

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 cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com.

2019 CCHGA Officers

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Patrick Smith
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Member at Large

This letter shown in the photo to the right was found in a donation and transcribed by Ms. Josephine McMahan years ago.. The letter was sent to Mary in Ashland City from Clayton.

Clarksville
June 11, 1901

Dear Mary

I will now answer welcome and most highly appreciated letter which I received on the 8th. I was very glad and ___ to hear from you but however ___go to read it. Mary I am very glad indeed that you did throw in _____ in the fire instead of letting your parents read it. I feel that you appreciated it just the same.

___also feel that you conferred to me a lasting favor. Mary I appreciated your letter very much. It showed true friendship in you after they found out that I had written to you and raised objections and then you ___so.

I had just as soon send them this way as direct to you ___we will be sure of your parents not getting them. It is like Miss Jessie Crenshaw says where there is a will there is a way isn't it. I am now attending the institute where is quite a number of us present. I think there was about 120 today. Miss Laura, Miss Fannie, Rosa W., Miss Eva H., Miss Bessie W., Miss Angelena Pennington are with us. We are having an interesting time of it. I saw Pegg ___ she said tell you hello. She sad that you wasn't treating her well at all but I don't see why that you are not treating her as well as she is.___you. You asked me where I was going to teach well I do not know for certain yet but I expect the I will teach about three miles from home at Antioch. It is a nice school house and in an excellent county. Yes I was sorry that I didn't get the Neptune school but it dd not ___ expect that you will come back to Southside this fall will you not? I hope that will be so that I can go to school there after xmas but I can not say now. Miss Mary I want you to be sure and write me word when and on what day you are coming to Clarksville and I will try and make it convenient to see you for a few minutes.



When did you see Eula? Tell her hello for me. When did you see Polly Caroline? We did not think when we were reading that verse in that book at Bro. ___ that it would come to pass and such an early date as it did when ___ there on the following Tuesday _____. and you were far away from home did we? But we never know what is going to come to pass tomorrow, I did not only look disappointed but I felt that way after taking such a drive and not securing any school and above all not getting to see you at all.

Russell and I are taking of coming up to Mr. Bobbits, next Sunday week. If we do we will let you know and Elsie also two or three days before and if we do come will it be so that you could visit Elsie for a few hours that day. I would like very much to see you when I come up in that town. I am certainly coming to Elsie's entertainment at Ashland. Let me know when it is convenient I do not know when Pro. WWM is going to have his reunion he don't know now himself. The protracted meeting at Southside begins on the first Sunday of July. Guess you will attend it will you not? Mary I have not yet broken my promise. I am remembering to live the life of an upright honest Christian gentleman and I wan the prayers of all Christians that I may succeed in living up to my purpose. I have gotten clear of my revolver and now I do not own any at all because they are not of any use to me. Mary I am not the only one that has to write and address my letters to someone else and get them to give them to you. Bee Nicks has to end the letters that he writes to Miss Susie as she __them to__. I spent the night at Southside Sat. Night. We're all going out to the graduating exercises at the SWPW tomorrow. All of us are going together. When did you see your young Mr. Hmphreys? I hope that all of you girls are not as lonely as I am since school is out.

Russell and Miss Elsie are getting up much of a case aren't they? Miss Elsie is a good, nice and pleasant girl. You tell her that I am very much obliged to her for acting as postman for us. Well as it is about midnight I will close. Answer soon.

From your friend Clayton

PS if it is convenient I'd be glad if you will answer my letters and mail them either on Mon or Tuesday and then I will know exactly when to go to the box after then and they will not be in the ____

However if this not convenient you can have them at any time and I will ge them all right. I didn't receive your letter in time to answer on Thursday. Goodbye

A JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER EXPEDITION - GIDEON H. LOWE

continued from June 2019

December 27, 1847. Two men whom we saw on on yesterday at preaching, came in this morning, to whom we sold 40 vols. - Find considerable ? in town about our books. Mr. Woodberry - the Presbyterian minister in this place is taking a deep interest, with us and gives us good aid in circulating the precious truth for which he has our grateful thanks. Find this evening they are reading our books all through town.

E. W. Vaughan who has just returned from an excursion with his basket of books throughout the place, says the people are nearly all reading

He called at a Coffee House which he had distributed some vols and in the morning, and found one young man reading " ? " aloud, while there was a crowd around him, all paying the most strict attention.

We feel that we have effected some good today. Distributed some 70 vols, and a goodly portion of - Nelson has been in great demand today, sold 8 copies. We rejoice at this, for there are many infidels here.

There seems to be great anxiety on the part of many of the citizens for us to preach before we leave this place, this we trust we shall be enabled to do soon as the rivers are falling.

Tuesday, Dec. 28. Rained all day, but little done; sold some 15 vols and among the ? of Nelson, great talk about it; hope and believe it will effect great good in Smithland. Made a Temperance Lecture tonight - considerable excitement.

Wednesday, December 29, 1847. Clear and warm, high wind, river drought. falling. Busy in town with our basket today. The people in considerable confusion, getting into their houses when they had to leave on account of high water; yet we have not labored in vain; we have distributed more than 40 vols and many ? , which we humbly trust will be abundantly blessed.

The few friends of the ? here, are greatly encouraged to find the citizens so willing to buy and read our books; we feel that the Lord is which us, blessed be his holy name. Our constant prayer is; that we may be humble; and entirely given to the work.

Thursday, Dec. 30. Resolved to redouble our diligence today; started out early this morning, find the people considerably excited about the books; discover they have generally been reading, and well pleased. The man who sells the yellow book and who opposed our selling at first, sent his young man to get some of our books and we sent him the right kind.

To be continued in December 2019 Newsletter

**Lee's Grocery and Bait Shop
Submitted by Bobby Lee, CCHGA member
Continued from June 2019 Newsletter**

Daddy had ponds dug behind the house to raise "tuffy" minnows and built block worm beds to raise worms and a shed to cover them. We hand dug and counted the "red wigglers". They sold for .75 cents for a box of 100. The minnows sold for: small 4 doz. 1.00, medium 3 doz. 1.00 and large .50 doz. I still have one of the signs.

In the early days we were open seven days a week and running the store was a very demanding job. Seldom did we sit down to eat a meal that someone did not stop to purchase something. Daddy would get up early and open but he never was much at keeping the store. He left that to Mom and focused on doing things outside. Mom said he flattered her with the thought that the store was hers but the reality was that he did not like to run the store.

When I became old enough I ran a trap line in the winter. Prime muskrats would bring 2.00 to 3.00 dollars, raccoons about 3.00 and mink 20.00 to 30.00 that was good money in those days. I stretched the hides and cured them all winter. I sold them at Block Bros. on 2nd. Ave in Nashville at the end of the season.

Our life evolved around the river. Some of my best memories are the commercial fishing, duck and dove hunts as a teenager and young adult.

The store was a gathering place for the community. Neighbors would come and sit around at night and on Sunday afternoons. We had many fish fry's, Mom could cook fish. She said the secret was a black skillet and hot grease, slightly smoking. It would be so hot in the kitchen we would open the doors. Also wild game suppers, Ms. Frances Hall was a really good wild game cook. I remember Uncle Hershel Speight, Mom's Uncle, coming to a "tacky" party dressed as a woman. He liked a little "nip" now and then and was feeling good. He was the life of the party flirting with all the men. Uncle Hershel lived to 101 years of age.

A New Addition

December 12, 1951 Daddy told me I was going to my first cousin, Don Duke's to spend the night, I thought that was strange since I had not asked to go. I believe they had killed hogs and were working out the meat. Duke's Grocery was a busy place and where you hung out then in Bellsburg. Aunt Ruby, Uncle Howard and Don lived across Hwy 49 from the store.

Daddy came to pick me up the next day and told me I had a new baby sister. Pat was born at home; Dr. Harper was the Dr. Mom had a couple of days off from storekeeping and then back to work. Wow, how times have changed.

Bob Reed

My memory is that we put timber skids under the old shack that Pop Fairbanks had lived in at the Mouth of Harpeth. Daddy took the old army truck and pulled it to our new place. It sat near the drive to the boat dock and fish cleaning shed. Bob moved in and went to work for us. He was an early riser and waited on the early morning fisherman. When Daddy opened the door in the morning Bob was usually sitting on the porch. He had lived next door on what would become Daily Halls place and later Brantley's Fish Dinners.

I remember one time Mr. Irvin Miller (Tuckhoe Farm) wanted to buy some fish but he wanted Bob to clean them. Bob, for some reason, did not want to do it. I think he had taken a bath and changed clothes, which was a big deal for Bob. I believe Mr. Miller offered him a good bit of money but Bob would not do it. Here was a man worth millions and another with nothing but Bob could not be bought. Mr. Miller later talked about the incidence and how Bob was maybe the only person to not do what he wanted done. He respected Bob a great deal after that.

On June 1, 1971 Bob was not on the porch when Daddy opened the store. When Daddy went to check on him he was sitting in his chair. He had passed away during the night. Mom was responsible for getting his grave marker. He is buried in the Dozier Cemetery, on Bradley Dozier Road, next to his parents.

A military veteran, Bob had no family, no money and no ambition. Bob was his own man and honest as the day was long. He ate with us most of the time and had to be encouraged to bathe and wash his clothes, which Mom did for him.

Cheatham Dam

Construction had started on Cheatham Dam in 1950 and the lock opened in 1952. I vaguely remember when they blew up old Lock A. I think we went down there in a boat to see how many fish were killed and it was a large number.

When new lakes are formed it's a prime time for fishing. The rising waters cover new fertile areas and the fish multiply and grow. Cheatham Lake was no different. Daddy found a flatboat for sale around Cumberland City or Palmyra TN. These were large barge type vessels used to move heavy farm equipment across rivers. They had no power and had to be pulled across the water. We were going to use it for the boat dock.

I think maybe Daddy, Charles and Clarence Mitchell and M. J. Morris went to get the barge. They were going to motor it up the river. They carried two 20 to 25 horse power outboards, 55 gallon drums for fuel and sleeping and eating provisions for the trip. This was quite an undertaking. The barge was probably 12' wide and 40' long, heavy wood construction and a load for the outboards. I wanted to go so bad but Daddy would not let me. I believe they were gone several days; regular Huckleberry Finns.

We anchored the barge just upstream from the Harpeth Bridge and tied the rental boats to it. In those days there were no launching ramps and few people had boat trailers. We bought Rich Line 14' V-bottom aluminum boats and started the boat rental business. The price was 2.00 a day. The drive went down between Hwy 49 and Bob's shack and underneath the bridge to the river. We built a building with aluminum roofing for the exterior to use for the boat dock. I stayed there sometimes on busy days and ran the dock. We had fishing supplies and snacks for sale there. I would load the boats and put the outboards on for the customers and some would give me a tip, I liked that. I also earned spending money by cleaning fish for customers. .05 cents a pound in the early days and later up to .10 a pound.

Commercial Fishing

When I became old enough I sometimes ran one of the boats and Daddy and Bob ran one. If we baited the lines on the river Daddy and Bob would bait and I would jump them out. The earliest days these were flat bottomed wood boats and we left them in the water most of the time loading the motor, gas and fishing supplies when we used them.

In trot lining, bait was always a chore when you fished 800 plus hooks a night. We would go below the Dam and with rod and reel catch large shad and skipjack for cut bait. In the summer time shad minnows would school along the surface. Daddy made a "scoop" of welded rods and ½" hardware cloth that hung from the front of the boat. It was hard to move through the water and we used two outboards on the boat. You just ran into the schools of shad, stopped suddenly, put the motors in reverse and lifted the scoop up. Very hard work! We also had a mussel brale (more accurately a crowfoot bar). A piece of ½" galvanized pipe approx. seven feet long. From it hung varying lengths of line with a wire hook on the end. You pulled this through the mussel beds and the shells would close on the hooks. We also seined the local creeks for crawfish and even used Spam lunch meat for bait.

I remember one time we started below the Mouth and fished all the way past the Ford Plant moving up river each night and not fishing the same spot twice unless we had a really good night there. We docked at Mark Morris Boat Dock on Sam's Creek, Locus Cove on Highway 12 and an elderly lady's place above Scottsboro on Highway 12. I never knew her name. Daddy paid her a little something as we drove through her yard and tied the boats behind her house. We fished about twenty trot lines a night. Take them up in the morning, rack them, go get bait if you didn't have it, bait them and put them out again. Later we started using metal Jon boats and trailers.

In the summer time we fished trammel nets. Jim Story, a son of Bill Story who was a good friend of Daddy's growing up, helped us. Jim had been a college student and wanted to be a wildlife biologist but he dropped out of college and later became a game warden on Kentucky Lake. He stayed with Mr. Jack and Mrs. Della Story when he worked with us. We would set the nets in the shallow sloughs and literally drive the fish in them. It was mostly rough fish, carp and some buffalo. We wholesaled the fish in bulk to Bluff City Fish Company from Memphis, who would send an insulated truck weekly, and Little Fish and Oyster Company in Nashville. The carp brought .05 a pound and even though you could sometimes catch a boat load it was really hard work for not much money. There were times we caught more than we could sale. We sold them .50 cents to 2.00 a fish.

Lee's Gro. closed in 1971 or the next year.

This article is taken from a family history I had written for the children a few years back. It is my hope that you will enjoy it now and perhaps one day a child or grandchild of a future generation will see it and get a glimpse of what it was like for their ancestors in a previous time.

Mark your calendars for upcoming CCHGA Meetings and Events!

- October 10, 2019 - Business Meeting/6:30 pm/Cheatham County Public Library
- November 14, 2019 - Business Meeting/6:30 pm/Cheatham County Public Library
- November 22, 2019 - Fall Bake Sale at Sycamore County Services Building 9:00 - Sold Out. Call the CCHGA office at 615.792.3623 to participate or email cchga007@bellsouth.net! We need you to help bake for our preservation of Cheatham County history!
- December - Cheatham County Museum and CCHGA Office Closed/No monthly meeting



Scraps - by Nell C. Harris, Editor of Ashland City Times**April 4, 1980**

“Scraps” will be a column of just what the name implies. Bits and pieces of happenings, people and places of yesteryear, like the Old Lenox Hotel that Elsa Lockert is displaying in such an authentic print.

In memory I can see the boarding house across the street from the *Times* office and the roomers going in and out. One I particularly remember because he had a beard and sideburns (unusual at that time). It was during World War II days when everyone thought only spies tried to hide their features with whiskers, at least that’s what one of my sons thought. To our surprise, the stranger turned out to be a minister, and the Tennessee Central depot agent, who was new in town. We learned to love and respect him, and he wrote an interesting column for this paper entitled “Meditations of Uncle Pete.” H. L. Wilchester was a good citizen, long since gone to his reward. God bless his memory.



Ms. Nell Clark Harris worked for nearly 70 years in many positions including Editor for the *Ashland City Times* before retiring in 1981.

Don’t forget! October, November and December are CCHGA membership months! Please renew your membership for 2020! Give a membership for Christmas to that person who has everything! The membership form is located at https://cheathamcountyhistory.weebly.com/uploads/1/1/7/9/117977532/cchga_2020_membership_form.pdf.



2020 Membership Form

CHEATHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION

PO Box 703, Ashland City, TN 37015
615-792-3623
cchga007@bellsouth.net

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Birthday: _____

E-mail: _____

As part of membership communications, CCHGA will keep you informed on the latest news from the Association, upcoming programs, and volunteer opportunities by sending out electronic notices a few times each month. This helps to reduce our postage costs.

I am a new member for 2020 I am renewing my membership

I would like to receive the quarterly newsletter "CCHGA Bytes" in email

Membership Dues

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20.00/year	<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35.00/year
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime under 60 years \$300.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime 60 - 70 years \$200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime 70 - 80 years \$100.00 Donation	<input type="checkbox"/> 80+ Free <input type="checkbox"/>

SPECIFIC CHAPTER DESIRED:

Pond Creek & Lillamay/SamsCreek At Large Member

Please make check payable to "CCHGA"

Comments: _____

Received by: _____ Date: _____

Cash Amount: _____ Check Amount and _____

September 2019

CCHGA Bytes

Email: cchga007@bellsouth.net

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/CheathamCountyHistory/>

Instagram: @cheathamcountyhistory

Website: <https://cheathamcountyhistory.weebly.com/>



Standing Marie Anglin, Extension Leader

Seated at computer is Sarah Andrews,
watching is Elsie Frazier

1992

**Sarah and Elsie (shown in the
photo) are CCHGA Members!**

Cheatham County Historical and Genealogical Association

P. O. Box 703

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