

REMINISCENCES
of an OLD TIMER

by

CAPTAIN ROSS SMITH



Captain Ross Smith, About 1896

*With affection and pride
this little book is
dedicated to my
children*
WILLIAM, LAURETTA, and SAMUEL

FOREWORD

This booklet, the Reminiscences of an Old-Timer, though unpretentious, is a worthwhile production, particularly in its depiction of the construction and the beginning of the operation of railroads in East Tennessee, as well as of the use made of such lines of communication by the Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War.

Many books of a reminiscential kind have been written by persons who engaged in early steamboat navigation, but, strangely enough, few if any have appeared that have been written from the standpoint of an employee on our early railroads. The book is, in this respect, well-nigh unique, and therefore of essential value to those who may hereafter deal with the history of transportation in Tennessee and the South.

"Captain" Ross Smith for a long period of years was known to thousands of Upper East Tennesseans as the conductor of the passenger train No. 1, "the short train" operated between Bristol and Knoxville. His unflagging courtesy and geniality made him a host of friends, and those who have with him survived will welcome the appearance of the "Captain's" recollections of the past.

The book is, also, an important contribution to the history of Old Jonesboro, made in the year of the celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the Mother Town of Tennessee. Coming generations of those deriving from Jonesboro families will find it serviceable in genealogical research. The lives of the old Jonesboro families have reached to most, if not all, of the States of the Southwest and Northwest. Descendants may here get glimpses of the habitats of their ancestors and of the neighbors of such, as well as of the pinching conditions that prevailed during the years of the Civil War, in a town rent by faction and strife as few other towns were.

A reading of the book leaves one wishing that its writer had given fuller accounts of the leading families of the olden time: those of Confederate Brigadier-General Alfred E. ("Mud Wall") Jackson; Chancellor Seth J. W. Lucky; Parson William G. Brownlow, the Blairs, Hosses, Deadricks, Dossers, Cunninghams, and others.

The remarkable history of Washington County and of Jonesboro yet remains to be written. The fact is a deep reproach to our citizenship; and it is to be hoped that one result of the Sesquicentennial celebration will be to inspire action by the County Court of Washington County toward the granting of aid in the financing of the writing and publication of such a history. Its writer would find much of value in this book, put forth on the initiative of one patriotic man to whom the Past was not without appeal.

SAMUEL C. WILLIAMS

"Aquone"
Johnson City
1930

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I

REMINISCENCES

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I was born at Jonesboro, Tennessee, June 10, 1846, the oldest of four children: two sisters and a younger brother. My great grandparents emigrated to East Tennessee, then the State of North Carolina, about the year 1780. On my father's side John C. Smith settled on the headwaters of Little Limestone, just east of Jonesboro. He held two land grants: one, 1783; the other, 1784, from the State of North Carolina. These grants are now in the Lawson McGhee Library at Knoxville, Tenn.

John C. Smith had two sons, John and Turner; two daughters, Sarah and Martha. Martha married a Snodgrass. Sarah married Joshua Babb. In 1809, Turner married Mary Ruble, whose parents came from Virginia and brought with them an old walnut chest made in Ireland in 1788. The Rubles were of Scotch-Irish descent, and I am inclined to think: the Smiths were the same stock. My father, W.H. Smith, a son of Turner Smith, lost his left hand in a premature blast near his home. This incapacitated him from hard labor. He afterwards went to school for several terms, and later ran for and was elected County Court Clerk in 1844, a position he held up to his death, in August, 1854.

On January 17, 1845, he was married to Mary Ann Mauk by W.H. Russell, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister. On my mother's side her grandparents were German and came from Pennsylvania in 1779, and settled fourteen miles southwest of Jonesboro on Nola Chucky River. Their name was Mauk.

My grandfather, Samuel Mauk, married Sarah Broyles. They had four boys and four girls. He built and owned what was then called a cold blast furnace, where iron was made. He also owned a sawmill in the forties. When both mills were operated, there was quite a little village called Mauktown, which was the voting place in Mauk's District No. 1. At that time all districts in Washington County were named, not numbered.

In order to sell the iron and other products of the country, he would build flatboats (four or five), as there was always what they called the Maytide in the river. This was their chance to get to market, so with two men to a boat they would set sail for Knoxville or Chattanooga. When their cargo was sold they had the pleasure of walking back home.

In my early years I went to two free schools taught by an Irishman by the name of O'Donnell; one to a teacher by the name of Grimsly, who taught in the old Baptist Church, now the residence of James A. Cummins; one to the widow of Judge Emerson, now the property of the Mottern heirs; then to the old Martin Academy on the hill (on the south side of the town) to James Davies and his daughter, Alice. Alice taught the primary classes. There were no graded schools in those days. Pupils were placed as to fitness or knowledge. I remember the following teachers: Peter H. Grisham, D. B. Barkly, H. Cady, and W. L. Lampson. This seat of learning was the second institution of its kind built in East Tennessee after the erection of Washington College by the Rev. Sam Doak.



Mary Mauk Smith

Mother of Captain Ross Smith, as she appeared in 1890. She died in 1914 at the age of 90

I remember the old stagecoach that used to stop at the Kinney Hotel for breakfast and to change horses after a night's drive from Blountville to Abingdon. The body of the coach was hung with heavy leather straps. The coach carried four to six passengers, often one being on the high seat with the driver. The luggage was carried in a large leather case behind in what was called the boot.

I remember well the speaking in behalf of the preservation of the Union of the States by Thomas A. R. Nelson, Sr., for the Union, and Landon C. Haynes, for secession. One was a Whig, the other, a Democrat. The question of secession was on, and the passions of the people were high.

Our town itself was pretty equally divided. In the fifties there lived in the old town several influential men who figured most honorably in the affairs of the State of Tennessee, and there was an atmosphere of culture and refinement such as pervaded the South. Most of these men had three to four slaves who were treated very well. I do not remember of ever hearing of one being whipped.

We had lived in town two years. I was born in a two-story frame that stood between the jail and John L. Blair's residence, now a vacant lot. Later we lived in a house that stood just back of the Hicky & McCorkle wholesale grocery. We had a cow, and Mother kept her milk in a spring house at the old mill spring. Father having built a home and bought some land near his old homestead, we moved to that in 1847.

After Father's death the responsibility of raising her four children fell upon Mother. I was eight years of age, my brother Sam, six months. As my father had built a house and bought some land, in settling up the estate there was a debt of about eight hundred dollars. We managed fairly well to live with some hired help until the Civil War came up. The E. T. & Virginia R. R. had been surveyed just before Father's death. My mother cooked first meal for the surveyors in this section.

Along between the years of 1856 and 1860 James Buchanan was our President. I went to school and helped on the farm. We kept a few sheep, sheared them, hauled the wool to a carding machine, where it was made into rolls which my mother would spin into yarn for our clothes. Then she would buy cotton yarn for the web. All of this would have to be dyed with homemade extractions. Many a thread have I handed through the gears of our old loom to make our jeans or linseys. My mother could do any kind of work in the field except to handle a wheat cradle. In the early fifties the cradle had just come into use. I remember having seen men cutting wheat with the sickle.

As the war progressed, times grew harder. It was pretty tough to make ends meet. I would have to go eight or ten miles to a country mill for flour and bring it home on horseback. Then groceries became very scarce: for coffee we parched wheat, or cut sweet potatoes into small cubes and parched them. If our tallow dips gave out for a light at night, we would take a rag and lay it in a saucer of fried grease. There was no coal oil until after the war ceased. Then it was forty cents a gallon.

Finally the Confederate forces lost control of Upper East Tennessee, and then it was that small parties of both Confederate and Federal cavalry rushed back and forth between the two armies. What one left, the others took. They robbed our field of what little corn we had raised and at last stole our horses, leaving us without any means of making a crop of any kind.

But all of these depredations must not be laid to either force. Their actions were confined to forage and food. There were many men laying out in the mountains to keep out of the army, and they often made a raid in the valley for provisions.

A part of this time no trains were run between Knoxville and Carter Station. Prior to this time I had a great liking for railroading. I would often leave home on any train the engineer or conductor would let me ride, loading freight, firing, tossing up wood, or any other work just so I was railroading, not knowing or caring when I got back home or got anything to eat. I often slept on the footboard of the engine near the boiler.

At last my mother got tired of this and said, "I will get you a job tomorrow. When the passenger train stops at Blair's Hotel for diner, we will try."

So the next day we were there. When the engineer stepped from his engine, Mother asked for the Job. "Yes," he said. "Be here in the morning."

So I was on hand. My first pay job was a wood passer. The engineer's name was William Pettus, the fireman was an Irishman by the name of Pat Cain. On reaching Knoxville our duties were to clean the engine, the fireman on one side, I on the other. That was in the days of no ballast, and you can bet that, on a rainy day, the engine was about as muddy as a country road wagon.

This was in February, 1862. The mountain men had burnt the bridge over the Holston at what is now Bluff City. (The first name of this station was Middletown, then Union. Confederate authorities, not liking the name, changed it to Zollicoffer, a Confederate general killed in the Civil War. At the close of war it took the name of Union again.) Bluff City was our terminal. On account of the bluff below the railroad bridge, all freight, baggage, and passengers had to be transferred over a wooden bridge opposite the station, a distance of nearly a mile.

Just how long I kept that job I do not remember, but in the summer of 1863 I was working on the Jonesboro section at two dollars per day. I boarded myself, or rather my mother did. The value of the dollar then was running along with the German mark during the World War. I remember for one month's work I got a sack of salt, fifty dollars, and a pair of shoes, twenty dollars. As my mother had boarded me, I gave her the salt and kept the shoes. The last month's work is still in the arrears.

In the winter of 1863-64 I was braking on a short run between Greeneville and Bulls Gap, hauling supplies to General Longstreet's army whose headquarters was one mile east of the Gap. The authorities would not let regular trains go west of Greeneville for fear of capture.

Part of the time it was very cold. My bed was in the depot on a plank by the stove. One bitter day three officers came to Alex Whalen, our engineer, with a request that he take them to Bulls Gap. He said: "Gentlemen, I would like very much to accommodate you, but the crosshead of the engine is broken. I have sent it to the blacksmith shop for repair and can't say when it will be done."

Being ignorant of machinery, they went away satisfied. That was a, tough job. We had no cab to warm us up. The wages for that job are still due. One day, in a downpour of rain, we were unloading a car of corn for the army. Two of the staff officers came in the car out of the rain. I overheard one say to the other that the army would leave for Virginia in a few days.

Being an Andrew Johnson Democrat, I had no idea of going with the rolling stock, which I knew they would take. So when I got back to Greeneville, I took sick and I told my conductor (Allison) I was going home. Having two or three pounds of boiled ham and some hard biscuits in an old haversack, I sold them to Louise Clem for five dollars Confed. Clem was one of Mike Clem's slaves of Jonesboro. So home I came, and I kept out of sight a few days until the Confederates left, going the northern route.

Then one night about eight o'clock John Emmet Naff, two Hutton boys from Virginia, and I left my home, going over Green's Hill and struck the railroad below town. I had seven and a half dollars, which my mother had accumulated and given me. We reached Greeneville at daylight. At Midway we were stopped by a small squad of Federal cavalry, who questioned us and then allowed us to proceed. We spent that night at a farmhouse near the Gap.

The next day I left for Knoxville on a train conducted by Col. Robert McKee, of Greeneville. This was the last I ever saw of my companions. I remained in Knoxville two or three days and met a man by name of Dempsey, who had worked for us on the farm. Together we went to Chattanooga. I caught a freight train for Stevenson, Ala. Remember that I was not troubled with a particle of luggage: all I had was the clothes I had on.

Reaching Stevenson I met up with Capt. Henry Lyle running a freight train for the government. He gave me a job. Right here I met a friend indeed, and one whose kindness will always be remembered. He then had a crew from home: Jacob Brown, Green Burluson, and myself from Washington County; the other was Joseph Fouche from Greene County. It was during the summer of 1864. We were hauling supplies to General Sherman's army when it was marching through Georgia. The captain's pay was one hundred twenty-five dollars per month; the brakeman's was sixty dollars and rations.

Our trips out of Nashville were over the N. C. & St. L. R. R. The return trip was by the M. & C. R. R. to Decatur, thence the N. & S. to Nashville. The empty cars were all taken back via Decatur to give better transportation facilities for the army. While on these runs, we would get very tired of sow belly and other rations furnished. The people along the road were glad to exchange roasting ears and beans for our fat sides. You may bet this exchange on our part was more than mutual.

There were many accidents then. General Wheeler would often make a dash in and tear up a portion of track, causing a bad wreck. I have seen General Wheeler's home along the M. & C. road a few miles east of Huntsville, Ala.

On one trip we had a large black negro for front brakeman. In coming up the Cumberland Mountain one sunny day, this fellow went to sleep. When the train ran into a tunnel we suppose he awoke. Jumping up he struck his head against the roof of the tunnel, falling off between the cars and walls of the tunnel.

We missed him but had no idea what became of him. After arriving at Stevenson, he came in on a following train an hour or two later, none the worse, only a few bumps on his head.

A serious accident occurred on this mountain that summer. There were two train loads of wounded soldiers from the Battle of Resaca going north to hospitals. The government had no comfortable accommodation for the wounded. The day being hot, the soldiers lay in box cars on green branches and bushes with the doors open and with holes cut in the sides of the cars for air. The second train, following the first, got away from the crew and, about halfway down the mountain, crashed into the first. You may imagine the result as I can't describe it. None of this kind of accidents was ever published that I know of.

On one of our return trips up the North & South Road near Franklin, Tenn., I went to sleep and lost my hat. Now losing my hat was not unusual, but the cost of the hat at Jonesboro is worth mentioning. Sometime before I left home, J. C. Aiken, a merchant selling goods where now is the city drug store, had a wool hat priced at thirty dollars. I wanted it. Mother nor I had any money, so

she told me if I would haul wood to pay for it I could buy it. So, to pay for that wool hat, I hauled thirty loads of wood to J. C. Aiken, who lived then behind the W. E. May store.

Later in the summer we were sent to Springfield, Tenn., to haul timbers for the sappers and miners (as they were then called) to rebuild the trestles and bridges on that line at Springfield that had been destroyed by the retreating Confederates. I had a bad case of typhoid fever and lay in a box car six weeks, attended by a doctor in the employ of the United States Government.

After I got so I could travel, I went to Nashville, drew my pay, and came to Knoxville. There I met Cal Shaw and George Olliver. We concluded to make a trip to our old home, arriving at Bulls Gap at sundown, where General Gilliam's forces were stationed. We slipped out between two pickets, crossed Lick Creek, got our supper at a farmhouse, and then resumed our trip. It was dark and, on nearing Midway, we heard quite a racket in that direction and concluded that safety first was in order. We found a big bunch of hay dropped from some wagon. Picking it up, we carried it in to Swan Pond thicket, where we spent the night.

Next morning, hungry as usual, we started out to hunt our breakfast. Crossing the railroad to the north, we saw a large two-story brick house at which we thought that we might get a meal. This house stood on the main highway and was owned by a man named Harmon. There had been a man by that name and one by the name of Fry hung at Greeneville for bridge burning. Whether this was the same Harmon I do not know.

Nearing this house we were going along a staked fence, when a squirrel ran up on a stake. Shaw, carrying a small rifle, raised the gun to shoot it, but the gun failed to fire. At that moment we heard the tramp of horses on the road a few yards ahead of us. On looking we saw a bunch of Confederate cavalry passing west. We took to the woods double-quick. We ran into a man going in the direction of the troopers, and we held him up until we saw them cross Lick Creek.

Had that gun fired, your humble servant would not be here to write the story. We recrossed Lick Creek and lay in a sage field until sundown. Going to a farmhouse near by, we got supper and bed, and remained there three or four days. Being the only one having any money, I paid the bill.

One night at twelve a man on horseback came, awakened us and told us the army was leaving. We dressed hastily and lit out for the Gap, two miles distant. Why the young man came to notify us we never knew. Arriving at Bulls Gap, all was confusion; there were as many, if not more, civilians than soldiers.

We took the road south of Whitesburg; at Russellville we turned north, crossing the railroad. Right here the handles of my old oilcloth valise broke, and a time I had wagging it the balance of the night and all next day. We crossed the Holston River and around Clinch mountain, arriving at Bean Station about four in the afternoon. There I was fortunate enough to buy a piece of fresh beef and had roast for our supper.

Next day at noon we broke camp again, still going west. As I had recently got over the fever, I was always hungry. In passing a sweet potato patch I could not resist the temptation to go in. I scratched out a half dozen, carried them in my arms to our next camp, and we had roasted potatoes for supper. Our camp that night was four or five miles north of Mossy Creek. The following day we left the army near Mossy Creek. The next night we slept in an old storehouse at New Market. Leaving there early, we reached Colonel Shaw's home four miles east of Knoxville that evening, as full of cooties as a dog is of fleas. In an old outhouse we built a fire, bathed, and burned every rag we had

on. That cured me of scouting. I went to Knoxville, got from Henry Hoss a hundred dollars that I left with him while trying to make a visit home.

Leaving Knoxville I went to my Uncle David Smith, who lived in Edgar County, Ill., twelve miles west of Paris. This being late in the fall of 1864, I helped his boys gather a large crop of corn. When winter set in, the boys all went to a free school. Not wishing to stay at home, I went also.

In the spring I took a notion to railroad again. Going to Pana I got a job of braking on the Big Four, Pana, Ill., to St. Louis. I was in Pana on the night of the assassination of President Lincoln. On the Sunday following, there was a big freight wreck two miles east of Pana.

On going to this wreck I met my old engineer, William Pettus, who had given me my first job at home. That job did not last long, as the company fired my conductor. Going back to Uncle's I went to work on his farm. We boys put in a large acreage of corn, and then came the end of the war.

I began to want to see the home folks, so I borrowed fifty dollars from Uncle. On arriving at Greeneville, Tenn., I had five dollars left. This I loaned to Al Brown so he could get home too. He lived at this time in the home now occupied by J. A. Cummins. So I came home broke, or less than I left with.

After I had stayed at home a few weeks, I went to braking on a train hauling timber to the trestle of the Watauga and Holston rivers. The conductor's name was Messer, of the Boston & Maine R. R. He had been running a train for the government. Many Northern men came South during the war for better wages.

During the war the roads used by the government--all cars and rolling stock--were branded U. S. Military R. R. The man in charge of a train drew a captain's pay; that is why all the conductors on our Southern roads are called captain. Now it is a common title applied to every foreman in charge of a crew.

Later I went to braking for Col. Isham Young on a local freight. We had very few conveniences. To put in a brass, we had to get a good stout fence rail, with a block of wood for a heel. There were no dogs to replace a car on the track; we had to rely on the firewood we used. In the early days of the operation of the road, all things were crude.

The life of all the trainmen was hard--there was no cab on a through train, but one on the local freight. The brakeman had to ride the hurricane deck in rain or snow, sleet or hail, holding his train from running away down the many heavy grades in this section of East Tennessee. Seldom did he have a chance to warm his hands during the trip. Many are the boys who lost their lives from the top of a frozen train. All couplings were made by hand.

In winter we had to dig wood out of the snow five or six times for the engine between Knoxville and Bristol. Often the engine would get out of water between tanks. Then we would have to hunt up a section crew and buckets, get to some pond which was often frozen over, and bail enough water to get to the next tank. Often when on a side track waiting for a train, the engine would get low in water. Then in order to fill the boiler, we would put out a flag, get out on the main track in order to run the pump of the engine. This would fill the boiler again. There were no injectors in those days.

At meeting points all trains would wait thirty minutes on the opposing train. If it failed to reach the meeting point at that time, the train had a right of track. If both trains failed to make the meeting

point, then the westbound train had the right of track. Each road kept its own cars at home.

The Old Dominion Line of steamships from New York to Norfolk brought the freight; there it was loaded on the Norfolk and Petersburg cars, and hauled to Petersburg. Then it was transferred to the Petersburg and Lynchburg, and so to Bristol, Knoxville, Dalton, and on to its destination, all to be transferred to each line. Now cars are loaded to go to their destinations without change. At Knoxville the E. T. & Va. and E. T. and Ga. railroads each had a transfer platform in their yards. Generally the E. T. and Ga. would shunt their cars up to the E. T. and Va. yard for freight brought in by that road, then vice versa.

In 1867 there was a large crop of corn raised in East Tennessee. The Irish near the yard always kept a lot of hogs running loose. They would get in the cars for the shattered corn after the cars were unloaded. Many mornings, on taking out the local, on rounding French's grade just east of Knoxville, we would see a hog or two standing in the car doors. I'll bet the owners never guessed what became of their hogs.

When I was braking my pay was forty-five dollars per month. Twenty of this I gave to Mother; the rest went for board and clothes. I was given a train in the fall of 1866, with an increase in pay. I paid off all the old debts on the estate. Some were for my schooling, one a doctor bill of my father, and a large bill of merchandise bought before the war--all this I paid. When I had accumulated enough to settle one bill, I would come home and pay it, but it took a few years to do it as there were other expenses at home.

In September, 1873, the Jay Cooke banking house of New York failed, causing at that time a panic throughout the United States nearly equal to the black Friday a few years before. The officials of the road ordered a twenty percent cut in wages from top to bottom. The engineers refused to accept the cut and quit.

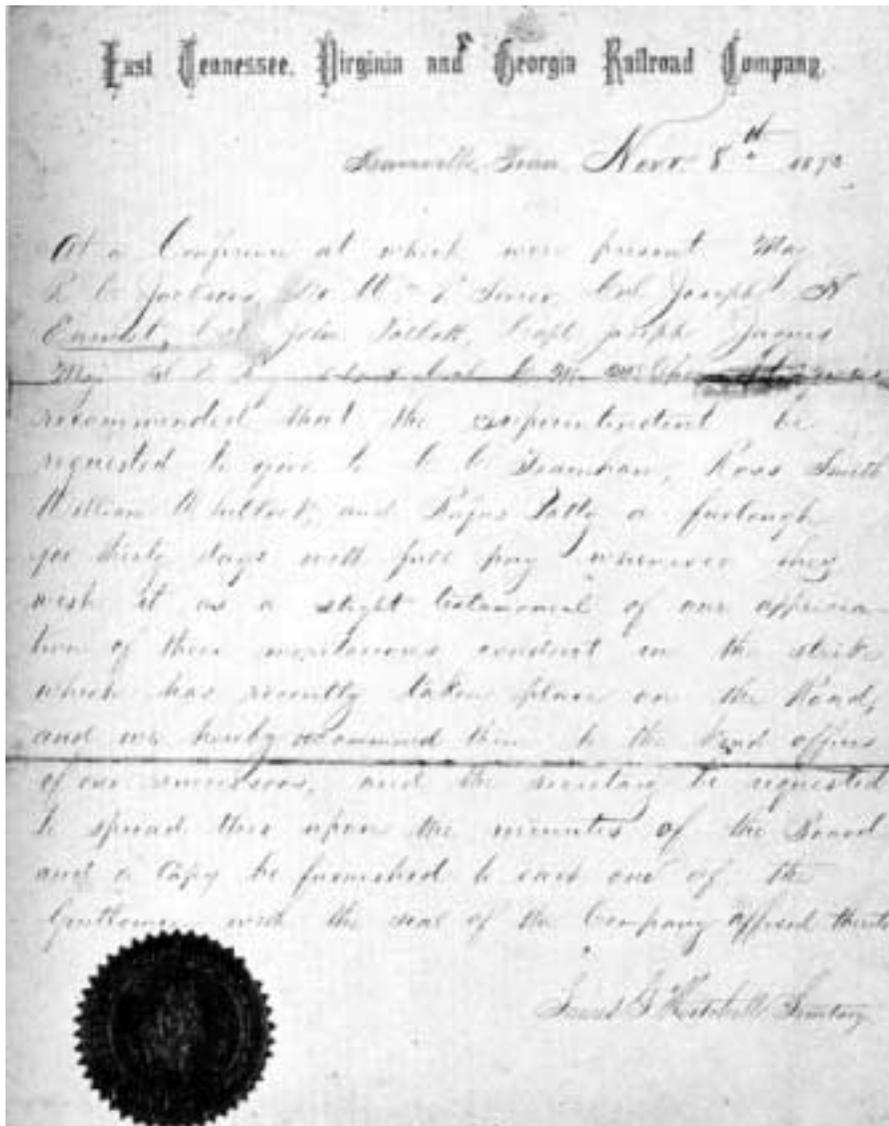
At that time I was running a passenger train, as the road was running a double daily. On Saturday the 20th, I reached Knoxville on No. 1. No train had left Knoxville that day. As soon as I stepped off of my train Newt Bogart, train master, led me away from the crowd (which was large), and told me that I was expected to get on that engine and take No. 1 to Chattanooga. I demurred for a while, calling his attention to the relations between myself and the men, but he insisted.

Finally I told him to get Chas. Hodge, master mechanic to oil the engine for me and that I would go, but first I went among the engineers and talked to them, and told them what was expected of me. They were friendly and did not advise me, so after holding the train an hour, I went and got on Engine 125 Rogers and lit out. I stopped at Mouse Creek for diner and made Cleveland on time. On reaching Chattanooga I told the yard engineer to turn the engine and bring it back into the Union shed. He did so and stood her right beside our ticket office from which I watched that night.

Next morning, on leaving Chattanooga, the engine would not steam. Stopping for wood just of Tyners, I found that the sparks had not been removed from the smokestack. I got the spark chute and removed them. This caused me a twenty minutes' delay, but the engine steamed all right and I soon made up lost time, reaching Knoxville on Sunday. I found a large portion of the population at the depot to meet the train. After eight days the engineers accepted the cut and went back to work.

The three other men who ran an engine during the trouble were C. C. Trainham, William Whitlock, and Rufus Patty. Trainham was killed in a collision just east of Watauga. Patty was riding on the engine of train No. 2, and was killed at Raders by crashing into the rear of a freight.

When all was settled it resulted in taking off one passenger train. The officials offered me my choice of trains, but as there were older men than I, I refused to supplant them and took back the Bristol local that I had run before.



Certificate For Service During Strike of 1873

While the men were off, one or two came to me saying I was taking their job and food from their children. My reply was ready for them at any time. I did not want it. Soon we all were good friends again, and many of them on the local would ask me to go over and run awhile and they would play conductor. I ran the local for several years for seventy-five dollars per month. Our hours were sixteen each way, Bristol to Knoxville and return.

Previous to the year 1886, the gauge of all Southern railroads was five feet two inches; Northern, four feet eight inches; the change was at Lynchburg, Va., for Washington, D. C. Through sleepers had to have a change of trucks, which was made by steam hoist in the yards at Lynchburg. So in the summer of 1886 the change was made general.

At the time I had charge of a crew getting out ballast at Carter Station. With my crew beginning at daylight, we changed the gauge by moving the rail on the north side to the proper width, arriving at Johnson City at 8 A.M. The change on this division was made by twelve noon, and a train from Bristol to Knoxville made the trip. If memory serves me right, it was on the 18th of June, the same year that Standard Time was inaugurated throughout the United States.

My memory of Knoxville in 1862 is as follows: Between Gay and Central streets, between the railroad and Vine Street, called Gunters Flat, was a two story frame building; the balance was vacant on the east side of Gay Street from the railroad to the Sanford Chamberlain drug store. There were practically no buildings on the west side. Next to the railroad, now the west ramp of the viaduct--was Flag Pond in which grew cat-tails--there was not a house to Vine Street. Then there were some frame buildings on to Union Street, on the corner of which stood the octagon brick in which was a barber shop, now the site of the Sol George Department Store. There was a large two-story frame building with statues in the yard which extended some fifty feet from the street back to the building, I was of the impression that the owner's name was McBride, but I see Seen & Heard have given another name. It was in a little frame shack that stood close to Ramsey's bookstore, now the Miller Building, that Peter Ritter first started his cigar store. My first sermon heard in Knoxville was delivered in a small brick church on West Main Street by Dr. J. W. Spence. The Franklin House or Hotel, which stood on the site now occupied by the Courthouse, was burned about the year 1867 or 1868. I was at this fire.

In the spring of 1865, the United States Government purchased a tract of land just north of the old Gray Cemetery and established a national cemetery. The bodies of all Federal soldiers killed during the war in East Tennessee were removed to this burying ground. The most of them had been buried just where they fell and just as they were--no coffins or boxes. The taking up of these bodies was done by a couple of Irishmen of Knoxville whose names I have forgotten, but I remember one was badly marked from smallpox.

I was braking for Colonel Young on the local Knoxville to Bristol, once or twice a week. We would take an empty box car out of Knoxville for loading. This car would be left at any station where any of the bodies were known to be. Some places there would be only three or four. These bodies were placed a small pine box three feet long and one foot square. As some of these men had only been dead something over a year, the flesh was not all decomposed. The graves were shallow. These two men, after getting what identification they could, would uncover the bodies and with shovels transfer the remains to these small boxes. If there was nothing to show whose bodies they were, the graves were marked unknown. On our return trip the next day we would pick up this car, putting it behind our cab. The odor was almost intolerable, and it fell to me to have to ride this car back to Knoxville.

I belonged to the first Order of Railway Conductors organized in the United States in 1870 with headquarters at Indianapolis, Ind. About the year 1889 or 1890, the road went into the hands of a receiver (Henry Fink). The Order brought suit against him in the Federal Court at Cincinnati on account of some difference in our wages--I don't remember the exact status of the suit. Then I withdrew from the Order, telling them I could not be a party to it on account of my relations to the company. My first duty was to my family; next, to the source of my living; and then to all humanity. The conductors did not ostracize me for this move.

Labor organizations are beneficial fraternally, but they are demanding too much. If they are not more conservative, in time they will become a menace to the progress of our nation. Patriotism is on the wane. Politicians cater to any class for votes. Money and power are sapping the life of our

Constitution. The simple life has lost its charm; jazz and joy rides rule the day; mammon sits in the hearts of the majority.

One writer says that when a nation deserts its God, 'tis on the road to decay. The cause the fall of the Roman Empire and of the Jewish nation was from factions within. The resources of this nation will not always supply its people at the present pace of extravagance. Taxes have become a burden to man. Our governing bodies should be more considerate--where do we find the words "If ye keep my commandments"?

In the year 1873, the government released Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, from Fortress Monroe. In going to his home in Mississippi, Mr. Davis came through East Tennessee. At Bristol he got on my train, No. 3 and ate supper at Capt. James Sevier Hotel, Jonesboro. I have heard that he and Abraham Lincoln were born within nine miles of each other in the State of Kentucky. Davis had only one eye as did Col. Henry Watterson, the renowned journalist. Both of these men were my passengers; also Don Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, on his visit to the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876.

There are many other incidents that occur to my mind now which it would take too long to recite and may not be of interest to the readers of this narrative, or to my old railroad comrades, or to those who are younger. I am the only one left that led a railroad life through the Civil War of the sixties. I helped haul supplies to both armies. The life, a varied one, had many ups and downs. The life of the brakeman now is comfortable to what it was in the early days of the road. Now the fireman has the hardest job in the train service. All men in train service should truly appreciate the approved appliances now in use for their comfort and safety.

The Creator has been good to me during all these varied years, for which I am truly thankful. Many narrow escapes have been mine, but His hand has always sheltered me.



Old-Time Railway Due Cards

My brother Sam's train, No. 41, was wrecked on Sunday, October 7, 1894. The whole train was destroyed by fire except the last sleeper, which was cut loose and pushed back by the passengers. Sam died October 9, at 5 A.M. On March 25, year not remembered, John Swatts wrecked No. 2 one mile west of Afton, and died the third day. John Patterson, my brother-in-law, was wrecked on No. 2 on June 29, 1895, one-half mile east of Chucky City. He was killed instantly. Bass Henegar, fireman, was killed instantly in a wreck of No. 2 by running over a horse. The three first wrecks were caused by an obstruction. Patterson, Swatts, and Henegar were on No. 2, my regular train.

And now to all who read these reminiscences: Be considerate. Be conservative. Money is not the real goal to be desired; it brings comfort, but not real happiness. May all, when the summons come and the shadows grow darker, find a sweet rest in the Great Beyond.

In 1868 on November 5, I married Miss Virginia Patterson. Four children were born to us two girls, Lauretta and Nellie; two sons, William Patterson, engineer, and Samuel Jaques, now train master, named after our old railroad official, both with the Southern Railway. You can tell by their lives the influence of a good mother. She was my best and truest friend. The loss of her in 1911 brought about the following thought:

LIFE

When the Creator takes your choicest flower and severs the line to which is moored your every hope, your every fear, your aspirations, and your all man rebels at the decree and bitterly asks why ; but from out the records of the musty tombs of ages long since gone, there is not the faintest whisper or an assuring light that fully, fully satisfies the human soul.

And stoic time silently and relentlessly marches on, impartially snatching a victim with each passing moment.

The lord and the beggar, the king and the peasant all share a common lot. The fate of the countless millions of the past await the innumerable host that are to follow.

From whence to whence the riddle remains unsolved. The why and wherefore of life is beyond the human ken. Life is like the little stream that steals from out yon mountainside, clear and pure as the crystal, as it wends its way to the vale below, cutting its banks and making its bed as it goes. It grows in size, strength, and power; it becomes a mighty stream on whose bosom float the ships that fly the flags of every nation; it empties into the great ocean. Then and there could you tell, or would you know, one drop of the water of that little stream that left yon mountainside?

Is not the human life the same? From the cradle to the grave is not the little babe as pure as that little stream when it emerges from Mother Earth? Is not the mother's love and care through babyhood and childhood the same guiding hand as the bed and the banks of that little stream? Yea, on into manhood and the cares and responsibilities of life! When life's work is done and that spirit takes its flight into the mighty ocean of Eternity, does it retain its individuality, or does it mix and mingle with the universe and become a part and parcel of the Unknown?

Vain are the expressions of human triumph over Nature. O Grave! where is thy victory? O Death! where is thy sting? Mother Earth does not rejoice over the loss of a single life, but opens her bosom to receive her own.

Death leaves no wound or exults over her power; 'tis only tired Nature's ever-sleeping potion. But it is a fact as cold as the iceberg of the Arctic that there is no other exit for the human race.

Man in every age has conceived that he is of a higher power than nature, yet he lives in the realms of nature, and his every substance is derived from her. His moods are many and varied, yet the earth, of which he must be a part and a parcel, is his only habitation.

The true meaning of the life of the founder of Christianity has not yet found lodgment in the hearts of one hundredth part of His followers. When the human race becomes imbued with Love as He lived it and taught it in all its fullness thereof, there will be no Heaven to seek or Hell to shun.

*Somewhere along the winding trail
When I am all too tired to weep,
I'll lay life's little toys aside
and go to sleep.*

*It makes no difference after that
How long or short the passing night;
Whatever comes or doesn't come
Will be all right.*

*To him on whom the narrow house
Has but a moment closed its door,
A million ages more or less
Will be no more.*

*I will not question or complain,
Or issue orders to the skies.
I aim for God to manage that,
For He is wise.*

*If He intends to wake me up,
I'll like it just as well as you;
But if he lets me slumber on
That's all right too.*

-PARSONS.

*BUILDING OF THE EAST
TENNESSEE AND VIRGINIA
RAILROAD
NOW THE
SOUTHERN RAILWAY*

II
BUILDING OF THE EAST
TENNESSEE AND VIRGINIA
RAILROAD
NOW THE
SOUTHERN RAILWAY

The incidents that I remember of the building of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, Bristol to Knoxville, are as follows: The surveys were made in 1853-54, the idea originating mostly in Sullivan, Washington, and Greene counties. Grainger and Hawkins counties made a hard pull for it to go through Tate Springs and Rogersville, but the Holston River, being one mode of transportation, worked in favor of the present route.

The chief engineer was Robert L. Owens, of Virginia, afterwards president of the Virginia & Tennessee Railroad, The local engineer, W. T. Lynch, lived in the Cox property, where Jack Young now lives. Colonel Owens boarded at the John Simpson Hotel, and there met and married a music teacher of the tribe of Cherokee Indians.

The grading of the line was all done with pick and shovel, mule and cart. In the summer of 1855 the promoter staged a big railroad barbecue just east of town in a large white oak grove. There was a very large gathering from every county, Bristol to Knoxville.

The first two miles of grading was awarded to Mike Clem, of Jonesboro, a tanner and slave Owner. This was from Jonesboro to the overhead bridge. The next award was to John Lyle, a prosperous farmer. In running the line through the town, it cut all lots in half between the creek and Water Street from Fox Street to the lower railroad crossing.

A large two-story brick building was built on the Blair lot for a depot. The first story was for freight; the second was used as the headquarters of the company, with Dr. Samuel B. Cuninghame as the first president, John Keys, as treasurer, John Blair, Jr., as bookkeeper and timekeeper. The home of Dr. Cuninghame, now owned by L. M. Broyles, is still in good repair, and stands near the railroad. All of the officials were residents of Jonesboro.

The road was built both ways, Knoxville and Bristol. The two crews met in the hoop cut just west of Midway from which this station took its name. The reason for the name of hoop cut was that, in those days, hoops were in fashion; 'tis said that they covered about four acres. It was here in the summer of 1858 that the president drove the last (silver) spike. The spikes and chairs or couplings to connect the rails were eight by ten inches. A hole in each corner for spikes had grooves to slip the rails in.

Chairs of cast iron were made at Embreeville, the first furnace built in East Tennessee, by Elihu Embree, who was said to be the first abolitionist in the country. At the time of the building of the road this furnace was owned by the Blairs. The fishplate was not then known. When riding on the train, you could hear the click of the wheels at every joint.

Before the completion of the road, it came near losing its charter for want of finances. Then thirty of the wealthiest and influential men of the counties through which it ran pledged their all for its completion. This, I think, was accomplished by inducing the Legislature of the state to issue four million of bonds for their use. A part of this fund was also for the East Tennessee and Georgia

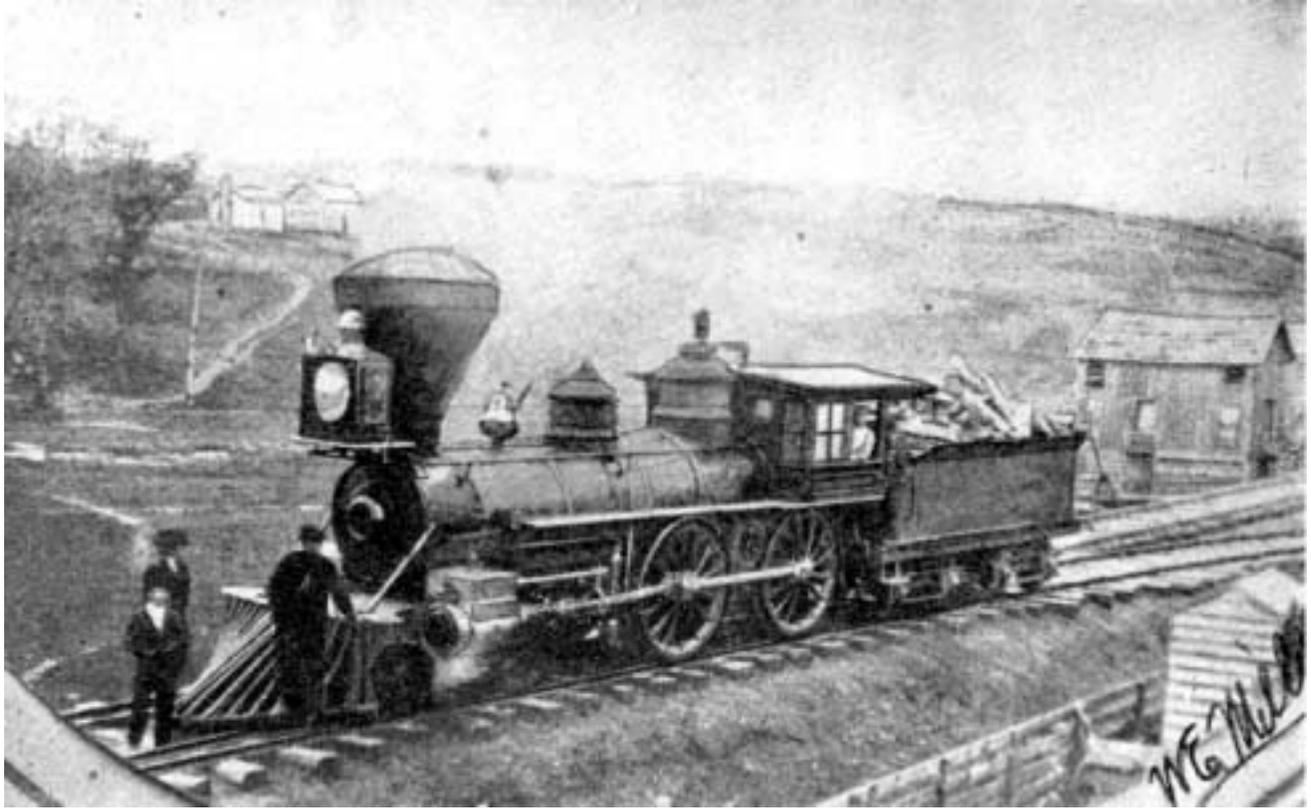
Railroad, which was also in financial straits. As far as I have been able to ascertain, the names of these thirty are as follows: Sullivan County -Joseph Anderson, Samuel Rhea, Andrew Shell; Washington County--Dr. S. B. Cuningham, Judge Seth J. Lucky, Thos. A. R. Nelson, Sr., John Blair, Dr. Wm. Sevier, G. W. Telford, G. W. Nelson, Adam Broyles; Greene County--Joseph Earnest, A. L. Snapp; Jefferson County--Gen. Wm. Brazelton, Frank Taylor, John Talbot.

On the completion of the road the head quarters, with all of the officials, were moved to Knoxville. Just previous to the Civil War the road lost its president by death. His successor was John R. Banner, Of Mossy Creek. Here I will mention that he might have been one of the above thirty, afterwards called the "Immortal Thirty."

The first engine hauling rails that came to Jonesboro was the track layer run by Henry Salts, son of Daniel Salts, of Jonesboro. The first passenger train engine, Greenville pulled a combination coach and mail car. The engineer was an Irishman by the name of Mc-Donald; John Hammer, of Bristol, was conductor; and G. W. Willett, Jr., of Jonesboro, was mail agent. The post office was in the building now occupied by the Hickey-McCorkle Wholesale Grocery. W. H. Crouch was postmaster; Press Crouch, clerk; and Henry Hoss, depot agent.

The railroad built a long platform on the north side of the track, Fox Street to Cherokee Street. It was then that John Blair built a large dining room as an addition to his residence, and all passenger trains stopped there for meals.

In locating the depot quite a controversy arose over the location. Thos. A. R. Nelson wanted it in town; Gen. Alfred E. Jackson wanted it where it is now. Nelson won, but in the eighties the brick depot burned. Then General Jackson had his desire gratified by donating the present site. It was also necessary, for the growing traffic had outgrown the facilities of the old site, which is now used as coal yard and warehouses. On the platform above mentioned was the telegraph office. Charles Nelson of Virginia, was the operator, and used the old Morse code.



“Old Buncombe”

*Properly named “Gov. Senter,” running from Morristown to Wolf Creek, Tennessee, on
The C. C. & C. R.R.*

There was also between the railroad track and county jail a one-story frame in which Capt. Geo. E. Gresham edited the Jonesboro Flag in 1865. Captain Gresham also was postmaster immediately after the war closed.

In 1858, the first superintendent was Mayor Temple, of Greeneville, Tenn. Then came L. C. Hoss, of Johnson City. Right here I will mention the great interest the older people of that town had in the building of the road, among them being the Johnsons, Faws, Ranges, Jobs, Wheelers, and Whites. L.C. Hoss was superintendent, I think, at the beginning of the war. Our old passenger conductors were E. S. Ripley, of Fullers Depot; Jas. Ashmore, of Mossy Creek; James A. Rudd, of Greeneville; on freight; Robert Shannon, of Panther Springs; James Homer, of Knoxville; Robert and Frank Ensor, of Carter County. None of the above had any practical knowledge of their vocation, yet all did well. The older engineers were J. B. Hoxsie and Charles A. Hodge, who came from up north. These old men probably were responsible for the success of road's operation.

The Confederate authorities did not take full charge of the road. Although they left its operation in the hands of the company officials, they had their supplies and troops given preference.

The successor to L. C. Hoss was one Phillips, a Baptist preacher from the Western and Atlantic road. It was he who took the engine wipers out of the roundhouse, put on the wood passer, and had the fireman and the helper to keep engines clean. This was in the early days of 1862.

There used to be a large three-story brick hotel just west of the north end of Gay Street viaduct called the Humphrey House. The E. T. & Ga. R. R. shops and roundhouse were just west of the second creek. These buildings were burned during the siege of Knoxville. When the road resumed operation, the shops were built between the yard tracks and Broad Street.

The master mechanic's name I have forgotten, but later came J. B. Michaels and still later B. J. Sitton and Joseph Ambruster M.C.B.

The depot building of the E. T. & Va. R. R. was a large frame, with John Rice as agent. The E. T. & Va. R. R. depot was a large brick structure.

In the years of 1866 and 1867 the stock of the E. T. & Va. R. R. was worth seventeen cents on the dollar. At this time John R. Branner was president; J. B. Hoxsie, superintendent; Charles Hodge, master mechanic; Robert Seay, M. C. B. Our passenger conductors were William Bonnell; Col. Cochran, of New Market; Harry Lyle, of Bristol. There was one daily train each way, taking nine hours from Knoxville to Bristol, and vice versa. Our freight conductors were Col. Isham Young, Tom Holloway, Wm. Jenkins, James Lee, Joe Branner, and Andrew Waldron. Our engineers were Wm. Dace, Wm. Guinn, Charles Harvey, Lafayette Vines, Sol Onkst, and one or two other names that I have forgotten.

In selling the stock of the road thousands of the citizens in all the counties subscribed. The stock was of small issue, twenty-five dollars per share. Washington, Sullivan, Greene and Jefferson counties took fifty thousand each; I do not know the amount subscribed by Knox County. In 1868 some of our own people--W. R. Callaway, Charles McGhee, Capt. Joseph Jaques, E. J. Sanford and others--made some arrangement with the state to take over the indebtedness caused by the issuing of its bonds. For the benefit of the roads, the price paid the state was never revealed.

Then came the consolidation of the two roads in 1869 with Captain Jaques and Maj. R. C. Jackson as active managers, and Newton Bogar, train master. Captain Jaques, a jovial old soul, used to say to me: "Ross, politeness is mighty cheap." Later R. T. Wilson of New York became president, and was followed by Samuel Brice.

Thoughts outrun my pen to go back a few years when the road was turned back to the company. There was a stockholders' meeting every year with the privilege of each stockholder getting a free ride to Knoxville. So many of them made the trip that it took eight or ten coaches to haul them. The shares being small some families had several and often would lend their neighbors a share, one share being sufficient for the trip.

In the years between 1876 and 1880 some New York interest together with our local people, took an active interest in the road. I remember that Jay Gould made a trip over the road at one time. 'Tis well known that at one time he caught Colonel McGhee short and came near causing him a serious loss. When these interests consolidated, they bought the Selma, Rome & Dalton and extended the E. T. & Va. & Ga. to Atlanta. Major O'Brien was the general superintendent. Major Huger came to the road in 1877 and was shortly made superintendent.

Now the engines of the road in its earliest operation were the tracklayers Ocoee, Greeneville, Bristol, Knoxville, Jonesboro, S. B. Cunningham, G. W. Adams, and John A. Ross. The Bristol was captured at Carter Station by a force of Federal cavalry, who had made a raid into East Tennessee, burned the bridge over the Watauga, and ran her off the east pier into the river. This engine was two years later taken up and put in commission again. To recruit the old stock bought from the United

States Government, the company purchased two Rogers, two Baldwins, and two Cooks.

To go back again: The first section foreman, Johnson to Jonesboro, was Samuel Miller, then Jesse Colbert. The road masters were James Trim, of Greeneville; second, Robert Caldwell, of Knoxville; third, John Moore, from the M. & C. R. R.

Just previous to the consolidation, Major Jackson of the E. T. & Ga, R. R. had a private car (which was also used as a pay car monthly) in which he would go on Saturday to his home in Athens to spend Sunday with his family. Uncle Billie Winton, who was quite a character, was the engineer on the through freight, which would only pull fifteen cars.

On one occasion the Major had his car attached to Billie's train which left Knoxville at 10 P.M. The Major went to bed in his car in which there were two berths, expecting the car to be set out at Athens. Billie, when ready to start, counted his cars as usual--thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen. "Oh, hello," said Billie. "There is one too many," and he stepped in and pulled the pin. Next morning when the Major stepped off his car, he was still in the Knoxville yard.

There are plenty more tales I could tell about Billie, but one more will suffice. On this same run one night, when reaching Lenoir, Billie found his watch had stopped. Looking up the watchman at Lenoir Mills, he asked him what time the moon rose. On getting this information, Billie said, "Oh, hello plenty of time to make Sweetwater," that being his meeting point for the east-bound train.

In the years of 1859 and 1860 Ebenezer of Leesburg had several slaves, and hired them to the railroad company to work in the Jonesboro section. In those days no trainmen or trackmen were affiliated with any religious organization--that was left for the officials. It was a strenuous life for the real laborer. Like the great West, no tenderfoot need apply. There were saloons along the line. Some men would occasionally take a drink, but the privilege was seldom abused. Individual liberty was then recognized. The great majority of them were gentlemen, and used liquor in moderation. Times now are greatly changed; 'tis only the criminal now that takes a drink.

Our pay was received on the twentieth of the following month. On this day the pay car would leave Knoxville, paying all agents, trackmen, and bridge crews; also paying for ties, wood, and timbers bought for the use of the company.

Now a great many of the men can hardly wait two weeks for their pay so anxious are they to spend their wages.

From 1888 to 1899 I ran Nos. 1 and 2, making the trip Bristol to Knoxville and return daily, a distance of two hundred and sixty-two miles. The mileage per year was over ninety-five thousand miles.

Now there is no railway in the United States that has a finer set of officials and employees than the Southern Railway.

A few of the old agents that I remember prior to 1861 are: W. P. Brewer, Bristol, Henry Johnson, Johnson City; Henry Hoss, Jonesboro; E. S. Mathes, Bulls Gap; Pleas Davis, Whitesburg; C. G. Nenny, Russellville; John Rice, Knoxville; Jacob Barkley, Telfords.

*ROSTER OF EARLY RESIDENTS
OF JONESBORO*

III

ROSTER OF EARLY RESIDENTS OF JONESBORO

I will endeavor to give a roster of the names of the citizens of old Jonesboro in the years of eighteen fifties with residences, names, and occupation. Such roster will be correct only as memory serves me in this the year 1930. Once the capital of the State of Franklin, its first charter was granted in 1784, and it celebrated its centennial year in 1879.

Commencing at the old cemetery, at the east end of Main Street, on the north side, going west, was: Milton Atkinson, Silversmith: A long one-story frame. Large family. James and Browlow followed their father's trade, Henry Cate and William were tanners. There were six daughters. One married A. C. Collin, father of H. C. Collin, of the Knoxville Journal; one, Bush McCloud; one, John Dwain; one, William Smith; one, Nelson; one, John Compton.

Blacksmith shop of W.P.Brewer: One-story frame.

W. P. Brewer, Merchant: One-story frame; our Sunday School superintendent. Two boys. My memory of this family is vague. W. P. Brewer moved to Bristol, and was depot agent for the E. T. & Va. R. R. through the war. All of the above is now the property of Mrs. Silas Cooper.

Thomas Dosser, Constable: One-story frame. Two sons: William, deceased; and James, now a mechanic in the Southern Railway shops, Knoxville, Tenn. Site now of the bungalow of F. S. Patton.

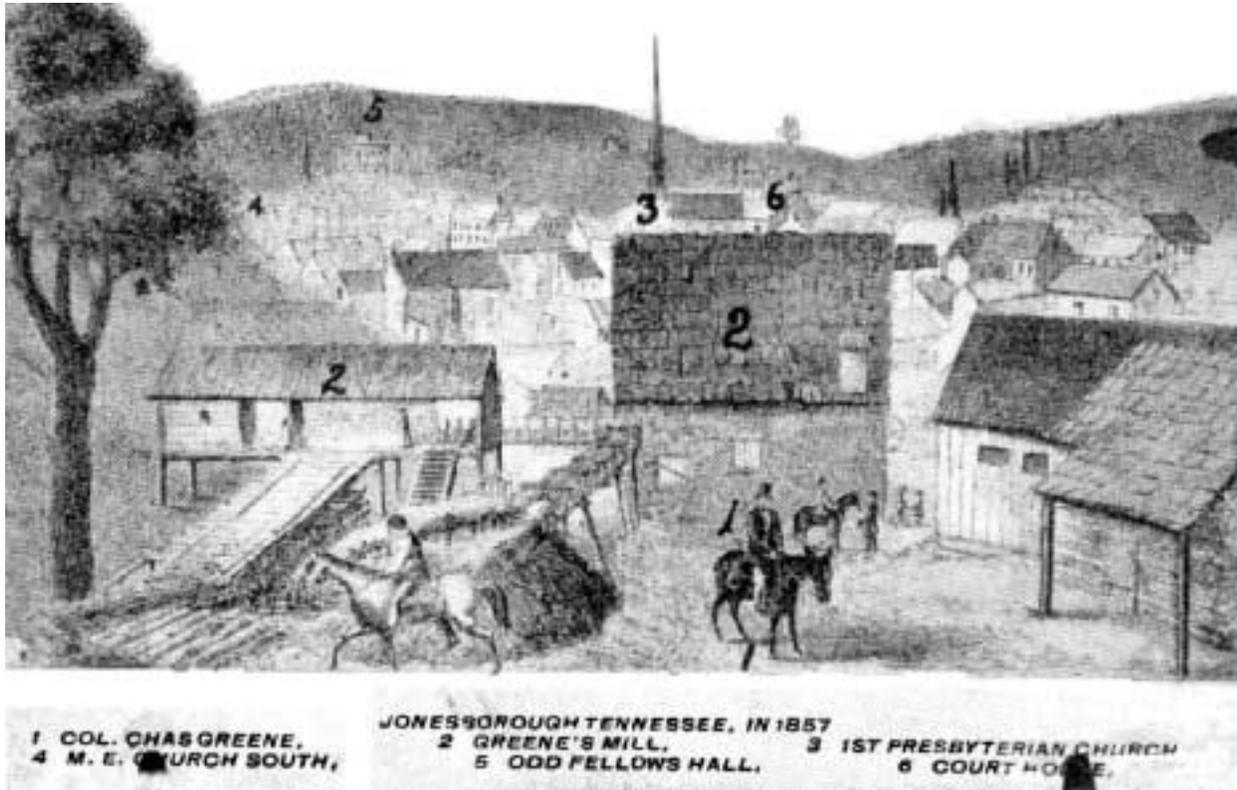
David Wilds, Merchant: Two-story brick and frame. Four children: John, a minister; Mrs. George Smith; Mrs. Wilson; one died. Home of Miss Lillian Dosser.

Chief Justice James W. Deadrick: Large two-story frame. Five boys: James W., Jr., and A. S. were lawyers; Dot, owner of Unaka Spring; others were Frank Shell and Dissey: two daughters: one married Judge John Moon; one, a lawyer named Van Dyke. Now the home of Mrs. Charles Thomas.

The Baptist Church, one of the oldest in town, is still prosperous. The pastor was William Cate. A fine addition has been added by John D. Cox and sister, Virginia, in memory of their mother.

Mrs. Mary Stewart: Boarding House, two-story log, later weather boarded. Kept a select house of picked boarders. Only one son that I remember. Later occupied by Charles Meek. Now a filling station.

Seth J. Lucky, Jurist: Two-story brick, one of our most prominent citizens. One son: Cornelius,



Jonesboro in 1857

From an old print in The New York Herald

lawyer; two daughters, one of whom married a lawyer by name of Williams. Now the Ford Motor Company.

Two-story brick used as a broker's office by William Gammon. All I remember is that in the first and second years of the war all the silver went into hiding, or at least disappeared.

In order to make change, they cut the Ocoee bank bills of one dollar in halves. Each half passed as currency for fifty cents. Now S. L. Tucker's Restaurant.

The Widow Johnson: Two-story brick. Nothing I know of this family. Now belongs to Dr. Jacob Stewart's heirs.

Hardware and tin shop run by A. G. Mason: One-story brick. Replaced by two-story brick, belonging to the Masonic fraternity.

Jacob Naff, occupation unknown: Two-story brick. Later sold to W. H. Crouch, merchant. Three sons: Robert, George, and William; two daughters. Now owned by E. J. Baxter.

Kern Family, Bakers: Two-story brick and frame. This family was German.

W. K. Blair, General Merchandise: Two-story frame. This site and the Kern property is now used by the R. M. May Building.

Kern's Bakery: A two-story frame. Now the property of P. K. White.

William Landreth, Drugs. One-story brick. Now replaced by a modern one, belonging to W. E.

May.

Eason, Merchant: Just back of May's Store a large two-story brick. Now owned by W. E. May.

In a large two-story frame lived a family by name of Keys. This was torn away, and a three-story brick built by James H. Dosser. Now the property of Epps and Epps, Attorneys.

J. W. Deadrick, W. H. Maxwell, John B. McLin, Law Offices; A two-story frame, set back a short distance. In the second story L. W. Keen had his Photo Gallery. To this building was a porch three feet high from which Nelson and Hayes delivered their speech for and against secession in 1861.

Two-story brick built by James H. Dosser for a business house. Both the above sites are now occupied by the Shipley Hardware Company.

Two-story brick built by Capt. G. E. Grisham, in which a man by the name of Monday sold goods. Now the property of Matt Fink.

Dr. J. C. Perry, Drugs : One-story frame. Two sons: William and Joseph. I think this family moved to Sevierville in the late fifties. Now the site of Hoss & McCall Clothing use.

The Deadrick Building, built by Franklin Deadrick, three-story brick in which John A. Wilds and son sold merchandise, also Dr. Gibson had a drug store, and J. C. Aiken ran a General store.

On the hill back of the Deadrick Building stood a two-story frame in which lived Samuel Rhea and family. Site now of the home of J. B. Duncan.

John D. Cox, a large three-story brick now being remodeled into the Andrew Jackson Tavern with four storerooms on the street. On the hill north of this tavern is the Columns, the home of John D. Cox, and sister, Virginia.

John P. Chester, Hotel: A large two-story frame with basement, at which all of our many prominent politicians stopped on their way to and from Washington, D. C. On the top of the hotel hung a large bell to summon the guests to their meals. Only one son that I remember, Polk. Now the property of Gus Broderick.

James H. Dosser, Merchant: Two-story brick. Married twice; a large family. Boys were Robert, Charles, Ally, and Frank; two or three daughters; one daughter married Isaac Reeves; Charles is a lawyer. The others followed in the footsteps of their father and are now successful in business. Now the home of Mrs. A. P. Mathis.

The First Presbyterian Church with R. P. Well, pastor. This building must have been begun in the thirties, as I find some members of the following dates: J. F. Deadrick, 1835; John Allison, 1836; R. L. Blair, 1839, Caroline Crawford, 1840; Delilah Humphrey, 1842; W. K. Blair, 1838. The Deadricks lead in numbers, with the Blairs second, and the Crawfords third. Then comes Chesters, De Vaults, Kenedys, Gammons, Boyds, Jacksons, Greshams, Lyles, Deakins, Naffs, McClures, McLins, Slemons, Nelsons, Stevensons, Sparks, Seviars, Crouchs, Luckys, Smiths, Willetts, Taylors, Rogans, Mathis, Aikens, Barkleys, Maxwells, Murpheys, Byers, Telfords. This was a very prosperous church when I was small. With my father and mother, I attended every Sabbath that the weather permitted and every seat was filled. Each family had its own pew. All pews were numbered with doors to close. R. P. Wells, being from the North, left at the outbreak of the war. At the close of hostilities there were two factions,

the Southern and Northern, both of which claimed to control the policies of the church. A compromise was made in which the Southern bought the claims of the Northern. The old church has ceased to function for want of members, of which there are but few and they are young, being born since the close of the war. All of the older members have moved or passed away.

Dr. Jennings: Two-story brick and frame. One daughter, Phoebe, married Marsh Ingle. Memory short on this family. The home now replaced by a modern one, which is the property of W. E. Mays.

J. A. McCorkle, Saddler: Two-story frame site, back north of W. E. May's residence. Now the home of J. T. Whitlock, Mayor.

John Simpson, Hotel: A large three-story brick run as a hotel in the early fifties. Sons were John, David, and A. B.; three daughters, Letitia, Rebecca, and Kate. I think he sold this hotel to William Coffman, who was a partner of Joseph Naff in the tin business. In this statement I may be wrong. Now the home of Mrs. R. M. May.

Reuben Roddy, occupation unknown: Two-story frame. Only one son, James, that I remember. Now the home of Mrs. William McCull.

Robert L. Blair, Sr., Manufacturer: A two-story frame. One son, John L., Jr., and one daughter, Florence. Now the home of Dr. Panhurst.

J. O. Dillworth, Druggist, lived in the east end of a large double frame. Two sons: Oscar and Charles. In west end of this house lived A. G. Mason, a forty-niner to California in that year. Three sons: James, minister; John, blacksmith; Charles, clerk; two daughters, Anna and Nellie.

Samuel Griffith, Magistrate: Two-story frame. Two sons, now dead, James and Newton, both lawyers. Still the home of their mother, Mrs. J. A. Boyd.

Female College: Principal, A. D. Tadlock, Presbyterian minister. This school was well patronized by students from other states. Now replaced by a new high school building.

Dr. Joseph Rhea, Dentist: One and a half story brick. One son, Samuel, also a dentist. Home now of Frank Haw trustee.

Gen. Alfred E. Jackson: A large two-story brick set in a large white oak grove of ten acres. I only remember two sons, Henry and A. N.; three daughters, I think, Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Rogan, and Mrs. Fuller. Property now divided up into lots and sold.

David Guthrie, occupation unknown: One-story frame. Now the home of C. H. Haire.

We will now cross to south side and go east:

Joseph Naff, Tinner: Two-story frame. Little remembered of this family. Now the house of the Widow Taylor.

Hosea Renshaw, Cabinetmaker: Two-story log house. One son, Frank. House stood on the corner of the lot now owned by H. Keeber.

The residence of W. K. Blair: Two-story frame. Replaced by a new one by Peter Miller whose widow lives there.

Grisham home: Two-story frame. In this family I remember was Peter Grisham, bachelor clerk and school teacher, was a clerk for the government in Washington for a long time. Matt Grisham married a Miss Kenedy. One son; two daughters, Mrs. Murray and Miss Mary. Site now of a new building owned by F.S. Britton, Druggist.

Jerry Boyd, Cabinetmaker: Two-story brick and basement. Five boys: William, Leslie, David, James, and John; two daughters. Now owned by D.T. Lovegrove.

Cabinet Shop of Jerry Boyd: Two-story frame, burned about the year 1855.

L.W. Keen, Photographer: Two-story frame. Two sons: Milton and Alva. Now occupied and owned by the grandchildren.

Samuel Greer, Job and Printing: A long one-story frame, burned in the fifties. Now replaced by the modern home of S.S. Kirkpatrick.

On a lot on which Dr. Dulaney lives stood an old vacant house owned by Dr. Edward Armstrong.

The Methodist Church, another old landmark of the town, is still in flourishing condition, with a good membership and a Sunday School. The Rev. David Sullins served in the pulpit for many years.

Three sisters of Gen. Alfred E. Jackson lived in an apartment house two-story brick with basement, which their father had built for them. All became widows, Mrs. Aiken, Mrs. Walls, and Mrs. Watkins. Contractor was Cherokee Smith, who also built the John Simpson Hotel.

Dr. D.J. Gibson, Druggist: Two-story brick. The home of John Bowman; owner, J.D. Cox.

Gosnall Family: Two-story frame. Little is remembered. Now Hotel Russell.

Dr. S.B. Cuninghame, two-story brick, sits back some distance from Main Street. Married twice. Two sons: Samuel married a daughter of Thomas A.R. Nelson; Cornelius, a bachelor; one daughter married a missionary named Rhea and went to China; the other daughter married S.C. Duncan, Presbyterian minister. This property is still in good repair, and is owned by L.M. Broyles.

Naff and Cofman, Tin Shop: Two-story frame, in which worked William and Henry Cate Atkinson, John Butt, and Henry Babb. Site now occupied by the Bank and Trust Company.

A. Cone, of the firm Cone & Adler, a two-story frame, where now live Mrs. Hunter and Elsie Mathes.

Cone & Adler, Merchants: A two-story brick in which they sold goods. Site now of the City Barber Shop.

Zachariah Bureen, Minister: A two-story brick. Two children, I think: John, a lawyer; daughter Sarah. Now the Post Office and Drug Store. Burned in 1875.

Now south to the Southern Railway:

Joel Butler, Saloon: Two-story brick, property of Hilbert Brothers.

Large frame, one story, not remembered what used for, but John and James Grisham sold goods in this building in the years of 1878-79. Later burned.

G.W. Willett, Sr., Sheriff: Two-story brick. Three sons: Zed, G.W., and Samuel; two daughters, Sarah and Anna. Samuel died at the outbreak of the war; G.W., Jr. was Sheriff for several terms; Anna Laurence still lives in Johnson City. It was in this house that L.W. Keen first opened his Photo Gallery. There has been a great deal written about Gen. Robert Lee refusing command of the Federal Army in the War between the States. Here is a similar case. Zed Willett at that time was a cadet at West Point, and held a Lieutenant's commission in the regular army. He resigned, came home, and joined the Confederate Army, and was made first lieutenant. Just before going to his command he married Miss Lauretta Lyle, daughter of John Lyle. He was killed at the battle of Shiloh. This property now belongs to Mrs. A.S. Murray.

County Jail: Two-story brick. The jailer at one time was William Patterson. This jail had what they called a dungeon for the confinement of our worst criminals. It is now replaced by a modern one.

On the now vacant lot between the jail and Washington Hotel the writer was born. Later the house was occupied by a large family by the name of Showalter, one son and daughter, Miss Gertie, who married Capt. Harry Lyle, railroad conductor. She was the mother of Cy Lyle, Harry Jr., and Col. Burrow's wife. Also the Rev. David Sullins, who married Rebecca Blair, daughter of John Blair, lived here.

John Blair, Congressman from 1823 to 1835: Two-story frame and brick. Converted his residence into a hotel in 1857 where passenger trains stopped for meals up into the seventies. Later run by Capt. James Sevier. Now the Washington Hotel.

Now back north to Main Street:

Dosser & McEwen, Merchants: One-story brick, burned about the year 1855. Site now General Stewart and Herald & Tribune office.

County Courthouse: Three-story brick, built by John Lyle, 1845. Now replaced by a modern one.

J.M. Brown, Merchant: Two-story frame. Only one son, J.M. Jr., that I remember. Site now of the C.L. Woods Grocery Store.

J.M. Brown, residence. Site now of the apartment house of J.D. Cox.

Dr. Kinney, office, a small one-story building.

Dr. Kinney's residence and hotel in the fifties, where the stages stopped for breakfast and changes of horses. Here I will mention Alf Irvin, one of the drivers (colored). Site now of the home of Mrs. J.K. Haire.

On the back of a large lot stood the livery stable. Site now of the Second Presbyterian Church.

James Brown, Saddler: Two-story frame. Three sons: Thomas, Charles, and William. Now the Scheell Filling Station.

Now south to the Southern Railway:

Tom Burton's Saloon: One-story frame.

A.G. Mason's Wagon and Blacksmith Shop: A long one-story frame. Site now of Ward's Warehouse.

Honly Sisters, Seamstresses: One-story brick. Made their living by dressmaking.

J.D. Estes, Shoemaker: Two-story frame. Had a large family, but names forgotten. Site now of the William Lee Warehouse.

W.C. Slemons Tanner: Two-story frame. Two sons: Melvin and James. Melvin lives in Orlando, Fla.; James who married a daughter of W.H. Maxwell, lives in California. Two daughters, Charlotte, deceased, and Miss Alice, who still lives in the old home.

Now east again:

J.W. Atkinson, Silversmith: Two-story frame.

Poindexter Bros., Merchants: Two-story brick, sold general merchandise.

Jeremiah Smith, Laborer: A large family: Addison, Zachariah, sons; one daughter married Thomas Russell; one, William Paterson; one, William Bratton; one, John Naff; one, a White; Miss Fannie, a school teacher.

Phoenix Hotel: Three-story brick, owned by John Green, with livery stable in connection. This hotel ceased to function about 1850. The sites were on the vacant lot now owned by Miss Alice Slemons.

Job and Printing Office: One-story frame. In this building, I think, W.G. Brownlow published his paper the short time he lived in Jonesboro. This was run later by Lawson Gifford, who published Fowler's Arithmetic, edited by Roswell C. Smith. From this Arithmetic my father took the writer's name.

Servant House of W.M. Gammon: Two-story brick, both torn away. Stood in the yard now the possession of the Hoss heirs.

W.M. Gammon, Farmer and Broker: Three stories. Three sons: Melville, John A., Ally. The youngest was killed during the war near Morristown in a skirmish with some Federal Cavalry. John A. and Melville moved to Rome, Ga., and engaged in the mercantile business. Now the home of Matt Hoss' heirs.

David Reece, Shoemaker: A small one-story brick. Site now of the new Baptist parsonage.

William Cate, pastor of the Baptist Church for many years: A two-story frame. Only one son that I remember, Gideon, father of Col. R.H. Cate of Knoxville. Now the home of Mrs. George Smith.

Enoch Brown: A two-story frame, father of Col. A.J. Brown, who was also Circuit Court Judge, married Miss Sally Wild. Now the home of ex-Sheriff Pritchett.

J.W. McCatherine, Wagon Maker: One-story frame. Now replaced by a new building owned by Carl Osborne.

Addison Smith, Brick Mason: One-story frame. His sister, Fannie was a school teacher.

Joseph Marshall, Colored Minister and Carpenter: One-story frame.

Now back to the Phoenix Hotel and going south on the old Cherokee Road, I will take both sides of the road:

Joshua Babb, Laborer: Two-story brick and frame. Four sons: Newton, Caleb, James, and Henry; three daughters, Elsie, Adalade, and Amanda. James went to Kentucky, where he joined the Federal Army and was killed in a railroad collision. Now the home of S.S. Tucker.

Daniel Coleman, Laborer: Two-story brick and frame. Two daughters: Ellen and Mary. Now belongs to Aden Gray.

D. Hill, Magistrate: One-story frame. Two sons: D., Jr. and Augustus. Building now torn away.

Mary Graham, Wash-woman: Two-story frame on hill above mill spring. Now a vacant lot.

Mike Clem, Tanner, Contractor, and Slave Owner: Two sons, John and William. Site now of the home of Mrs. S.C. Smith. Clem's tan yard was located where now lives I.W. Becket.

Saw and Grist Mill belonging to John Green. Grist Mill, two-story stone and frame. Sites now occupied by the Mill Spring Supply Company.

John and Joel Butler, Stone Masons: One-story frame. Now the home of Miss Lucy Swanner.

J.B. Frazier, Tobacco Trader: Two-story brick and frame. Now known as the old Babb property.

The road from the Butler property to Sheriff Pritchett was not opened until about the year 1856 or 1857.

Ben Chance, Laborer: One-story frame. Now belonging to Land Swanner.

Starnes Home, long two-story frame. But little is remembered of this family. Now replaced home of Lewis Walker Cord.

Then comes Jesse Mathes, Shoemaker and Robert Mathes, Stone Mason, in small frame shacks. Daniel Salts, Miller: Two-story log. Three sons: Henry, the engineer; Thomas, the tinner, James, the printer; two daughters. Site now the colored school building.

County Schoolhouse: A small one-story log in which O'Donnell taught school, to whom the writer and many boys of the best families of the town went. Now removed.

Jennie May: One-story frame. A corpulent old, old lady, who was the captain of our pie company when we sold pies to the soldiers in 1861.

Tom Burton's home: A small one-story frame.

Lewis Family: A long one-story frame like the Starnes. But little is remembered of this family. Now replaced by the home of N.R. Jackson.

The old Baptist Church, to which the writer went to school when very young to a teacher whose name was Grimsly, was bought by Col. John Ryland, who also purchased a large acreage of land between the Johnson City road and the Cherokee road. Colonel Ryland had two sons: Talbot and George; only daughter remembered, Fannie. On this farm I saw the last muster of the state militia. It was also on this farm that the people staged a big railroad barbecue. Colonel Ryland held the office of sheriff for two or three terms. The greater part of this farm has been divided into lots and sold. The old Ryland home now belongs to James A. Cummins.

Joshua Sherfy, Carpenter: Two-story frame. Two sons; three daughters. Now owned by Mrs. Mahony.

Mordecai Price, Brick Mason: One-story frame. Later occupied by a family named Rader, who moved to Bristol in the late fifties.

Hyter Pritchett, Carpenter: One-story frame. One son, Jeter, became a lawyer, located at Marshall, N.C., became a Judge, and was elected to Congress. Died at Marshall a few years ago.

Now drop back to the south side of old E.T. & Va. R.R. and go west:

Tan yard of John Green, a long one-story brick just east of the railroad trestle. Ceased operation in the early fifties.

John Green, Slave Holder and Real Estate, consisting of farms and town property: Large three-story building. Three sons: John, Talbot, and Allen; two daughters, Mrs. Davis, mother of J.L., and Mrs. Huff. Now owned by Mrs. A.S. Murray.

John E. Naff, Tailor: Two-story brick and frame. Two sons: Emmett and George; five daughters, Sarah, Annie, Carrie, Minnie, and Maud. Later sold to Henry Hoss, who filled out the unexpired term of my father as county court clerk. Mr. Hoss had two sons, Embree, a bishop; Archibald, a doctor; two daughters, Mrs. S.J. Kirkpatrick and Mrs. George French.

The widow of Judge Emerson: Large two-story frame. Now the property of G.C. Mottern heirs. W.H. Crouch, Warehouse, in which he held the office of postmaster when the railroad came to Jonesboro. Now Hickey-McCorkle Wholesale Grocers.

Shelby T. Shipley: Two-story brick. Two sons: John and Edward; two daughters, one of whom married Elbert Shipley. His sons are A.L., W.P., and Herbert. This property was sold to Dr. W.R. Sevier, who had one son, Samuel, now dead; one daughter, Miss Nannie, married a Sabin. Now the home of J.M. Ward.

Martin Academy set just back of the Sevier property on the hill. Mention has been made of the Academy in the Reminiscences.

Lawson Gifford, Printer: Two-story frame. Only two sons remembered, David, and Frank, my schoolmate. Now the home of W.S. Hickey.

Mrs. Susan Watkins, Widow, same as at one time lived in the brick on Main Street, and who owned two or three slaves. House now torn away. A new one on the site is owned by G. Snapp.

Ben Armstrong and two sisters occupy the house their father built and taught school in during the

fifties.

Martin Fleming, Carpenter: Two-story brick. Two daughters; one son, David. Fleming assisted in building the First Presbyterian Church. Now the property of Mrs. Jesse Baskett.

Tom Hashbarger and two sisters lived in a one-story log when the first troops from the South were going to Virginia. Tom left with them, nothing definite ever being heard of him. It was reported he was killed at the Battle of Manassas. Now the property of A.B. Cary.

Dr. John Casson: Two-story frame, stood across the street from Hashbargers. Now a vacant lot. A.G. Mason married a daughter of Dr. Casson.

Aunt Nellie Helms, Colored: Two-story frame. She was the cake and pastry baker for the town. Now the home of Bettie Pearson, colored.

Two-story brick built by John Lyle and occupied while building the Courthouse. Later occupied by a man by name of Haskew.

A.N. Jackson, son of A.E.: Two-story brick. Now the property of J.V. Hawkins.

Now cross to the north side, and go east:

James Barkley, Farmer: Two-story frame. At one time a stopping place for wagoners hauling goods from Baltimore; said to have been called Bowling Green. As I remember, one son, James; one daughter, Mrs. Champ Aiken, who now lives in the old home.

W.H. Maxwell, Lawyer: Two-story frame. Two daughters, one of whom married James Slemons. Site now replaced by the modern home of W.P. Shipley.

Samuel Gugenheimer: One-story frame. One daughter, Nellie, that I remember. Now a new model home of A.L. Shipley.

James Murphy, Lawyer: Two-story brick. Married Miss Eliza Jackson; one daughter, Eugenia. Now the home of Joseph Sherfy.

A vacant lot on which John Robinson pitched his shows. The writer remembers attending Robinson Circus in 1853. Now a two-story brick stands on this lot, built by James H. Dosser for his son-in-law, Isaac Reeves, lawyer. Now the property of A.J. Trusler.

The Spark family lived in a one-story brick. Two sons, James and William, printer; one daughter, Kate, married Milton Keen, undertaker. Now the home of Fred McPherson.

Rogan family, two-story frame. My memory is rather vague as to this family but remember two brothers, Talbot and Joseph, lawyers. Property now of W.C. Wayman.

Jacob Adler, Merchant: Two-story brick. The home of Lilburn and Lillie Febuary.

James Brown, Saddler: Two-story frame. Three sons: Thomas, Charles, and William. Now owned by P.K. White.

John A. Wilds. Merchant: Two-story frame. I think three sons: David, Henry, and William; three

daughters; Sarah married Col. A.J. Brown; Kitty married Col. Tom Reeves. The old home has been replaced and is owned by Joseph Beals.

John E. Naff, Tailor: One-story frame built in 1847. First sold to W.H. Crouch, then to J.H. Dosser, then to Thomas Brothers, then to R.M. Duncan, and still belongs to the Duncan heirs.

Presbyterian Parsonage: Large two-story brick. Now the home of Bert Sabin.

Samuel Geisler: Two-story brick and frame. This man was killed, about the year 1858, by falling out of the hayloft of his barn, breaking his neck. Now the home of Mrs. Wallace Beren.

Widow Stevenson, two-story frame stood on a lot south of the Peter Miller property. Had one son, William.

Thomas Russell: One-story frame. Five sons: William, John, Charley, James, Eugene; three daughters, Lizzie, Retta, and Mary. Thomas Russell went as a substitute for John Williams in the Confederate Army, and took fever and died. Now the property of Miss Flo Osborne.

The following farms lay near Jonesboro: On the east, Thomas A.R. Nelson and John Ryland; on the south, John Green and A.E. Jackson; on the west W.H. Maxwell and James Barkley; on the north, Franklin Deadrick.



Main Street, Jonesboro, About 1910

THE MILL-BROOK SPRING

THE MILL-BROOK SPRING

[Legend has it that "he who drinks out of the Mill-Brook Spring will return." The old Mill-Brook Spring in Jonesboro suggested this poem written by Rev. J.B. Herndon, one-time pastor of the Jonesboro Presbyterian Church.]

*Have you ever seen the Mill-Brook Spring
That flows in the ancient town?
Have you ever drunk from its limpid depths
The magical waters down?*

*Hard by the roadway flows the Spring,
And many a traveler stops to drink,
And catches a glimpse of a Heaven below,
As he pauses o'er the brink.*

*The mill whirls on in endless song
As the days and weeks go by,
And the musical blows of the anvils ring
From the sooty smithy nigh.*

*And the Brook flows down thro' the quiet town,
And makes the meadows green,
All along its sides the snowdrops hide
With buttercups between.*

*Have you ever seen the Mill-Brook Spring
That flows in the ancient town?
Have you ever drunk from its limpid depths
The magical waters down?*

*There are wonderful tales the townsmen tell
With never a doubt of the truth,
For they verily believe these waters have
A power o'er age and youth.*

*And a legend they add to all their tales,
An ever confident refrain.
"Whoever drinks from the Mill-Brook Spring
Is sure to come back again."*

*A child drank here and wandered afar,
Till all had forgotten his name,
But an old gray man in the after years
Back to the village came,*

*And begged a place to lay him and die,
When he drank of the Spring once more,
And they laid him to rest on the warm earth's breast,
Where he sleeps till time is o'er.*

*And lovers many have wandered here
To the parting of the ways,
And, quaffing the magical waters, dreamed
They would meet in other days.*

*A youth left home for the great wide world
That lay o'er the valley rim.
And his mother led him to the Mill-Brook Spring,
And looked to the future dim.*

*A soldier brave in his Southern gray
Marched away with never a fear,
For the Mill-Brook waters assured the wife
He was sure to come back to her.*

*And men, they say, have been known to go
Across the wave tossed main,
And brave the storm, and famine, and death,
And yet come back again.*

*And young and old who have tasted here
The sweetest waters God has made,
Have found its magical powers true
For man or woman, boy or maid.*

*Have you ever seen the Mill-Brook Spring
That flows in the ancient town?
Have you ever drunk from its limpid depths
The magical waters down?*

*I went to the Mill-Brook Spring one day,
And drank of its waters cold.
A warm wind blew from the southern climes,
And the meadows were all in gold.*

*A subtle something filled my soul
That made me dream of bliss,
It may have been the April sun,
Or a fairy's enchanting kiss.*

*And she who walked by my side that day
Was full of laughter and song.
And the glow of beauty that flushed her face
Was full and fair and strong.*

*"You'll come back now, I know," she said,
"For you've drunk of the Mill-Brook Spring."
And it seemed so glad a thing to her
That future days might bring.*

*And about my heart a secret string
Today draws me back to the place.
It may be the charm of the Mill-Brook Spring,
But it may be the charm of the face.*

A DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

*A DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST**

[As it was found in an ancient manuscript which was sent by Publius Lentulus, President of Judea, to the Senate of Rome.]

THERE lives at this time in Judea, a man of singular character, whose name is Jesus Christ. The barbarians esteem him in a prophet, but his followers adore him as the immediate offspring of the Immortal God. He is endowed with such unparalleled virtue, as to call back the dead from their graves, and to heal every kind of disease with a word or a touch. His person is tall and elegantly shaped; his aspect amiable and reverend; his hair flows in beautiful shades, which no united colors can match, falling into graceful curls below his ears, agreeably couching on his shoulders, and parting on the crown of his head, like the headdress of the sect of the Nazarites. His forehead is smooth, and his cheeks without a spot, save that of a lovely red. His nose and mouth are formed with exquisite symmetry; his beard is thick, and suitable to the hair of his head, reaching a little below his chin, and parted in the middle like a fork; his eyes are bright, clear, and serene. He rebukes with majesty, councils with mildness, and invites with the most tender and persuasive language. His whole address, whether in word or deed, being elegant, brave, and strictly characteristic of so exalted a being. No man has seen him laugh, but the whole world has frequently beheld him weep; and so persuasive are his tears, that the multitude cannot withhold theirs from joining in sympathy with him. He is very modest, temperate, and wise. In short, whatever this phenomenon may be in the end, he seems at present a man of excellent beauty and divine perfections; every way surpassing the children of men.

**Reprinted from a biblical nomenclature by John Wilkinson, printed by Heiskell & Brown, Knoxville, in 1820.*