls 1908
The north wind roaring and dark as pitch
They upset that roost and rolled it in a ditch.
Board of Health!
They kept out of jail.
Board of Health!
Cause their leader was the one put on their trail...”**

It continued with descriptions of raiding a watermelon patch, sneaking cider from “cousin Jim's,” putting frogs on the church porch, and it ended with a final verse:

**“Everything dull and everything quiet.
Then a dance at Hunts on a fatal Friday night.
The Board got there but it didn't get back,
Cause they went with Daniel whose first name was Jack.
The old lady Gossin, the scandal to recite,
Was the first to learn that the Board was tight.
Hurry girls and break all your dates.
For you ain't gonna go round with such reprobates.”**

Luther Prepared for Career

In April 1922, Luther completed a course in bookkeeping and commercial usage at Jennings Business College in Nashville. On Luther's diploma, Mr. R.W. Jennings wrote: “This is a young man of most excellent morals and of a practical turn of mind...has a clear head for business and is qualified to make himself very valuable in any store, office or counting room.” Luther then became a “runner” for First National Bank in Nashville. He described the job much later in a April 24, 1969 column printed in the *Gazette*.

“Then to the city to work, where the hardest job I ever did in my whole life I did with my tongue when I refused to accept a check with its being certified. It was a big business house on Market Street where they had always treated me so nice when I had made previous collections. But this time they cussed me black and blue until I assured them I was

the lowest employee at the bank and I had to do it to hold my job. The next genuine cussing I got was when a teller at the bank waited until almost train time to hand me \$800 to wrap and seal and then get on the train for Monterey. I ran every foot of the way to the depot out in the middle of the street, then dodged under the gatekeeper's arm, who was holding it, outran it until I reached the express car. The door was open, and I threw the money in the car and also the express book for the man, whose feet I threw it at, to sign, then slowly walked on beside the tracks until I found the book he had signed and thrown out...I was promoted at the bank to a job that kept me inside all the time, and the fun was over on the street then. I quit, although two officials pleaded with me for an hour to stay on. I've never regretted my action, for then I went west, where no one ever cussed me again, because I was from Tennessee. People out there believed a Tennessean would shoot them if he were ever antagonized. Of course, there was nothing to such a belief, but as long as they believed it, it worked wonders.”

The story of Luther's travels, told in additional *Gazette* and *Star News* columns, will continue in the next edition of this newsletter.

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Check out the new Sumner County Historical Society's facebook page.

We plan to post information on historical events of the past and present. If you have information to share or requests for information regarding Sumner County history, please post on the page or contact Jane Wright at jswright107@gmail.com or 615-452-7704.

If you want to email SCHS for any reason, the email address is: schstn1786@gmail.com.

Please Pay Your Dues

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

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

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

Sumner County Historical Society

Post Office Box 1871
Gallatin, TN 37066

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