

# Days Of Old Sumner County

Newsletter No. 1, January 2013  
Sumner County Historical Society

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## Sumner Co. History: Its Importance

The Board of Directors of the Sumner Co. Historical Society announces its first ever quarterly newsletter. State Historian Walter Durham of Gallatin writes below, introducing this newsletter and explaining why it is being done.

**Few counties in the United States have a history as important to our country and as interesting to readers as Sumner County. As early as 6,000 B.C., Native Americans camped and hunted in the area. Today inspection of the remnants of earthen mounds reveal villages of the fifteenth century that were occupied by precursors to the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw, who regarded the region as a jointly-held hunting ground.**

**When explorer-hunters appeared across the (See SUMNER, Page 10)**

## The Art of History



**This painting, *Drifting Down River*, by artist David Wright of Gallatin, portrays pioneers moving a flatboat down the Cumberland River as they did in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Wright, who ranks as one of America's premier artists, says he paints to create historical atmospheres, not just an event in time.**

## Sumner Cabin Now Part Of Irish Park

By Jan Shuxteau, editor

Closing out a chapter of Sumner County history that began in 1775, Gallatin businessman and historian John Garrott made a pilgrimage last summer to visit Hugh Rogan's cabin, formerly located in Sumner County, now in its new location in Northern Ireland's Ulster American Folk Park.

In 1775, Hugh Rogan, then age 28 and a fierce Catholic enemy of the British, fled Ireland with a price on his head, seeking religious liberty in America. He eventually made his way to Sumner County where he built the cabin that will soon be open to the public in Ulster. The park, which honors Irish immigrant heroes and is reminiscent of America's Colonial Williamsburg, bought the cottage and relocated it brick by brick and timber by timber.

Garrott tells the story of how Rogan left behind his young Irish wife (Nancy) and baby son, and—along with his brother-in-law—stowed away on the last merchant ship to leave the British Isles ahead of the American Revolution. Arriving just after the Battle at Bunker Hill, he was immediately caught up in the war against his old nemesis.  
**(See GARROTT, Page 2).**

## **GARROTT, Continued from Page 1**

Rogan heard descriptions of the rich lands on the frontier, and he joined expeditions going west. According to Jay Guy Cisco's *Historic Sumner County, Tennessee*, Rogan came with the Donelson party down the Tennessee River and up the Cumberland to French Lick. He defended Bledsoe's fort when it was attacked by Indians, and he was with General Daniel Smith in 1782 when he was attacked near where Cragfont is now. Rogan was a signer of the Cumberland Compact, which entitled him to a 640-acre land grant.

Cisco described him as a "man without fear, with a big, kind heart...a general favorite among the pioneers." He was also a man with a love story, and his reunion with his wife and son is worthy of a movie script. In the 1780s, Rogan was headed to find a ship home to get his family, when he met his brother-in-law on the way. The brother-in-law, who had married in America despite a wife in Ireland, told Rogan that Nancy, believing him dead, had remarried. Full of sorrow, Rogan returned to Sumner County to the house he called Rogana. Eventually, he learned that the story was false—Nancy still waited. In 1796 he returned to Ireland and brought her and his now 21-year-old son back to Rogana.

Rogan and his wife had a second son, Francis, in 1798. Francis Rogan had two children with his wife and many with a black slave. Many of his descendants live in Gallatin and occasionally gather, both black and white, for family reunions.

Adjacent to Rogana, Francis Rogan built the brick cottage, now in Ireland. Sumner County Historical Association moved Rogana itself to Bledsoe's Fort Historical Park in 1998.



**John Garrott and family members visited the cabin in the summer of 2012. The room below has five pieces of furniture created by Garrott to replicate original period pieces.**



# Fairvue Plantation: Early Days of the Historic Home

By Bill Puryear

From the prehistoric stone-grave natives to today's beautiful development, it's hard to name a more beautiful or historic area than the first Bluegrass district of Tennessee

Centuries ago the Woodland Indians chose these rich creek bottoms to hunt, farm and bury their dead in stone-lined graves. When the earliest pioneers came in the 1770s, they chose these same rich lands along a creek they named Station Camp, after the earliest hunters' staging camp there. The land along its two fertile creek valleys leading to rich river bottoms must have looked like paradise to the first permanent white settlers.

Revolutionary War Veteran James Franklin, along with his five sons, soon claimed it. One of them, Isaac, became hugely rich trading in slaves, land and cotton—precious cotton—which rapidly replaced wool as the worldwide fabric of choice. The five Franklin brothers claimed the best of the land and built substantial homes along the creek, below a promontory that river travelers knew as Pilot's Knob. Isaac, who had gained fame throughout the South, built a spectacular mansion as a crown for his two thousand fertile acres. He called it Fairvue.

But beautiful Fairvue had a dark side, for it was built on the backs of humans sold in bondage. Isaac Franklin was one of the largest slave traders in America.

The old Buffalo trace that ran in front of the house became the main stage route for traversing Cumberland country. Along it came one day the lovely Adelia Hayes from Nashville, bound to see friends in Gallatin. Forced to take shelter from a storm in the mansion, whose owner was away, she took a look around and announced, "I set my cap for the master of this house."

Franklin was 28 years her senior, but they had 11 years and four children together. Unfortunately, none of them survived to live as adults, and Isaac's will, after leaving Adelia, rich, bequeathed the remainder to found an academy for Sumner County. The will was broken in Louisiana courts, which ruled it perpetual. Adelia took the money and built, with her second husband, Belmont Mansion in Nashville, now the centerpiece of a growing university system. (See FAIRVUE, Page 10)



Fairvue, 1839

# Teddy Roosevelt: An Early Historian of Middle Tennessee

By Jan Shuxteau, editor

A remarkable history, *Winning of the West*, that includes Sumner County/Middle Tennessee in its days as the western frontier was written in the 1880s by a man better known to most of us for big game hunting, charging San Juan Hill and ultimately leading America: President Teddy Roosevelt.

Roosevelt, president from 1901-1909, wrote four volumes of *Winning of the West*, packing Volume One with stories about Kentucky and Tennessee, starting from before today's boundaries of state and county were recorded.

Published in 1889, Volume One was reprinted in paperback in 1998—it's that good.

Roosevelt enjoyed a much publicized "presidential" visit to Middle Tennessee in 1907, but local historians wonder if he could have been in these parts decades earlier. They point out that a bench behind which he and other presidents spoke is now displayed in the Gallatin Public Library.

Also, he is known to have traveled widely in the former frontier. He wrote Volume One while still in his twenties, sounding as if he were standing on Tennessee soil. "Toward the mouth of the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers," he wrote, "the landscape [of the 18<sup>th</sup> century] became varied with open groves of woodland, with flower-strewn glades and great barrens or prairies of long grass. This region, one of the fairest in the world, was the debatable ground between the northern and southern Indians. Neither dared dwell therein, but both used it as their hunting-grounds; and it was traversed from end to end by the well marked war traces [trails] which they followed when they invaded each other's territory."

Local historian and businessman John

Garrott explains, "By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this area was the hunting ground for several tribes : Creeks, Shawnee, Cherokee and Chickasaw. They didn't have what you'd think of as their permanent homes here, but they hunted in reasonable peace as long as other tribes did not come into their territory."

Roosevelt, a great believer in what he called "a strenuous life" writes at length about the longhunters and pioneer leaders including Daniel Boon (whom he admired greatly) and Kasper Mansker, the surveyors and explorers—who came into the



**Theodore Roosevelt and Presidents Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, Andrew Johnson and Benjamin Harrison made speeches at Gallatin from behind this judge's bench, formerly in the Sumner Co. courthouse and now displayed in Gallatin library.**

Kentucky/Tennessee to open it for settlement.

"Boon is interesting as a leader and explorer, but he is still more interesting as a type," wrote Roosevelt, explaining that the West was won by no one person, but by the "dauntless, restless backwoods folk," such as Boon, who were "strong and daring." Boon was, in his words, "a tall, spare, sinewy man, with eyes like an eagle's and muscles that never tired...he lived for 86 years, a backwoods hunter to the end of his days," whose "claim to distinction rests...on the fact that he was able to turn his daring (See ROOSEVELT, Page 9.)

# Sumner Co. Archives: Records Indexed Back To 1786

By Shirley Wilson, Genealogist

If you are interested in doing genealogical or historical research in Sumner County, the Sumner County Archives is where you want to be. The Archives is the official repository for the early permanent records of Sumner County. While the more recent records remain in the various county offices, most of what you will want for your research is located in the Archives. The dates vary as to when records are sent to the archives.



Sumner County Archives has one full time staff member, Bonnie Martin (right) and one part-time staffer, Randy Tatum (left) as well as dedicated volunteers.

While the Tennessee State Library and Archives has many of Sumner County's records on microfilm, there are some records that are unique to the county and can be found only at the Sumner County Archives (ask for a list when you visit.). Examples include the family and historical vertical files.

Many services are provided through the Web site, including a card catalogue to an extensive collection of books and an excellent manuscript collection. The Web site also has a Limited All Name Index to some of the records which are available to use at the Archives. Microfilm viewers and copiers and document copying are available at a modest cost. Staff will respond to email for specific requests for copies of indexed records. A modest search fee is charged plus copying and mailing fees. Due to economic times, the facility is understaffed, so please be patient.

Except for deeds, all early records beginning in 1786 are maintained, most are indexed,

and all are available to the public for research.

Many records such as wills, probates, marriages and court cases are available in three different formats: the original form, in book form, and on microfilm. Patrons are asked to use the microfilmed version while searching, but the originals and books can be accessed when necessary. These records include the courts of county, circuit and chancery. The county's deeds are on microfilm through 1947 at the Archives. Most original deed books remain in the office of the Recorder of Deeds.

In addition to the official county records, the Archives facility has an excellent collection of family, military, historical and genealogical books relating to Middle Tennessee. While the focus of the collection is on Sumner County, there are also books on the surrounding counties and states from whence Sumner Countians came and to which they migrated in their path westward. Even if your ancestors aren't from Sumner County, some of the library collection will be helpful to you.

**(Note: Shirley Wilson of Hendersonville is a retired professional genealogist who has lived in Sumner County for 35 years. She was involved in the formation of the Sumner County Archives and has served on the Sumner County Public Records Commission since its formation.)**

## Sumner County Archives

Address: 364 Belvedere Dr.  
Gallatin, TN 37066

Phone: 615-452-0037

Tools: Computers may be used. Cameras, scanners not permitted.

Sign In: Patrons must sign in and out. Please call first if coming from a distance or check the Web site at: <http://archives.sumnertn.org> for holidays and other closings. The Archives is behind the county administration building, and parking is free.

# Confusion About the Avery Trace Continuing

By Jack Masters

There is a great deal of confusion linking Peter Avery with North Carolina legislation in 1786 and later to build a road to the Cumberland River region. ***I have not seen a North Carolina reference to Peter Avery, nor am I aware of any.***

From Davidson County Court minutes in October 1789, reference is made to pay Robert King and party "Three Hundred and forty pounds Lawful Money of S'd State for Marking a Road from Clinch River to Nashville as Witness our hands July 15<sup>th</sup> 1788" Signed Robert Hays and James Robertson. This road was completed in 1788 and was constructed from "West to East"

There are Tennessee Land Grant references to "Averys trail", "old Avery road" and "Averys Great Road". These references are after 1809 and are in Roane and Morgan Counties in East Tennessee. Obviously, there was an Averys Trace but it didn't exist in Middle Tennessee.

This conclusion is based on information from the pioneer surveyors themselves. In more than 16,000 surveys for land issued by North Carolina in RG1177, there is not one mention of Avery's Trace. A few examples of what the surveyors called the road was:

- **Waggon Road leading to Nashville**
- **Road leading from Bledsoes Lick to Holston**
- **Holston Road**
- **Road to Holson**
- **Settlement Trace**

In our books, Bill Puryear and I refer to the road simply as "Holston Road" since most references do include the word "Holston."

The main source of confusion was introduced on Feb. 5, 1990, when House Bill No. 2568,

enacted by Tennessee's General Assembly, designated portions of certain highways to be named "Historic Avery Trace." According to the Bill "When an area has historic, cultural, and natural sites to promote, it provides a marketing hook." The creation of a "Heritage Tourism Corridor" is based on tourism.

The route, as designated in the House Bill, originated at Fort Southwest Point in Roane County and followed Highways 61, 24 (Hwy. 70N) 56.53,262,85 to the intersection of Hwy. 25 in Smith County. The route then followed Hwy. 25 through Trousdale counties to Fort Nashborough in Nashville.

The Tennessee Humanities Council, Avery Trace Association, historic sites, arts councils, historical societies and others along the Trace are working together in a joint effort to establish The Avery Trace Heritage Tourism Corridor.

However well intentioned, the Heritage Tourism Corridor has permanently distorted the existence of the Avery Trace in the Cumberland Region. When hundreds of thousands of residents and tourists see the signs which have been erected, they have no other reason than to believe that they are on the Avery Trace.

I continue to be amazed at scholars who mistakenly make any reference to Avery Trace when it is linked to Middle Tennessee. The late Bill Brown, an outdoorsman who hiked and researched all the old roads in his lifetime declared to us on his deathbed his certainty that the road over Cumberland Mountain was built from West to East by Middle Tennesseans, and gave us his research files.

The critically acclaimed author Harriette Simpson Arnow in her *Seedtime on the Cumberland* and *Flowering of the Cumberland* never mentioned the word Avery. Her books are recognized as the definitive work dealing with the early pioneer Cumberland Region, and when she does not mention the word "Avery" you can bet she did not for a reason.

**Jack Masters and Bill Puryear co-authored a trilogy on the Cumberland Settlements and more. Details can be seen at:**  
**<http://www.cumberlandpioneers.com/averytrace.html>**

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# Sumner Gives Tennessee a Remarkable Pioneer Governor

By Jan Shuxteau, editor

***“We dashed into the corners of our shelter, just as the Indians reached theirs and...their entire [rifle] volley whistled past over our heads, scattering splinters in all directions. Reserving our fire, we at once leaped the fence and charged right up to the [Indian]troop, who with their guns empty, turned and fled as hard as they could dash up the hill. We ran on...and up rose 25 more, who were in ambush and delivered their volley.”***

*So reads an excerpt of the swashbuckling 18<sup>th</sup> century memoirs published by the Sumner County Historical Society of then 17-year-old William Hall, pioneer Indian fighter of Sumner County who went on to become a state legislator four years later, a brigadier general in the War of 1812 and governor of Tennessee in 1829. In the memoirs, his descriptions of the Indian Wars on the western frontier—which included Tennessee—are worthy of any action hero of modern days. More stories about William Hall will appear in future newsletters.*

## Teen Years: Hall to the Rescue

In the paragraph above, Hall describes a desperate time—April 1793—when he and a friend, the “tried soldier” William Wilson intervened in an Indian attack. They rushed out of Bledsoe Fort, where Hall was recuperating from a small pox inoculation, to the aid of a small group of men who had been plowing in nearby fields and were then running for their lives toward the fort. The plowmen were pursued by “a large body of Indians” who charged them from the surrounding woods, firing a “tremendous volley.” Hall and Wilson made an audacious rush **toward the Indian troops—not away from them**—surprising them into running away. Hall later said he would not have done it “for any consideration on earth” had he known how many Indians were there.

Meanwhile, the farmers in the field continued their flight. One, an Irishman named Jarvis, and a plowman called Prince were shot. Another, a mulatto named Abraham, was losing ground to an Indian who was then shot by pioneer James Hayes came out of the fort to join the fight.

Hall recounted that six or so pioneers grouped together behind a fence and were preparing to fire against 50 or 60 Indians “hacking and scalping” Jarvis’ body. Suddenly, the group was hit from behind by another volley of bullets. “I wore my hair very long at the time, and a bullet cut a large hock of it from the side of my head,

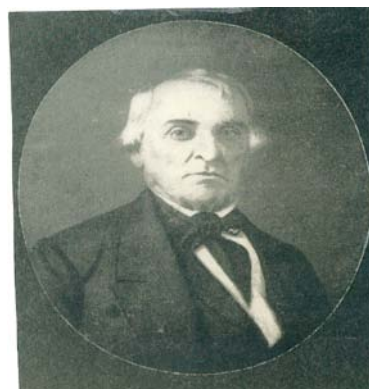
throwing it up into the air a foot high,” Hall said. The pioneers ran for the fort, continuously dodging bullets.

Afterwards, Hall said that the total Indian force numbered at least 260. It was estimated by the pioneers to be one of the largest ever mustered in Middle Tennessee. “It seemed almost miraculous that we were able to keep such large numbers at bay,” he said.

On that spring day, Hall was no stranger to Indian fights and miraculous escapes. He recounted that at the age of 13, he and his brother James were on foot a quarter mile from home when 10 Indians with “tomahawks in their right hands and guns in their left,” closed in on them from behind. Thinking the situation hopeless, William was ready to surrender until the men bashed in James’ skull with their tomahawks. Standing only six or eight feet away, William dashed into a thick cane brake. Three men rushed after him, but they were encumbered by their weapons, girth and the terrain. He sped ahead and reached the safety of home.

A month later, Indians attacked his family as they traveled to a nearby station, killing another brother, his father and a brother-in-law. Hall managed to get his little brother and little sister safely to the station. His mother, whose horse had run away with her during the attack, also made it to the station.

Years later, Hall said, “I have suffered...as much as any one could have suffered in the early settlement of this country, having lost my father, two brothers, two brothers-in-law, a sister and her child by the Indians; but withal it is some satisfaction to me that I have not been driven from my heritage...”



**Gov. William Hall in later years**

# Hillary W. Key: From Slavery to Prominence

By Velma Brinkley

Born on December 18, 1834, Hillary Wattwood Key was the third child born to slaves, Benjamin and Hannah Key of Sumner County. His family was owned by wealthy slave trader Issac Franklin, owner of Fairvue Plantation in Gallatin. (See Page 3). In addition to Fairvue, Franklin owned six other plantations in Louisiana and multiple other holdings.

After the death of Issac Franklin in 1846, the Hillary W. Key family appeared in August, 1847, on the estate inventory with Hillary being valued at \$500 (loose court papers). He drank from the bitter cup of slavery but refused to allow that horrific experience to define his future.

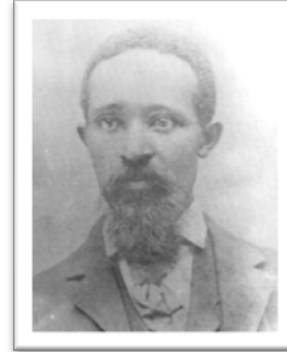
After the Civil War ended, Key became a very prominent politician, pastor, builder, and Presiding Elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Key reported having served in the Civil War as a Union spy under General Eleazer A. Paine in Gallatin, Tenn. (The Bright Side Of Memphis). In that service, he engaged in many hazardous undertakings for the cause of the Union and the freedom of the Negro race.

Rev. Key was a charter member of the original Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which he joined on Oct. 3, 1866. He was a presiding elder for 25 years all across the state. Prior to, as well as, while occupying that position, Rev. Key built churches in Gallatin, Dicktown, Carthage, Allgood, Livingstone, Mason, Gainesville and Memphis, Tennessee (Tennessee Annual Conference, September, 1907).



**Rev. Hillary W. Key constructed the first brick building for Key Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church in 1868 on Blythe Street in Gallatin. The church is now named Key-Stewart United Methodist.**



**Hillary Key of Gallatin Dec. 18, 1834-July 14, 1912**

Key's life was devoted to his work, and he did not hesitate to sacrifice his time, energy and money for a worthy cause. One great grandson reports that Key even mortgaged 300 acres of his Mason, Tenn., estate to build the beautiful and costly New Centenary Church in Memphis.

During the early years, Key taught school in several communities. In 1868, he and other trustees constructed a building in Mitchville (Sumner County) to serve as both, a school and a church (Rebellion Revisited). He was overseer of the Mason Preparatory School, which served as a feeder school to Central Tennessee College (later named Walden University) of Nashville. There he served on the board of trustees and was often called upon to lecture, or teach theology classes.

As a testimonial of his great services rendered and eminent ability, Walden University conferred upon Key the degree of Doctor of Divinity (The Bright Side Of Memphis).

See HILLARY KEY, Page 10)



# Looking for the History of the Sanders-Luna Farm

By Rebecca Johnson Lunsford

*Have you ever wondered who owned your property before you? Or how many generations lived there before your family's ownership? I have, and I found some answers. By pouring over old deeds and abstracts, I discovered a partial history of my grandparent's farm in Hendersonville on the Walton Ferry-Saunders Ferry peninsula.*

The General Assembly of North Carolina created Sumner County in 1786. On the tax roll of 1707, James Sanders was credited with owning 10,220 acres of land.

**In 1793**, we find "Stockley Donelson who although he lived in Davidson was one of the largest landowners in Sumner County..." (Walter Durham, *The Great Leap Westward*, page 71).

**In 1796**, 640 acres were conveyed to Stockley Donelson and William Terrell. In December, the property went to H.T. Terrell (abstract). **By 1850**, H.T. Terrell bought more of the original tract from heirs of James Sanders ex parte, which included 81 acres conveyed to Terrell by Daniel S. Donelson (Book 27, page 349). James Sanders married Mary "Polly" Smith of Rock Castle in Hendersonville on Feb. 22, 1806.

J.A. Luna paid \$20,148 in **September 1913** for 600 acres. According to the deed, it was a "Tract of land in District 5, Sumner County, Tennessee, and being that part of what is known as the Samantha Terrell Clark farm lying west of Sanders Ferry Road, bounded on north by Berry and Fite; east by Berry; south by Curtis; west by Dunn and Carter, containing 600 acres, more or less..."

**In 1927**, J.A. Luna paid \$10,000 for a 50-acre tract to add to his farm. According to records, it was "Bounded on the north by J.W. Carter, I.N. Jones, Mrs. Bates and Rabbit Road (now Luna Lane); on the east by Sanders Ferry Road and the Berry Estate; on the south by Walton's Ferry Road and Stamps; on the west by J.W. Carter, Newman and Walton's Ferry Road" (Book 41, pages 79-83).

In declining health **in the early 1940s**, Luna divided his farm between his two daughters, Johnnie Mai (Mrs. R. Ernest Johnston) and Sue (Mrs. Cordell Johnson). Sue received the Walton Ferry side with a new house built in 1942. Johnnie Mai got the Saunders Ferry side of the farm with the original brick house built by James Sanders' brother in 1797.

I sold Eagle Heights, the old brick house, **in 1984** to Merrol Hyde. My father, Cordell Johnson, lived in the Walter Ferry house, Hickory View, until his death in 2001. I still own that house with its surrounding property. Some 227 years have passed in the history of this land.

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## ROOSEVELT, From Page 4

woodcraft to the advantage of his fellows. In fact, Boon himself said he was ordained by God to settle the wilderness.

Roosevelt wrote that Boon and five other men set out into the western wilderness (Kentucky and Tennessee) in May 1769 "clad in hunting shirts, moccasins and leggings with traps, rifles and dogs" and came upon "shaggy-manned herds of unwieldy buffalo," elk, deer and "plentiful" bears, wolves and panthers. Boon and another man were captured by Indians in December, but they escaped and eventually made their way back to camp. Their companions had scattered, but soon Boon's brother George "himself a woodsman of but little less skill" and a companion arrived, and the adventure continued.

***\*George Boon's descendants likely live on in these parts. Elderly family members always told Hendersonvillian Howard Boone (daughter Nancy Boone Carroll, grandson Steve Carroll and great grandson Bryce Carroll) that they are related to George.***

(Editor's Note: Tennessee State Historian Walter Durham of Gallatin wrote more definitively about the longhunters in his book *Kasper Mansker, Cumberland Frontiersman*.)

## **WALTER DURHAM, Continued from Page 1**

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

During the early 1800s, Sumner Countians General James Winchester and his son Marcus Brutus and Nashvillian John Overton planned the city of Memphis on land they had previously acquired. Although both Winchesters visited the site, and Marcus became the first mayor of the city, the basic planning was done around the dining room table at Cragfont, Winchester's home in Sumner County.

In the book *James Winchester Tennessee Pioneer*, I wrote about 19<sup>th</sup> century attraction to the West. Winchester encouraged and supported his son Marcus to stay in Memphis, and he was almost equally supportive and proud of his sons-in-law as they sought their fortunes at New Orleans. Winchester prospered by pushing westward to the Cumberland country when he was still a young man. He seemed to covet such experiences in the farther West, not only for his own sons and daughters but for other young people as well.

From the second floor of the long west portico at Cragfont, Winchester enjoyed an unobstructed view of the western sky. Sunsets, whether golden or draped with varicolored clouds, served to ask: How far does this bountiful land extend? For a man sensitive to beauty, the sunsets and evening skies raised another question: What lies beyond? Throughout his eventful life, Winchester would slip into the eastern portico of the house while it was still night, and with the patience for which he was justly noted, wait until the light of dawn appeared. Then came sunrise—the new beginning Winchester sought—beyond the sunset.

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## **HILLARY KEY, Continued from Page 8**

The dust from the Civil War had barely settled when Key took a seat at the table of equality. He found himself elected and or appointed to all types of positions and offices in Sumner County. The book, *Rebellion Revisited* by Walter Durham listed a great number of Key's endeavors. Chief among these were the following: (1) Founded Key Memorial Methodist Church in 1865; (2) Superintendent of the Sumner County Freedmen Bureau; (3) One of seven Sumner incorporators of the Lebanon and Gallatin Telegraph Company on Feb. 26, 1869; (4) President of the Board of Aldermen April 3, 1869, and acting mayor as needed (5) Gallatin City Council in 1868 and (6) Listed as one of three public office holders who were County Claims Commissioners.

Reverend Hillary W. Key was married to Martha Key about 1857. Three of their children lived to become adults. All of the children were provided the best educational advantage his great love and wealth could afford. They were all graduates of Walden University and his son, Lorenzo, became a medical doctor. One of the girls, Moriah, married D.W. Fields, a dentist. Of Rev.Key, *The Western Christian Advocate* said, "As a father he was kind and provident; as a friend he was always accessible, and he lived a life that was unspotted, and died embracing the faith he so long espoused on July 14, 1912.

Reverend Hillary W. Key and his first wife, Martha are buried in the family cemetery on his 350 acre farm in Mason.

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## **FAIRVUE, Continued from Page 3**

Isaac's magnificent tomb, like his fortune, was built on sand and tumbled away. The Civil War saw both Fairvue and Belmont occupied by Yankees, but with the help of a friendly Union general Adelia converted cotton from her Louisiana plantations to gold, which she moved to London. She became one of the South's wealthiest women, eventually selling both Fairvue and Belmont and moving to Washington, D.C. After three husbands and 10 children, she died at the age of 70, while on a shopping trip to New York City.

The slave-hewn limestone blocks of Isaac's ruined tomb are featured today in the entrance gates to the Fairvue Plantation development, and as fate would have it, his wealth ultimately seeded the birth of Belmont University, a great university of learning for young students as he intended and not from not just Sumner County but from the entire nation.