

Days Of Old Sumner County

Newsletter No. 34, May 2021

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Dr. Robert Buchanan: Remembered

The following story, originally headlined, "Raging Creeks, Nor Storms Could Stop This Devoted, Now Retired 'Buggy Doctor,'" is about Robert Norman Buchanan (1878-1967), the well-known and still remembered country doctor, who practiced medicine in Sumner County's Beech community in the first half of the 20th century. The story was written by Louie



Dr. Robert Buchanan

Spivey, a longtime writer for the *Star News* and the *Goodlettsville Gazette*. It appeared in a newspaper called *Sumner County News*, probably in the early 1960s. We sent a copy of Spivey's story to Buchanan's grandson, Robert Hickey, who made minor changes that have been included here. Dr. Buchanan practiced out of his home on Long Hollow Pike (between Buchanan and Stirlingshire Drives).

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In his new painting, Gallatin artist David Wright envisions how Abraham Bledsoe, 18th century pioneer hero and mulatto slave might have looked as he stood with his dogs, alert to danger.

Abraham Bledsoe: African American Pioneer

By Jane Wright

In 2019 Gallatin artist (and SCHS member), H. David Wright, was commissioned by the Tennessee State Museum to paint Abraham Bledsoe, the mulatto slave of Anthony Bledsoe (1733-1788). The only description found regarding Abraham was given by General William Hall of Gallatin who said of him, "He was a brave, active, and intelligent fellow, and indeed a good soldier and marksman."

A few examples of his bravery were cited. On one occasion Abraham was accompanying Molly Bledsoe, Anthony's daughter, to a nearby fort. About half way they were attacked by Indians. Abraham instructed Molly to make a run for the fort while he kept the Indians

(See ABRAHAM, Page 9)

Memories of Wild Rides in Days of the Model T

By Luthor Ralph

Editor's Note: The following story, which ran on May 1, 1969, in the *Star News* and the *Goodlettsville Gazette*, is part of a collection of columns called "Billy the Goat's Tales of Two Towns" by the late Luther D. Ralph. He was a Shackle Island native who wrote nostalgically for local newspapers from 1949 to 1976. Ralph, born on Nov. 30, 1890, still has descendants who live in this area. In 1969, he wrote the following story:

In today's automobile age, there is nothing happening that is humorous enough to report, so we will have to revert back to the transition period between horse and buggy and automobile to find something worth telling.

One of the oldest stories on record about this change in modes of traveling concerns the old farmer who lived so far back in the hills he had never heard of a gas propelled vehicle. One day he ventured out on a highway, and he met an automobile followed by a motorcycle, and his horse ran away with the buggy. When some men working along the road stopped his horse and asked what caused it to run away, the old fellow answered, "I met a four-wheel thing getting its breath awfully loud because there was no horse pulling it, and I could hardly hold my horse, and then along came a colt following it, and popping like a pack of firecrackers. That scared the old rascal so bad he ran away with me."

One of my own uncles had a buggy horse that was old enough to vote in a horse election when autos first invaded the highways. Every time he would see a car coming he would turn the horse off the road, get his head against a fence, then jump out and hold a big feed bag over the horse's head until the monster drove by. It was hard to tell which was the scariest, the man or the horse.

I remember well my first ride in an automobile. A group of us boys from Shackle Island were staying in town going to school. One of them, however, wasn't going to school but was chauffeuring for a rich businessman there. One night he brought the car to the boarding house to take us boys for a ride. We drove out Harding Road at a moderate speed. At one place, he remarked, "You boys remember this spot when we come back over it." I didn't think I would remember it on a dark night like that, but I did, and still do, for when we neared the spot coming back, he pulled the throttle down, and the car sped over a bump, throwing the three of us in the back seat up and bumping our heads on the steel frame of the roof.



When the city people first began driving their cars out over our country roads, they didn't travel much faster than a horse and buggy, and they always bowed and spoke to us country hunks when they met us on the road. Soon afterwards they began shipping second hand Model T Fords from the North down here, [Model T Fords were first introduced in 1908] and most every boy in the country bought one, then began driving them to see how fast they would go. Soon the women folks caught that dreadful disease called speed. Today on this crooked Long Hollow Pike where there is no speed limit, everybody with the exception of a few old timers, drive through here like rocket ships to the moon.

Back to the Model T days, one young fellow who grew up a Shackle Island on a rough hill farm, moved to Nashville with his folks and got a job where he made enough money to buy a second hand Model T. Then he got in the thing and drove it out to Goodlettsville. There he visited with some friends, and after parading up and down the streets a while he headed for Shackle Island, his old stomping grounds. As he came down by the old rock bank, he was driving so fast he couldn't make the turn out Long Hollow Pike, and, consequently, he knocked down a yard fence and stopped his car on the front porch of the house on the corner. He eventually made it on to Shackle Island. His trip back home proved quite a historical coincidence, for it was the Fourth of July, the day we celebrate as commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence. As all of you know, the first man to sign this famous document was John Hancock, and the bearded old gentleman who lived in the house where the fence was knocked down and the car stopped on the front porch *was [also] named John Hancock!*

The other fellow is not the only one the joke is on concerning these ancient cars. The first car we ever owned was an old T Model we paid \$80 for, *plus \$10 for another radiator* [after] a grocery truck on First Street darted past me, then stopped in front of a store, directly in front of me the first time I drove the thing to Nashville.

New Evidence about the Naming of Castalian Springs

By Kevin E. Smith, Professor of Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University

In the series of articles about what is now Wynnewood State Historic Site published in the *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* in 1994 and later reprinted by the Bledsoe's Lick Historical Association (BLHA), the late Walter Durham, state historian and Gallatin resident, described the origins of the name "Castalian Springs" as follows:

Sometime between 1829 and 1832 – probably in 1830 – the inn and springs became known as “the Castalian Springs,” a name suggested by Mrs. Wynne’s brother Valerius Publicola Winchester, then a student at the University of Nashville and later a member of its academic faculty. The lick springs, located in the flat at the foot of the hill on which the inn was located, are said to have reminded Winchester of the springs of Castalia at the foot of Mount Parnassus where Apollo and the Muses lived in Greek mythology... (Durham 1994:11).

Recently, however, a copy of a letter in a private collection from Valerius to his sister Almira Winchester Wynne offers previously unknown information. Penned at the University of Nashville on 25 June 1830, Valerius wrote to his sister Almira Winchester Wynne:

Ask me for a toast for Alfred on the occasion of the 4th of July celebration at the Lick. I am the worst hand in the world at such things, but have with difficulty recogitated that which follows. A word first though about the name; you say the Olympian Springs – but I am told that the advertisement in the newspaper calls them the Castilian springs – I find in the Classical Dictionary that the Castalian fountain (and I suppose this is the name intended) was “sacred to the muses and that its waters had the power of inspiring those that drank of them with the fire of poetry”

This text seems clearly to suggest that Almira favored the name "Olympian Springs" – and that Valerius Winchester was not the originator of the name "Castalian Springs." Previously, our earliest documented reference to the name Castalian Springs comes from a July 26, 1830 advertisement in the *National Banner* and *Nashville Whig*.

If we can dismiss Valerius and Almira based on this newly discovered letter, who then is the next most likely source for the name? No currently known other document offers any significant clues, so once again, I fall back on cautious supposition. The most likely sources of the name are the two primary partners who

built the inn in 1829 at Castalian Springs – Alfred Royal Wynne and Stephen R. Roberts. I shall at this point default to Alfred R. Wynne, who clearly had the greatest interest in developing and promoting the inn over the long term.

CASTALIAN SPRINGS.
THESE Springs are situated in Sumner county, eight miles east of Gallatin, on the road leading to Carthage, and thirty-three miles from Nashville. The fountains are numerous, and the waters are uncommonly cold, clear and palatable; their constituent qualities are somewhat varied; all of them, however, contain portions of *Sulphur, Soda, Salts and Magnesia.*
The effects of these waters have been fairly tested, and experience has proved them of great service in all eruptions of the skin or other cutaneous diseases, dyspepsia or indigestion, head-ache, liver complaints, diseases of the eyes, gravel, and many other chronic and acute diseases.
The proprietors have, at considerable expense, erected spacious and comfortable buildings for the accommodation of visitors, which they flatter themselves will be found equal to any establishment of the kind in the Western country. The surrounding scenery is peculiarly picturesque and beautiful, and Nature seems to have left but little to be supplied by art, to render the retreat more fascinating and agreeable. Every exertion shall be used to afford pleasure and comfort to visitors; the invalid shall have unwearied and constant attention, while the gay, the grave and the fashionable shall meet with a hearty welcome.
GEO. ROBERTS
For the P
Castalian Springs, July 26th, 1830.—e6t

Above is the 1830 newspaper ad for Wynnewood Inn

Did Alfred have the education in the Greek classics that would have allowed him to propose the name? I suggest the answer is "yes."

Upon the death of his father Robert K. Wynne in 1802, Alfred was taken in by his grandfather Thomas K. Wynne and uncle John K. Wynne – who lived at Hickory Ridge, Tennessee in Wilson County. He lived with them until 1816, and reportedly was educated in a fine school at Hickory Ridge. The only school at Hickory Ridge during the period between 1802 and 1816 was Campbell Academy – authorized by the *Acts of Tennessee, 1806*, with John K. Wynne as one of the trustees. By 1810, George McWhirter was the schoolmaster and is noted as "the first man who taught the classics in Tennessee." So, perhaps the "toast" that Valerius planned to offer to Alfred was in honor of his selection of an appropriate and lasting name for the inn and resort.

Portrait of a True Southern Gentleman: Vernie Hawkins

Editor's Note: The following story was published in 1990 in a booklet about Sumner County entitled "Tell Me a Story" by David Collier. He wrote:

Vernie Gilliam Hawkins was born in Phillips Hollow three miles of Westmoreland on a hillside farm. He started school at age six and got his first education in a one-room school named Buffalo...

His father, J.L. Hawkins, was a Baptist preacher who made the circuit of his churches by horse and buggy. His mother was Julie Wallace before her marriage. Being brought up in a Christian home made a lasting impression on Vernie.

When I talked to Mr. Hawkins recently in his apartment at Brandywood, he had just passed his 89th birthday on January 26. On his walls hung plaques of different achievements he had accomplished over his long teaching career.



As we talked and reminisced, his mind went back over the years to Buffalo and the trap lines he ran to catch varmints to make extra money, catching opossums, polecats and occasionally minks, which were skinned on the way to school. The main cold remedy back

then was wearing a yarn vest soaked in turpentine, and that—along with the smell of polecat--gave the school room around a hot stove an aroma all its own.

In the sixth grade, he transferred to Westmoreland, walking three miles to school. His Junior year, he rode a train to Gallatin and attended high school, and his final year of high school was at Portland.

Jobs were scarce in those days, and he didn't like the idea of being a farm laborer at \$15 a month or of being a sharecropper. Being a school teacher had a certain amount of prestige in the community. Also a teacher always wore a coat and tie, and that was appealing. So in 1916 at age 18, he took his first assignment as a teacher at Buck Lodge at a salary of \$35 a month. His board for himself and his saddle horse at a farm house near the school cost him \$10 per month.

A room at the high school in Gallatin was the County Superintendent's office where supplies were kept for all of the county schools. He chuckles as he remembers the supplies he received for his first one-room school...two zinc water buckets, three water dippers, two boxes of chalk, two erasers and two brooms. If for any reason any of these supplies got broken lost or worn out, they were replaced out of his own pocket. The water supply was a neighbor's well

near the school. Buck Lodge was a one-room school, teaching through eighth grade with around 40 students.

In those early days of teaching, wood—always green—was furnished by the county for heat. The job of bringing in wood and tending fire was rotated among the boys, and sweeping the school was done by the girls. Everyone brought their own lunch.

At lunchtime, students got their exercise by playing annie over, fox and hounds or baseball. Truant officers at the time were unheard of. Tobacco setting, strawberry picking, corn gathering and getting in the family wood supply kept a lot of students home...

After teaching at Buck Lodge for one year, he taught at several different rural schools, acting as principal and also teacher at Hollis Chapel, Oak Grove, Fairmont and Brackentown, which were two teacher schools. Evelyn Collins was placed at Brackentown to teach with him, whom he later married in 1922. Over the years, three children were born...Ralph, Charles and Gloria, and in years to come nine grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

During his early teaching years, by attending college at Bowling Green, Ky., during summer vacation from teaching, in 12 summers he received his Bachelors degree. He remembers chopping strawberries for \$1 a day to help pay his tuition at the college.

After being teacher and principal at different grade schools in Sumner County, he was selected by Wilson County to be Superintendent of a four-year school at Watertown. After that, he was Superintendent of a four-year school at Mt. Juliet...Sumner County then hired him to be principal of a four year high [school] at Hendersonville, and he served two years. Mr. Hawkins appreciates ...having a school there named in his honor.

In 1941, he was elected Superintendent of Sumner County schools and served in that capacity 13 years. After serving as Superintendent, he served as principal at Guild Elementary for eight years...

Today, as he reminisces about his early days at Buck Lodge and other rural schools and the teachers who taught at these schools since the founding of America, he takes his hat off to those one-room teachers who have helped to make America great.

Note: Vernie Hawkins died Nov. 13, 1993, at age 95.

These 'Bean Day' School Lunches Remain a Legend

Ninety or more years ago at one small, unnamed school in Sumner County, a practical and generous teacher—dubbed Aunt Em—decided that her young students needed a nutritious hot lunch at least once a week. And she--by golly!--was going to get it for them. Aunt Em's hot lunches were the subject of a story written in 1959 by educator Tom Hawkins (1921-2008) and paraphrased below. Hawkins, born in Fountain Head, was an associate professor at what is now the University of Central Oklahoma. He and his wife moved back here when he retired. He was a nephew of School Superintendent Vernie Hawkins, page 4. Tom Hawkins' daughter, Annelle Huggins of Memphis, sent this story and is certain that the Bean Day school was one of the superintendent's schools. According to school archivist Kay Hurt of Gallatin, Vernie Hawkins taught at Buck Lodge, Hollis Chapel, Oak Grove (there is more than one Oak Grove) Fairmont and Bracken Town School. "Oak Grove was very small and deep in the country," noted Hurt. "It may be the Bean Day school."

Tom Hawkins wrote:

Aunt Em taught the "big room" (third through eighth grades) in a two-teacher elementary school in north central Tennessee during the 1920s. How long she had been teaching at this school when we moved into the community, I don't know. But she had become somewhat of an institution... She was in her late fifties and was one of those late women...

Aunt Em did not have government surplus, federal funds, state or local money to finance her program. . . She did, however, realize that youngsters needed hot food during the winter months, rather than a cold biscuit and meat or a cold baked potato...

To procure her supplies, Aunt Em held an auction. And what an auction! All the girls were sent into the "little room" (primer, first and second grade room). The boys were left in the big room. Soon from the little room, which opened off the stage, would emerge one of the girls. She would be draped in a sheet so that her identity was supposedly unknown, but a giggle from under the sheet, in most cases, revealed her identity...

Acting as auctioneer, Aunt Em called for bids on the young lady. Not in money, but in beans...From various parts of the room came, "I'll give 500 beans." Another, "I'll make it 1,500. This continued until Aunt Em's gavel indicated sold. The sheet was removed, and the girl took her place beside her purchaser... another girl was then auctioned...

Any boy could bid on any girl or buy as many as he felt able to pay for in beans. If a young man erroneously identified a girl and bought the wrong one, he would certainly try to buy the right one... Sometimes the young fellow bought several girls to better assure getting the one he wanted. The reward for purchasing a girl was the honor of eating with her when the beans were cooked... Every boy was expected to buy a least one girl. Some of the more bashful of us were known to have bought our sister.

After the auction each boy would be notified the number of beans he owed and when to bring them to school, usually the next day. . . Aunt Em served as cook. Lack of a kitchen range caused no concern for there was the heating stove in the big room. Double desk tops served as dining tables...

On the day the hot lunch was to be served, Aunt Em would bring a large pot big enough to hold beans for at least 100 children. The seasoning meat was provided from her smokehouse, and salt was brought by her and some student who volunteered a handful. Aunt Em would wash the beans and put them on the stove to cook when she arrived at school. All morning long the beans would simmer and boil...on the large wood-burning stove in the center of the room. One of the older girls was charged with the responsibility of keeping plenty of water in the beans and stirring them occasionally...the boys who "knew their lessons" and had been "good" were happy to bring in wood for the stove from a huge wood pile outside. All morning long, the delicious aroma of the cooking beans mingled...

Each pupil provided his own bowl and spoon. If he desired bread with his beans, he provided it. At lunch period, everyone remained in his seat until after the blessing. The boys then carried the bowls to the stove where the beans were served. Aunt Em always saw to it that there were enough beans for second and third helpings.

Hot lunch was not served every day during the winter months, but one auction often provided beans for several lunches...Not every auction was for beans. Sometimes Aunt Em's plans called for vegetable soup. This being the case, the girls were auctioned for different items. Some for tomatoes, some for potatoes, a few for onions...The soup would be prepared in the same fashion as beans, with Aunt Em providing a chunk of meat for stock and some student volunteering to bring the salt and pepper...

Many of her pupils may have forgotten much of the academic teaching Aunt Em did, but few, if any, will forget the warm noon meals on cold winter days.



The Bank of Portland before its failure in 1926

'Depression' Struck Portland Early When Bank Failed

By Albert Dittes

On Oct. 4, 1926, the Portland Bank, with 1,200 depositors, closed its doors and went into receivership. This failure led to the fall of several important businesses in town meaning lost jobs and life savings.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)--guaranteeing all bank deposits--came as a result of the 1929 Wall Street stock market crash, affecting the entire country. The Portland Bank depositors thus had no way of retrieving their money and experienced a great depression three years before the rest of the county.

The Portland Bank started with a capital of \$10,000 (or \$263,018.18 in 2020) when several substantial people signed the charter on Oct. 24, 1903. Perhaps the most prominent was W.T. (Uncle Billy) McGlothlin, 65, a businessman, local historian, Civil War veteran and one of the first local farmers to grow strawberries.

Leading day-to-day financial details was Risdon Dick Moore, 44, who had been appointed first postmaster of Portland when it changed its name from Richland on April 10, 1888, and was the first mayor of Portland at its 1905 incorporation as a city. His 1928 obituary referred to him as "'Judge' R.D. Moore, a prominent business and religious figure of Sumner County," having served on the Board of Education for 15 years and the County Court for 10 years."

Other incorporators were businessman John W. Jones and G.P. Bailey, a local dealer and teacher, according to the 1910 Census.

Early reports showed the bank to be sound. A July 8, 1905, ad in the *Gallatin News* reported it having \$79,203.90 in resources (\$2.083 million in 2020). Capitalization went up to \$124,556.22 in 1909 and \$262,422.95 early in 1917. That

included \$219,422.95 in deposits (or \$4.463 million in today's currency).

Another early newspaper advertisement proclaimed that "The growth of this bank has been phenomenal, organized in 1903 with a capital of \$10,000 and reorganized in 1910 with a capital of \$25,000.

"Now with its capital of \$25,000, surplus \$5,000 and deposits of \$15,000 it is justly ranked as one of the leading banking institutions of Sumner and adjoining counties."

A Second Bank Opens

The Farmers Bank incorporated in February, 1912, with a capital stock of \$20,000 (or \$525,036.36 in 2020). Its directors were: W.T. McGlothlin, J.F. Dye, W.C. Gibson, F.C. Enders, S.M. Griffin, Carlos Watwood, J.W. Marlin, Rufus Marlin and P.W. Kerr.

Portland Bank Went Terribly Wrong

The Portland Bank served the community during World War I and into the 1920's. Then something went terribly wrong.

On Monday evening of Oct. 4, 1926, the directors met and decided not to open the next day. "The state banking department was asked to send a representative to Portland to look into the condition of the bank," according to a story on the front page of the Oct. 7, 1926, edition of the *Sumner County News*. "Mr. H.L. Gregory of the state department arrived in Portland Tuesday night and is now engaged in making an inventory of the bank's affairs. No statement has been given out as to the financial condition of the bank."

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For a time, the Bank of Portland's closing devastated the Portland economy. J.M. Cummings sold his store goods to W.W. Wallen and Son and devoted his attention to his nearby farm. A Trustee's Sale forced the sale of 78.8 acres owned by R.D. Moore to cover a \$2,000 note plus interest. The Highland Rim Crate and Furniture Co., Moore and Riggsbee, Moore Feed Co. and G.W. Moore also went under subsequent to the Portland Bank failure.

The Kerley family took G.D. Moore, vice president and son of Manager Risdon Dick Moore, to court for accepting a \$466.42 deposit from C.W. Kerley the same day the board of directors closed the bank. At his trial, Moore testified that his father had taken part in a bitter political contest for the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. His rivals retaliated by continually withdrawing their deposits, taking out more than \$10,000 (\$147,111.86 in 2020) on Oct. 4, 1926, the last day the bank was open. The Tennessee State Attorney General prosecuted the case, and a jury found the defendant guilty as charged Sept. 28, 1928.

Why the Bank Failed

People spoke of several possible causes of the economic disaster of the Bank of Portland. One problem was that some people had purchased large tracts of land during World War I, but a decline in value left them unable to repay.

R.D. Moore reported that "slow collections on notes and slack business conditions caused an accumulation of frozen paper that sapped the Portland bank's cash," but he also added that he believed the Bank of Portland would eventually be able to meet all of its debts in full.

The local newspaper carried stories meant to reassure the community.

The community eventually recovered from the setback caused by the bank failure. With tobacco and strawberries the basis of the economy, local farmers continued to command good prices for their crops.

The Farmers Bank, financially sound when the Bank of Portland failed, also weathered the Great Depression of the 1930s, and ordinary life went on, as it must.



The Bridal House's gets a new 'old look'

The Bridal House Restored

By Jane Wright

When the Bridal House in Cottontown was donated to Sumner County by Donald Brickey in 2016, County Executive, Anthony Holt asked Jane Wright to organize an association to manage, furnish, and open the house to visitors. Thus, the Friends of the Bridal House (FBH) was born in 2017.

The first major renovations were undertaken by the Sumner County Maintenance crew. They cut down the huge boxwoods blocking the view of the house, added heat and air, replaced water pipes, tore out the kitchen in the "meeting room" and added a kitchenette.

The louvered front doors, door hardware, paint color, and the brick front porch were not in keeping with the structure's time period, so FBH hired Harris Green of Orlinda Furniture Company in 2018 to construct new period-correct doors. FBH provided the hardware. Bill Burt, of Indiana, custom made three windows to replace rotten ones, and FBH picked out the new trim color.

Finally last fall, the Sumner County Maintenance crew removed the non-period brick porch. The porch had caused the bottom log to rot, so Donnie Wix of First Class Renovations in Castalian Springs was hired to stabilize the house, lay a rock foundation and add rock steps. This latest renovation brought this unique house's exterior closer to its beginning in the early 1800s. Its new stabilization should allow the house to stand gracefully and safely for another 200 years.

The Bridal House is located at 2315 Highway 25 W in Cottontown, TN. For more information, see Bridal House's website: www.bridalhouse.org or see us on Facebook. To join the Friends of the Bridal House, email: friendsofthebridalhouse@gmail.com.

Who First Called 'Station Camp' by Name?

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Located between Hendersonville and Gallatin, Station Camp—now the setting for three of Gallatin's newest schools and residential areas—is one of the earliest named places in Tennessee. The names "Station Camp" or "Station Camp Creek" date back to the days of the Long Hunters, according to Jay Guy Cisco's *Historic Sumner County, Tennessee*.

The Long Hunters were the first white men to venture from a starting point in southwest Virginia (America's western border) then travel deep into the wilderness of Tennessee and Kentucky. They began "long hunts" (from which they got their name) in the 1760s to explore and hunt for months at a time. They were adventurers who had heard stories from the Indians about excellent hunting grounds where the finest furs could be gotten and the land was rich. After the Long Hunters traveled west, they came back home with news of fertility and trapping. In his book, *The History of Tennessee*, John Haywood (1762-1826), a Tennessee historian and judge, noted that "a Long Hunter could earn as much as \$1,600 to \$1,700 a season, which is more than a farmer could expect to make in his lifetime."

They Make a Camp in Kentucky First

According to Cisco (who often quoted Haywood), a company of about 20 Long Hunters from North Carolina and Virginia left a rendezvous place in present Wythe County, Virginia, on June 2, 1769, for a great hunt in Kentucky and Tennessee. The group included Kasper Mansker, for whom Mansker Creek is named, and Abraham Bledsoe, who eventually settled in Castilian Springs. Cisco wrote that they traveled to a Flat Lick, then down the Cumberland River, crossing at a "remarkable" old fish dam near a place called "The Bush." They made a camp and a storage place for skins and game in what is now Wayne County, Kentucky and returned there every three to five weeks to add to their stores.

"They continued to hunt to the west and southwest, through a country covered with high grass, but finding no trace of human settlement; they found many places where stones covered large quantities of human bones," wrote Cisco.

"In June, 1770, some of the hunters returned home, having been out one year, while 10 of them, including Mansker...built two boats and two trapping canoes, laded them with furs and bear meat and proceeded down the Cumberland, down the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers to Natchez where they sold their cargo, and where some of the party settled, the others returning home through Georgia," Cisco continued.

"In the fall of 1771, Kasper Mansker, James Knox, Henry Knox, Richard Scaggs, Henry Scaggs, Isaac Bledsoe, Abraham Bledsoe, James Graham, Joseph Drake, John Montgomery, Old Mr. Russell, his son, Young Russell, Huges, William Allen, William Linch, David Linch, Christopher Stoph and others, 22 in all, with several horses, came out again. It will be seen that five of this party, Mansker, Abraham Bledsoe, Joseph Drake, James Knox and Richard Scaggs, were members of the first party which had gone out in June, 1770.

"This party was so successful in getting skins that they were not able to carry them all back with them, and as their hunt was prolonged they built what they called a 'skin house' at a common center in what is now Green County, Kentucky. Their hunt extended into the barrens of Green River. One of the hunters, named Bledsoe, wrote on a fallen poplar tree, which had lost its bark, '2,300 deer skins lost; Ruination by God,'" according to Cisco.

Some of the Long Hunters returned home in February 1772, Cisco continued, because their ammunition was low. Isaac Bledsoe, William and David Linch, William Allen and Christopher Stoph remained at camp. However, one of the Linch men was later taken sick, and Bledsoe took him to a settlement. Soon after that, Indians attacked the camp, taking two of the men. One man escaped, but Cisco could not determine who.

In any event, the rest of the group returned from home two or three months later. They found that the camp was still intact with only meat missing. They found that the dogs they had left behind were "quite wild" since they had not seen a person in months.

They Travel on to Station Camp

"Soon after returning to camp, the party traveled on through the forest to the southwest and fixed their camp at a place to which they gave the name **Station Camp** creek, which it has retained to this day," wrote Cisco. "There they remained from May, 1772, to August of the same year, hunting and exploring the country. It was from members of this party that several geographical localities in Sumner County took their names. Drake's Pond, Drake's Creek and Drake's Lick took their names from Joseph Drake. Bledsoe's Lick, Bledsoe's Creek were named for their discoverer Isaac Bledsoe. Kasper Mansker gave his name to Mansker's Lick and Mansker's Creek.

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"In July or August, 1772, about 25 Cherokee Indians came to the camp in the absence of the hunters and plundered it. The hunters continued there was for some time afterwards until their ammunition was about exhausted, when they broke camp and started for the settlements. When they had gone as far as Big Barren River in Kentucky, they were met by another party of hunters, upon which Mansker and four or five others returned and hunted to the end of the season, then went to their homes in the New River country."

About Author Jay Guy Cisco



Cisco (1844-1922) was a newspaperman, historian, diplomat and book store owner, who wrote *Historic Sumner County Tennessee* in 1909.

According to online accounts, Cisco was a veteran of the Confederacy. He traveled in Europe after the war

then settled in Jackson, Tenn., where he opened Cisco's Bookstore.

In the 1880s, he founded and edited a newspaper, the *Forked Deer Blade*, in Jackson and gained a reputation for strong opinions and strong political writing. Some copies of that newspaper can be found online.

He was appointed as U.S. Minister to Mexico in 1888 by President Grover Cleveland.

After his ministry, he moved to Nashville where he was the assistant industrial and immigration agent for Tennessee with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. It was during this period that he became known as a historian.

Facebook Page Now Online

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.

(ABRAHAM, Continued from Page 1)

back, and they both arrived safely.

In 1793, Abraham was traveling through the thick cane brake from Bledsoe's Fort to Greenfield Station (a distance of 2 ½ miles) when he came within 10 paces of two Cherokee chiefs; Mad Dog and John Taylor, the latter a half-breed. They had been visiting with the Shawnees and were on their way back to their villages but wanted to steal horses and kill settlers on their homeward path. Abraham instantly threw up his gun and fired, killing Mad Dog. He then ran away to safety while John Taylor carried off his slain comrade.

Also in April of 1793, General Hall recalls talking with Abraham, "a very intelligent servant of Col. Anthony Bledsoe's family" when Greenfield Station was attacked by Indians. Abraham was first to spot the Indians at the fence and alerted the inhabitants of the station. Abraham is credited with killing at least one of the four Indians killed in the attack while the station lost two men and some horses.

The *Nashville Banner*, 1897, stated "Abraham Bledsoe lived to be old, and died in the first decade of this century. A braver man never lived. Several of his descendants are, at present, living in Sumner County."

Wright's painting shows Abraham in front of Greenfield Station, ready to go hunting with his flintlock rifle and dogs. The painting will be on exhibit at the Tennessee State Museum's "Tennessee at 225: Highlights from the Collection," starting on June 1 and running through May 21, 2022. This is a self-guided tour, showcasing 100 artifacts from the Museum's collection. For more information please visit TNMuseum.org.

Please Pay Your Dues

Because of the pandemic, Sumner County Historical Society did 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.

(BUCHANAN, Continued from Page 1)

"The stream would be swollen, the young doctor knew even before he drove within sight. The heavy recent rains would have Station Camp lapping at its banks, and he was filled with apprehension as he jogged along the still muddy road in a buggy on his errand of mercy. He reflected over the frantic call that had gotten him out, and he knew he had to make it, come what may.

"The little mare drew up at the water's edge and snorted her disgust. She half turned her head as if to ask, "What about it?" Beyond, muddy, swirling Station Camp rolled full and heavy toward the Cumberland. He had no alternative, the doctor knew. His first thought was to get there. He clucked reassuringly to the mare, raised lines and let them come down on her back with a little smacking sound, and she half timidly took to the water. She tried to turn her head once again, but he had a firm hold on the lines. A few steps further, and it was as easy to go ahead as it would have been to turn back.

"It all occurred so quickly the doctor hardly knew what was happening. A mighty current of water caught up the buggy, swung it around! Swept the mare around! Pulled both animal and vehicle downstream! The buggy tipped! The doctor's medicine fell into the raging stream!

"But then a ray of hope. The little mare composed herself and began swimming toward the bank. At first it seemed as if her hooves were tiny things waging a losing battle against the rushing clay colored giant as she churned the water in slow progress. Then the bank and safety.

"That was only one of the experiences of Shackle Island's Dr. Robert Norman Buchanan. He is retired now, but by far the major portion of his life has been devoted to attending the sick in the southwestern portion of Sumner County, and there are few of the older families in the area who haven't at one time or another sought his services. "That day at Station Camp Creek," the doctor said, "my buggy was swept several feet downstream. I lost my pill bag, but somebody found it later and returned it to me. It was found a long way downstream. It seemed in the old days that the only time I was called out at night was during a storm."

"But the storms never were too bad nor the streams too high when someone needed him," Mrs. Buchanan said. "He has doctored people all the way from here to White House and from White House to Hendersonville."

"I've ridden all over these hills and hollows," the doctor said. "first, by horseback and buggy for several years, then by a Ford car."

"The county only had dirt roads in the early days," Mrs. Buchanan said. "In fact, most of the roads were creek branches. For a while you could hardly get from

here to Hendersonville. Roads were nothing but creek branches—no such thing as a pike or a bridge.

"He has gone many a time in a hollow somewhere, had to leave his buggy, had to cross on a foot log and had to walk a much further distance on foot. Maybe he would be going way up a hollow to deliver a baby; he would have to leave his buggy, and someone would meet him with a horse to ride the rest of the way."

Sometimes a Car Was No Better

Perhaps the doctor thought when the car came into use that many of his troubles were over. No more catching up a reluctant, scary horse on a lightning filled night to jog along behind, no more oozy barnyards to tramp around in; rather he could look forward to a more convenient, faster and surer way of traveling.

However, he found that he wasn't much better off, and probably many times he had the notion to reverse his mode of travel and to pay heed to the popular comment of the day, "Get yourself a horse."

"I got my first Ford in 1918," the doctor said. "Those were the days of hard living. In the winter time. we had to heat many a tea kettle of water to pour on it to get it started. One day it wouldn't crank. I got mad and gave it a good hard kick. Evidently, that was what it needed. It started right off."

"Thousands of Babies"

Dr. Buchanan said that he has delivered thousands of babies in the Shackle Island area. Many residents would have agreed; there were hardly any of the older families where his services haven't been felt. In fact, the residents thought so much of him that in 1953 they got together and organized a special tribute. November 8 of that year was one of the highlights in the doctor and Mrs. Buchanan's lives, for it was then "Dr. Buchanan Day" was held at Beech Church, and practically everybody in the community turned out for the occasion.

Present were several well-known residents of the county...Among them were Jack Anderson, Dr. James Troutt, Dr. Wesley Osborne...Gordon Turner was the principle speaker for the occasion. Also present were more than 100 of Dr. Buchanan's babies. One unusual show of deliveries were those of the L.D. Ralph family, all nine of whom were attended by the doctor...

Born in Rutherford County

Dr. Buchanan was born in Rutherford County on June 29, 1878. He was the son of ex-Governor John Price Buchanan, governor of Tennessee from 1890-'92...Gov. Buchanan was a courier with General Hood's army during the Civil War, and he participated in the battle of Franklin...

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Mrs. Buchanan is the former Margaret Jane Terry (1888-1972). Dr. and Mrs. Buchanan had three children: Robert Norman, Jr., M.D. (1911-2004) a dermatologist in Nashville; William Thomas (1913-2002), an engineer with Dupont in Chicago; and Mrs. Thomas Hickey (1917-2007), of Washington, D.C.; and nine grandchildren.

On Dec. 23, 1957, the Buchanans celebrated their 50th anniversary.

Although the doctor has spent most of his life in Shackle Island, it wasn't in his plans to do that. He had intended to move on after a short while.

"I graduated from the old University of Nashville in 1905," he said. "I had taken pre-med work at Peabody [College], and I was ready to practice. My brother was the minister at the Beech Presbyterian Church here at that time, and he persuaded me to come here.

"It was a bright April morning when I left Murfreesboro. Never will I forget it. I rode horseback all the way on old Bess, a little blaze-face mare. She was five years old. I stopped over that night in Nashville and made it here the next day.

Sumner County Good Place

"My brother had told me Sumner County was a good place, but I didn't aim to stay here. I planned on staying about two years then move on," a twinkle came to his eyes as he looked at his companion, "but a certain little brown-eyed gal drew my attention. You couldn't get me to leave then."

"We met down at Beech Church," Mrs. Buchanan said. "I was coming from school one day, and I stopped off to visit with his brother's family, and he was there."

Dr. Buchanan lived in his home on Long Hollow Pike, a 500-acre farm on which he raised cattle and sheep from 1909 until his death in 1967. He retired from medicine in 1946 and devoted all his time to farm work.

His doctoring days are over now, but he likes to reminisce of the days when he ran to the buggy or Model T and hurried to the bedside of a sick friend. The patient knew he was in good hands when the doctor arrived, and he knew he didn't have to worry about payment—getting well was the main thing. In fact, the doctor rarely pressed anyone for payment.

"I've taken many a bushel of apples, potatoes and corn in trade," he said. "Also, many a rick of wood."

Gallatin Hit By Epidemic in 1849

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

In the summer of 1849, a cholera epidemic hit various regions in the United States, including Middle Tennessee where it spread to Nashville and Gallatin. It took the life of former U.S. President James K. Polk, among many others.

In his book, *Old Sumner*, State Historian Walter Durham noted that the *Nashville Daily Union* newspaper published a few "dramatic" cholera reports, written by Thomas Boyers and sent to the paper by telegraph from Gallatin. Boyers was a Gallatin lawyer and editor who later founded the *Gallatin Examiner*, which was eventually renamed the *News Examiner*.

Boyers' first report came on Aug. 20, stating "The cholera broke out at Gallatin again on Thursday morning last, and 23 persons, 13 whites and 10 colored, died..." He reported that there were only three or four hundred people still in town. Several hundred of Gallatin's thousand residents had already fled the city.

The next day, Boyers sent this message, "My report this morning of the health of this place s not quite so good as yesterday... Since 2 p.m. yesterday, five new cases have occurred—all are doing well, however, save two who have but little chance of living... Our physicians have got some control of which they had not up to Friday night last. Upon the whole there is a striking abatement in the ravages of the disease."

Over the next two days, Gallatin's cases appear to have dropped. Boyers wrote, "I am happy to announce that no new case of cholera has appeared since Monday at dusk. We have been blessed with a respite of 36 hours. There are several taken previously who are doing well, and will in all probability recover. We have two deaths on yesterday."

But two days later, his news was not optimistic. "My report this evening is not so favorable... We have three new cases since last evening at sunset—two or which proved fatal this morning... the epidemic is spreading in every direction around us in the country and proves very fatal. I am unable to give you the number of cases or deaths... We are getting again in something like good spirits, though the town still wears a sad look. No person from the county ventures in—and few travelers pass through. The *Gazette* gives, however, an exaggerated account of our misfortunes. The Post Office has never closed; nor... the printing office. Most of the stores are closed for the good reason that there are no buyers."

Durham reported, "The absence of further reports in the Nashville newspapers after Sept. 1, 1849, can be taken as an indication that the epidemic abated about that time.

Sumner County Historical Society

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To: