

The Blandford Series
of
Yarbrough Genealogical Records



Old Blandford Church, Petersburg, Virginia
{Richard Yarbrough's grave marker is bottom center, above.}

Volume 93
Pioneer Families of Sumter County, Alabama

Created by
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Leonard Yarbrough, Editor

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Dedication

Whether we wish to admit it or not, we are the future of our ancestors, as our descendants are our future. We owe our descendants our dreams and bequeath to them the legacy of our collective accomplishments – nothing more and nothing less. To our descendants, we charge you with the honoring of your heritage. Your ancestors were hardy folk, god-fearing and plain spoken, and who recognized that nothing was due them except that which they themselves earned. They were not ashamed to profess their belief in God, their country and the American ideal. Of course, there were a few rascals in our collective history, but neither more nor less than in any other family.

We too easily forget what it took to forge a life in a new world, one rife with peril and with little at hand but a steadfast determination to not only survive but to thrive. Our ancestors bequeathed us with their genes, aspirations and talents. It is therefore fitting that the Blandford Series of Yarbrough Family Records be dedicated to them for making it possible for us to be who we are.

To paraphrase Robert Kincaid¹, “The dreams they had were good ones. They didn’t all come true, but they were worth having, all the same.”



Acknowledgement

The Yarbrough Association is greatly indebted to the vision and efforts of Cathy Y. Walker and William A. (Bill) Yarbrough, the late president and vice-president of the YNGHA, respectively, for beginning the project to digitize the 150+ volumes of records accumulated over the life of the Association. Fulfilment of the project was through the efforts of a number of officers and members, including Bill’s son Mark, Rachel and Don Yarbrough, Hal Yarbrough, Jan and Jim Yarbrough, Ann and Al Bush, Elaine and Lyle Wolf, Joan Y. Singlaub, and Joanne and Bill Augspurger.

It was my privilege to be a part of this dedicated team.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leonard".

Leonard Yarbrough,
Editor
Blountsville, AL
June 14, 2015

¹ **The Bridges of Madison County**, Robert James Waller, Warner Books, Inc., New York, 1992

Preface

These records are the legacy of our Yarbrough family researchers, to whom much is owed. The known family researchers include Jean Baker, Ann Y. Broadbent, Mary Y. Daniel, Frances (Rea) Donohue, Betty Humrighouse, Pauline Gray, Evelyn Goble, Nelle Morris Jenkins, Ophelia Kessler, Frances Lockwood, Karen Mazock Renee Smelley, Dorothy Svec, Jeanette Wilson, Cleveland “Cy” Yarborough, Edna Yarbrough, George A. Yarbrough, and Robert Price Yarbrough.

The originals of these volumes are being kept for the benefit of future generations by the Williamson County Library, Franklin, Tennessee.

No claims of accuracy or authentication of the material herein are made or may be assumed. Many of these records have been superseded by subsequent research. Hence, there are records which are erroneous and unreliable; it would have been a Herculean task to attempt to correct all of them. Fortunately, there are only a few critical genealogical facts that are involved, and which are correctly stated here:

- Richard (the Immigrant) Yarborough was never married to Frances Proctor;
- Ambrose Yarbrough did not immigrate from Yorkshire; he is now believed to be a descendant of Richard the Immigrant;
- There are so far only two proven sons of Old Richard – John and Richard II;
- There is so far no evidence proving Joshua Yarborough I to be a descendant of Old Richard.
- The “Old Country” referred to in old documents and letters is the Colony of Virginia, not England or the Old World.
- There were not seven brothers who immigrated from “the old country”; in fact, it now appears there were three brothers and four sons of the brothers. Which were the fathers and which were the sons are so far unknown.

In spite of these inaccuracies, these records comprise much of our history and some of our accomplishments. There are pages whose print quality is so poor that word recognition was not possible. In spite of that, at least partial capability for searching these volumes is provided, as well as an index to each volume. Nonetheless, the viewer is cautioned to perform his/her own due diligence in connection with any use of this material.

The various spellings of the Yarbrough surname have never been applied consistently, even within a given family. To the extent possible, the names in the index reflect the names used on the source pages; where it wasn't clear as to which might be the proper spelling, the spelling used is “Yarbrough”.

The material contained herein is subject to the copyright laws of the United States. Material may be freely used by Yarbrough family researchers so long as proper attribution to the [Yarbrough National Genealogical & Historical Association, Inc.](#) is given. This material, in whole or in part, may not be used for any other purposes without the express written permission of the Yarbrough National Genealogical & Historical Association.

We welcome the [submission](#) of any Yarbrough family information that can be added to our growing data base. More information about the extended Yarbrough families can be found at our website, <http://www.yarbroughfamily.org>. If you are a Yarbrough or a member of one of our allied families, we invite you to [join our family association](#).

Nelle Morris Jenkins

As the saying goes, “Mrs. Jenkins was researching the family before it was a family”; she was the first Yarbrough family researcher that I found when I began my own family research back in the early 1980’s. She was a descendant of Manoah Yarbrough and Nancy Cunningham and a grand-daughter of John Yarbrough, Ashville, AL. She was a wife and homemaker, teacher and a dedicated family researcher. The focus of her efforts was the pioneer families of Marengo and Sumter Counties, but she also researched the Yarbrough family, publishing **The Yarbrough Family Quarterly**¹ from 1961 until her death in 1963.



Nelle Morris Jenkins

Besides the Quarterly, her other publications include:

- **Pioneer families of Sumter Country, Alabama**
- **Marengo County, Alabama, marriages, 1818-1828**
- **Morris genealogy, 1605 to 1959**
- **Abstracts and genealogical records of Sumter County, Alabama**
- **Morris genealogy, 1605 to 1959**

We are all indebted to her.

Leonard Yarbrough
Blountsville, AL
August 2014

¹ The Quarterly was in many respects more like a newsletter, but it served as a model and inspiration for Charles David Yarbrough’s **Yarborough Family Magazine** two decades later.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My interest in local history began after World War I, when Mrs. Rosa Little Meek of Panola told me so much about the pioneer families of Warsaw. Later on Hon. John A. Rogers, late of Gainesville, gave me in his own handwriting the history of his town. Mr. John T. Simms; my father-in-law Mr. T. L. Jenkins; Mr. Phillip Willingham, Sr.; my husband, the late Bertram Andrews Jenkins, and Dr. Robert Spratt of Livingston, all fed my growing interest in the early settlers of our county. My good friend, Mrs. Julia Praytor Killingsworth, and our Probate Judge, Wilbur Dearman abetted me in my efforts in collecting data for this volume. To the families of those who have passed on, and to those of you who are still living, I wish to express my feeling of gratitude for stirring within me the desire to set down, for posterity, what I have gleaned from them and from you.

Helle Morris Jenkins

SUMTER COUNTY, ALABAMA

HISTORY OF SUMTER COUNTY

Sumter County was not one of the original counties organized when Alabama was admitted to the Union in 1819. At that time the land which is now Sumter County belonged to the Choctaw Indian Nation. Negotiations, which were begun between the Choctaw Indian Chiefs and the United States Government in 1804, were not consummated until 1830 and it was not till 18 December 1832 that this land was made into a county. Sumter County was named for General Sumter of Revolutionary fame from South Carolina.

It was in 1824 that the mighty Choctaw Indian Chief, Pushmataha, visited Washington with the avowed purpose of bringing into closer relationship the Choctaw Nation and the United States Government. He became the toast of the town. He was tall and very erect, and quite proud. Whenever he entered a room he would announce in an eloquent and a grand manner, "I am Pushmataha." He took quinsy while in the capital city and when death seemed eminent he asked that the big guns be fired over his grave. He was buried at Arlington Cemetery and the great of the country followed his body to its last resting place. He was accorded a full military funeral with the firing of the guns and the sound of taps.

On the 27 September 1830 representatives of the United States Government and of the Choctaw Nation met on the banks of Dancing Rabbit Creek near Macon, Mississippi and signed a treaty giving to the United States the Choctaw lands west of the Tombigbee River. The Indians were to be transported to Oklahoma. This treaty is known as "The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek."

The Indians went into a period of mourning before the long and tragic trek west. It had been handed down from father to son of another transplant of their nation when their Chiefs bet their hunting ground on the outcome of a ball game and lost to another Indian Nation. The Choctaws boasted of the fact that they had never shed white man's blood in battle.

As the French, the Spanish and the British had maintained a fort (called Tombechee and later Fort Confederation) at different times on Sumter soil at the bluffs on the Tombigbee River at what is now known as Epes, and that these people had always maintained a friendly relationship with

the Choctaws one can readily see why there should have been a peaceful co-existence.

Many of the French, Spanish and English took Indian wives. Some American men who wandered into the Indian Territory prior to 1830 married Indian maids, also. These men were known as squaw-men. Coleman at Gainesville, Brashier at Jones' Bluff, a freeman (Negro) by the name of Tom and many more were squaw-men. By virtue of this they were awarded so much land under a provision of an article in the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek.

A commission was appointed by Governor Gayle to select a County Seat and to organize the county. Those appointed were: Judge William G. Anderson, Edward B. Colgin, Warham Easley, Dr. Charles J. Puckett, Andrew Ramsay, John C. Whitsett and William D. Winston. Judge Dillard stated in his unpublished history of Sumter County which may be seen at Court House in the Probate Judge's office, that little was known about the background of William G. Anderson except he had a meagre education, but had an abundance of common sense, native shrewdness and decision of character. He was arbitrary in disposition and quick in temper. He also stated when the commission met to select the location for the county seat that William O. Winston had illness in his home so did not attend the first session. It looked as if Hickory Hill, just out of what is now Sumterville, would be selected as the County Seat, and it struck the irascible chairman (Judge Anderson) as being so preposterous and so excited his fears that it would be selected that he denounced the entire proceedings as tomfoolery and vented his abjurgations on the commission in the tersest Saxon, enlivened by an occasional ejaculatory oath that pooped out with a bang. He clutched his hat and swore he would not preside over such a set of fellows. Judge Dillard went on to say that this pleased Major Whitsett and Dr. Puckett so they tore up the minutes.

The next day William O. Winston made his appearance and saved the day by casting his vote for the present site of Livingston for a County Seat. Andrew Ramsay had nominated Hickory Hill; Dr. Puckett had nominated present site of Livingston, Warham Easley nominated Chiles' Place or Mill across and down Sacarnoochee River from Livingston several miles.

The commission selected the name of Livingston as a name for the new county seat. It was named for Edward Livingston who at that time was Secretary of State in President Jackson's Cabinet.

Judge Anderson's father was William Anderson and his mother was Elizabeth Easley. Her great grandfather was Warham Easley who married Sara Barnes. Warham's father was Robert Easley the immigrant forebear. Judge Anderson's great grandfather was James Anderson, born in Scotland and who went to Ireland from where he emigrated. He landed in Philadelphia and went to Augusta County, Virginia. His wife's name was Jean. Their son John went to Madison County, Kentucky. His wife's name was Ann

Erwin. Their son William married Elizabeth or Betsy Easley in Greenville County, South Carolina and removed to Kentucky and then to Clark County, Alabama where we find him in the 1816 Census - a special Census taken of Alabama inhabitants in the Mississippi Territory of which Alabama was a part before it became a state. (See Alabama Genealogical Register, page 183 Volume 1 number 4). There were some Easleys in this census also, among them was Warham Easley who was later a member of the Sumter County Commission. (See the various members of the Anderson family elsewhere in this book.)

Edward B. Colgin, a wealthy planter, was from Gainesville, Alabama. His history will be given in Volume 3, Pioneer Families of Sumter County.

Andrew Ramsay was from near Sumterville. He was a brother of Alexander Ramsay who was born 1799 in Pendleton District, South Carolina. Andrew and Alexander Ramsay were the sons of Alexander Ramsay born 1747 in Scotland and his wife Mary Egger was born 1755, also in Scotland. It is said that Andrew H. Ramsay, who patented land near Sumterville, was a son of Andrew Ramsay. We know that Andrew Ramsay, the member of the Commission to form Sumter County returned to Tennessee after a short time in Sumter County, and from there he went back to South Carolina. Andrew H. Ramsay was here much longer. His daughter, Margaret married Furney Richardson in 1845. G. W. Ramsay of Sumter County married his first cousin, Willie Ramsay both of whom were grandchildren of Alexander Ramsay, who married Sara Hartgrove Ried in Pickens County, South Carolina.

Warham Easley was in Clark County in 1816 (see Alabama Genealogical Register page 184 Volume 1 number 4.) Roderick Easley was also named in this census of 1816 along with Warham Easley. We next find them in Marengo County, Alabama when Roderick's estate was settled (Will Book A page 189.) It seems that the Easleys, the Andersons, the Moores, the Mitchersons, the Hollands, the Cherrys, the Davises, the Lacys, the Darnells, the Jenkins, and the Brownings came from Kentucky. We believe that the William Andersons, the Lacys, the Easleys came first and were later joined by other members of the families. We found them living together in Kentucky and later in Marengo County and still later in Sumter County, Alabama.

Charles J. Puckett patented quite a lot of land in Township 19N Ranges 3 and 4 West and he was one of the founding fathers of Payneville. He was also a practicing physician, and became Paynesville's first postmaster in 1837.

Major John C. Whitsett was born in North Carolina, came to Sumter County before it was organized. He was trustee or a factor for the many Indians who received land in Sumter County by virtue of a clause in the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. They could not sell the land without permission, that is to see that they were not taken advantage of by unscrupulous settlers. More will be given about Major Whitsett in volume 2.

William O. Winston was a large landholder in Township 21N Range 3 W. He married Amanda Morrison (2nd wife) and they were parents of six children. Mr. Winston was a member of a large and prominent family in Sumter County and as they lived in and around Gainesville their history will be given in Volume 2 "Pioneer Families of Sumter County."

On the 22 December 1814 the Governor of Mississippi Territory, which did not belong to the Indians of which Alabama was then a part, had a bill passed providing for militia duty in case of emergency. (See page 586 Digest of Alabama Laws, Published 1823.) On 31 December 1822 a bill was passed in the Alabama Legislature which amended the preceding act. It stated that all free white men between the ages of 18 and 45 be compelled to register with the Military Authorities within 30 days after immigrating into a county. Everyone had to serve when called upon except all public officials, Ministers of the Gospel, public ferrymen, Justices of the Peace, Postmasters, postriders and millers except in invasion or insurrection. Every county had its Battalion or Regiment, and each beat had its company with officers. The companies had to be mustered out once each year upon a 30 day notice.

Much of the social life of Sumter County centered around the military Companies in each beat. Once a year a Military Ball was held either in Livingston or Gainesville.

Another bill passed 7 December 1811 (same book page 623) related to Mills and Millers. One section provided for the erection of mills so as to not overflow any other mill or create a nuisance to the neighborhood. In 1821 the act was amended to provide that each take his turn in grinding and that the miller could legally take only 1/8 part of grain ground for toll. As Sumter County was and is well blessed with waterways, several people applied the first year of the organization of the county for permits to erect mills.

Another interesting bill enacted in 1807 was the one requiring persons who wished to sell liquor to present a petition with names of freeholders saying that the person was of good character before he could obtain a license.

In 1815 a levy of 20¢ on each \$100.00 value to be paid on all land.

In the early years after Alabama became a state all divorces were granted by the Legislature. Before the County Courts were established couples were known to announce in what was called "bans", their intention of marrying. Later, when a minister came into the community, they had him do a better job of it. Funerals were held months after death because no minister was at hand when death occurred. The colored people continued this custom for a century after it was discontinued by the whites.

In an article "Alabama Black Belt" by the Reverend Kenwick C. Kennedy, in the Alabama Historical Quarterly Number 3, Volume 2, 1940, page 282, gives the following: "The Alabama 'Black Belt' is a fair-spoken term

and corresponds not merely to the 'right side of the tracks' but to the old, exclusive, best-family streets; being from the 'Black Belt' is like being from the Low Country in South Carolina, or the Blue Grass in Kentucky or Tidewater in Virginia.

"The Virginians and South Carolinians are still proud of the states that gave them birth. Virginia and South Carolina are the two states in which pre-Confederate, Southern aristocracy reached its zenith. In Alabama the Black Belt counties achieved the most exalted aristocracy of any other section in the state.

"The type is nearly extinct, but not entirely. In the Carolina Low Country, the Mississippi Delta, a few parishes in Louisiana, a few counties in Georgia and in the Alabama Black Belt the strain still survives, somewhat tainted by the Twentieth Century, but preserved well enough to be recognized. Nowhere is it more authentically intact than in the Alabama Black Belt. Nowhere is it preserved in a larger area than here. Yet of all the museum pieces of the Old South that remain, none has received less publicity and none is less widely known. So, unsung and unknown and relatively unexploited, it has gone its quiet, calm way, restoring much of its former grandure."

THE EARLIEST SCHOOLS (1830s - 1840s)

IN SUNTER COUNTY, ALABAMA

The 16th section in every Township was set aside by the State Legislature to be used for schools. The land was rented or gradually sold off and the funds were used to build schools, to help pay salaries of teachers whenever parents were not able to pay tuition, and for other school purposes. At the organization of the county the governor

other school purposes. At the organization of the county the governor of the state appointed commissioners to look after these sections, as well as the schools within the various townships.

Township 16, Range 2 West was the Gaston District. George Kennard, Pleasant White and Solomon Williams were the commissioners in 1841. 13 November 1841 the citizens voted on whether to consolidate their schools. There were two factions in this township so finally two academies were organized. As this was an important section of the county I will give names of those voting in this election, as follows: John Dill, Thomas Young, J. H. Simmons, J. J. Shields, J. H. Kennard, Thomas Nelson, G. J. Wilson, R. L. Hunter, John C. Ward, Bird Wheat, Jacob Kuhn, John Kuhn, N. A. Davis, W. Ward, James Auld, John Gilmer, John Wayne, Geo. W. Kennard, Solomon Williams, Samuel Halsell, Hiram

Brown, Nathan Halsell, Benj. Lewis, James Anderson, Mathias Ethridge, James Grimes, John C. McCormick, Simon C. McLendon, Dempsey S. Haize, Bryant McClendon, James Ingram, Charles Page, R. T. McCormack, John J. Stephens, Jesse Ward, Burwell McClendon, Henry Cahoon, E. Peters, C. A. Spear, W. W. Hall, J. C. Talmage, Nathan Fuller, N. M. Foster, A. Haley, M. Callums, J. M. Rogers, William Wheat.

Prof. T. A. Lilly and his wife, Mrs. Lilly were co-principals of Gaston Institute; there was a Gaston Male and Female Academy at the same time as the Gaston Institute; Sumterville Male Academy under direction of Rev. S. S. Cross; West Alabama Military Academy at Sumterville with C. A. Derby and P. B. Burwell teachers; and the Classical and Mathematical School was near Sumterville with Benj. P. Burwell, Principal; Mt. Moriah Academy at McCainville; Gainesville Female Academy Wm. R. Poindexter, Principal and with Prof Lockett and Prof. Jordan, "late of Kemper Springs Academy teachers"; Livingston Female Academy with C. E. Brame and wife, James Harran, C. S. Danneburg teachers in 1852; Sumterville Female Academy with Prof. and Mrs. M. F. Davidson and Miss Elizabeth Eason teachers. There was a Pleasant Hill Academy in Township 20 R 2 West, and Central Academy in Township 23 Range 3 West - Benj. Turner, James M. Stanton and John W. Geiger were School Commissioners of the latter Township in 1842, (Noone knows anything about either academy today) - page 292 of 16th Section Book; Blake Little and Samuel Taylor were commissioners in Township #23 R 3 W in 1837; Township 2D Range 2 West had teachers A. E. McEnnis, Elizabeth Muldrew, George J. Colgin, George Barrows, Mrs. Joanna Roberts, John P. Hampton, E. Root, Thomas M. Tobin, and N. O. Smith. In 1845 teachers in Township 21 Range 2 West were: L. D. Myers, Miss Mary Brown, James Ellison, O. M. McDaniel, Woodson Hubbard, George Belton, Aaron A. Kemble, Susan Craven, Willis V. Hare, Thomas J. Davidson.

Township 22 Range 3 West Elisha Meredith, C. A. Hatch, and Charles Beasley were Commissioners in 1844, James B. Tartt was Justice of Peace.

Township 1B Range 4 West the following were appointed Commissioners in 1842: Benj. Stone, R. R. Shelton, G. W. Grant, F. M. Grant, Jabal Faulkner. In Township 18, Range 3 West Richard Yarbrough was J. P. and Stephen and C. P. Yarbrough figured in the school business in 1838 with Stephen Webb, Thomas Porter, R. D. Twombly (?) and P. M. Fullingham were teachers. In Township 19 Range 3 West David Boyd, Amos Travis, Micajah Frazer were Commissioners in 1840; in Township 21 Range 2 West Ferney Richardson, A. H. Ramsay, William R. Colgin and Mitchell Malone were Commissioners in 1835 with John McNiece and John Griswold teachers. In 1848 Elias N. Wrenn, Thomas Lacy, and Warren Woodson were teachers.

There was Black Jack Academy at Bluff Port, Prof. Nuffer was the first master of this academy; then Prof. T. A. Hunter, a Harvard graduate was master; other teachers were Prof. Johathan May, Mr. Hoit, Miss Dutch Cook and Miss Mary James.

Old Payneville had a famous academy headed by the Rev. Hadden, a Presbyterian minister. Mr. Farrah was an early teacher. There were other academies and schools in the county, which will be mentioned as we give the histories of different towns and villages.

According to Mr. Joel Campbell DuBose in his "History of Alabama" the young people in these early academies studied Quackenbos' Rhetoric, Caesar's Gallic War, Virgil's Aeneid and all the Bucolics and Georgics, Orations of Cicero, Horace entire, Juvenal's Satires. The course in Greek embraced the four books of Xenophon's Anabasis, Homer's Iliad, Herodotus, Cyropaedia, De Corona and others.

In the field of mathematics they were proficient in University Algebra, Davies' Legendre, and Surveying and Navigation. Grammar and rhetoric were studied year in and year out. Every Friday afternoon was devoted to reading of compositions and to "speaking". The close of the session was about July 1st with public examinations, which swept the whole range of poetry, music, philosophy, science and nature. A great public dinner was a climax to the school closing; perhaps this custom was the beginning of our barbecues for which Sumter County is so famous.

SOME " FIRSTS " IN SUMTER COUNTY. X

First Probate Judge in Sumter County was William G. Anderson.

First Tax Collector in Sumter County was Albert G. Anderson.

First Sheriff in Sumter County was George W. Harper.

First County Clerk in Sumter County was James Savage.

First County Treasurer in Sumter County was James Parker.

First Surveyor in Sumter County was Alfred Moore.

First Auctioneer in Sumter County was John B. Cooper.

First elected Commission of Roads and Revenue in Sumter County: William Godfrey, Wilson G. Myers, Lewis Brock and M. McGee, August 1836.

First entry in Deed Book A page 1 was the recording of the sale of a slave from Winchester J. Harman to Jesse Brashiers, a Choctaw Indian Chief, who was part French. The sale took place 27 July 1825 but was not recorded until 19 August 1833.

The first Post Master at Gainesville was John E. Whitsett, 1835.

The first Post Master at Livingston was William B. Ogletree (1835), followed by Hancock and then Houston.

First Postmaster at Sumterville was Charles Hinsdale, 1835.

First Post Master at Payneville was Dr. C. J. Puckett, 1836.

First Post Master at Jamestown (Warsaw) was

The first court house in Sumter County was a log cabin which stood at the site of the present court house.

Sumter County's first Circuit Court was organized by Judge Sion L. Perry of Tuscaloosa.

First Ministers of the Gospel: Eli Davis, Mr. Campbell, Payneville, Wiley Stanton,

First Doctors in Sumter County: J. L. McCants, J. A. Smith, C. J. Puckett, Robert P. Dalton, W. B. Posey to name a few.

First Lawyers in Sumter County: William H. Green, Murray F. Smith, Samuel B. Boyd, R. K. Chamberlayne, James Hair and many more.

First merchants in Sumter County: D. L. Ayers and Company, Drapers and Taylors; William Moore & Co., Williams and Dillard; W. H. Norvill & William Land, Watch Makers; Anthony Arrington and S. F. Miller; Moffett and Watson's Ware House, Gainesville; M. C. Ward, Taylor; Rix, Rich and Rix, Sumterville; others will be mentioned in later volumes.

CHAPTER II

SUMTERVILLE

HISTORY OF SUMTERVILLE

In pioneer days most communities grew up around churches which contributed to the social as well as to the religious life of the people for miles around, but Sumterville was different from the average pioneer village. The people, as a whole, were well educated and many of them were men of means; so their first thoughts were, not only of churches, but schools as well. From the earliest days Sumterville boasted of three churches; the Presbyterian which was really three miles west of Sumterville; Old Side Baptist Church and an Episcopal Church; and at the same time a boys' Military Academy and a Female Academy were organized. Around 1844 another school was organized near the Presbyterian Church which was near the present Bethel Memorial Chapel. This school had as its head master, Professor Benjamin P. Burwell who saw to it that his pupils were quite proficient in Greek and Latin. This school was more centrally located so served not only Sumterville but the Old Ramsey community, as well. Professor W. Fayette Davidson was Head Master of the Boys' Academy for many years.

The northern part of Sumter County, the part of the county in which Sumterville is located, is in what is known as the "Black Belt". The black, waxy soil was too heavy for the average farmer of that day to till with the equipment he brought with him from sandy areas, so he sold out to his neighbor who had slaves to work the soil. In that way the whole area finally fell into the hands of a few land lords. Many tales have been told about Sumter County mud but the poem written in 1852 by Professor W. Fayette Davidson and published in "Sumter Democrat" aptly tells the tale as follows:

SUMTER COUNTY MUD

I've wandered in distant climes
And seen a host of sights
By day light and by moon light
In fact all sorts of lights;
But ne'er yet where e'er I'd stray
In regions ill or good

Did I ever find one thing to match
This Sumter County Mud.

The whole area was covered with tall cane when the first settlers moved in; the trees were oak, cotton wood and hickory, but the cedar trees which now grow everywhere were imported from another county. The dogwood and red bud trees were abundant. This limerock, hilly land was noted for its beautiful and brilliantly colored flowers which covered the country side in the spring.

A few white people began to trickle into the Indian Territory before the Choctaw Indians left for Oklahoma after the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Clark Crocker and Anthony Phariss were among those who came to Sumterville area while the Indians were yet there. They told how the Choctaws met on a hill just east of what is now Sumterville and went into a period of mourning because they were being transplanted to another soil. A free Negro by the name of "Tom" had wandered into the Indian territory and married an Indian woman. By virtue of this marriage he acquired quite a bit of land under the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, this land lay just north of Sumterville; and a creek called Tom's creek bears his name, even today.

The first settlers of Sumterville and environment were William Patton, Randle Jackson, Seaborn Jackson, Jacinth Jackson, the Wehbs, John E. Brown, Jeremiah Brown, Terrance Foy, Bryant Richardson, Evan Bryant, William Gilbert, John Holland, William and John Kerr, Tom Ormand and many others. They built their homes on the hill tops and tilled the lower ground. At first there were many springs flowing from the lime rock hills, but after the land was cleared and worked the springs stopped flowing. The Foy's, Bryants and Ormonds suffered the first years from lack of water. Every two weeks they took their clothes to the Parker place on the Sacarnoochee River, five or six miles from Sumterville, to wash. Later on they dug wells in the bottom land and hauled water to their homes, this was before they learned that wells dug on the hills would produce water.

The old road built by the French from Fort Tombechee to the outpost, which was located at the present site of Old Payneville, ran through Sumterville. In places, yet, our modern roads follow the old roads or trails as set forth by the French, Spanish and English in those days before the "Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek".

Sumterville was first called Patton's Hill for Mr. William Patton whose home was just behind that of the one we know as the Dr. Wrenn home. Mr. Patton's grave has not been located, perhaps it is unmarked or the stone has crumbled. But we know from his will and settlement of his estate that he died 7 April 1838. He had a son, William S. Patton who studied medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and later became a practicing physician; his daughter was Cynthia M. Myers, and he left a widow, Eliza

Patton. The town was still called Patton's Hill until after 1841, for on that date the Poll List was headed "Patton's Hill". It is said that John E. Brown was instrumental in getting the name changed to Sumterville when in 1844 the town was incorporated.

In the early 1840's Sumterville boasted of eight business houses, Masonic Lodge, three Churches, two schools, and an Inn for the convenience and comfort of stage coach travellers. The stage road ran between Gainesville and Sumterville and on west toward Jackson, Mississippi through DeKalb. Mr. Webb was proprietor of the Inn. Charles Hinsdale was Post Master in 1837.

The Old Side Primitive Baptist Church was the first one organized in the north western part of the county; the building was erected 6 July 1833. The Methodist Church was built in 1841. The Presbyterian Church was three miles west of Sumterville where Reverend Carothers preached a year or two prior to the erection of the building in 1835. In 1897 this Presbyterian Church building was moved to Sumterville.

The organizing and charter members of the Primitive Baptist Church were Asa Wright, Clark Crocker, Thomas Hogger, Randle Jackson, John Ari Elisha Thomas, P. McDaniel, Armaton Smith, James Williams, Sara L. Henry Smith, E. N. Bryant, Wright Jones, Lermel Mathress, Ben Richardson, Coin Richardson and Washington Richardson. (From original Minute Book of Old Side Baptist Church.)

The organizing and charter members of Bethel Presbyterian Church were P. R. Fleming, Mary B. Fleming, Jennett (Spence) Dial, Mary Dial, Kerr, Margaret Kerr, Robert S. Lavender, Jane Lavender, (all from Zion and Concord Churches in Greene County), James Wrenn, Eliza Wrenn from Ebenezer Church, Thomas Moore and Elizabeth C. Moore from Bethel Church, Mrs. Anna Elliott from Harmony Church. The next members to be added to the roll were: William and Joseph Greenlees, Mrs. Isabella Greenlees, Mrs. E. Cavert, Mrs. Liza Patton, Mr. Carder and wife Nancy from Mt. Zion all of whom united with the church 23 August 1835. Mrs. Mary Yarbrough (wife of Alfred Yarbrough) joined the church 23 July 1837. David Gage and wife Nancy from Philadelphia Church in Wayne County, Mississippi, George W. Wrenn (who married the daughter of Mary and Alfred Yarbrough) and Jacob Shipman and his wife, Eliza, all united with the church in 1839. (From the original Minute Book of Bethel Presbyterian Church.)

The oldest home in the community is "The Cedare", built by John E. Brown. His great granddaughter, Mrs. Julia Praytor Killingsworth, lives in this lovely old home built in 1838.

The Jeremiah Brown home is about three miles west of Sumterville. It was remodeled after the Civil War by Mr. White who married Addie Brown, a daughter of Mr. Brown. It was changed to look like his old home in Kentucky. The stair case which forms a balcony facing the front door, is especially interesting. Mrs. James, whose home is in Virginia owns

this lovely old home which is called "Louden." She is the great granddaughter of Jeremiah Brown, who was the largest slave owner in Sumter County. It is said he owned more than a thousand slaves, many of whom he did not know as he had overseers to look after various sections of his plantations.

Each plantation around Sumterville, and in other parts of this section of North Sumter County, had plantation stores or places to store foods raised on the land and used to furnish the slaves during the year. Each plantation was sufficient unto itself as cotton was raised, ginned, spun into thread and woven into cloth by either the slaves or by the men and women of the home. Leather was tanned at home and made into shoes, harness and the like. The shoes were pegged together with wood pegs, usually made at home. Meat was killed and cured, vegetables and fruits were dried for future use.

Over the years Sumterville failed to grow, in fact it became smaller. Livingston was chosen in 1832 as the county seat instead of Sumterville; or Hickory Hill, which was just out of the town, itself; the railroad was put through or near Jones Bluff so Sumterville was left out of the main line of communication; at a later date another railroad was built six miles west of what is now Emelle; Sumterville was left off the main highways of Sumter County; the planters sold out and moved "west" after the slaves were freed; the top soil was washed off the hills so the bare lime rock was in evidence everywhere. Land in 1832 was bought from the Government from 2¢ to \$2.00 per acre; by the late 1830's land was sold for \$100.00 per acre and in Reconstruction days some lands were sold again from 2¢ to \$5.00 and \$10.00 per acre.

In 1840 the population of Sumter County was 29,937. In 1940 (or a century later), we had 2,416 fewer persons; but the amazing part is that in the last hundred years we had lost 8,231 whites and had gained 5,815 Negroes. In 1940 the percentage was 79.4% Negro population or an increase of 21% over 1840; while the white population had decreased 26%. Sumterville had lost more whites in proportion than many other parts of the county. Today there is only one small white school north of Livingston as children are transported by bus to centrally located places. We have in 1959 only 46 white teachers in the entire county; but the Negroes boast of 181 Negro teachers; their schools are newer, more modern and in many cases better equipped than some of the white schools.

The once bare lime rock hills around Sumterville are now covered with grass and the Hereford cows are peacefully grazing, making more money for their owners than the slaves ever produced working in cotton fields. The village is still the quiet, easy going place of yesterday where many of the old timers still live graciously. The names "Sumterville", "Bethel" and "Old Side" are yet loved today by a multitude of people scattered to the four corners of the earth; even though the old glory has all but vanished "with the wind".

Minutes

BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunterville, Alabama

Sunterville, Saturday 22 September 1835. On this date a meeting was called to organize a Presbyterian Church three miles west of Sunterville where the present Bethel Chapel now stands. The Charter Members of this church were:

P. B. Fleming	Sara Kerr)	
)	
Mary B. Fleming	Margaret Kerr)	From
)	Mt. Zion and Concord Churches
Jennett Dial	Robert S. Lavender)	Greene County, Alabama.
)	
Mary Dial	Jane Lavender)	

James Wrenn and Eliza Wrenn from Ebenezer Church, Greene County, Alabama. Thomas Moore and wife Elizabeth from Bethesda Church, South Carolina. P. B. Fleming and Thomas Moore were elected Ruling Elders of this new church; they were ordained 23 September 1835. Mrs. Anna Elliott of Harmony Church was received as a member same day.

21 November 1835. The Church was officially named "Bethel". Signed Thomas Moore, Clerk and J. B. Adams, Moderator of Tuscaloosa Presbytery.

8 May 1836. Isabella Ramsay was received into the church from Ebenezer Church, Greene County, Alabama.

12 June 1836. Robert L. Lavender and Mrs. Jane Lavender received from Concord Church, Greene County. (Seems that their letters came at this time, joined as Charter members.)

7 October 1836. William Greenlee, Joseph Greenlee, Mrs. Isabella Greenlee and Mrs. E. Calvert received into church, Mrs. Eliza Patton received same day from Cedar Grove; Mr. Carder and wife Nancy from Mt. Zion, Greene County joined by certificate.

23 July 1837. Mrs. Mary Yarborough received by letter from Millenium Hope Church.

26 November 1837. Mr. David Gage and wife Betsey P. were received into the church from Philadelphia Church, Wayne County, Mississippi; and Mrs. Lavender from Greensboro Church.

26 May 1837. Mr. James Wrenn and Eliza Wrenn were received by letter from Ebenezer Church, Greene County, Alabama. (Letter received on this date.)

24 November 1839. Jacob Shipman and wife Eliza presented their certificates and J. W. Kerr joined church by profession of faith.

9 August 1840. Armstead, Viney, and Charlott slaves of Mrs. Mary Yarborough and Cleressa and Clary, slaves of Mrs. Jennett Dial joined the church. (These were the first recorded Black members. Later on many slaves joined the church.)

12 July 1840. Mrs. Nancy Jamison was received by letter from Courtland Church; Andrew Nevill and wife Mary along with Elenor Rix were received from Gainesville Church. Mr. Joseph McCorcle and wife Violet from Ebenezer Church; William Prierson Fulton and wife Elizabeth received from Mt. Zion, also slaves joined church at same time.

Mention was made of Mr. Thomas Moore being ill. He was absent quite a time from church.

13 December 1840. William F. Fulton and Joseph McCorcle were elected Ruling Elders.

25 April 1841. Andrew J. Laughridge brought letter from Mesopotamia (Eutaw) and William M. M. Week from Louisville, Mississippi Church.

26 April 1841. Mrs. H. E. McLunsey received from Methodist Church, Darlington Circuit, South Carolina. On same date Mr. Jane McKenley was baptized.

7 August 1841. Mr. T. R. Kendal from Burlington, Vermont Congregational Church, and Mrs. Amanda Kindal and Mr. Robert McCorcle received on examination; Mrs. Ester Kennon by certificate from Concord Church (Mrs. Mary Ward and Mrs. Amanda Kindal were baptized.)

15 August 1841. (There must have been a powerful revival service as so many joined the church on this date.) The following joined by profession of faith: John Ward, Armstrong Kerr, David McKenley, James Linch, Jacob E. Thompson, Abraham P. Fisher, Leroy Boyett, Thomas J. Davidson, George J. Shipman, Mary Ann Hopper, Rebecca Dial, Mary L. Moore, Martha H. McCrrkle, Mary A. Fleming, Ellen E. Carder, Mary Ann Lavender, Catherine Fleming, Amanda E. McCorcle.

21 August 1841. (The revival must have lasted a couple of weeks.) The following united with the church: Andrew McCorkle, Nancy G. Porter, Margaret E. Moore, Virginia Kerr, Jane E. Moore, John Fielder, Robert A. Fleming, Mary E. Ramsay, Elizabeth C. Jackson, Catherine E. Jamison, John W. Dial and Washington Edwards.

22 August 1841. The following joined the church: Margaret Ramsay, Hester A. Greenlee, Geo. Rix, Robert Hadden, John Smith, James Fleming, Jane McDow, Martha Yarborough, Thomas Jamison, Jeremiah Dial (this was the son of Jennett Dial), James Dial (his brother.)

15 December 1841. Received by certificate Mrs. Martha B. Hadden, Miss Laura Ann E. Hadden and Nancy J. Fulton. The same day the death of Mr. D. Gage was announced.

17 April 1842. Mrs. Effy Clark was received from North Carolina; and Wm. J. Campbell and William M. Hadden joined the church.

26 February 1843. Benj. P. Burwell was received into the church. Mrs. Shipman and John Fielder were dismissed at their request.

1st Sabbath April 1843. Leroy Boyett and wife dismissed at their request.

4 June 1843. Merritt and wife Paulina, slaves of Thomas Moore received into the church; Charles belonging to Thomas P. Harper Rosanna belonging to Isaac Hadden and Willis belonging to Jeremiah Dial joined the church.

6 August 1843. Mr. John Soule, Henry R. Leveret, and Andrew J. Le united with the church on this date.

21 January 1844. Mr. B. P. Burwell was dismissed at his request church in Mobile.

1 May 1844. Mr. B. P. Burwell presented certificate from 2nd Presbyterian Church in Mobile.

1 April 1844. The total membership of Bethel Church was 83 Whites, 44 Blacks.

3rd Sabbath October 1844. William Kerr received upon examination.

2nd Sabbath 1845. John McDow received upon examination as were Margaret E. Lavender; Mrs. Isabella Ramsay and daughter Mary dismissed to join another church.

15 February 1846. Mrs. Ester Kennon dismissed to join a Mississippi church.

1 April 1845. This church membership consisted of 68 Whites and 42 Blacks.

9 April 1846. No mention before this of Alfred Yarborough having joined the church but on this date a committee was appointed to see why he was not attending. He said as long as the present minister

served there he was not going. He was suspended from the church. Many members were turned out about this time; some for swearing, some for drinking and for other things. Negroes were turned out for stealing, lying and breaking other commandments. Jeremiah Dial was turned out for swearing. He said he was not going to say he would stop, furthermore he did not want to belong to their church; Jesse Hutchins was turned out because he was seen drinking - these are but a few.

21 February 1847. T. R. Kendal and wife Amanda were dismissed to a Mobile Church; Mrs. Nancy Jamerson (Jamison) and son Thomas dismissed to a Tennessee church and Mrs. Lavender to Payneville.

25 April 1847. John Ward and wife Mary were dismissed to Gainesville church.

3 May 1847. Mr. William Hadden and James Hervey Fulton dismissed to Danville, Kentucky. At this time the membership was 55 Whites and 61 Blacks.

29 March 1850. Mr. Geo. Rix and wife, Rebecca, Mr. James Roberson dismissed to Gainesville.

3 June 1850. Mrs. Mary C. Burwell was dismissed to Jackson, Mississippi Church.

28 May 1853. John W. Kerr and wife Margaret and daughters Susan and Sarah Ann were dismissed to Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, Mo.

3 July 1854. Mrs. Louisiana Handley (Mrs. Peter) presented certificate from Gainesville.

1 October 1854. Mrs. Eliza N. Wrenn, Joseph R. Ramsay, Joseph D. Mitchell, Mrs. William Johnson, Mrs. Keziah E. Mitchell and Miss Susan B. Weck received into the church.

24 December 1854. Lucy Smith, Mrs. Mary Whitsett, Margaret Nevill, and Frances J. Wilson joined the church. Andrew Nevill and son William dismissed to Mobile.

14 January 1855. Mrs. Jane Roberts was dismissed to join Carrolton Church (Alabama.)

23 July 1855. Mrs. Melvira Dillard and Mrs. Josephine Fulton received by faith.

25 May 1856. Mrs. Mary Whitsett was dismissed to join church in Tusculum. Miss Susanna Frierson dismissed to Zion Church in Mississippi; Mrs. Martha Heddeleston, to join church in Greene County, Concord.

22 February 1854. Mr. Mitchell McKinley and wife Eliz. and daughters Sara, Isabella, and Mary Jane were received by certificate from a Presbyterian Church in South Carolina.

28 June 1857. Margaret Kerr was received by faith.

10 October 1857. Joseph Kerr, John Moore and John McKinley were received into Church by faith. At same time Franklin Burwell, Benj. F. Mitchell, W. T. Harwell, James D. Harwell were received by faith also.

27 March 1858. Joseph R. Dial was received by faith. Mrs. Martha McConnell was dismissed to a Presbyterian Church in Yorkville, South Carolina. B. P. Burwell, his wife Margaret Burwell and Franklin Burwell were dismissed to a Presbyterian Church in Texanna, Texas.

9 October 1858. A committee was sent to the home of Doct. B. A. Jones to examine him on faith; he was in a poor state of health so could not go to church. He was accepted as a member. Same day John W. Dial and wife Eliza were dismissed to join church at McKinley. Michael McKinley and wife Eliz. and 3 daughters Sara, Isabella and Mary Jane and son John were dismissed to join a church near Louisville, Mississippi.

12 June 1859. Mrs. Palmer and Carr Eason joined the church by faith. Mrs. Ann Clark was dismissed to Payneville. Isaac P. Kerr and Logan Kerr were united with the church, by faith.

30 September 1860. Miss Mary Hannah Fleming joined by faith. Mrs. Willie Ann Johnston asked for certificate to join church in Centerville, Texas.

30 March 1861. Mrs. Louisiana Handley asked for certificate to join church at Pensacola, Florida.

21 September 1861. Mrs. Nancy Mitchell and J. M. Joseph to Presbyterian Church in Meridian, Mississippi. Miss Lucy Nevill was received on profession of faith.

Saturday 18 September 1864. Mr. Luke Palmer received religion while in the Army and was received into the church, on this date.

2nd Sabbath October 1865. Mr. T. J. Templeton was dismissed to join a church in Mississippi.

(This brings us to the end first 30 years of the history of Bethel Churchs. The Church owns a complete record to the present day.)

METHODIST CEMETERY
SUNTERVILLE, ALABAMA

This cemetery is located on a hill just as one leaves Sumterville on the Emelle road. At one time a church stood by this cemetery. (See Sumterville history.) This old church is still spoken of in reverent tones by those who recall the many memories of days gone by. They love to tell about Henry McDaniel's vision of building a church; of William Godfrey's stroke in the church after "feeling the hand of the Lord" at Quarterly Conference; of the Godly old preacher, Rev. James M. Patton who was born in Perry County, Alabama in 1829 and who married Miss Mary Falconer, born in Eutaw, Alabama in 1843. All the children looked forward to Saturday before "meeting day" when then trudged down the road to meet Brother Patton. They considered it a great treat to unhitch his horse from the buggy and ride him bare back to the pond to let him drink.

Brother Patton buried the dead, married the young and he preached powerful sermons which were instrumental in the salvation of more people than it is possible to estimate. Not a stone is left of this old church; it was sold for a few pieces of silver and the money applied to a debt on the parsonage at Gainesville, Alabama.

Inscriptions

John Elmore Baker, born 8 August 1865, died 9 February 1944. (He was a native of Virginia, as is his wife. They are the parents of 10 children viz: Elizabeth, (Mrs. Faibel), Charlie W., Joe P., Martha (Mrs. Frank Diall, see Boyd Cemetery for this family of Dials), Mrs. Frances Bassett, John E., Jr., who married Margaret (Peggy) Ormond, the daughter of Evan and Sallie (Burwell) Ormond - See Ormond records Old Side Cemetery.

Brown

In memory of Milton Dozier, son of G. A. and Sara B. Brown, died 14 March 1861, aged 2 years, 10 months. (His parents were George Alexander Brown and wife Sarah B. Godfrey. George Alexander Brown was the brother of John Evander Brown - see John E. Brown Cemetery records - and Sara B. Godfrey, daughter of William Godfrey, married 9 May 1839.)

Mary Alice Brown who departed this life 11 January 1847, aged 4 years

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