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foreign missionary to China, chemists, musicians, teachers, lawyers, doctors, dentists, preachers, farmers, social workers, editors, and most importantly, capable wives and mothers.

After the death of his mother, Lavinia Bennett, in 1872, Cam and Emily moved in with his father, William, at the big white house and deeded his Beaugard home to his daughter, Karen Bennett Graham, who raised one son and nine daughters in it. The cyclone of 1892 destroyed the south front of the house as well as the Fayette Academy school building and the Travis home across the road. Sadly, one daughter, Sallie Kate, 11, was killed by falling brick. The house was rebuilt in 1894 to its current configuration with its three large Victorian dormers, porch gingerbread, and three front doors with an "L" added on the back for the dining room and kitchen. The house has a total of seven fireplaces. A bucket well was built on the back porch and water is still drawn from it today. The large barn remains, as well as the smokehouse, chicken house, and gas house (used to generate gas for lights in the house before electricity).

Grandchildren: Jim, and John Addison Lester, Jr. Mrs. J.W. Graham died in 1929, and in her will, she stated that the house could not be disposed of as long as any of her nine daughters were living. Cousin Mary Lou lived to the age of 92. In 1983, Jeanne and Glenn purchased the house, keeping it in the Bennett family line, and completed restoring it in 1989.

Jeanne's grandmother, Lavinia Jane Bennett, married William Blalock Steward in 1874, moving to a home in Jonesboro where he was a merchant. They raised five daughters. Believing education to be more important than land, Lavinia sold her inherited land holdings in Fayette to send each of her daughters to Randolph Macon College in Lynchburg, Virginia. There is a brass plaque identifying the Stewart girls' room in the dorm. Jeanne's mother, Bennett Stewart, the youngest of the family, married Dr. Frank L. Fort of Morrow in 1925 and moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where Lavinia Jeanne Fort was born and named after her grandmother.



Bennett-Graham-Brewer Home 160 years of Bennett Generations Picture taken 1911

Captain Glenn Milton Brewer was born in Tyler, Texas, the only child of James H. Brewer and Pauline McClellan. He met Jeanne in 1945 at the Riverside Baptist Church in Jacksonville while a young sailor attending Combat Air Crewman School at the Naval Air Station. They were married five years later on Sea

### Jeff's Father - Jason's Grandfather

Glenn from Annapolis. They went on to make the Navy a career with Glenn serving in Korea and in Vietnam, retiring in 1976 as a captain in the submarine service.

They have four children: Kathleen Brewer of Ojai, California; Barbara Cooper of Astoria, Oregon; Cecilia Englehart of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania; and James Brewer of Austin,

Texas. They presently have nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren and recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at Callaway Gardens with all the family. Jeanne has been a volunteer with the Joseph Sams School for the past 13 years and served on the initial board of directors for the restoration of the Holiday-Dorsey-Fife House. Glenn served on the Fayetteville planning and zoning commission and has served as a city councilman in Fayetteville for the past 10 years. Submitted by: Jeanne and Glenn Brewer, Fayetteville, GA

## 70 EIGHT GENERATIONS OF BETSILL HERITAGE

### IN FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

In the year 1821, the year Fayette County was constituted, and of the land ceded by the Creek Indians to the government, William Betsill was granted 202 and \_ acres, known as land lot 83, at the mouth of Hurricane Creek and the Flint River. This acreage was passed to Godfrey Betsill and his wife Sara in 1822.

Of German origins, the Betsills' migration to Fayette County began from the ports of Europe. Ancestors passed through Philadelphia immigration early in the Colonial years. This family, along with other immigrants, found a place in society on small parcels of land among the vastness of plantations in Fayette County, earning their way as skilled workers that were not the usual plantation help, such as carpenters and blacksmiths. The U.S. census records of 1830, 1840, and 1850 track them in Fayette County, and when Clayton County was created in 1858, the next census in 1860 put them in Clayton County.

Sara and Godfrey's children were Green Berry, born in 1820, who married Serena Harrison in 1863 and died in 1895; Godfrey, Jr., born in 1815, married Porthenia Dorman and died in 1879; Homer P., born in 1822 and married Delila Cook; Isaac Turner, born in 1923, who married Louisa Williams and later Annie Hubbard, and died in 1901; Sarah, who married James R. Banks; Jane (Jentzie), who married John Bentley; Eliza, who married Eli Whaley and Mary, who married Piles James.

Green Berry and Serena's children were Rufus, Cue Dellars, Greene, Pero, Ella, Lizzie and Etta. Rufus married Sallie Margaret Haisten about 1890, and their children were Vara, born in 1891, who married Joseph Luther (Luke) Brown; Bird, born in 1893, who married Junious Oscar Phillips; Bryant, born in 1894, who married Annie Ruth Harper; Jessie, born in 1896, who married John Wayne Floyd; Rufus, Jr., born in 1898, who married Opal Connie Johnson, the great-granddaughter of H.V. Johnson, governor of Georgia (1853-1857) and Ann Polk, niece of President James K. Polk; Barney, born in 1900, who married Agnes Shields; Tossie, born in 1903, who married Grover Parker; Sidney Lanier, born in 1905, who married Jewel Marshall Hankins. Nettie Jane, born in 1908, who married Elom Wilkerson. Upon his death, she married William Edward McCook. Pearl was born in 1911 and married Thomas C. Sowell, and after his death, she married Norris William Tyree. And Murdie, born in 1914, married Joseph W. Lewis. Rufus and Sallie had 59 grandchildren, of whom 17 were boys.

Rufus, Jr. and Opal Johnson had seven children: William Rufus married Mable Eunice Chalker of Dale County, Alabama; Opal Louise married Edward W. Keller of Hastings, Florida; Thomas Lindy married Pauline Middlebrooks of Ontario, Canada; Margaret Elizabeth married Paul O. Myers of Albany, Georgia. Bobby May married Orbert Lee Dodson of Fulton County, and upon his death she married Frank Head of Fulton County; Gene Franklin married Priscilla Hale of Memphis,

Tennessee, a great-great-granddaughter of Sterling Price, governor of Missouri (1853-1857); Roy Johnson married Betty Louise Hulme, whose grandfather was Bennie Chester Banks of Fayette County.

Rufus and Sallie left descendants currently involved with the betterment of the county. Many descendants can be found in Fayette County families as each generation passes from one to the other. The Betsills have married into more than 100 families. Living now in the county, are eight generations since Sara and Godfrey settled here. The youngest at this writing is Christian Blake Pace, son of Brian Pace and Michelle Bruton of South Carolina, and grandson of Sylvia Betsill Pace and her husband John Willis Pace of Fayetteville. Christian's great-great-grandparents are William R. (Bill), who died July 21, 2000 and Mable C. Betsill of Clayton County.

The Betsills have been involved in normal salt-of-the-earth type activity. They are carpenters, roofers, masons, and general contractors. They have been associated with automobile assembly, in servicing and gas stations, retail stores, farming, beauty shops, banks, policing, ministering, trucking, and have also been employed in nearby Atlanta factories. The Atlanta airport has been the work place of some, while hospitals, and civil service jobs have provided good hard-working people a better life as our county advanced through the past century. More people of hard work, honesty, and a solid belief in God can contribute to our county in the future.

Many members of this family, both male and female, have heard the call to arms in time of conflict, as well as peace, since the Civil War. In time of peace, military service in the armed forces has been voluntary as well as required. Some members of the Betsill family have given their lives to protect this heritage.

Descendants of the Godfrey, Isaac, Bryant and Barney families still exist in the surrounding counties and in Fayette County. Submitted by: Gene F. Betsill, Fayetteville, GA, in the 225th year of our independence, 2001.

## 71 BETSILL - HARPER FAMILY

When "Mr. Bryant" Betsill met "Miss Ruth" Harper while visiting his sister, Bird Betsill Phillips, around 1917, in Fayetteville, Georgia, the merger of four pioneer families (the Betsills, Haistens, Harpers, and McCulloughs) began the Betsill-Harper generation. Their ancestors emigrated from Europe during the 1600-1700's. Migration in this country continued through Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia until they reached their destinations in Clayton, Elbert, Fayette, and Henry Counties.

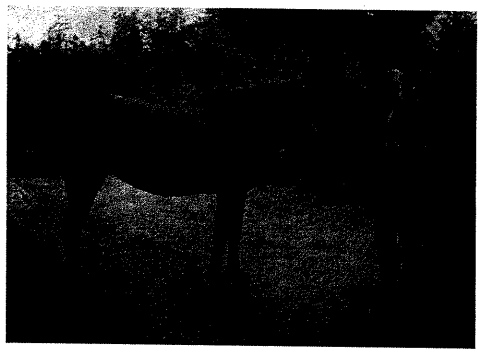


Betsill Family, 1964 L-R: Seated, Sallie, Katharine, Ruth, Bryant, Myra, Standing, Warriner, Demaris, Tiller, Jane, Alex, Rachel

John Haisten (1762-1825), an American Revolutionary soldier, was born in Virginia and married Nancy Ellis (1766-1850). They settled in Indian Territory around 1819 within the area that is now known as Brooks, Georgia. John and Nancy had ten children. James Edward

Haisten, their fifth child, was born in South Carolina in 1799. He married Margaret "Peggy" Cartwright in 1818. It is believed that James and "Peggy" Haisten founded Sharon Grove, which became Haistentown, which later became Brooks. They had eleven children. The eleventh child, Alexander M. Haisten (1843-1913), married Sarah Jane Bridges (1844-1909) in 1866 in Fayette County. Alexander served in the Confederate States Army: Rank, Musician, from 1862 until 1865. Alexander and Sarah Jane had ten children. The fourth child, Sallie Margaret Haisten (1872-1956) was born in Brooks and died in Clayton County. In early 1890, she met Rufus Betsill (1864-1930), whose parents were Green Berry and Serena Harrison Betsill. After a short courtship, Rufus and Sallie were married on November 2, 1890. They settled in Clayton County where they raised their family. Rufus was struck and killed by a train in Lovejoy, Georgia, on April 12, 1930.

William Selfridge Harper (1826-1859) married Elizabeth Jane "Betsy" Gilbert (1829-1919) around 1850. She was born in Henry County, died, and was buried in Fayetteville. "Betsy" and her young children moved to Fayette County after her husband's death. Around 1865, she married Jephtha M. Murphy of Fayette County. William and "Betsy" Harper had two children born in Henry County: Matthew Gilbert Harper (1852-1909), and Susannah Green Harper (1855-1927). Both are buried in Fayetteville City Cemetery.



Matthew Gilbert Harper before 1909, on Hwy 314 looking south toward Fayetteville. One of the cedar trees shows above horse's head.

On January 3, 1880, Matthew married Rachel Henrietta McCullough (1859-1936) in Rockdale County. Rachel, was the daughter of Robert and Annis McCullough. Matthew built a house on land he had purchased in the Black Rock District, Fayette County, on what is now Hwy 314 and New Hope Road. He brought his bride to this house where they started housekeeping and lived until he died. Afterward, Rachel lived with various members of her family until her death. Matthew and Rachel had four children born in Fayette County: Sylvester Quigg (1881-1961) died in Miami, Fla; Ada (1883-1956); Geneva (1886-1909), (neither Ada nor Geneva married) and Annis Ruth (1900-1987).

On May 26, 1918, a beautiful spring Sunday morning, the Betsill Harper bond took place in a simple wedding ceremony uniting "Mr. Bryant" and "Miss Ruth" at her home in Fayetteville, Georgia. Bryant and Ruth were the parents of nine children, all born in Fayette County, except Demaris who was born at Lovejoy, Clayton County, during a short time (around 1922-1925) when they lived at the Betsill home place on Panhandle Road. Bryant and Ruth returned to the Black Rock District, again residing at the Harper homestead. They celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on May 18, 1968 with relatives and friends at an open house held at their home.

The children of Bryant and Ruth are Katharine Elizabeth, (1919-1986), m. Samuel W. Banks (1917-1994); Myra, Aug. 28, 1920, m. W. Reece Whitehead; Sallie Mae, July 19, 1926, m. L. Watson Maxwell (1815-1992); Demaris, June 24, 1924, m. first Paul V. Green,

2nd W. Vernon Beane; Leon Tiller (1927-1989) m. 1st Beverly Ann Rucker, 2nd Myrtle LaRae Garzand, 3rd Elsa Fessenden; Rachel Henrietta, March 9, 1930, m. Roland Autry Howell; Alex Bryant, July 25, 1932, m. Nora Helen (Susie) Eason; Everett Warriner (1934-1998) m. 1st Mary Christine Brooks, 2nd Bernice Graham; and Annis Jane, April 4, 1939, m. 1st Hubert Belton Moore (1957-1969). After his death, she married James A. Dyer.

Bryant Betsill (1864-1971), born in Clayton County, Georgia, was the third of fourteen children born to Rufus and Sallie Betsill. He served in WWI from July 1918 until the end of the war. He was a member of The American Legion, Post 105, Fayetteville, and helped construct the "Log Cabin", for Post 105. He was a farmer, carpenter, and a pioneer in raising chickens for commercial use. Ruth was a homemaker who had her hands full caring for her husband, nine children, her mother, Rachel, and sister Ada. In 1932, Bryant built a larger house with a detached cottage for Grandma and Aunt Ada, replacing the house Matthew had built at the original site on Highway 314 and New Hope Road.

Two beautiful cedar trees stood beside the road in front of the house, planted in 1880 by Grandpa and Grandma Harper shortly after their marriage. They were returning from a visit with relatives in Henry and Rockdale Counties when they spotted two small cedar trees by the roadside. Grandpa stopped the buggy, got out, pulled them up, brought them home and set them out where they remained for 114 years until DOT began the widening of Hwy 314 in 1994.

There are 64 living Betsill-Harper descendants: six children, 21 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren, and 11 great-great-grandchildren. Five of the descendants currently live in the Black Rock District — Alex; his daughter Cathy Norman; her two sons, Sam and Greg; and Demaris Betsill. Jane and her husband live in Fayetteville, as well as Alex's son, Bryant; his wife, Yvonne; and their daughter, Rebekah. Also living in Fayetteville the son of Sallie Maxwell, Richard (Rick) Maxwell; his wife, Brenda; and son, Andrew. Other descendants live in Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah. Alex and Susie's home is located on one of the remaining lots of the Harper land on New Hope Road. Submitted by: Demaris Betsill, Fayetteville, GA Sources: *First Families of Henry County Georgia*, articles, Pg. 307, by James Otis Rodgers, Jr., and Martha Virginia Rodgers Fall. *The History of Fayette County, 1821-1971; Gilbert Pioneers and Their Descendants in North Carolina and Georgia*, by R.L. Guffin, Jr.; *Haisten: A 200-Year History of the Haisten Family*, by Robert Wayne Haisten

**72 MINNIE IRENE BETSILL**

Minnie Betsill, great-granddaughter of Godfrey, Jr. and Sarah Betsill, was born on July 18, 1901, in Lovejoy, Georgia, one of 10 children of Linton Turner and Leola Elizabeth (Cotton) Betsill. Godfrey Betsill, Jr. was listed in both the 1820 and 1830 Fayette County censuses. Turner J. Betsill, Minnie's grandfather, was born and raised in Fayette County and married Louisa Williams on August 24, 1846. Turner and Louisa are enumerated on the 1850 Fayette County census. By the 1860 census, they are listed as living in Clayton County as farmers.

Minnie was raised on the family farm, and, as she grew older, met auburn-haired, blue-eyed Asbury Benjamin Sams. They married January 25, 1925, and began married life with the bare essentials. They worked very hard to make a living of rural farming. Less than a year later, Minnie gave birth to her first son, Billy Riley, on January 10, 1926. Two years later, Mildred Irene, her only daughter was born. Her last child, James Asbury, was born six years after Mildred. Shortly after James' birth, Minnie was devastated when Asbury died of typhoid fever on June 16, 1934.

Minnie, alone with three children to raise, became a victim of depression. She was unable to maintain the sharecropping farm. For the next



Jeff's Grandfather Jason's Great-Grandfather

Jeff's Great Grandfather Jason's Great-Great Grandfather

Minnie (Betsill) Sams Thompson, Robert Charles and Charles Thompson.

four years, her father and two of her brothers each took in one of her children.

In 1938, Minnie went to live with her brother, Bonnie, and worked on the farm to pay her way. One of Asbury's brothers, Costello, knew that Minnie could work for him. Costello took care of his mother, who had cancer. Minnie moved to Fayetteville and was in charge of the children under her mother's care. When her mother died, Minnie bought a store on R. C. Street and ran the store until the beginning of World War II. Unable to make a living with the store, they moved to Brunswick, Georgia, where R.C. got a job painting battleships. Later, they moved back to College Park and R.C. became a constable, wallpapered and painted houses, and completed income tax forms until beginning his own income tax business. Minnie made their next home in East Point. After her past experience, Minnie had never been content on R.C. for long. Minnie continued to live alone in their home in East Point for many years. She baby-sat grandchildren, learned to pay the bills, and was often known to call City Hall when she felt that something in the neighborhood required their attention. Minnie was visiting her son James in Stockbridge when she died on October 2, 1986. Submitted by: Margaret Tarrant, 1206 Tucker Road, Perry, GA 31069, mt7704vd3@cs.com

This is now the site where the Bank of America Building is located at New Hope Road and Hwy 314 in Fayetteville, GA

Jeff didn't live in Fayette County at the time of Publication.....

**73 JONATHAN CLAY BLANTON**

Jonathan was born on December 30, 1985, at Southern Regional Medical Center in Riverdale, Ga. He is the first and only child of Karla Lynch Conner and the late John Clay Blanton. He is the grandson of John and Brenda Lynch of Starr's Mill and Juanita and the late Troy Blanton of Fayetteville. His maternal great-grandparents are Lyman and Gladys Mann of Tyrone and the late Dewey and Alice Mae Lynch of Fayetteville. His paternal great-grandparents are the late Mr. and Mrs. B.T. Garner and the late Mr. and Mrs. Jess Blanton. He is an eighth generation Fayette Countian and is a direct descendant of several pioneer families.



Tallulah "Lou" (Clark) Jones, buried Fayetteville City Cemetery

Another son, Edgar Favor Dorsey married Elizabeth "Lizzie" Clark of Fayette County on 27 November 1879. Boss as he was known was born in Fayette County on 10 Mar 1859. Lizzie died there during childbirth on 10 Jul 1899 at the age of thirty-eight and Edgar moved to Twiggs County, Georgia where he died 18 Sep 1937. Lizzie was born 14 Jul 1860 probably in Fayette County. Her parents were George Washington and Martha Ann (McEachern) Clark, prosperous cotton farmers of the area.

Jeff's Mother  
Jason's  
Grandmother



Lula Claude (Dorsey) Edwards, buried Parkhill Cemetery, Columbus, Georgia

A sister of Lizzie, Tallulah Clark Jones (Mrs. R.F.) was a long time resident of Fayette County. Everyone called her Aunt Lou whether or not she was their Aunt. When Lou died, her estate was put up for auction at the home she had lived most of her adult life. That home is still located on Jeff Davis Drive behind the new post office. No money had been left of the estate and all utilities had to be cut from the house long before the sale was to take place. It was decided as her former

Jeff's Grandmother &  
Grandfather (maternal)  
Jason's Great-Grandmother  
& Great-Grandfather



George Washington and his wife, Martha Ann (McEachern) Clark

Jeff's Mother  
Jason's  
Grandmother

the auction. Mrs. Rufe Edwards (Edwards) McCombs, a true niece of her Aunt Lou attended. According to her accounts the porch lights flickered the entire time the auction was being held. No one could find out where to turn them off and they stopped after the event concluded.

Edgar Favor and Lizzie Dorsey had several children: Mary Lynn, Carrie, Sallie, R. Manson, and Lula Claude the oldest. Claudia as she was known was born in Fayette County on 15 Jan 1881. She married in Fulton County on 15 Apr 1916 to Charles Elbert Edwards. It was her daughter Rufe who had attended Aunt Lou's auction in 1958. It was also Rufe's daughter, Beth Kissel who became a member of the Holiday-Dorsey-Fife House Association to see that her great great great grandfather's house was preserved for future generations. Submitted by: The Dorsey Family may be found by contacting Mrs. Beth (Mrs. G.D.) Kissel, 3305 Brownwood Drive, Snellville, GA 30078-6814 or e-mailed to: DBADJKiss@aol.com

### 154 WILL C. AND LILLIAN EASTON

Will C. Eason married Lillian McElroy on December 12, 1915, bringing together yet another combination of descendants of Fayette County pioneers. Two Eason brothers came to the United States from Ireland before the revolution. One settled in the Carolinas and was killed in the Revolutionary War. The other, Abraham, settled in Georgia. His name is found in the records of Jackson County, Georgia, as witness to a deed in 1801. The first Eason to actively settle in Fayette County was Rice Eason, Sr. who purchased land about four miles north of Fayetteville on Morning Creek from his father Abraham who probably drew the land in the 1821 lottery. Rice was Will's great, great grandfather. Will's great-grandfather, Richard Eason, was killed at Lookout Mountain during the Civil War. Will's mother, Dakota Jackson Eason, was the sixth child of George and Frances Gilbert Jackson. Frances was the seventh child of Matthew and Tabitha Gilbert. Matthew Gilbert's family was in Halifax County, North Carolina, in 1776. Matthew left there in 1806, traveled through Raleigh to Charlotte, and arrived in Henry County in 1822.



Lillian, Dakota Jackson, and Will C. Eason

Lillian Eason was the daughter of Pleasant Davis McElroy. Seven McElroy brothers came to the United States from Ireland or Scotland. James McElroy, a Revolutionary soldier, settled in Fayette County. His grave is located on McDonough Road. His son, Peter Early McElroy, was Lillian's grandfather. Many McElroy descendants still live in Fayette County.

Eleven children were born to Will and Lillian. The oldest was Elizabeth, the author's mother, followed by Willie, Richard, Mary, Maggie, Betty, Evelyn, Susie, Jean, Jane, and Harry. After living in Atlanta for a short time, Will bought a house on what is now County Line Road, and commuted to Atlanta where he worked for Mather Brothers Furniture Company.

The family exemplified the typical hardworking farm lifestyle of the 1920's and 30's. Aunt Mary

explained that the normal day would begin at 4 a.m. with chores, such as tending the animals. This included cows, pigs, chickens, pigeons, goats, ducks, horse, and a pony. After breakfast, the children would walk about three miles to catch the school bus. The chores would continue after school. The family raised most of their food. There were fresh vegetables and fruits in season and canned vegetables, fruit jams, jellies, and preserves put up for the rest of the year. In the fall, hogs were killed. Some meat would be cured, sausage canned, and lard rendered for later use. Also, Will rented additional land on which cotton was raised to be sold.



Harry, Jean, Jane, Susie, Evelyn, Betty, Mary holding Mary Lewis

Lillian was overseer of house and garden work. All the children had a part in planting, hoeing, picking and preserving. Each had specific chores such as milking cows, gathering eggs, churning, chopping wood, cleaning house, washing and ironing clothes. Each one was important to the well-being of the family. Lillian, with help from her sister Nora Millsapps, made most of the children's clothes. The material for these clothes came primarily from feed sacks. Lillian would go with Will to pick out the sacks of feed, getting the matching material she needed for clothes. With all the chores to be done, Lillian still found time for flowers of all sizes, colors, and fragrances which she planted around the house and vegetable garden.

Elizabeth Eason married Brewster Lewis who lived close by, and the author of this article was born a couple of years later than the youngest Eason to become the first of 25 Eason grandchildren. Because of the closeness in age and being the first grandchild, a special relationship with aunts and uncles and with Mama and Daddy Eason was felt.

In the 1940's, the Eason's moved to Clayton County, living first on Main Street in Jonesboro and later on Panhandle Road. At both locations, they maintained a farm with a variety of animals and a large garden. As a youngster living in Atlanta, Mary Lewis Bowen, the first grandchild, loved visiting Mama and Daddy Eason. She thought living on a farm was wonderful as she "watched" eggs gathered, cows milked, and animals fed. She loved playing with paper dolls cut from the Sears Roebuck catalog and making rooms and furniture from twigs to be set among the roots of a large tree. In the summer, she would tie a string to the back legs of June bugs and fly them around the yard. There were always creeks to dam up and turn into a swimming hole. Over one creek, there was a rope run through a piece of pipe and tied to a tree on either side so one could glide over the creek and drop off in the water. One thing she learned from visits was that her Mama Eason was probably the best cook anywhere. One thing for sure, no one could make a Japanese fruit cake to equal hers. Every Christmas, as long as she was able, Mama Eason made that cake for each of her children and for her first grandchild. Mary

Lewis realizes now more and more just how blessed she was to have such a rich heritage.

In their later years, Will and Lillian returned to Fayette County, living on North Jeff Davis Drive in Fayetteville for the rest of their lives. This home, like all the others, was still a gathering place for the family. There was always plenty of good food, family support, and a feeling of belonging.

In recent years, the children, grandchildren, and the great grandchildren of Will and Lillian have resumed the tradition of an annual family reunion. The author hopes that the youngest of these will hold to the tradition so they, too, can realize the joy and security of family identity and appreciate the hard work of those who have prepared the way for their descendants to have a richer family life. *Submitted by: Mary Lewis Bowen, 167 Castlewood Road, Tyrone, GA 30290*

### 155 BETTY JO JONES EDMONDSON

Betty Jo Jones was b. October 19, 1928, in Fayette County, in the Starr's Mill community, to Roy Eugene Jones and Vivian Louise Whatley Jones. She was a fourth generation Fayette Countian descended from William Robert Whatley and Emily Jane Neal Whatley and also Charles Pickney Jones and Rebecca Brooks Jones. She was married to Jerry M. Edmondson of Fairburn, Georgia, in 1946. Betty Jo and Jerry made their home in Fairburn, Georgia, where they had a clothing store, Edmondsons. Betty Jo and Jerry had two sons Michael D. b. May 10, 1947, and Gerald D. (Doug) b. January 18, 1951. Michael had three sons: Larry, Keith, and Scott. Doug had two children, a daughter Molly and a son Pete. Jerry and son Doug are owner-operators of Pillowflex in Palmetto, Georgia. *Submitted by: Betty Jo Jones Edmondson, 7480 Herndon Rd., Fairburn, GA 30213.*

### 156 ELI EDMONDSON

Eli Edmondson was an early pioneer of Fayette County, Georgia. He was born about 1804 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina, the son of John Edmondson and Lydia Downing Edmondson. He moved to Fayette County when he was about 20 years old. He appears in the 1824 Fayette County tax digest. On 2-1-1825 in Fayette County he married Jane McBride, born about 1805, the daughter of James McBride and Mary Hamilton McBride. He died 10-31-1864 of typhoid fever. Jane died after 1880.

Eli Edmondson was a very prominent citizen of Fayette County. He owned over 1000 acres in the vicinity of Whitewater Creek. He represented Fayette County in the Georgia General Assembly in 1831-32. He once owned Starr's Mill. He constructed the first jail in Fayette County in 1829.

Eli was the patriarch of one of the oldest and largest families in Fayette County. Eli and Jane had 10 children, seven sons and three daughters. Five sons who were of age served in the Confederate States Army: John, James W., Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and Joseph A. John was a captain, James W. and Thomas Jefferson were lieutenants. Thomas Jefferson had to resign his lieutenantcy after being wounded at Sharpsburg, Maryland. His younger brother Joseph A. assumed the lieutenantcy and was a captain at the war's end at age 22. Eli and Jane's descendants number in the thousands today and live in several states including Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and California.

Eli and Jane's ten children in birth order were: Mary Louisa, John, Martha J., Elizabeth, James W., Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Robert, Joseph A., and Peter Eli.

Their daughter Mary Louisa (b 4-13-1826, d 11-7-1858) married in 1843 Warren Cofield (b 10-9-1819, d 8-13-1850) of Troup County. Mary Louisa and Warren had three children: Mary Jane (b 11-26-1844, d 12-8-1881) married in 1860 Jesse Burgess Haralson, Jr.; Joseph

Alexander (b 3-12-1847, d 4-15-1918) first married in 1870 Sarah Frances Henderson, (b 6-9-1855, d 2-22-1875) and second in 1878 Mary Sue Pergerson (b Feb. 1855, d 1937); and Thomas Uriah (b 4-12-1849) married in 1876 Martha Lugenia Whitaker. After Warren's death, Mary Louisa married Warren's brother Uriah Cofield, (b. Apr. 1807, d Apr. 1863) and that union produced three children: Martha Mary Alice (b 7-14-1853, d 3-16-1872) married in 1869 Charles M. Whitaker (b. 1850, d 1-12-1929); Annie Eliza (b 12-2-1855, d 11-22-1916) married in 1871 William Henry Haralson (b 7-31-1849, d 3-19-1926); and Exa (b 1-29-1858, d 10-6-1923) married in 1874 Charles Monroe Sanders (b 8-17-1854, d 3-14-1937).

John Edmonson (b 3-11-1828, d 6-23-1868) married in 1848 Sarah Elizabeth Goddard (b 6-25-1826, d 2-5-1916). John and Sarah had nine children: William Henry (b 2-25-1850, d 1-25-1926) married in 1882 Luna Briggs Eastman (b 12-24-1849, d 1-6-1927); Joseph Eli (b 12-7-1851, d 12-21-1922) married in 1872 Mary Melvina Lovell (b 10-14-1854, d 12-4-1923); Charles Jenkins (b 3-18-1854, d 12-4-1925) first married in 1878 Emma Eugenia Merritt (b. 10-17-1859, d 11-13-1894) and second in 1896 Martha Lou Olive Morgan (b 4-9-1875, d 8-8-1949); John Thomas, (b 6-29-1858, d 11-23-1935) married in 1891 Rebecca Jane Brogdon (b 3-10-1869, d 8-15-1943); Robert Benjamin (b 3-26-1860, d 12-28-1931) married about 1882 Mary Elizabeth Waldrop (b 12-26-1864, d 9-29-1927); James Everette (b 7-22-1863, d 5-30-1948) married in 1886 Martha Ann Elizabeth Lester (b 3-15-1866, d 3-14-1955); George Tidwell (b 3-17-1866, d 11-28-1953) first married in 1887 Ida Clark Harris (b 8-26-1865, d 4-2-1925) and second in 1927 Rebecca Annie Simpkins Oakes (b. 1-9-1882, d 12-25-1934); Emma Jennie (twin of Ella Mae), (b 8-30-1868 d 12-13-1956) married in 1888 James Jefferson Lester (b 1-9-1859, d 1-5-1898); and Ella Mae (b 8-30-1868 d 1-21-1943) married in 1890 William Oscar Coleman (b 7-22-1869, d 7-16-1933). Martha J. Edmondson (b 3-29-1830, d 10-17-1902) married in 1852 Reuben Raymond Rogers (b 4-14-1828, d 12-14-1907). They had ten children: James Robert (b 1856, d 7-20-1856); George Alexander (b 1857, d 12-20-1879); John Oliver (b. 1859, d 1859); James B. (b 11-21-1859, d 2-23-1925) married in 1888 Rosa Elizabeth Manley (b 3-22-1867, d 10-10-1914); Joseph Eli (b 10-7-1861, d 12-26-1879); Reuben Raymond (b. 12-1-1864, d 1-13-1868); Abner Derrell (b 12-14-1866, d 1-31-1924) married in 1890 Mattie A. Coppedge (b. 11-19-1871, d 8-8-1943); Frank Berrien (b. 8-26-1870, d 3-29-1931); Mary Tallulah (b 4-10-1873, d 9-16-1954) married in 1896 Edward Sylvester Ward (b 9-19-1871, d 8-9-1955); and Sarah J. (b 3-25-1878, d 12-9-1919) married in 1898 Charlie H. Harwell (b 2-21-1875, d 3-6-1903).

Elizabeth Edmondson (b 6-9-1833, d 3-18-1908) married in 1849 William R. Lavender (b 11-2-1826, d 4-20-1901) of then Henry now Spalding county. They lived in Spalding County, Georgia until about 1868 when they moved first to Alabama and then to Tennessee, settling in Warren County. Elizabeth and William had nine children: Robert; John Thomas; Martha; Mary; Carry B.; Wiley J.; Josephine M. (b 1-1-1868, d 2-8-1952) married in 1889 James Bird Mason (b 10-24-1858, d 3-8-1913); and Dock George (b 4-6-1871, d 7-17-1954) married about 1892 Mary Ellen Gibbs (b 9-1874, d 10-4-1910). Nothing is known about the remaining child.

James W. Edmondson (b 1834, d 1862) married in 1858 Malissa O. Stinchcomb. He was discharged for disability from the Confederate army on 7-12-1862 five miles south of Richmond, VA. He died sometimes between then and November 1862. James and Malissa had one child: Louisa Jane (b 3-4-1861, d 6-1-1906), married in 1884 Simeon Clower Bernhard (b 10-1861, d 3-12-1934). She is buried in the Edmondson Cemetery near Starr's Mill.

Thomas Jefferson Edmondson (b 7-8-1836, d 2-29-1908) married in 1862 Lucinda Alice Kelley (b 7-23-1844, d 3-7-1908). They had eleven children: John Benjamin (b 12-18-1863, d 8-31-1947) first married in 1890 Mary Magdalene Travis (b 10-15-1868, d 9-30-1899) and second in 1902 Theodocia Snead (b 11-20-1876, d 3-3-1958); Robert Eli (b 10-29-1865, d 12-31-1938) married in 1890 Lula Elizabeth Busbin (b 2-10-1873, d 11-5-1950); Mary Elizabeth (b 2-4-1867, d 3-2-1937) married in 1886 Hiram Luther Pollard (b 1-5-1861, d 2-27-1910); Anna Eliza (b 12-3-1868, d 12-11-1951) married in 1886 James Gordon Travis (b 6-10-1866, d 3-9-1954); Mattie Lou (b 9-16-1870, d 3-31-1956) married in 1893 Tandy Bogan Farner (b 4-19-1868, d 5-13-1927); James Thomas (b 10-5-1873, d 8-11-1911) married in 1897 Martha Brassell (b 5-1880, d 8-8-1911); Hattie Camilla (b 5-20-1875, d 11-9-1963) married in 1896 Oscar North Travis (b 8-14-1870, d 2-25-1950); Willie Mae (b 9-22-1876, d 7-8-1927) married in 1899 Hiram Wallace Travis (b. 2-7-1875, d 2-7-1946); Georgia Estelle (b 12-2-1877, d 7-30-1970) married in 1899 Thomas Marlin Kerlin (b 12-15-1872, d 5-7-1954); Rosa Janett (b 3-23-1884, d 11-27-1973) married in 1901 Henry Madison Kerlin (b 9-19-1877, d 7-18-1953) and Lucius Howard (b. 11-18-1886, d 9-8-1964) married in 1907 Louise Amelia Coogler (b 12-10-1885, d 5-28-1952).

George Washington Edmondson (b 9-5-1839, d 9-29-1905) married in 1868 Olivia Josephine Matthews (b 9-1-1849, d 3-19-1901). They lived in Fayette County until after 1880 when they moved to Atlanta. Olivia's father once owned Starr's Mill and sold it to Eli Edmondson. They had six children: Emma Euphemia (b 1-1-1869, d 9-5-1954) married in 1888 Henry Iverson Starr (b 4-4-1867, d 3-30-1930); Lela Celestia (b 8-22-1870, d 3-5-1949) married in 1886 Elbert Carlton Hicks (b 3-22-1866, d 8-19-1900); Willie Edmondson (b about 1871, d 1873); Mary Elizabeth (b 5-22-1877, d 5-24-1945) married in 1898 Walter N. Seymour (b 6-15-1879, d 4-28-1956); Minnie Estelle (b 7-7-1879, d 3-5-1968) married in 1899 Dennis Guthrie Kavanaugh (b 10-11-1874, d 3-25-1948); and Ernest Eugene (b 8-11-1885, d 12-7-1957) who was first married about 1905 to a person whose name is not known and second in 1911 to Donna Decordova (b 5-24-1889, d 11-19-1971).

Robert Edmondson (b 2-28-1842, d 6-26-1855). Family tradition holds that a horse killed him.

Joseph A. Edmondson was born in 1845 and died 1-1886 in Moultrie, Georgia.

Peter Eli Edmondson (b. 7-1849, d after 1900). He went to Texas and is in the 1870 census living with old John Huie, the former Fayette County lawyer. *Submitted by: Mary Ann Bunn, 485 Pokona St., Sebastian, FL 32958-3902.*

### 157 JOHN BENJAMIN EDMONDSON

John Benjamin "Ben" Edmondson, born 12-18-1863 in Fayette County, Georgia, was the son of Thomas Jefferson Edmondson and Lucinda Alice Kelley. His paternal grandparents were Eli Edmondson, an early Fayette County pioneer who was in Fayette County by 1824, and Jane McBride Edmondson, daughter of James McBride and Mary Hamilton McBride. His maternal grandparents were James Wilbourn Kelley, Sr. and Mary E.M. Field Kelley. He lived his entire life in Fayette County. He married first in 1890 Mary Magdalene "Maggie" Travis (b 10-15-1868, d 9-30-1899), the daughter of John Edwards Travis and Malissa Henrietta Alford Travis. He married second in 1902 Theodocia Snead (b 11-20-1876, d 3-3-1958), the daughter of William Beasley Snead and Mary Frances Adams Snead.

Ben and Maggie's three children in birth order were: Birdie Belle, Mary Lou and Maggie Bennis. Birdie Belle Edmondson (b. 9-19-1891, d 12-21-1984) married in 1911 James Andrew