

# YORE LORE

Baldwin County Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 108, Foley, Alabama 36536

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## Baldwin County Genealogical Society Meetings for October 10 and November 14 have been cancelled ... due to the continued effect of Covid 19 pandemic.

The next meeting will be December 12<sup>th</sup>. If the Meeting Room is still limited to 20 people, registration will be necessary. Information will be forthcoming as soon as we know. It has been a tough year but hopefully we will end the year with a Merry Christmas. Stay well, wash hands often and wear a mask!

Please stay posted to BCGS and Foley Library's webpage.

We wish all to be careful and take care.

*Tina Graham, President*

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**BCGS Board Meetings will continue to meet at 10 a.m. Board Room**

**Obit Committee is meeting with respect to social distancing.** 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs of each month in AL, Local History & Genealogy Room

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### BALDWIN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MINUTES:

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#### ***We honor one of our own..... Lennie Harris***

Lennie Harris, long time member of the Baldwin County Genealogical Society, has decided to take a bit of well-deserved time for herself these days, stepping back a bit from her many activities. She has worn many hats in her contributions of time, talent and treasures for the Society itself having been the Society's photographer, and faithful giver of door prizes of her prized daylilies. But most valued is her gentle hands to file obituaries for the Obit Committee for past years, a legacy for future family researchers.

Lennie is an avid family historian and shares unselfishly her research with whomever asks. She enjoys her family's reunions often traveling miles to attend with her immediate family.

The Society appreciates her dedication and service. The work she has done for our organization does not go unnoticed. We will see you at the next meeting, Lennie, but in meantime, put your feet up, and enjoy.

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### ADDITIONS TO THE ALBAMA, LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY COLLECTIONS

**In Honor of Lois Marie O'Konek, Genealogist, from Dr. Daniel Dolgin:**

Archdiocese of New Orleans Sacramental Records Series, 19 vols from 1718 -1831

A Southern Catholic Heritage v 1 Colonial Period 1704-1813 by Charles E Nolan

#### **Other Additions:**

Bible Records of Barbour County, Alabama v 1-2 by Helen S. Foley

Abstracts of wills & estates for Barbour County, Alabama by Helen S. Foley

Obituaries from Barbour County, Alabama, newspapers, 1890-1905 by Helen S. Foley

1833 State Census for Barbour County, Alabama by Helen S. Foley

Rural land owners of Barbour County, Alabama, 1851 by Marie H. Godfrey

Mass Migration Under Sail by Raymond L. Cohn

Marriage and death notices from the Southern Christian Advocate by Brent Holcomb

Naval Aviation Depot, Pensacola, Florida

The statistical handbook of Trigg County, Kentucky by Eurie Pearl Wilford Neel

Italian Immigrant Families by Joseph N. Macaluso

The Liberator, Lincoln Consolidated High School, Washtenaw, Michigan, yearbooks 1958, 1961, 1962, 1963

Minnesota Swedes by Lily Settedahl

Seventy-Five Years of German Immigration to Ste. Genevieve County, Missouri, 1800-1875 by Barbara A McClurkin

Mississippi Coast Historical and Genealogical Society quarterlies, vol 24 no 3 – v 32, 1996

Portrait and biographical record of Fayette, Pickaway and Madison Counties, Ohio by Chapman Brothers

Pennsylvania German Pioneers by Ralph Beaver Strassburger

The Spanish Archives of the General Land Office of Texas by Virginia H. Taylor

Records of the Superintendent of Indian Trade, 1806-1823 (Predecessor to Bureau of Indian Affairs created 1824) Bureau of Indian Affairs

Sims Index to Land Grants in West Virginia

**Donated from Marie Evans Davis McQueen estate, family histories of:**

Till Family, Descendants of Nicholas Till, IV and Barbara (Bruner)

Descendants of Robert Hinson, b 1802, Fauquier County, Virginia

Alexander – Descendants of James Alexander

James Family – Jessie Woodson James, Labon James, William James

Descendants of William Pride

Descendants of Ebenezer J. Bourland

Descendants of Thonas Joseph Johnson, Daniel McQueen, Emanuel Sandusky

## NEWS RELEASES

**FamilySearch** will provide specialized book scanning services and support volunteers in exchange for access to **Ontario Ancestors'** extensive library of historical and genealogical books. Digitized documents will be publicly available on both websites with digitization scheduled to begin by end of 2020, depending on pandemic restrictions. This agreement is a first for a genealogical society in Canada.

This is the second time two organizations have partnered on records preservation and access. The first digitization project was the *Vernon Directories* that began in 2019 (Search the *Ontario Vernon Directories* for fun discoveries about your ancestors.

*familysearch news August 2020*

**Boomers and Sooners: The Oklahoma Land Rush of 1889** saw as many as 50 thousand settlers pour in Oklahoma hoping to stake claim to a portion of nearly two million acres opened for settlement by the U. S. Government. The land, formerly occupied by Native Americans, was considered Unassigned Lands after the federal government forcibly relocated many Native American Tribes.

The number of settlers surpassed available land and they soon realized that some snuck into Oklahoma ahead of the April 22<sup>nd</sup> open date. Those early homestead seekers were known as **Sooners**.

*newspapers.com newsletter*

**FamilySearch and Partners Digitize Mayflower Descendants Records.** FamilySearch International, AmericanAncestors.org (New England Historic Genealogical Society) and the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, (GSMD), in concert with the 400th Anniversary of the Mayflower, announced that tens of thousands of Mayflower Society member applications (over one million images) and documented descendant family trees of the Mayflower passengers are now freely accessible online. There are an estimated 35 million descendants today of the 26 Mayflower couples that survived the first winter. The deceased generations in the applications are available online. Search the records at FamilySearch.org/Mayflower and the AmericanAncestors.org

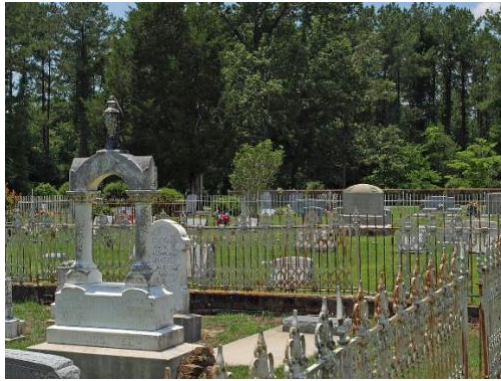
**About the New England Historic and Genealogical Society (NEHGS)** known to many as American Ancestors, is the world's largest nonprofit society dedicated to family history serving more than 260,000 members and millions online users with 1.4 billion records at AmericanAncestors.org. NEHGS was formally constituted in March of 1845 by an act of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is home to a world-class research library and archive, an expert staff, offers an award-winning genealogical research website and maintains a publishing division producing original genealogical research, scholarship and instruction each year.

(The Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections of the Foley Public Library have the New England Historic and Genealogical Register quarterlies 1847 – 2018, published by the New England Historic and Genealogical Society.)

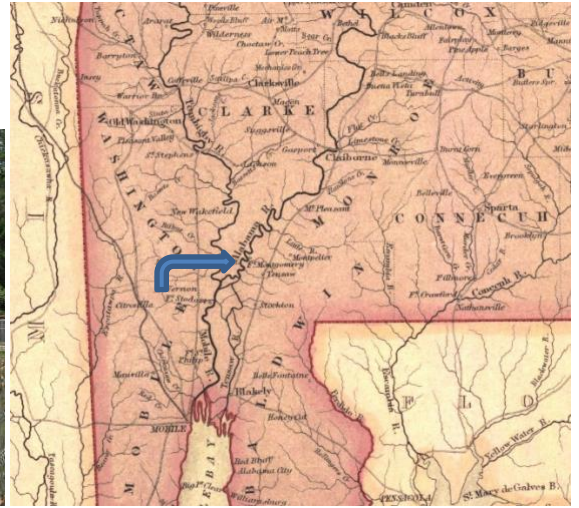
Montgomery Hill, Baldwin County, Alabama



Montgomery Hill Church,



Montgomery Hill Cemetery



Montgomery Hill located north of Stockton, Tensaw, and south of Montplier

After the Treaty of Fort Jackson in August 1814, part of Gen. Andrew Jackson's army traveled by boats down the Alabama River to land about the present Little River, the north of Baldwin County. Under command of **Col. Thomas H. Benton**, a post base of supplies was established at a place which he christened as **Fort Montgomery** honoring his enemy **Major Lemuel P. Montgomery** who was killed the previous spring at **Battle of Horse Shoe Bend**.

After some years, the word Fort was dropped from the name and the place was called "**Montgomery Hill**." It was near here that **Major Robert Farmer**, after his retirement as British Commandant at Mobile, established himself on a plantation and after the visit of **William Bartram** in 1775, the locality is referred to always when speaking of the Indian country as the **Tensas Country**, often spelled **Tensaw**. At that time a small post office run by stage, was operated in connection with a general store in at one time was a village of some proportions.

As early as 1812, **Philip Coleman** of Butler County, Alabama, a private in company commanded by **Captain Baily Hurd**, commanded by **Colonel McGrew** in the **War with Great Britain** in 1812, was honorably discharged at **Montgomery Hill** on March, 1815. Later he was drafted in Washington County, Alabama as private in under command of **Captain William Heard** in war against Indians, known as "**Jackson's War**," for term of six months to be honorably discharged, again, at **Montgomery Hill**, Alabama.

In 1839, **Montgomery Hill** was considered a gay place with "fine race track, almost a mile long, the whole length of it could be seen by a person standing on the ground seeing the horses run the whole track," this description found in reminiscences of **Mrs. Richard G. Davis** written in 1890. "There was at that time one fine large store owned by **Col. C.W. Godbold** ... together with a drinking house and stage stand where stage horses were changed," writes Mrs. Davis.

The **Holly Creek Church** was built in January of 1839 with **Harry Davis**, "old true **Methodist** of South Carolina stock " being a prime mover in building this memorial edifice. A man of wealth, **Davis** owned a saw mill, using the mill to saw and handled the lumber for the church. By mutual agreement, a **Baptist** preacher preached in the **Holly Creek Church** once a month until the **Montgomery Hill Baptist Church** was built in 1853-54.

Records and photos in the Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections of the Foley Public Library show the building specifications, 1853, of what was originally named **Montgomery Hill Missionary Baptist Church**, built on property conveyed to the Church by **A. W. Slaughter**, **D. P. Slaughter** and **Georgia H. Slaughter**.

In 1840, **Jacob Henry Schroeber**, 1807-1843, engaged in the tannery and currying business felt the call to be a pastor, one of his early churches being Montgomery Hill Baptist to help organize the church. He became the first pastor.

*Spirit of the South* newspaper, Eufaula, Alabama, item printed Mar. 13, 1849: "We learn that a difficulty occurred a few days since at Montgomery Hill, in Baldwin county, between **Randall Bryant**, and a **Mr. Rowe**, which terminated in the death of the latter."

*The Bethlehem Association*, for 1851, met with Montgomery Hill church, Baldwin County, Saturday before the 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbath in September. By June 1861, *The Weekly Advertiser* newspaper (Montgomery, Alabama), had an ad "War Notice" with the "Congress of the **Confederate States** voting to raise fifty millions of dollars on loan upon Confederate bonds having eight percent interest, secured by an annual tax." One of the meeting places to address the people was Montgomery Hill on 27<sup>th</sup> of June.

At the time of his interview for *Alabama Narratives* with **Ila B. Prine** who described him as "a tall dark Negro man with white hair and whiskers," **Nelson Birdsong** said he was born a slave at Montgomery Hill, and that his people were owned by **Mr. Tom Adkins**. Later, as a young boy, **Birdsong** moved to **Napoleonville** later **Crichton** in Mobile County, Alabama.

**Joseph Silver** died at his residence in Montgomery Hill, age of 51 years, July 23, 1869. While in March 1870, on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst., by Rev. Al. J. Lambert, joined in marriage **Maj. P. B. Jett**, of Arkansas, to Miss **Lulie W. Belt**."

One of the earliest residents, **George Brooke Tunstall**, born 1793, Virginia, died age of 48 at Montgomery Hill. He was husband of **Eloisa Matilda Tunstall** and **Louisa (Tate)Tunstall**. George and Louisa had eight children: Thos, Tate, Mary Ann, Peyton Randolph, Lucy, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Geo. Washington, and Edmund.

**James Earl II**, b c1806 d1860, lived in Tensaw, according to history but later moved to Montgomery Hill, now Blackshear, established a plantation and is buried there. His wife **Mary Jane (Steadham) Earle**, was a child survivor of the Fort Mims Massacre in August 1813. **Mary Jane** was of **Creek Indian** descent but not known through mother or father's side. It was noted by "**David Mitchell**, the federal official overseeing treaty claims, understood several men" including **James Earle** (among others, **Josiah Fisher**,

**Josiah Fletcher, Michael Ehlert and Zach McGirth**) “were white men married to Indian women but accepted their claims as adopted members of the **Creek nation**, subject to Indian law.” James and Mary Ann had seven children; **Cornelia Elizabeth** married **Charles Hall III, William, Mary (Molly)** married **Osman P. Hall, Jr., Elizabeth, Josephine, Ann Earle** married a **Bass**.

In September 1852, at Montgomery Hill, **Young Charles III** married **Cornelia Elizabeth Earle** to which twelve children were born: **James Lyman, Charles IV** married **Martha Jernigan**, (*Charles was a lawyer and a judge of Baldwin County*), **Sallie Hills Hall, Emanuel, Virginia Marcia** married **William Yancey Jernigan, Origen C** married **Clara Jernigan, Benjamin, Lyman James** married **Laura McLain**, (*he was a turpentine operator*), **John, Elvire** married **Thomas Benjamin Willisson**, Joseph married **Carrie Nelson** (*he was a medical doctor in Bay Minette*), and **William Childton**. Many of these descendants are still in the Montgomery Hill area.

An interesting “Call of Counties” in November, 1880, **Mr. Smith**, to prohibit the sale of liquor within five miles of **Montgomery Hill Baptist Church**, Baldwin county.” To this day that rule still stands although one doubts it is enforced. An 1890 census had the population of 200 for Montgomery Hill. By 1902, mail and passenger line was established from Bay Minette to Montgomery Hill with Hack leaving Bay Minette daily at 1:30 pm returning, leaves Tensaw at 5:30 a.m.. Fare being \$1.00; to Latham 75 cents; to Stockton 50 cents, ad by **E.H Nelson & Son**.

In 1906, photos by **Miss Maye Belt** of Tensaw, show **Rev. Andrew J. Lambert** as pastor from 1859-1906. Also photos of the interior of the church’s graining and paneling that set it far above any of the homes built in the area at that time. The slave gallery is a historic statement of the social arrangements of a slave-owning society. The grounds of the church show being surrounded by tall pines and oaks; the cemetery to the left of the entrance of the front door. Today **Montgomery Hill Baptist Church** is the oldest surviving church in Baldwin County and a Historic Landmark. (*These photos are in the Baldwin county History Files, FPL*)

**Mrs. S. M. Feist** was a pioneer to Baldwin County and Montgomery Hill, well known throughout the section. She was the wife of **Adolph Feist**, at one time a large property holder in the northern end of the county. When she died at **Montgomery Hill** in April of 1912 at age of seventy-five, she left behind eleven children, two sons and seven daughters.

**Julius Elvin Howell**, an agricultural agent who traveled extensively throughout Baldwin County, remembers a story told of a man passing thru the neighborhood of **Montgomery Hill** when a bad thunderstorm was going on. He went into the church to get out of the bad weather. At the same time another man had stopped in because of the weather. The two men talked and waited the storm out. After they left, the first man learned he had been there with a “badman” (*Railroad Bill*) who had robbed and killed all over this part of Alabama. **Railroad Bill**, also believed known as **Morris Slater**, a Black man, became legend in 1892 when a deputy sheriff in Bluff Springs, Florida, shot at a turpentine camp worker who refused to register or give up his rifle with state’s license laws. After exchange of gunfire, he was said to have hopped an L&N Railroad freight car and became a fugitive across panhandle of Florida and southern Alabama becoming the legendary **Railroad Bill**.

An excerpt from a letter of **Col T. T. Tunstall (Tom Tate)** to his son, Tom, an employee of the Mexican National R. R. with headquarters at Agnas-Calentes, Mexico, written Sept. 25, 1911, probably states the true heart of Montgomery Hill to its survival today: “Therefore this is to let you know that I am alive and on my native health at old Montgomery Hill amid the familiar scenes of boy hood happy times. I wandered over to the old homestead where the “old Oaken bucket, the iron bound bucket, the moss covered bucket hung in the well, but the well is no longer there –gone dry.” been filled up and those who drew up the water have long since kicked the bucket. I strolled along the obscure pathway that lead me a barefooted boy 80 years ago to the log cabin schoolhouse. I went down to the creek and the waterholes where I fished and learned to swim with other boys who alas are all under the green turf and I am the lone survivor.”



The beauty of the ironwork fences at the Montgomery Hill Cemetery.

Sources: Baldwin County Courthouse, Bay Minette; Military Records Phillip Coleman War of 1812, transcribed and Provided by John Ozment, May 2001; “Montgomery Hill, 1839” by Doris Rich, historian; Alabama Department of Archives and History; “Montgomery Hill” Baldwin County History Files FPL, Foley Public Library; “Ford’s Christian Repository, Nov, 1872” pg 317; “Alabama Narratives” WPA Project, 1937 pg 33; “Memorandum Book of Rev. Jacob Schroebel, 1801-1843, Baldwin County History Files FPL; “Military Records Phillip Coleman, War of 1812 & subsequent Bounty applications,” by John Ozment; “Montgomery Hill” Arrow Points Vo. 8 no 5 pg 74; “George Brooke Tunstall, family history” by <http://jenniferhsm2.homestead.com/sehoy.html>; “Ancestors of Virginia Marcia Hall”, Descendants of Timen Lolfsson Stidde, R. Eighth Generation, Genealogy.com; “A Conquering Spirit,” by Gregory A. Waselkov, pg208; Heritage of Baldwin County, Alabama, pg 12; “Railroad Bill” Baldwin County History Files, FPL; “Spirit of the South” newspaper, 1849 pg4; “South Western Baptist” newspaper 1851 pg 3; “The Times-Argus” newspaper, Selma, AL 1869 pg 3; “The Montgomery Advertiser” Nov 1880 pg 1; “Wilcox Progressive Era” newspaper, Camden, AL, Feb 1912 pg 3 compiled by Jeanette Bornholt, Librarian, FPL