

CCHGA BYTES

The Newsletter of the Cheatham County Historical & Genealogical Association

Cheatham County History Center Hours

Tuesday 12:00 - 4:00

Wednesday 10:00 - 2:00

Saturday 10:00 - 12:00

Call the CCHGA office 615.792.3623
or email

cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com

CCHGA newsletters are snail mailed or emailed to membership in March, June, September and December. If you would like your newsletter sent to you in an email, notify us by sending an email to cchga007@bellsouth.net.

2018 CCHGA Officers

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July Program Meeting July 12, 2018 ~ 6:30 pm Cheatham County Public Library

The Cheatham County Historical and Genealogical Association's second program event of 2018 will be held July 12 at 6:30 at the Cheatham County Public Library.



The guest speaker is **Myers Brown**. The topic is: **Over Here, Over There: Tennesseans in the First World War**.

Myers will speak on the digitization project focused on WWI and touch on other WWI resources at TSLA.

Myers Brown is a native of Old Hickory, Tennessee. He received his B.A. in history from Oglethorpe University and his M.A. in public history from Middle Tennessee State University. He is a Fellow and a former Governor of the Company of Military Historians and is on the advisory boards for the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association, and the Tennessee Great War Commission.

Currently, Myers is employed as an archivist at the Tennessee State Library and Archives and works with the Archives Development Program. Prior to joining the Tennessee State Library and Archives, he served as a curator with the Tennessee State Museum, the Alabama Historical Commission, and as Curator of Military History at the Atlanta History Center. He also served as the chairman of the Tennessee War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission.

He is the author of two books: *Images of Tennessee's Union Cavalrymen* was published in December 2008, and *Images of Tennessee Confederates* in April 2011. He served as editor of the *Best of the Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, Volume 5, *Nathan Bedford Forrest and the Confederate Cavalry in West Tennessee*, published in April 2013.

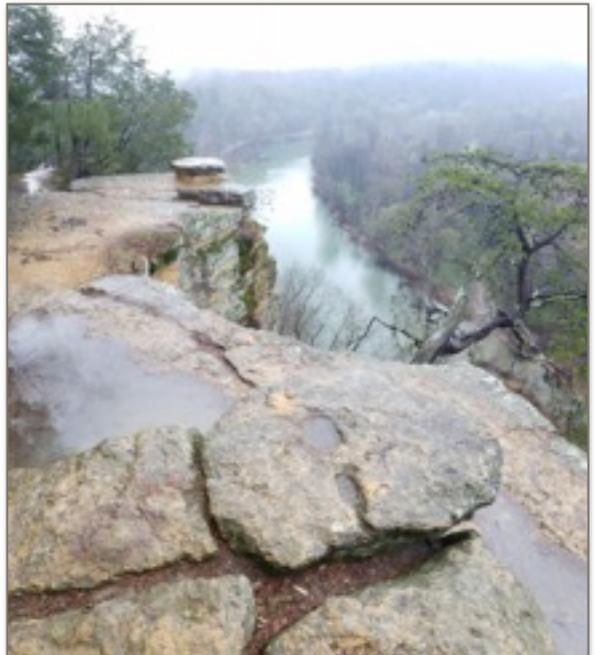
He is an adjunct professor at Goodpasture Christian School and has also taught at Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, Cumberland University in Lebanon, and Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin.

Footprints at The Narrows - *Submitted by DJ Hutcherson*

In the following 1883 newspaper article, the author claims to have discovered three and a half pairs of human footprints embedded in the flat rock on top of the ridge at The Narrows of the Harpeth. If in fact these prints did exist at one time, no trace of them remains today.

Foot-Prints in the Rock.

About twenty miles west of Nashville there is a place called "Narrows of Harpeth," one of the most picturesque landscapes to be found in Tennessee. At this point Harpeth River forms a horseshoe bend, making a circuit of six miles, and doubling back on itself to within eighty or ninety yards. In the heel of the shoe rises a ridge, forming almost a perpendicular bluff on both sides extending about half a mile south in the direction of the toe of the shoe. It rises to the height of about four hundred feet, and at the highest point is not more than eight feet wide on the top, with a perpendicular face on the east side for one hundred feet or more - that is, a plumb line suspended from the edge would hang clear for one hundred feet or more before it would encounter any obstruction. The ridge at the bed of the river is some ninety yards wide, but the slope which brings it to that width at the bottom is mostly on the western side. At the highest point on the crest of this ridge is a flat surface rock, and on that rock are imprinted six and a half tracks of human feet.



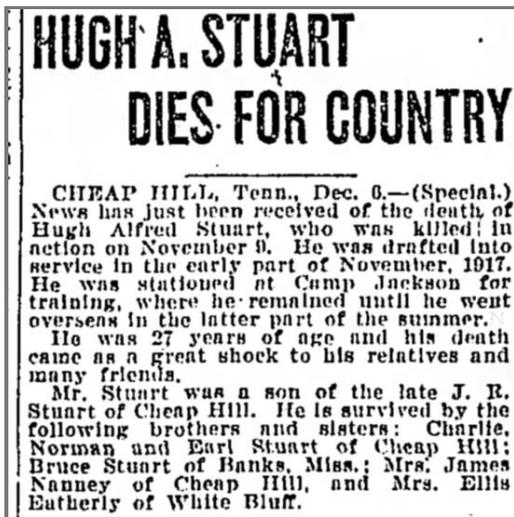
These tracks are indented into the rock as much as a quarter of an inch, or in some places more. The tracks are of bare feet, the toes all pointing in the same direction - toward the east. Most of the tracks are as perfect as if they had been imprinted on moist sand or earth. They are in three pairs. The first or largest pair is furthest north. They are less than the average size man's foot, and larger than the average size woman's foot, one a little in advance of the other. The next pair is on the south side, but near to the first. In size and appearance they represent the tracks of a child of sixteen or eighteen months old. The track of the right foot of this pair is turned in a little at the toes, and the toes of that foot are turned down, as we often see children when first learning to walk seem to endeavor to clutch the floor with their toes, as if to avoid falling or slipping. The topographical relation of these

tracks to the large ones indicates that the child might have been holding to the finger or hand of the larger person.

South of these little tracks, but is near to them, the third pair, indicating a child of some four or six years old. These last were made by a beautiful pair of feet, and are as pretty tracks as a child ever made in the dust or soft earth. All of these tracks are within three or four feet of the edge of the precipice on the eastern side, as already described. But I have said there was half a track, which is the most interesting feature on the tablet. This half track is printed on the very edge of the precipice, and represents the heel and hinder half of the foot from the middle of the instep back, and would indicate that the toes and front part of the foot projected over the precipice or that the rock had broken off at that point. The half track is of the large size foot, or foot of the adult person, and is immediately in front of the large pair of tracks already mentioned.

Just here some interesting questions arise. Who made those tracks? How were they made and when were they made? I was born within half a mile of the spot, and lived there until I was twenty years old. In my youth I often stood upon the rock to enjoy the wild, romantic and picturesque scenery surrounding, and at one time and another have spent many hours of my boyhood upon it, but never saw the tracks nor even heard of them being there. Some seven or eight weeks ago I was in the neighborhood, in company with my youngest son, and took him up to the rock to show him a spot that had been interesting to me in my boyhood days. While sitting on the rock he discovered one of the small tracks. They had evidently been discovered before, for they were all covered with moss except that one, and it had been, but someone had manifestly been picking the moss out to make it more distinct. He called my attention to it. It excited our curiosity, and we then made a careful search for others, and found the six and a half tracks described. They were all covered in moss, except the one which had been partially revealed by picking the moss out. I then inquired of several of the surrounding neighbors, but could find no one who had ever seen or heard of them. If they were cut by a chisel, it must have been by an artist of no mean ability - such an artist has certainly never resided in that neighborhood. But why should an artist of such capacity have gone to the out of the way place to amuse himself cutting tracks where they would not be discovered by a human being until they were overgrown with moss, and where the oldest inhabitants in the neighborhood have never heard of them; not even the owner of the land on which the rock is situated, and why cut the half track on the edge of the precipice? Under other circumstances it might be supposed the tracks were made by the tread of human feet, at a time when the surface was soft, and it afterwards hardened into rock and the impressions became fixed. But this theory is not plausible, from the fact that in this climate we have constant rains and winds, and in the winter time frost, and the place is so exposed that it is scarcely possible that tracks made in the soft earth or sand could have withstood the action of the weather long enough to have hardened into stone. But, if made in this way, when was it done and who did it? Doubtless it was in the long ages past, and the size of the tracks would suggest the possibility, if not the probability that they were the tracks of a mother and her two children; that she may have had the smaller one by the hand. They were all facing toward what is now a precipice. - Ccr. Nashville (Tenn.) American.

The Huntsville Weekly Democrat (Huntsville, Alabama) January 10, 1883



The Tennessean, December 7, 1918

2018 CCHGA Meetings

All meetings at 6:30

Cheatham County Public Library

- June 14
- July 12 - Program Meeting - Myers Brown
- August 9
- September 13
- October 11 - Program Meeting - Nanette Malher
- November 8 - Annual Bake Sale
- December - No meeting

Emails from an Icon

The Inspirational Life & Last Words of Pioneering Aviatrix Bobbi Trout (synopsis from the book in progress by presenter Nanette Malher)

In 1927, a 21-year-old ignores the fact that she is a woman and throws herself into helping birth American aviation, a new industry that even men fear. Against all odds — lack of money; male chauvinism; a father who is a compulsive drinker and gambler; the looming Great Depression — she brushes aside mainstream thought, cuts off her hair, dons men's clothing and sets her sights on the sky. The public admiringly looks up as she breaks one aviation record after another.

She becomes so famous that Walt Disney asks her to advertise his "new" Mickey Mouse. In 1929, Trout competes against her gal-pal aviatrixes in the first national women's air race of 1929 dubbed "The Powder Puff Derby" by Will Rogers.

In 1987, a young woman aspires to be a pilot but knows no one in the aviation industry. She ventures to Atchison, Kansas to witness Amelia's 90th birthday celebration. To her surprise, she winds up rubbing shoulders with 400 women pilots (members of The Ninety-Nines, an organization of women pilots started by Amelia Earhart and Bobbi Trout in 1929). She meets Earhart's sister Muriel Morrissey and Bobbi Trout. Almost fifteen years pass. The woman is now a business owner (not yet a pilot) and receives a serendipitous email from Trout. Thus begins an extraordinary and inspirational friendship that culminates to Trout's death in 2003 at the age of 97. However, the story does not end there . . .

Nanette Malher is a resident of Cheatham County and a business owner (Aviatrix Enterprises), graphic designer, writer, composer, film editor and private pilot. On October 11, 2018, at 6:30 pm, at the CCHGA meeting at the Cheatham County Public Library, she will give a presentation about her friend and American aviation icon Bobbi Trout, which will include playing scenes from the award-winning documentary "Breaking Through the Clouds - The First Women's National Air Derby" for which Nanette composed the soundtrack. Historical photos and memorabilia will be on display. DVDs and soundtrack CDs will be available for Nanette to sign. (A special drawing will be held for those in attendance for one person to receive a valuable item personally signed by Bobbi Trout.)

Continued from March 2018: The Memoirs of Ralph Spangler - Reminiscing About Yesterday

**Interviewer: Gary Pace,
Transcribed in 2010 by Betty Harris**

him we had to dig holes on the fields 165 feet wide. I remember we stretch strings from sideline to sideline, and about every four feet Dan Stack was one of them and Roscoe Griffin was the other one. We found a couple of farms where the fields were full of Bermuda and the owners said we could dig up all the Bermuda we wanted. So that's how we, got the sod for the field. The next day we would come back and dig our holes and drop the clumps of sod in the holes. We didn't have any type of watering system, but we had 50 gallon barrels. We used them to fill up the holes with water after we dropped the sod, then we would tamp it down. We did that on the whole football field. This was in about the first of June. Fortunately we had some good rains and we fertilized it heavily. And we had a nice football field in September.

(Gary remembers that Coach would take his health classes to the farms. The first class would dig up the sod, the next would bring the clumps back in to school and the next one would dig holes and another would drop the sods in the holes. They got their exercise and did something useful and learned a lesson in doing so.)

(Gary remembers that when he played offense, they ran nothing but a single wing. He is still fond of that today. Why did Coach choose the single wing?)

Coach remembers that his coaches were ahead of their time at GBA. The students did not realize it at the time. But **Coach J.B. Akin** called him on a Sunday afternoon after he had visited a couple of schools, and he showed them a *T Formation*. Back then, most schools ran single wing, double wing, *short punt* but no *T formation*. But we put the *T formation* in and had an undefeated season because of it. Back then most schools ran one defense which was a 6-2-2-1. Back then, they did not have the various defenses that you see today. Those six men were the linemen, you had two linebackers lining up in front of the offensive guards, two half backs and what they called a safety. That was the defense most of the time. But when I went to AL we ran a completely different system that I had never seen which was called the *Notre Dame Box* which **Frank Thomas** brought in from Notre Dame. He played under the great Legend **Canute Rotney**. I fell in love with that formation. You came out and lined up. No split receivers, no 7 man line but you came out in tight formation, a man over seven your quarter back, you had a half back, a full back and a right half back and you lined up looking like you were going to run the *T formation*. But then on a signal, you would shift and you would either shift right or you would shift left. Now when you would shift right your left halfback would come to tail back your full back would take a couple of steps up and become your full back the man on center would shift out and become what we would call your blocking back and your right half back would shift out and he would be your wing back. This was shifting right.

Then when you would shift left it was the complete same way. Your right half back would come your tailback and your left tailback would shift out to become your wing back. So you had an offensive right and our's had an offensive left. We never ran a play at AL from the tight *T formation*.

When I started coaching I said, "Why can't we run some plays since we set up in a *T* before we shift, why can't I run some plays out of that formation?" And I did. It was very effective because most of the teams lined up in a 6-2-2-1. Well the tight *T* against the 6-2-2-1 defense

You couldn't draw up a better defense to run against than the 6-2-2-1 defense. After that, and as time went on schools started using what they called the 54 defense. It was a 5 man front, 2 ends, 2 tackles, and a man on the center's nose which was a five man front. Your two line backers still lined up in front of your offensive guard. And then your two wing backs, and of course, your tail back.

Then people started using the split 6. And then TN came in and started using the wide tackle 6 which was used at Wyoming. You came in with another defense or two and these I see on TV but I'm not knowledgeable enough to know the advantages or disadvantages of the three man front or the four man front. The offensive formations now are so much different, I guess the reason they use the three man front is because people are spread out over the field and they have to have people on these spread people where they can receive a pass. Of course that weakens your running game to some extent. They are also using now a four man front. But these pros have gone into almost a three man front. Matter of fact, Hainsworth who played at TN who was an all American and who played for the Titans who is now with Washington, he does not like the three man front. Matter of fact, he just told the coach, "I don't want to play the three man front. I'm a four man front." Now I cannot go into details on a three man front or a four man front because I never used it, I was never around it, I don't know the better points or the weaker points of it. But as years have come by, you've seen changes in the offensive and the defensive and I don't know what will take place in the next years to come. But I'm sure they'll have some more changes. They might even have a two man front, I don't know. Each year, you see changes in football, and if you've kept up with it, people say wonder why they do this and why they do that, but if it were not for changes, football would kind of be in a stale mate I guess.

I've met some interesting people. I'll go into detail about my tennis trip. Sam Reeks, as I mentioned, was one of my closest friends. I have a phobia about flying. In fact, I've only been up in a plane once. Sam said he was going to take me to Los Vegas. Gosh, I didn't even have coffee money, much less enough to go to Los Vegas. But he said he was going to give me a trip to Los Vegas. So we went. He carried me to Los Vegas and we stayed at one of the better hotels. What a great trip, and the things that I saw that I'd never seen before. But this particular day at the hotel (and I cannot remember the name of the hotel) they had two or three tennis courts laid out in the hotel area. Sam and I had carried our tennis rackets. Sam was a better tennis player because when he would serve the ball it looked like a bullet coming at you across that net. Down at the park, after I built that tennis court, people used to say that nobody ever played tennis but Sam and I. But it wound up that even people who worked over at State Industries would come over and play after they got off work at 11 o'clock at night. They were used heavily by people here in Cheatham County rather than just Sam and I. But to get back to the story, Sam and I were out playing and had played a set of tennis. They had nice chairs there and a water cooler and what have you and we were sitting there and who walks in but **Tony Bennett** and one of his friends. The minute he walked in and came close to the courts, I said, "Sam, do you know who that is?" And he says, "Yeah, that's Tony Bennett." I said, "You're exactly right."

Ghosts From the Past Linger Still at Historical Millwood Farm House

Ashland City Times, May 29, 1985

Editor's Note: The following feature story was written by Pauline H. Nicholson of Route 1, Ashland City, and concerns the historical aspects of her home, Millwood Farm.

We live in the country, five miles north of Ashland City.

The road winds through clean green hills. It is bordered now and again on the left side by gray limestone cliffs and on the lower side its boundaries are made clear by tall, young poplars, their green foliage interspersed with yellow leaves, their trunks gray and smooth. They stand like watchful sentinels.

In the valley beside the road, as if to keep one company, a rock-bottomed brook, cool and clear, murmuring happily, glides along, following the curves of the road. It runs past the old stone spring house on its right bank, graciously accepting its added burden, then rushes into Sycamore Creek close to the spot where the bridge crosses.

The elevation of the bridge helps us to see the lovely valley along the creek. To the left, through a meadow runs an unpaved road leading to the Girl Scout Camp.

An historical marker at this road intersection tells us that on this creek stood a powder mill owned by Dupont. Here powder was made in 1860, and over this road they hauled it on wagons to Ashland City and shipped it by steamboats down the Cumberland River to the armies of the C. S. A.

To the right from the new bridge we can see the old bridge built of steel designed and constructed by the Old Major Lewis, a well remembered character in these parts.

The highway now goes up a hill cedar lined on either side. At the top of the hill looking down and to the right, there is a spectacular view - a deep, deep valley (created by I wonder what?) and deepened by the age old horseshoe bending channel of the creek.

A narrow drive leaves the highway and, clinging at times perilously close to the rim of this valley, brings you almost immediately within sight of our home, Millwood Farm.

The trees have grown uncut for ages. They are enormous. Some oaks are 40 inches through. These giant hickories are the biggest in these parts. The smaller maples, dogwood and beeches make a deep shade even at noon day.

Before the Civil War, when this was a part of Davidson County, an old academy called Millwood stood here and these trees were on that campus.

They say a youth with Confederate leanings climbed the tallest hickory and tied to an upper limb a Confederate flag. The headmaster ordered him to take it down. He climbed it again but instead of taking the flag down, he chopped the limbs off with a hatchet to keep others from hauling it down. The emotions of the students ran rampant after his punishment and caused the disbanding of the school as students took sides for the North or for the South.

From the yellow poplar slave-hewn timbers of that building we framed our low rambling ranch type brick - combining the old with the new.

Forsythia and mock orange, roses and japonica are everywhere. Over the wall, even over the roof and the topmost brick of the chimney grows the shining green ivy.

The spot is so drowsy and quiet that now and again a deer will come in the morning mist to nibble the rose hedge and scamper away at a sound.

There is a feeling of timelessness here. A dreaminess that would make one feel, in the lazy evenings, the almost physical presence of those boys and girls of other years.

Here we found the answer to a dream. Here was the place to hang the old family dinner bell. A quiet woodsy drive for children to safely ride tricycles, bicycles, go-carts and convertibles.

Here we have a wide fireplace that burns wood cut a few feet away, really burns it in a blackened chimney. The firelight flickers on the cannon-ball posts of an old, old bed and almost reflects in the red, red would bedspread handmade by my grandmother.

I touch these things softly. They are all precious. The then and the now.



Pauline Hagedwood Nicholson, daughter of Paul E. Hagedwood and Enolier Collins Hagedwood. She married John Baxter Nicholson.

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