

The Heritage of Shelby County, Alabama

Shelby County Heritage Book Committee

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Clanton, Alabama



#1250

It is believed that William and Nancy left Shelby County sometime before 1860 and moved to Fayetteville in southern Talledega County. They lived in Fayetteville for the remainder of their lives. Both are buried in the family cemetery on the old homestead in unmarked graves and the date of death is unknown. The community of their homestead was frequently referred to as Rigginstown due to the many Riggins families living there. After Nancy died, William remarried to Nancy Stringfellow in Talladega County. Nancy was from Tennessee. No children were born to this second marriage.

William and Nancy Atkinson Riggins were the parents of five children: 1)-Darby, 2)-Melissa, 3)-Agrippa, 4)-Blanton Box and 5)-Mary. All were born in Alabama.

1)-Darby was born in Alabama in 1822 and married Melissa Rasberry (1822-?) in Bibb County. The family was living in Baker County (now Chilton County) in 1860. Darby and Melissa were the parents of eight or possibly ten children. a)-Nancy (1845-?), b)-William (1847-?), c)-Melissa (1849-?) married Capers Ogletree, d)-Thomas (1853-?) married Marietta (Molly) Morris, e)-M. Blanton (1853-?) twin to Thomas, f)-Rebecca (1855-?), g)-James (1857-?) and h)-Martha (1860-?). References have been made to two more children, Gant and Newton.

2)-Melissa was born in Alabama in 1826.

3)-Agrippa was born in Alabama in 1823. He married Cynthia Childress (1824-?) on 27 January 1847. She was born in Alabama in 1824 and was the daughter of Alfred and Beedie Childress of South Carolina. Agrippa and Cynthia had seven children: a)-Thomas (1847-?) married Lucy Robinson, b)-Mary (1848-?) married Mr. Bradley, c)-Martha (1855-?) never married, d)-Robert (1857-?) married Mary Morris, e)-Buford (1859-?), f)-Paratine (3 Apr 1860-?) married Sandy Sima and g)-Blanton (1862-?) married Mightie Maske.

4)-Blanton Box was born 24 July 1829 in Bibb County, Alabama. He married Mary G. Childress on 18 November 1852 in Bibb County. Mary was born in Bibb County on 12 January 1829. Mary was a sister of Cynthia Childress, wife of Agrippa. Blanton Box and Mary had ten children: a)-Percifer Smith (7 Sep 1853-17 Jan 1891) married Anna Chastain (1857-8 Feb 1927) on 14 January 1874. Anna was the daughter of James and Sarah Hubbard Chastain of Chilton County, Alabama. Blanton Box and Anna had eight children: a)-Rayford (1875-1955) married first to Jean Coker then to Fanny English, b)-Melissa Anna (29 Mar 1876-7 Dec 1952) married James Reddick Flournoy, c)-Hector (1878-?) married Delphia India Anderson, d)-Hiram (6 Dec 1879-?) married Catherine Homes, e)-Walter (?-?) married first Georgia Lee Kelley then Sallie Estelle Hasten, f)-Mary Garner who married Robert Green, g)-Lilly who married Austin Caudle and h)-Lee (9 Mar 1891-10 Aug 1925) married Pearl Holmes Blankinship.

Blanton Box enlisted as a private in the Confederate Army on 10 May 1862. He served in Company H of the Forty Fourth Alabama Infantry Regiment. His Confederate service record in the National Archives gives the following: "Absent without leave in Bibb County, Alabama." On the Regimental Return for July 1862 of "Absent enlisted man accounted for" in the following: "Absent without leave, believed to have joined another Company". The remnants of the Forty Fourth Alabama Infantry Regiment were with General Robert E. Lee at the surrender at Appomattox Court House on 9 April 1865 and Blanton Box was not listed in attendance. His first cousin, Enoch Newton Walker who was in Company F was in attendance. The Alabama Forty Fourth was in almost constant action throughout the Civil War and was in almost all of the major battles.

Blanton Box and family was living in Talladega County in 1860. He died 3 October 1896 and was buried, along with his wife Mary, in the Riggins Family Cemetery on his home place.

5)-Mary (24 Jul 1825-4 Dec 1893) married William Haddox on 11 September 1842. They are buried in New Salem Baptist Cemetery near Clanton, Chilton County, Alabama. Submitted by: Book Committee Chair John R. Walker, 1616 Linda Vista Lane, Birmingham, AL 35226

✱ Newton Jasper Riley

Sometime around 1837 Newton Jasper Riley's parents, Allen William Riley and Penelope Sides, and three young children moved to Alabama from South Carolina. Allen was born in 1804 and Penelope in 1812. They were married on September 9, 1827. Their three young children at the time of their move to Alabama were: Martin J. (born 1833), David L. (born 1835), and Angeline (born 1836). They first settled somewhere along the Coosa River in Calhoun County. Newton Jasper was the first of the Riley clan to be born in Alabama on June 10, 1839 in Calhoun County. John C. (born 1841), Caswell Abe (born 1844), and Thomas James (born 1846) were also born in Calhoun County. Allen's wife and mother, to their 7 children, Penelope, died in 1851.

On January 16, 1852 Allen married Amanda M. Walker. Sarah E. (born 1852), William (born 1854), and James B. (born 1858) were also all born in Calhoun County. Then sometime in 1859 the family moved to Talledega County for a short period of time where Francis (born 1859) and A Spencer (born 1859) were born. In 1860 Allen moved his family to the southwestern part of Jefferson County near the Rock Creek area near Bessemer. It was here that R Alice (born 1861), Lucrita Mary Lou (born 1867), and Richard (born 1868) were born.

Newton Jasper Riley joined the Confederate Army in Talledega. He served in Company D, 1st Regt., Alabama Infantry until he was Honorably discharged in June 1865 as Corporal. His "muster rolls" indicate that Newton was captured and listed as prisoner of war three times during his service, at Island No. 10 (April 8, 1862), Port Hudson, La. (July 9, 1863), and Nashville (December 15, 1864). He was discharged (released) at Camp Douglas, Nashville on December 20, 1864. Newton married Maryetta Vance on February 17, 1864. The license was issued in Jefferson County, but Maryetta was from Talledega County. Evidently they were married while on leave because Newton was still in the Army at that time. Maryetta was a childhood sweetheart of Newton's that first married a man named Rainwater. They had one daughter, Sarah Ann, born 1861. Mr. Rainwater was kicked in the head by a mule and died.

After the Civil War, Newton and Maryetta and her daughter Sarah Ann, moved to Cadiz, KY. Newton and Maryetta had five children born in KY.: Albert Sidney (born 1868), Monia Hughes (born 1870), Minnie (born 1871), Hughie Thomas (born 1873), and Maude Jane (born 1874). Albert Sidney died in Cadiz then a short time later Maryetta died (March 6, 1876).

In 1877 Newton loaded his remaining four children and Maryetta's daughter Sarah Ann in a covered wagon and headed for Alabama to be near his family (reference: "*A Covered Wagon Move Back To Shelby County*"). Sarah Ann was 16 years old at that time, the other children were 3,4,6 and 7 years old. He lived for a short time near his family not far from Bessemer, but then moved on to the Wilsonville area in Shelby County. In 1878 he married Sarah Ann Rainwater. He was 39 and she was 17 at that time. They had four children: Oscar Lawrence (born 1879), Miley (born 1881), Benjamin Rankie (born 1883), and May (born 1885). Sarah Ann died in 1885 and is buried at the Town of Shelby. Newton died on July, 1913 in the Dargin area of Shelby County and is buried at Old Chapel cemetery near Wilsonville.

Oscar Lawrence married Lilly Mae Payne (born 1881) in the Camp Branch area. They had 7 children: Elva Gertrude (born 1900), Mildred Inez (born 1902), and Nela Mae (born 1906), Herschel MacDonald (born 1910), Rebecca Romaine (born 1914), Oscar Lawrence Jr. (born 1918), and Annie Ree (born 1920). Elva Gertrude married William Arthur Cobb (reference Cobb/Riley), Mildred Inez died in 1905, Nela Mae married Burnie Lee Cobb, Herschel MacDonald married Ina Mae Hattaway, Rebecca Romaine died in 1935, Oscar Lawrence Jr. married Evelyn Jones, and Annie Ree married Fletcher Willie Davis. Gertrude and Herschel remained in and raised their families in Shelby County, the others moved out of the county or out of the state.

Four of Newton Jasper Riley's Great Grandsons currently (1998) live in Shelby County; William A. Cobb, Jr. (Grandson of Oscar Lawrence Riley), Mac Heaton (Grandson of Mary Riley), Herschel M. Riley, Jr. (Grandson of Oscar Lawrence Riley), and Timothy Riley (Grandson of Oscar Lawrence Riley). Note: Allen William Riley was also their Great-great Grandfather. Submitted by: William A. Cobb, Jr. 140, Hwy. 265, Calera, AL 35040 Sources: Census Records, Military Records, Court Records and Family History

Barbara Baker Roberts

County Historian

Dr. Barbara Baker Roberts, 1951 graduate of Calera High School, was the third daughter of Horace Claude Baker and Theresa Aldridge of Calera. She attended Alabama College, now University of Montevallo, as an English Major. By her sophomore year she was a feature editor for *The Alabamian*, the College newspaper, and an engineer for the College radio station. She studied creative writing under Robert Payne, noted British author-in-residence and Professor of English on the Montevallo campus.