Days Of Old Sumner County

Newsletter No. 40, November 2022
Sumner County Historical Society
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April Fools Joke Was a 'Matchmaker' for Our Aunt Bettie

Editor's Note: This story is from a collection of columns by the late Luther D. Ralph, compiled by his granddaughter, Annelle R. Huggins of Memphis. It features a fortuitous April Fool's joke and was published in April 1975 in the Hendersonville *Star News* and the *Goodlettsville Gazette.*

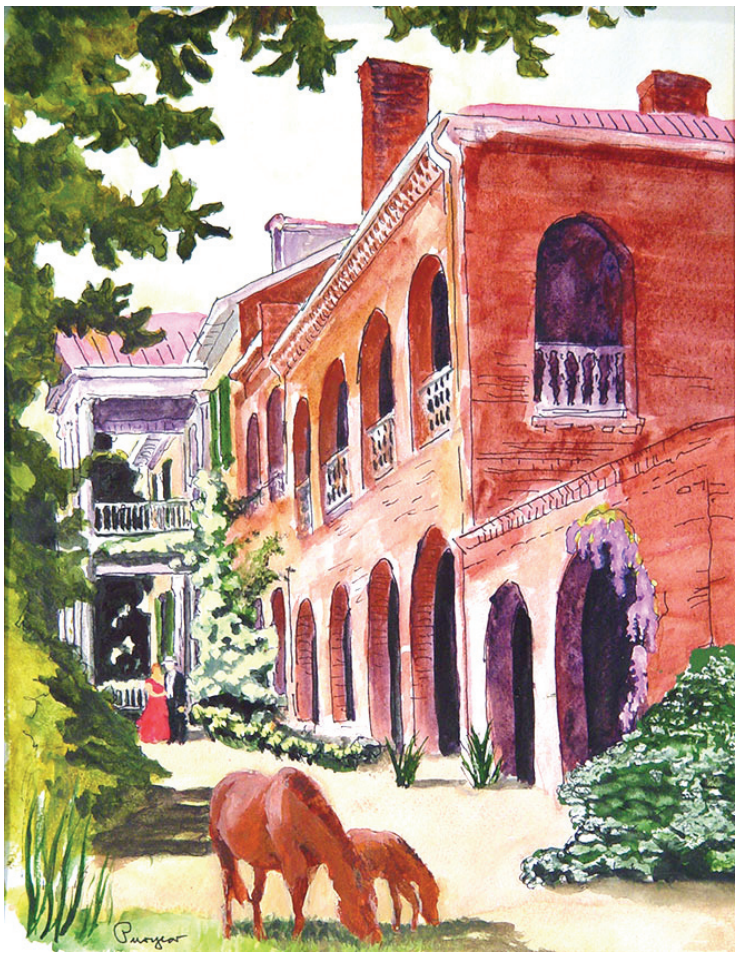
In 1949, the editor of the *Gazette*, having heard Ralph tell many stories about the Long Hollow Pike region over the years, asked him to write a column for the newspaper. This began 28 years of "Billy the Goat's Tales of Two Towns" in the newspaper. At one point in the 28 years, the *Gazette* and Hendersonville *Star News* had the same owners, and the columns were duplicated in both newspapers. The last of the 625 columns was written in 1976.

Luther Ralph was born on Nov. 30, 1890, in a log cabin in Sumner County in the Shackle Island area, between Goodlettsville and Gallatin. He was the oldest of 12 children, descendants of whom still live in this area today. Ralph wrote:

"Growing up in the high hills along Long Hollow Pike, there was not much a boy could do in the way of farming, so when I was only knee high to a duck I started working at other jobs.

"Everybody had chickens, so first it was building feed and roost coops, then hoeing corn for the farmers. Later, I worked in hay fields or fastened bailing wire around the bales as they came out of the mule powered bailer.

(See Aunt Bettie, Page 10)



Bill Puryear of Gallatin painted this view of Fairvue from a 1939 photo

Home Wedding at Fairvue in 1923

By Kay Hurt, Gallatin

The big day is fast approaching, and preparations are underway. The mirrors are polished; floors are mopped and waxed. All the silver is shining. Linens are washed and pressed. All the table settings are sparkling and ready to be placed on various tables. Pristine white tapers rest in silver candelabra backed by bowers of white chrysanthemums in the drawing room.

Fairvue is excited about the upcoming nuptials of Miss Mary Jane Franklin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Joseph Franklin and Mr. Carroll Johnson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Johnson, all of Gallatin.

The big day has arrived—November 2, 1923!

The following article describing the wedding is taken from the *Sumner County News*., Nov. 8, 1923:

(See WEDDING, Page 11)

Opie Read: 'I Remember' a Civil War Battle

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Famous American humorist and author Opie Read (1852-1939), who grew up in Gallatin, was the editor of six newspapers and wrote more than 60 novels, including, *I Remember.* In it was a short story, "The Touch of the Lark" quoted and paraphrased below. It is Read's remembrance of being a 9-year-old boy living in Gallatin when the Civil War broke out. He writes of early days when the war held the prospect of glory and how he came to see the reality. Some "enemy" troops were friendly, just like the boys from home. Battlefields were not romantic, and death was not thrilling. Read wrote:

"The contest that made of Lincoln the protagonist of a mighty drama came upon our town with the bluster of a storm…The cry swelled forth that the 'white trash' usurper must be opposed, to be effected only by secession from the Union. Men who adored the memory of Andrew Jackson and believed with him that the Union must and should be preserved, now agreed that 'Old Hickory' could not have foreseen the disgrace of a rail splitter in the White House.

"An election was held but Tennessee refused to withdraw from the national compact. This, however, did not satisfy the hot-heads. They swore the necessity of another ballot, and this time the State went out. On each occasion my father voted for the Union. This enraged his neighbors for the old man had not a quiet tongue; and a threat was made that our house should be raided.

"'All right," said father, 'and you'll be met with a double barreled shot gun loaded with scrap iron.' They might have been courageous enough to face bullets but to withstand scrap iron required a desperate boldness, so they failed to come. Two boys took it out on me, waylaid me, knocked me down and threw me into a muddy ditch. I went home with a lie, said that I had slipped and fallen into the mire, enjoying the secret of meditated revenge, and meeting the boys, one at a time, I beat them senseless.

"The first Confederate flag reared in our town raised a shout of revengeful joy. To me it was not so attractive…but I heard the shouting that proclaimed it the emblem of new liberty and was willing to accept it. My school teacher, a thoughtful man, asked me whether I knew what it meant. 'Music," I answered as a band began to play; and into my ear he shouted, 'Thoughtless boy, it means war, death and destruction.'

"My Sunday school teacher threw off his sissied gentleness and adorned with a red, white and red cockage, stood on a street corner and shouted the heaven inspired glory of secession. I couldn't grasp the meaning of it all, but I wanted to fight to music…I longed to fire a gun with Dixie stirring in my soul. A freckled girl with whom I was in love on account of her flaming hair, sniffed at my valor, and seeking my rival in her affections I fought him and got the worse of it.

"The grief of every stripling was his youth, his in aptitude for the ranks; and into my prayers, enforced upon me at night, I carried my sorrow and upbraided the Lord for not having favored me with an earlier birth. My eldest brother, more than 20 years older than I, joined the cavalry, and when he had come home to spend a night with us before going to the front, I filched his saber, unsheathed the bright war blade and slept with it.


Opie Read

"Soon came the news of victory, and the church bells were rung…It was not long, however, before other news was spread, and now the bells were silent. There came the whispered hush of human voices, the mysterious shaking of gray heads, and then the cry of women, wringing their hands: 'The Yankees are coming!' Our troops had been withdrawn, and the town was defenseless.

"Boys dropped their marbles and turned away from the game to hear the doleful drone of the Negroes. They had heard dismal tales of the northern overseer, who, further south, had worked the black man to death; and now they believed that all of the Yankees coming south were bent upon the mission of a more abject slavery for Africa's unfortunate children.

The story had been told, and we believed it that each man who marched in the ranks of the North wore a pair of horns not always hidden by his cap. The horns of the officers were gilded to catch the fancy of women, and the left horn of a captain had been short oiff by a sharpshooter from our neighborhood and sent home where it ws hidden away among the relics of achievement, too sacred to be shown.

"Up and down the streets, 'The Yankees are coming!' And now the bells were not silent but funerally tolling. The submissive draped white bedsheets from their windows…My black nurse, weeping over me, told me that they would cut my throat, and my father hearing her threatened her with the lash, but when questioned, he admitted that the town might be burnt…

Early in a forenoon after a night of bell-tolling and of prayer, we heard the triumphant blare of a brass band. A legion of Yankees came marching down the street. How trim and neat they were in their blue garb; how orderly, silent and looking neither to the right nor to the left, but straight ahead as if their mission lay far beyond us. They went into camp in a woods pasture near by; and now the boys ran out to get a better look at them.

“They greeted us with good humor, not a frown; and in a sort of humiliated astonishment we listened to their mirth as they stood about the camp fires. One of them told me a story of a bear that he had killed in Wisconsin, and running home I sneaked a peach pie and gave it to him. There was no violence. Not even a chicken was stolen; but our greatest astonishment was that removing their head gear they revealed no horns. Nor did close search bring out a difference between them and ‘our folks’ except their accents which to us seemed harsh.

“As time drew along some of our handsomest young women were married by Northern officers, and thus it has ever been that the conquerors have the pick of the ladies. The brides were not branded as traitors, but whenever a man came forward and swore the oath of allegiance, the boys sought a chance to shy a stone at him.

“The garrison that occupied Gallatin was gradually reduced, as the war was blazing at the front; and one night the news was spread that the Confederate General John Morgan, with his famous cavalry, was advancing upon the town. Now the cry was joyous, ‘The Rebels are coming!’

“One morning the town was keyed up in expectancy of a fight, and then came one of the surprises of war: Col. John Boon, the Federal commander, surrendered without the firing of a gun. His soldiers were paroled, and many of them, drooping in humiliation, cursed his name. [Morgan captured Col. Boon, but Boon was later exchanged and, after an investigation, was absolved from any blame and rejoined his command at Clarksville, Tenn.]

“It was for us a time of great jubilation, Morgan’s men singing as they rode through the streets, but another surprise was swiftly to come, the approach of Johnson, a Union cavalry leader.

“After a night when Morgan’s men had danced more to the tune of wine than that of the fiddle, they were ordered to mount and to ride forth to meet the enemy. Along with a number of other boys, I was commanded to a cellar, but I escaped and importuned a half-drunken bugler to let me ride on his horse behind him out to the field of battle…

“I took my place behind the bugler, and almost hidden by his cloak escaped notice except once when an officer ordered me to dismount. But I begged so piteously that he rode away, swaying in his saddle.

“Now with shouts and songs of discordant loudness we rode forth to battle. The morning was beautiful. The iron weed was in bloom, and sitting on its purple top, the dragonfly sang the song of midsummer. Mocking birds fluttered in the apple trees, and the bee martin flew round and round, seeking for a sight of the honey-laden laborer that had buzzed over into a field of clover.

“The troops dashed out upon a bluegrass plane. Over the brow of a green slope, the enemy was advancing. It was to be a cavalry fight, a shock of horse and a clash of saber. I glanced to the right and saw that our men were stretched out in a long line, and looking ahead, discovered that the enemy was in similar form. My friend blew his bugle.

“Clash! Two lines met with sabers drawn. It was an entrancing sight. Not a pistol, nor a carbine had been fired. There was no dust. The hoofs of the horses were soft upon the sward.

“Clash! Far to the right as the sabers gleamed, there were two long lines of brightness, broken into whirling glints of sun-reflecting silver. It was beauty and not horror that impressed me. I failed not to catch a single shading. I saw a bee martin catch a bee; I saw an iron weed bend its purple head beneath the touch of a lark.

“I saw a man with his skull split open fall to the ground. My friend blew his bugle. The horses leaped forward. The line of blue began to grow ragged. Wilder shouts, and now gunshots with, it seemed to me, the intruding yap, yap of a stray dog. The enemy was in flight. My friend, standing in his stirrups, waved his bugle high in the air and then blew upon it a triumphant blast. The enemy made a stand and again the sabers flashed…

“My friend lifted his bugle, but sounded no blast from its brazen throat. I thought that he had taken pity upon the vanquished line. Forward we bounded.

“My friend began to lean back against me. Was he laughing? He leaned back further. “‘Don’t please. You are about to shove me off.’

“He leaned back further. I moved to one side, reached around and took hold of the horn of the saddle. Blood spurted from the bugler’s breast. I looked and saw that death had thrown its film into his eyes. I stretched down and with my foot kicked the stirrup away. The bugler leaned over and fell to the ground.

“I got into the saddle, rode up to a fence, got down and ran back over the grassy slope. I saw a martin catch a bee. I saw the purple head of the iron weed bend beneath the touch of the lark.”‘

Back to the Battlefield: A Return Through Enemy Lines

By Jan Shuxteau, Editor

Editor's Note: In 1912 after his second term as mayor of Nashville, George Guild (1834-1917), wrote about his Confederate army experiences in, *A Brief Narrative of the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry Regiment.* Guild, a native of Gallatin, included the story of how he slipped through enemy lines in September of 1864 and traveled a hundred miles to reach Rosemont, his boyhood home. He was desperate to see his family for what he thought might be the last time. This is the second part of Guild's deadly adventure—a return through Union-occupied territory back to the battlefield.

George Guild spent only one full day at Rosemont—hidden and resting in a locked, upstairs room away from family servants and Union troops, who were picketed within shouting distance outside the gates. His wife and other family members visited him. They eluded servants and stole quietly, one by one, into his room throughout the day, knowing that if any one of them were caught George would be executed and the house burned down. In the dead of night, they gathered sadly at a back door to say a final good-bye. Guild wrote:

"I shall never forget that scene. It remains in my memory yet as a 'death watch.' All were weeping with smothered sobbing. There was no occasion to remain longer, so I immediately commenced bidding them farewell…At that I stepped out into the dark and began my sad tramp again. Somehow I felt stronger and better in getting out in the open air once more."

His family had scrounged up some old shoes to replace the tattered boots he'd worn on his long trip home, so after creeping in sock-feet onto the lawn he stopped at a convenient stump and put them on. He paused to decide how best to proceed and finally concluded that he would go around and in front of the pickets.

"After passing through a cornfield and at a point where the lands of my father and Mrs. Calgy joined, I noticed tall weeds growing in the corners of the fence. It was a first-rate hiding place, and was inviting to rest, which I so much needed.

The place was about half a mile from my father's house, where I concluded to avail myself of a night's rest and a day also before proceeding. I argued, too, that if I should be captured out there, there would not be such dire results—in other words, they would not interfere with the family. So I crept into the high weeds, and in a few moments was fast asleep.

George Guild

"When I awoke it was late in the day—a calm crisp September day in 1864. I could hear the Federal forage wagons lumbering along the pike, and the Federals actually came into the field, which was a very large one, and gathered corn. I quietly lay in the weeds and ate the lunch my folks had placed in my haversack, partaking pretty freely of a bottle of blackberry wine, and then smoked my pipe. When night came on I went back and had no difficulty finding my pistol [which he had hidden two days earlier in the bushes as he made his way toward Rosemont].

"I felt much refreshed after my night and day's rest, but was absolutely perishing of thirst for water. The bottle of wine had produced it, I suppose. I remembered a wet-weather branch [creek] on Mrs. Calgy's farm about a mile distant, and I broke for it. It lay just along the way I was to travel. Upon reaching it, I found a pool of muddy water. Kneeling down, I filled my stomach with the vile stuff; but it did not slake my thirst one particle and smelled and tasted of hog wallow strong enough to kill me. I filled my empty wine bottle full and hurried on to the old spring on the Chambers farm, where my father was reared and educated by his uncle, Col. Conn, who lived another mile distant but still along my course of travel…and when I reached the spring, I filled my stomach full of the sweet beverage, which at once did me great good. I had never before come so near perishing for water, and I know now what it means to thirst.

"Upon reaching the Hartsville Pike, I determined not to leave it till I reached Anthony's store and on to the Cumberland River, determined that if I met Federal scouts I would conceal myself until the squad passed; and then if I chanced to meet a straggler I would unhorse him and, mounting his horse, go at breakneck speed till I reached the point on the river where my good friend Mr. Walton was to come for me at a given signal. [It was Walton, whom Guild met on his way home and whose wife gave him a meal before Walton, himself, canoed him across the Cumberland]. Fortunately, I met no one and proceeded on foot

till I reached the vicinity of the river a little after daylight.

"I found some difficulty in locating the exact place. Looking about, I recognized the house of a lady and gentleman whom I knew well. Having reached the time and place when I could throw off my disguise, I went over to Mr. McMurtry's house. He and his wife were glad to see me. They had a good breakfast prepared, which I partook of very liberally, telling Mr. McMurtry that Mr. Walton had promised to meet me at the river on giving the usual signal. McMurtry seemed to understand this 'grapevine' way of doing and went with me, giving the customary signal himself. A few minutes later Walton came over in his canoe."

On his way to Gallatin, Guild had traveled as far as the Cumberland with Confederate Capt. Marcellus Grissim and two other men who lived near Lebanon. Grissim had invited Guild to spend the night at his house. Though sorely tempted to stay, Guild declined the invitation and pushed on toward home. It was a good thing he did!

"About the first words [Walton] spoke were to tell me that Capt. Grissim had been killed by a scout of Federal soldiers from Carthage on the night I promised to stay with him and rest before going to Gallatin, that Grissim and two young recruits who were to go to the army with him had all been killed in their mother's yard and in her presence, and that if I had consented to say that night I certainly would have been killed with them.

"He stated further that later in the day, and after the scouts had left the neighborhood, he had gone up there and was told where he could find my horse and a servant, who were hiding out; that he had brought them down and concealed them, that the country, he understood, was still full of scouting Federal soldiers; and that I must go up to his house and remain quietly till night, when he would go with me to get my horse.

"Passing over the river, I did as he said. At night, I mounted my horse and proceeded toward Lebanon, where I expected to meet some of our command.

"Before leaving I thanked Mr. Walton for his great kindness; and having nothing to give, I reached in my haversack and, taking out the beautiful little Smith & Wesson pistol, I gave it to him to give his wife with my thanks for her goodness and her ever-to-be-remembered kindness to a stranger under difficulties."

From this point, Guild traveled on, stopping at houses along the way to ask if it was safe to continue. He made his way back to Confederate troops though he barely missed being shot by "friendly fire" shortly before reaching Lebanon. Just how lucky he was on that occasion was brought home to him by a visitor years later. He wrote in his book:

"More than a year ago [1911] an elderly lady came into my office and asked if I was Mr. Guild. I replied that I was. Then she said: 'I am the woman you met when you called at my house, three miles from Lebanon on Big Springs Road, in the fall of 1864, to inquire if there were any Yankees at Lebanon. It has been more than 45 years ago. I moved to Texas soon after the war, and this is my first visit to Tennessee since I left. I have heard of you occasionally through Tennesseans I chanced to meet from time to time, and I have frequently thought if I ever returned to Tennessee I would look you up.'

She told him that she was sitting in the hall of her house with three Confederate soldiers who had been dodging Federal scouts after visiting their families in Rome, Tenn. They had witnessed the killing of Grissim and his recruits and were very fearful when they saw Guild riding up the road, immediately concluding that he was a scout sent to kill them.

"'When you dismounted and started up the walk to the house, they seized their guns to get ready to shoot you. I jumped up and said, "Don't shoot! It may be some acquaintance, and I will go down and meet him to find out his business." At that they rushed out of the house. When we met, you told me that your name was Guild, that you were a Confederate soldier, and that you had been to Gallatin for a few days to see your family, and that you were returning to the army again.'

The lady, whose name Guild did not recall, spent an hour in his office, talking about that night and inspiring him to remember going through enemy lines.

"On approaching Lebanon, a deathlike stillness prevailed…I could see neither individuals nor lights about the streets or houses…As I approached Seawell Hill…I came upon a [Confederate] picket. I went forward and told them who I was and found out that the Georgia battalion had gone into camp for the night. I told them I was so tired that I would lie down at the post and sleep till daylight, when I would go forward and meet the major of their battalion, whom I knew…[Resting there] I took advantage of the opportunity to review and knew that if the war were to last a thousand years I would not undertake a campaign 'behind the lines' again."

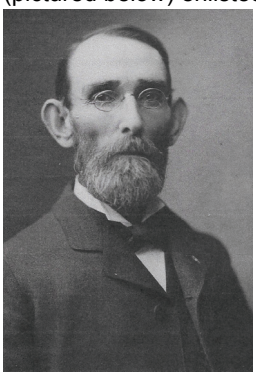
Rosemont Sends Another Soldier to the Battlefield

By Juanita Frazor and SCHS President Ken Thomson

In September of 1864—at the same time Gallatin's Confederate Cavalry Lt. George Guild was slipping through enemy lines to get home to Rosemont—his first cousin James W. Blackmore, who also grew up at Rosemont, was heading toward Nashville with Gen. John Hood's Confederate army, which had lately been chased out of Atlanta. Hood planned an audacious invasion of Tennessee.

Cousin James was 21 years old in September 1864 and was already a seasoned veteran of the first Battle of Manassas (called Bull Run by the Union) in July 1861, the Battle of Richmond (Kentucky) in August 1862, the Battle of Missionary Ridge in November 1863, skirmishes around Dalton, Ga., in February 1864 and the Battle of Atlanta in July of 1864.

Born in Sumner County March 9, 1843, Blackmore (pictured below) enlisted in Company I, Second Tennessee Infantry in the spring of 1861 when the war began. Ironically, he was also present when the war ended at the final surrender of the Confederacy in Greensboro, N.C. in the spring of 1865. This took place after the fall of Richmond, capital of the Confederacy, and after Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox on April 9, 1865—a date that many mistakenly believe was the official end of the war.



Here's What Really Happened

Richmond had been under siege for nine months when Union soldiers finally broke through near Petersburg on April 2. The city was in chaos--looting, fire and mobs. Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet took off, heading south by train. On April 11, they rolled into Greensboro, where tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers were encamped and where Davis and company planned to meet with general to decide their next move. Davis gave a long speech, urging the fight to continue, but the generals were unwilling. Gen. Joseph Johnson summed it up saying that it would be the greatest of human crimes to continue a war when you knew you had no chance to win.

Meetings continued in the railway car for two more days before a voice vote finally authorized negotiations to end the war. Davis left Greensboro, letting Gen. Johnson stay behind to work out the terms of peace with Gen. Sherman. At the end of the month an agreement was reached. It was over.

What He Did with the Rest of His Life

After that spring day, Blackmore, along with thousands of his brothers-in-arms, headed home to resume his civilian life. He went back to college at Central University in Danville, Ky., where he'd been a sophomore when war broke. He finished his literary courses then studied law with his uncle Judge Josephus Conn Guild of Rosemont, who had helped rear him. He completed his legal studies and graduated from Cumberland University in 1867. After passing the bar, he practiced law with his cousin, George, until 1871 when he went out on his own.

Both his legal training and the Guild name gave him a springboard to political life. Blackmore campaigned for and won a state senate seat, representing Sumner, Robertson and Trousdale counties from 1883 to 1885. He later became City Attorney of Gallatin and Gallatin mayor from 1901 to 1908.

He had a reputation, of which he was justly proud, for honesty. Friends claimed that his word was as good as a bond.

Parents and Grandparents, Family Ties

Blackmore was the son of William Montgomery Blackmore and Rachel Jackson Barry. His paternal grandfather, George Dawson Blackmore, was a native of Maryland who served Virginia in the Revolutionary War. Stationed on the frontier, he commanded a horse company, defending the settlements against Indians.

His mother's father, Dr. Redmond Dillon Barry, was a native of Ireland and was educated at Dublin University. He was a surgeon in the British Navy until he resigned his commission out of sympathy for America. He studied law in Louisville and moved to Gallatin where he married a "Cumberland belle," Jane Alexander. Barry started the tradition of horseracing in Middle Tennessee. He brought the first bluegrass and race horses here.

As a youth, Blackmore came to live with the Guilds at Rosemont after his parents died. Catherine Blackmore Guild, the judge's wife, was his father's sister.

James Blackmore was married twice, first to Maria Ewing, daughter of William B. Ewing of Davidson County, and then to Lola Ezell, who was 25 years his junior and who came to Gallatin to teach at Howard Female College.

He was for many years a member of the Donelson Bivouac, made up of ex-Confederate soldiers who lived in the area, plus one Union soldier, John Iss, whom the Bivouac made an honorary member. Iss was a French immigrant, conscripted off the streets of New York City. He had no real loyalties to either North or South.

The Donelson Bivouac led Blackmore's funeral service when he died in 1914.

Thomas Buntin donated the land for Richland Train station, pictured in the painting above.

Portland Is on Buntin Land

By Albert Dittes

Thomas Buntin, credited as founder of Portland, Tenn., bought the land now comprising the city limits in 1841 from James Wylie, who had purchased it from James Gwin, the first settler of this area. Buntin and his wife Elizabeth developed the property into a prosperous plantation that was eventually decimated by the Civil War.

Sumner County land records show a William Bunton, father of Thomas Buntin, buying 692 acres between 1808 and 1833. William Buntin died in 1831, according to the record. His widow later married Daniel Franklin Carter, owner of the stage coach line between Louisville and Nashville and one of the wealthiest men in Tennessee. The government awarded him a lucrative contract to carry the mail.

William Buntin's father and his two brothers, along with William's grandfather, fought in the War of Independence, earning them valuable land grants in Tennessee. Genealogical records indicate that William and his brother Joseph moved to Tennessee, William settling in Robertson County and Joseph moving on to Logan County, Ky. **It was William's son, Thomas, who earned himself a place in history as being the founder of Richland Station and later Portland.**

Another son of William Buntin, John Buntin III, born on Jan. 5, 1796, also moved to this area before the Civil War and settled in a plantation house on the Robertson County side of Hwy. 31W. Descendants of their slaves live in the Scattersville and Parkers Chapel communities.

The Buntins had a long history of owning prosperous land. William Buntin developed a beautiful plantation home in Robertson County called Tanglewood. His cousin, John Wheeler Bunton, moved to Texas during its early days as a republic and fought alongside Sam Houston for its independence from Mexico. He became part of the early government there and then gave up politics for plantation living. One of John Wheeler Bunton's brothers was the great-grandfather of President Lyndon Johnson.

More about Thomas

"Thomas Buntin, the grandson of John Buntin II, a wealthy British loyalist, was born on March 20, 1799, at the family estate of his parents William Buntin and Mary Cowan Buntin in North Carolina," states a sketch of his life. "Greeted with riches at birth, he received an extensive education in language, mathematics, manners and musical studies. When he reached the age of 20, he married a girl named Elizabeth Turner on April 27, 1819. She came from a modest, pioneer family." This marriage took place in Sumner County.

Portland founder Thomas Buntin inherited property from his father and also bought land in the Sideview area .His prosperity centered on the Portland farm. He built a mansion with front porch columns, a fitting status symbol for the richest man north of the ridge, owning 36 slaves and serving on the Sumner County court, according to the 1860 census. He also owned three large farms: the Huffman Farm in Robertson County, Carter Farm east of Gallatin and the Gibson Farm in Simpson County, Ky. The Thomas Buntins had seven children, five of whom were living when the Civil War broke out.

His fortunes increased when the Louisville city fathers started construction of a railroad to Nashville going through his farm. Work started during the 1850s, and the first train traveled the route in 1859. His farm produce could go directly to New Orleans and elsewhere. Buntin donated land for a railway station, which he named Richland after his prosperous farm. He also gave land to what became the Portland Church of Christ.

After the War Ended

The Civil War changed everything for the family. Thomas Buntin allowed Confederate General Felix Zollicoffer to use his home as headquarters when the war broke out. The county built Camp Trousdale nearby to prepare Sumner County boys for the Confederate army.

After General Ulysses S. Grant took over Forts Henry and Donelson on the Tennessee River in West Tennessee in 1862, Nashville fell to the Union forces. Buntin found himself in considerable trouble with Union soldiers because of his support of the Confederate war effort.

Union occupation forces closed down Camp Trousdale, and the troops gradually dismantled the once magnificent Buntin farm. The plantation house was burned down, property of value was carried away, the slaves left and Thomas Buntin died broken and discouraged on Jan. 30, 1865. His wife died in 1871, and Portland developed out of the desirable lands their heirs gradually sold off.

The large classroom and dormitory complex occupied by Howard Female College was located on the former site of Howard Elementary School, East Main St., Gallatin. Occupants of the facility included the Howard Female Academy (1837-1838), Sumner Female Academy (1838-1856), Howard Female Institute (1856-1861), and Howard Female College after that, except for 1874-1878 when it was Neophogen Male and Female College.

Howard Schools Were Early Local Colleges

By Beverly Bragg, President of Trousdale Place Foundation, Inc.

If asked about successful colleges located in Gallatin, Tennessee, most residents would more than likely cite Volunteer State Community College as an example. Establishment of the college began in 1969 and was a joint effort between Sumner County, which supplied the 100-acre tract of land for the new campus and $250,000 for construction of the first buildings; the city of Gallatin, which agreed to expand all utilities and essential municipal services to the school; and the Gallatin Chamber of Commerce, which provided crucial research data regarding the demographic of students expected to attend.

Historically, there were many successful institutions of higher learning established in Gallatin that offered courses and awarded degrees prior to the opening of Vol State Community College. In his book *A College for This Community,* former Tennessee state historian Walter T. Durham suggests that although “the creation of Volunteer State Community College at Gallatin has fulfilled the heretofore frustrated dreams of local partisans of education [in actuality, these] dreams. . . can be dated back to the early nineteenth century when attempts were first made to develop an institution of higher learning for the area”

Durham goes on to state that between 1838 and 1969, several schools would emerge and eventually pass “into oblivion only to be replaced by others.” The complex history of the Howard Schools supports Durham’s observation.

Howard Female Institute Issued Degrees

Howard Female Institute, the first academic institution in Gallatin qualified to award degrees, was established in 1856 by the local Howard Lodge No. 13 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Located on East Main Street, it was an expansive building with multiple porches, large classrooms, and dormitories. The history of Howard Female Institute can be traced back approximately three decades prior, when it operated under the name Gallatin Female Academy and offered classes similar to those offered today in elementary and high schools. Although the opening date of the Gallatin Female Academy is unknown, research indicates courses were being taught there as early as 1824. Research also confirms that approximately 80 female students were enrolled during the last half of 1828.

Charles L. Jeffries was the headmaster during this time and the faculty consisted of three teachers—Mrs.Hunt, Miss Lewis, and Miss Bledsoe—as well as three trustees—J.J. White, William Trousdale and Elijah Boddie.

Students included Eliza Allen, the future wife of Governor Sam Houston, and Elizabeth Goodner, daughter of James Goodner and Martha Fite from Smith County, Tennessee. While attending the academy, Elizabeth made a sampler comprised of a perfectly stitched alphabet, three lines of rhyming verse, and her name. Elizabeth’s stitchwork is enclosed in a border of white flowers that curl to and fro. A hand-written note on the back of the framed sampler reads: "Made by Elizabeth C. Goodner age 16 while in school at Gallatin, Tenn 1834." The sampler was found in a historic home in Franklin, Tennessee.

In January of 1836, the State Legislature awarded Gallatin Female Academy a charter of incorporation. The board of trustees for the academy included

educator and preacher William P. Rowles, as well as Harris Odom, Oscar F. Bledsoe, Richard May, James A. Blackmore, Daniel Saffarans, A.D. Duval, H. B. Vaughn, Elijah Boddie, William Trousdale, and Josephus Conn Guild.

Elizabeth Goodner (1820-1912) made the above sampler. She was the daughter of James Goodner (1792-1883) and Martha Fite (1798-1862) in Smith County, Tennessee. She made the sampler while attending the Gallatin Female Academy, which operated from 1824 to 1836 in Sumner County, Tennessee. The sampler is from the Green and White group of needlework from Middle Tennessee and bears a strong resemblance to others that have come from the nearby counties of Smith and Wilson. A note on the back of the sampler indicates it descended through Elizabeth's eldest daughter Cornelia (1836-1916), who married William Temple Cole (b. 1832). In 1835, Elizabeth married James W. Grissim (b. 1811, Wilson, TN), son of Rowland W. Grissim and Elizabeth Rather."

Within a year, the trustees had received enough funding to proceed with plans to build a large academy building and hire the most qualified instructors. In 1837, the trustees purchased land from John D. Tomkins for $800 and a two-story brick building was erected on East Main Street.

Durham noted that it was “in the center of a one and one-quarter acre tract made up of town lots numbered 7, 8, 15 and 16, less a 30-foot strip along the eastern boundary adjoining Tomkin’s residence. Lots numbered 7 and 8 lay along the south side of East Main Street and lots numbered 15 and 16, at the rear of the first two, faced the north side of Smith Street. These lots are the center of the property now occupied by Howard Elementary School.”

The name of Gallatin Female Academy was changed to Sumner Female Academy during the construction process, and a charter was also awarded to the academy by the State Legislature.

From 1838 to 1839, J. B. Blackington served as superintendent of Sumner Female Academy. He was subsequently replaced by William H. Marquess, the former president of Zanesville Female Academy in Zanesville, Ohio. Approximately four years later, Reverend E. McMillan from Shiloh and Gallatin Presbyterian Churches replaced Marquess.

Unfortunately, like many schools during this time, the academy could not secure much needed funding and in 1855, it closed.

Afterwards, the school building and land were sold to via a court order to appease creditors; however, the property was purchased by Charles E. Boddie on behalf of the trustees. Boddie then deeded the property to the trustees of Sumner Female Institute, with the understanding that the facility would always be used as a school, not to satisfy any debt the school would incur.

The trustees in Boddie’s deed were: Charles E. Boddie, Josephus C. Guild, H. B. Vaughn, Benjamin F. Allen, William Trousdale, F. A. Sporer, James Alexander, J.N. Head, James J. Turner, and William H. Solomon. In 1856, the trustees conveyed the land and building to local Howard Lodge No. 13, I.O.O.F.

Durham noted that the lodge “apparently agreed to sponsor a new school on the property as a charter was granted to Howard Female Institute by the State Legislature, February 18, 1856, with the provision that the school’s governing body – a board of visitors – would be elected to Howard Lodge from among its membership.” The charter also gave the president and the board of visitors authority to award degrees and diplomas accordingly.

Howard Female Institute’s first catalog was entitled *Announcement of the Howard Female Institute*, Gallatin, Sumner County, Tennessee, Projected by Howard Lodge No. 13, I. O. O. F., chartered by the Legislature of Tennessee, 1856, and circulated in Sumner and surrounding counties. An artist’s rendering of a remodeled and enlarged boarding house appeared in the catalog, setting high expectations for what was to come.

(BETTIE, Continued From Page 1)

"For excitement, I worked at threshing wheat with a cyclone thresher, powered and pulled by a traction engine with a wild cat whistle that would make your hair stand straight up…As I neared the end of my teens, which was long before the advent of chain [saws], I pulled one end of a crosscut saw many days cutting hickory blocks to split up into hatchet handles as they were called. But most of them were made up into automobile spokes, I believe, because there wasn't that many hatchets in use.

"Then we sawed eight-and-a half foot oak logs to hew into crossties with a heavy broad axe, which was the hardest work I ever did... I discovered I was a lot more successful making a 'match' than a crosstie, and it was a thousand times easier…

"The making of the match [between Bettie and J.W. Simpson] was a complicated affair with a dozen or more people involved in the plot. At that time, I was attending a business college trying to prepare myself to get a job that didn't have such hard work. On the last day of March 1911, I came home to spend the weekend and got a big surprise. My two oldest sisters, both younger than me, told me that our 45-year-old Aunt Bettie, the only aunt we had on either side of the house, had gotten a letter from a prominent squire and farmer on the Fountain Head route asking for a date with her, but she wouldn't accept it because her mother was getting old, and she hated to leave her.

"They also told me that [our paternal] grandmother was confined to her sick bed and that her two sisters, Aunt Nan and Aunt Lizzie, both widows like grandmother, were there to wait on her. So, Saturday morning I went up to see her, but not a word was mentioned about Aunt Bettie having a suitor. However, it suddenly popped in my mind that it was April Fool's Day, and I soon left for home with mischief in my mind. Back home, my sisters rustled up a Valentine card that had been sent them by a little cousin who lived in the same neck of the woods that Aunt Bettie's suitor did and had the same post mark on it that her letter did, which we easily changed to April. The card was written with a pencil, which we rubbed out. Not knowing his handwriting, we printed with a pencil the following message: "Dear Miss Bettie, I am sending you this to tell you that I will be at your house, Sunday, April the second, for dinner" and signed "J.W. Simpson."

"Then we took the mail carrier in on the joke, and he willingly carried the card and put it in her mailbox. A little later when sister Myrtle arrived she was sent to the mailbox and was drafted to stay and help dress a hen and bake a cake to serve at dinner the next day.

"Our maternal grandmother got to worrying about all the confusion, making the sick grandmother worse, and sent our mother up to tell her not to worry because it was an April Fool her children were playing on Aunt Bettie. She, too, got a laugh out of it and never gave us away.

Sunday, knowing that all that food would go to waste, four of us grandsons, on our way home from church, stopped by to help eat it up. This dear spinster aunt of ours made us wait until 2 o'clock before she served dinner. When we mischievous boys began passing the food around and saying, "Have some of the chicken, Mr. Simpson" and so forth, everybody laughed.

"Grandmother Ralph on her sick bed yelled [to Bettie], "It's good enough for you. I knew it was an April Fools joke all the time. You should have said, "yes," when he asked you about coming the first time."

"The sequel to this story is that the very next day another letter came to this disappointed aunt of ours asking for a date the following Sunday. She promptly answered, telling Squire Simpson to come, for she had already cooked one dinner for him, and she would cook another. A few weeks later they married.

"It was almost a year before I met the new uncle, and when I did he thanked me cordially, declaring, "If you had never broken the ice for me, I would never have gotten her."

Judge Guild Helped Bring L&N

In her book, *Historic Rock Castle*, Willie Ellis noted that the railway between Louisville and Nashville began operations on Oct. 27, 1859, following instrumental efforts by Gallatin's Judge Josephus Conn Guild. The judge, owner of Rosemont in Gallatin was the father of George Guild (pages 4 and 5) and the uncle of James Blackmore (page 6). Ellis wrote:

"Judge Guild…was a member of the Tennessee Legislature when the proposition came before that body to charter the L&N Railroad. He carried the measure through the legislature and also voted for state aid to the railroad. Guild was the author of an act submitting to the people of Sumner and Davidson counties the proposition for a subscription of $300,000 to the capital stock of the railroad. [Kentucky] Gov. Helm was the first president of the railroad, while Judge Guild was the vice president for Tennessee. This railroad was …a great artery for commerce and transportation between the North and South.

"The crossties for the road were often furnished by local farmers…These ties were of white oak, cedar and black locust. The creosote used on the wood by the L&N dated back as far as 1869 and was improved considerably by 1912…

"Maintenance of the railway gave employment to many men. The section foreman and the men that worked with him lived with their families in two-story frame houses along the tracks. If there was a big job to be done, the boarding cars would be pulled in on the sidetrack for as long as it took to get the cars rolling again. The boarding cars were fitted with a kitchen and living quarters for the men. Before 1900, most of the track work was done manually with pick and shovel or spike maul and crowbar. Then, men traveled up and down the track on hand cars…"

(WEDDING, Continued from Page 1)

Johnson-Franklin

A home wedding of beautiful appointment was that of Miss Mary Jane Franklin and Mr. Carroll Johnson, which was solemnized Friday afternoon at 5 o'clock at Fairvue, the country home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. B.J. Franklin. The house was elaborately decorated with quantities of specimen chrysanthemums, lilies, ferns and palms. In the hall, autumn's foliage with chosen flowers were featured. Rev. R.G. Cawthorn officiated in the presence of a company over 200 relatives and friends. The altar of ferns and lilies before which the bridal party were grouped was placed before the large double windows in the reception rooms. Candelabra holding white tapers shed a soft glow over the bridal scene, and the flowers and lights made a lovely effective background.

A program of nuptial music was given by Miss Annettee Draper of Gainesboro, pianist; Mrs. Florence Kennon of Cleveland, Tenn,, violinist; and Miss Robbie Neal of Watertown, vocalist.

The rainbow colors were featured in the wedding colors. Miss Elsie Shueman of Cincinnati, Ohio, who served as maid of honor, wore pale yellow georgette trimmed with gold lace. Miss Irene Sharp and Miss Katherine Hewgley, bridesmaid, were in pale green and lavender georgette trimmed with silver lace. All three carried French bouquets and wore bandeaux of silver leaves in their hair. The little ribbon bearers, Barbara and Elsie Franklin, wore pale pink georgette, and Annilee Franklin and Elizabeth Moss wore pale blue georgette. Mr. Paul Kirby of Nashville served the groom as best man, and Mr. Cardell Johnson and Tyler Ford were groomsmen.

A reception followed the ceremony, and the bridal couple were assisted in receiving guests by the bride's parents. Mrs. Franklin wore a handsome afternoon gown of black satin.

Miss Ruth Hewgley kept the wedding register at the reception.

The bridal table, where the wedding party was seated, had as a central decoration a large wedding cake in the shape of a ring. Satin ribbons radiated with symbolic emblems.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, after a wedding trip to St. Louis, will be at home with the groom's parents until after December 1, when their new home will be complete.

Out-of-town guests were Dr. and Mrs. E.B. Shuerman of Cincinnati, Mrs. Frank Richmond, Mrs. Claude Darwin of Cookeville; Mr. and Mrs. Earl T. Franklin, Chillcothee, Ohio; Miss Louise and Robbie Neal, Watertown; Mr. T.J. Draper of Gainesboro.

Research indicates no pictures were taken of the wedding or the couple. Above is a picture of Benjamin Joseph and Mary Elizabeth Draper Franklin with their Martha Elizabeth; (top row, left) Mary Jane and Carroll Johnson, Sr.; (second row, seated) #7 Elsie children and grandchildren made at Fairvue circa 1933. They are: (seated center) B.J. Franklin and his wife Jane Johnson, daughter of Mary Jane and Carroll; (standing right) Carroll Johnson, Jr.

Author's Note' The Benjamin Joseph Franklin family moved to Gallatin in 1908 from the French Lick community in Jackson County, Tennessee. Franklin purchased Fairvue in 1915, and the property was sold in 1935 to William H. Wemyss after Franklin's death, Sept. 4, 1934. *Benjamin Franklin was not related to Isaac Franklin, builder of Fairvue.*

Sumner County Historical Society

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