

Free! The Teresita Gazette

Olden Times in Macon County, NC & News of the History Scene Today
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July 2000

McConnell Clan to Gather

A big McConnell Reunion is planned for Saturday, August 19 at the Otto Community Center. The reunion celebrates the lives of Sarah McClelland and Philip McConnell, who married Feb 18, 1763 in Rowan County. McConnell was a Revolutionary War soldier who died in the service of the United States.

William McConnell, son of Philip and Sarah, obtained a land grant for Section 1, District 15, on the Little Tennessee River in Macon County in 1828. He died in Macon County about 1835. He and his wife Rachel Adams had 13 children and were the forebears of many Macon County families.

All McConnells invited! For more information, contact Tom McConnell at

JMcon5070@aol.com.

New on www.teresita.com

A unique and valuable resource for the 1860s — a list of debtors to the J.T. Siler estate — is available now on our website. Free!!

Macon County Will Book Published

Teresita Press announces the publication of *Early Wills of Macon County: Horse Beasts, Muly Cows and Runaway Daughters— Will Book 1, 1830-*



The Munday House once stood on Main Street, Franklin, about where Macon Furniture Mart and the Burrell Building are today.

1866. Compiled, with genealogical notes by Barbara McRae. (86 pages, paper, \$12.50)

Will Book 1 Testators

- George Brown
- Levi Truet
- George Rish (Rush)
- Aron Butler
- William Welch
- John Hood
- Samuel Woodfin
- Thomas Brown
- William Carpener
- Elijah Johnson
- H.C. Howorth
- James Hubbard
- Thomas Shepherd, Sr.
- Rebecca McDaniel
- Thomas Jennins
- William Russle
- Joshua Hall
- Aaron Thomas
- Elizabeth Sanders
- Solomon Clayton
- Jacob Stillwell
- Isaac Vanhook
- John West
- Margaret Ogilvie
- Nathan Tabor, Sr.
- Hilory Scott
- Joshua Hall, Sr.
- Mary Patton
- Phillip Guyer
- Benjamin Johnston
- Jane Moore
- Bryant Connelly
- James Angel
- George T. Ledford
- William McLure
- Solomon Truit
- Thomas Davis
- William Dills
- Isaac Norris
- Nancy Lamb
- Jake Saterfield
- John R. Duvall
- Timothy Lindsey
- Joseph Donaldson
- Thomas H. McDonnell
- Louisa A. Huggins
- John Wild
- Elizabeth Dryman
- William Conley
- Julius T. Siler
- Dicy Fulcher
- J.A. Curtis

Bounties Paid for Wolf Scalps

The grey wolf was a common predator in the Southern Mountains in the 19th century. Settlers viewed the wolf as an enemy and local governments offered bounties for wolf scalps. Among those claiming the \$5 bounty from Macon County (1883-1891) were:

- H.H. Dills
- B.S. Dills
- J.P. Norton
- A. Tilson
- J.M. Burnette
- Grant Zachary

From *Accounts Audited by the Board of Commissioners for Macon County, NC, 1883-1891*. Available from Teresita Press, \$25.

Macon County School Districts Revised, 1897

In the early 1890s, Macon County had 55 different school districts — one for each school. The system was a cumbersome one and in 1897 it was revised.

The three-person school board— chairman Mark Kelly, J.G. Siler and W.J. Evans — reduced the 55 districts to eleven: Franklin, Mill Shoal, Ellijay, Sugar Fork, Highlands, Flats, Smith's Bridge, Cartoogechaye, Nantahala, Burningtown and Cowee. The 55 schools remained but were parcelled out among the eleven districts.

Separate districts for black children were abolished. The four black schools were now administered by the districts in which they were located.

Under the new system, committeemen still ruled the districts, but as the districts were much

larger, there were five committee members instead of three. They were still appointed by the board.

(This information is from the school board minutes, and reflects the spelling of the secretary for that year.)

The list of committeemen for 1897 notes each individual's political affiliation. This seems to have been done in an effort at fairness, for all three major parties, Democratic, Republican and Populist, were represented. Democrats had a slight edge in most districts. The Cowee District committee was unique: J.T. Gibson, Democrat, W.B. Dean, Republican, M.L. Rickman, Prohibitionist, M.J. Mashburn, Democrat, and F.M. Burnett, Populist.

Committee members were sometimes removed because of neglect or failure to qualify. In 1894 the board ordered "that Lucius Cabe be notified he will be removed from the Office of School Committeeman in District No. 27 at the July meeting, and some other person put in his place; cause, neglect of duty and alleged complicity in an illegal distillery."

After the reorganization, Franklin was the largest district, with nine schools for whites and three for blacks.

The white schools in the Franklin District were:

- Franklin School
- Iotla (Campbell's)
- Double Branches



Highlands High School

- Patton's
- Clark's Chapel
- Union
- South Skeena (sic)
- North Skeena
- Wallace's.

The black schools in the Franklin District were:

- New Hope
- Penland's Bridge
- Iotla Bridge.

Flats, the smallest district, had just one school:

- Flats.

Nantahala is the big surprise, with five schools:

- Bridge
- White Oak Flats
- Flats P.O. (a different Flats)
- Jones School House
- Lower Nantahala or Merritt's (probably Hewitt's).

Mill Shoal District included:

- Holly Springs School
- Watauga School
- Lyle's Mill
- Mountain Grove.

In Ellijay were:

- Ellijay School
- Higdonville
- Salem
- Cross Rhode (sic)
- Mashburn

Sugar Fork District had:

- Pine Grove School
- Walnut Creek
- Brush Creek
- Buck Creek.

In Highlands District were:

- Shortoff
- Highlands
- Horse Cove
- Clear Creek
- Broadway.

Smith's Bridge District included:

- Mulberry School
- Coweeta
- The Academy
- Hickory Knoll
- Lower Testenty (Tessentee)
- Upper Testenty.

Cartoogechaye District's six schools were:

- Conoly School House
- Privey (Privett)
- Poplar Cove
- Allison's School House
- Watt's School House
- Black Place.

In Burningtown District were:

- Oak Dale
- Burningtown
- Morgan's School House
- Sulphur Springs
- Turtle Town

Cowee District included:

- Oak Grove
- Cowee
- Liberty
- Harmony
- Rose Hill
- Cowee School (black).

In 1897, the largest school in the county was Franklin, with 216 students. Union School had 109, Clarks Chapel, 101 and Flats, 104. Nantahala District, with 471 children, was second in size only to Franklin District

with its 835 children. There were 290 black children in the county. The total school census was 4,324.

Source: Minutes of the Board of Education, Macon County. Original in Board of Education office.

County Court was first governing body

The original Justices of the Peace (Magistrates), who were charged with organizing the Macon County government, were appointed by the Haywood County Court.

The 33 justices met for the first court in March 1829. William Deaver, Esq., administered the oath to the first them. They were:

- Aaron Pinson
- Saul Smith
- Jesse R. Siler
- John Howard
- Jacob Siler
- John Moore
- John Cook
- Enos Shields
- Jonathan Phillips
- Bynum W. Bell
- Benjamin S. Brittain
- Joseph Welch
- Michael Wikle
- Thomas Rogers
- Wm. F. McKee
- Andrew Cathey
- George Dickey
- Edward L. Poindexter
- Irad S. Hightower
- James Buchanan
- Wm. Tathem
- Wm. H. Bryson
- Matheew Patterson
- Barak Norton
- Wm. Wilson
- Thos. Love Jr.
- Mark Coleman
- Hugh Gibbs
- Asaph Enloe

- Robert Huggins
- John Wild
- Henry Dryman
- Jefferson Bryson

Their first task was to elect county officers:

- Nathan B. Hyatt, Clerk
- John Dobson, Register of Deeds
- Bynum W. Bell, Sheriff
- Montraville Patton, Solicitor
- Jacob Siler, Surveyor
- Michael Wikle, Trustee
- Nathan Smith, Coroner
- Robert Huggins, Ranger
- James K. Gray, Standard Keeper
- James Poteet, Constable
- Joseph Moore, Constable.

County Ranger

Robert Huggins was elected County Ranger from a panel of candidates who included Jas. Russel and William Hood. What was his function? He probably dealt with matters concerning animals (cattle and pigs) let out to forage on the open range.

Roads, Roads, Roads!

The first road matter considered by the court involved Jeremiah Harrison, who was appointed overseer "of a part of Cartugay (Cartoogechaye) Road leaving the State Road."

Jesse R. Siler was to work "to the Crossway on Jonathan Whiteside's Branch, and to have all the working hands that worked under Jonathan Whitesides."

The court appointed William Siler overseer from Crossway at Jonathan Whiteside's Branch "over all the upper part of said road." He was to have all the hands Moses Addington formerly had.

Working hands were citizens of the neighborhood, who were obliged by law to work one day per month on the roads. If they didn't show up, they could be fined. The overseer was responsible for the condition of the road, and could be fined if it were not kept in repair.

William McClure was overseer of "the Ridge Road from the fork near Smith's Bridge to the top of the Ridge between John Ledford's and Ammons Branch, and to have all persons liable to work on public roads" south of McClures, including everyone on the east side of the Tennessee River, as far south as Samuel Smith's section.

Road Petitions & Juries

When people in a community needed a road, they signed a petition and brought it before the court. The first one considered by the Macon court was for "a public road from or near Jas. Russell to interest the State road near where David B. Cummings lives." In response to a petition from citizens, the court would sometimes appoint a jury to consider where the road should go. In this case, the jury included Wm. Bryson, James Bryson, Joseph Welch, Edward L. Poindexter, Jesse R. Siler, Joseph H. Earley, Gidion F. Morris, Thos. Kimsey, John McClure, Humphrey Posey. These names were struck out in the original record.

Roads occupied most of the court's time in the early days. These records help us understand where people lived, and how the county developed. Once established, most roads remained pretty much in place over time.

In the early records of the Macon court, we find many references to areas in present Jackson and Swain counties. For example, at the first session, the Sheriff (Bynum W. Bell) was ordered to summon a jury to lay off a public road "the nearest and best way" from Gilbert Falls on Cullowhee to the ford on "Tuckaseejah" River, near the mouth of Cullowhee Creek.

Prior to Macon's founding, matters concerning the county were handled by the Haywood County court.

Justices of the Peace

The system of justices of the peace helped maintain order throughout the county. This was a large territory, and could not have been administered exclusively from Franklin. The first court appointed the following justices for the county militia companies:

- Jacob Siler, for Johnson Company
- Jesse R. Siler for Town Company
- Wm. F. McKee for his Company
- Edward L. Poindexter for Proctor's old Company
- Mark Coleman for Sawyer's Company
- Henry Dryman for Smith's Company
- John Cook for Wilson's Company
- Thos. Love for John George's Company
- Wm. Wilson for Toxaway Company
- Wm. R. Bryson for Cullowhee Company
- Thos. Rodgers for Savannah (sic) Company.

Source: Minutes of the County Court

1840 Census Shows Effect of Westward Migration

The free population of Macon County in 1840 was 4,878, a decline of 455 in ten years. The slave population had also declined, from 458 to 373. Fifty-three "free colored" persons lived in the county.

In 1835, the Cherokees had signed their final treaty, giving up their remaining eastern lands. This land drew many original settlers away and as other western lands opened, outward migration continued for decades.

The 1840 census found three schools and 140 scholars in the county. Of the adults, 640 were illiterate. Occupations were as follow:

- 1543 in agriculture
- 9 in commerce
- 91 in manufacturing
- 18 in learned professions & engineers.

Eight Revolutionary War Pensioners were listed:

- Wm. Garrett, age 85
- Danl Bryson, 84
- Thos. Plemmons, 80
- Aaron Thomas, 81
- Wm. McLeod, 80
- Thos. Williams, 80
- Nathan Thos. Thompson, 78
- Saml Monteath, 85

The Teresita Gazette is published by Teresita Press for anyone with an interest in the history of Macon County, NC. Send news, queries & comments to Barbara McRae, editor.

Teresita Press
PO Box 1114
Franklin NC 28744
www.teresita.com
email: bamcrae@smnet.net



Queries

This section is dedicated to everyone with Macon County, NC roots or an interest in Macon County history. Send us your questions... we may not have the answers but someone else may.

Arnold. I'm looking for information on Needham (William) Arnold, born in NC about 1760. His son Needham Arnold (b. 1786) is said to have married a full-blooded Cherokee Indian, Serena Foy (b. 1786), whose father was George Foy.

Needham Arnold and Serena Foy were born in NC and moved to Tattnall Co., GA, but I have no information on the father Needham (William) Arnold.

Jean McCarty
bennym@gate.net

Editor's Note: According to *Heritage of Macon County, Volume 1*, the early Macon County Arnolds descend from John Arnold, an English immigrant who moved to Orange County, NC from VA. He married Sarah Murray. This Arnold family moved to Macon County about 1822. A son William married Mary Redmond. (See article #24, by Freda A. Ellington) Does anyone know if this early Macon County family connects

with the Needham Arnold sought by Ms. McCarty?

Boone/ May. Seeking information about my grandfather Lewis Amos Boone, who owned land in Flats, Nantahala, Macon County. He married Anna May on January 3, 1903, in Flats. Her parents Samuel Jefferson May and Sarah Jane May gave the land for a church in Briartown.

Lou Ann Boone
WALouAnn@aol.com

Caler. I am trying to find out where Jacob Caler my original American ancestor and early resident of Macon County — and one of the founding fathers of Buncombe County — is from. They say he is from Germany but I am looking for verification.

Any help would be appreciated!
Thank you:

David Caler
dcaler@msn.com

Crawford. Could the Samuel and James Crafford (on the Love Survey) be Crawford's? I know that Samuel Monroe Crawford, b. 1818, could not read or write and signed at his marriage with

his "mark," 1838, Haywood County. Please contact:

Darlene Shumway
dshumway@prodigy.net

Hays. I am most interested in any information I can get on the family of Charles Hays (b. abt 1789). Thank you,

Marylynn Rush
rrush@earthlink.net

Editor's note: Charles Hays "of Buncombe County" bought Section 45 and 47, District 16, near the "plains of Iola" (Iotla Creek) from Jeremiah R. Pace and Benjamin S. Brittain, Sep. 6, 1838. (Sheriff's sale) (Deed Book B, p. 666, 676, 974) He sold these tracts to Jesse Siler in 1841. In 1843, he was security in a mortgage on behalf of Marshal J. Mull.

Other records of interest involving Charles Hays include a contract to marry, registered in Macon County, Apr. 2, 1845, between Charles Hays and Sarah Donaldson, in which she agreed to release certain property from all claims. The property included slaves: Arter, Jacob, Mary and her three children Andrew, Jane and Betsey. In turn, Charles released from all claim any property Sarah brought to the marriage. In 1847, Charles Hays bought a negro boy Jack, 16 years old, from Terrell Fulcher.

In 1848, Charles Hays bought land on the Tennessee River, District 12, from John Dobson.

In 1853, he witnessed the sale of land by Ann Hughs to West Truitt.

There are many other records tracing business and real estate activities of Charles Hays in the old deed books.

Johnston. Jackson Johnston is the brother of my husband's gg-grandfather. He was born in Ireland and came to this country in 1818, and to NC after 1828. I am interested in ALL information about the Johnstons and would love to find descendants as well!

Lucy Manson
lsm@easley.net

Mack. I am looking for some record of a cemetery called Top

of the Winding Stair. I have been told it lies above an old church in a town that used to be called Briar Town. I have also been told it lies in Franklin, NC. I haven't been able to find any record of my grandfather in any cemetery so far, so any help will be greatly appreciated. His name was James Frank Mack. I'm not sure what year he died.

Thanks for any help.

Teresa M. Sims
Gonehuntingbrb@aol.com

Editor's Note: The Winding Stair follows an old pioneer trail between present Queens Creek and the Swain County line. It is, indeed, near "Briartown," an old Cherokee town that gave its name to the settlement here. The Briartown Baptist Church was established in 1853, but early records of the church have disappeared. It is located about two miles from the Nantahala School. A picture of the congregation, ca 1909, is in the *Heritage of Macon County, Volume 2*.

Morgan. George W. Morgan (1816-1861) and Esther Morgan (maiden name unknown) (1814-1866) are my great, great grandparents. George W. Morgan is listed on the 1860 Macon County census as a blacksmith. Esther Morgan was a charter member of the Burningtown Baptist Church, which was organized in 1839.

I understand the records of Burningtown Baptist Church are still intact and might possibly reveal Esther's maiden name through relatives who were also members and may be buried there. George and Esther are not buried at the church. They are buried on the top of a hill in the Burningtown area.

I descend through George and Esther's son, William Carson Morgan, who was also a black-

smith and served in that capacity during the Civil War. After the war, William Carson Morgan became a preacher and moved to Graham County, NC. He is buried in Robbinsville at Old Mother Church. Please contact:

Wanda Brooks
wbrooks@meckcom.net

Editor's note: Founding members of the Burningtown Baptist Church, June 15, 1839, were Thomas Welch, Jacob Shope, Hethy Welch, Isabel Shope, Mary Mashburn, Elizabeth Barnes, Ann Clampitt, Elizabeth Rowland, Sarah Clampitt, Mary Barnes, Elizabeth Hannah, Orpha Hannah, Winifred Lovin-good, Elizabeth Clampitt and Esther Morgan. The first deacons were Thomas Welch and Jacob Shope.

In the 1850 Census of Macon County, George was 35, born Haywood County, Esther, 36, was also born in Haywood.

Wilson/ Martin. My grandmother was born near Nantahala, NC, 2/8/1894. Her parents were Henry McGilbert Wilson and Addie Emaline Martin Wilson. They came to AR around 1900.

I am (first) seeking burial places of Jefferson and Elizabeth Caler Martin, my gg-grandparents (Addie's parents). According to information my Grandma told my mother, they lived to be over 100. That could/ should put their deaths around 1940-1960. Hope someone can help me:

Alice Albright
cottonblossom@arkansas.net

Wild/Shields. I would like to obtain any information available on my grandmother, Addie Wild Shields, born in the Burningtown area of Macon County, married Mark Shields and lived in the Nantahala or Topton area. She died in 1908 and the grandchildren have not been able to locate her grave.

I am also interested in the Smith family of Macon County.

Ruth Hancock
eehancock@earthlink.net
Editor's note: Addie Wild was the daughter of Joseph Manning Wild (b. Dec. 3, 1839) and Rebecca Bryson (married Dec. 1866). Joseph's parents were John and Margaret Wild of upper Burningtown in Macon County. (For more on this family, see *Heritage of Macon County, Volume 1*, Article #718, by Mrs. Harris L. Sanders.)

Ah-leach or Alitse. The death of this Cherokee Reserver by John Welch, "revenger of blood," inspired the Robert Strange novel *Eoneguski, Or the Cherokee Chief*. His name appears as "The Leech" in Strange's book.

I'm trying to identify the children of Ah-leach. His reservation of 640 acres on Iotla Creek was listed in the name "Heirs of Ah-Leach." If you know their names, please contact:

Barbara McRae
bamcrae@smnet.net



P.O. Box 1114
Franklin NC 28744